

Interview with Marjorie Walker
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(assisted by Drusilla Modjeska)

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EE. Marj, you and I were talking about all of your work in Sogeri and at length in e-mails and having lots of fun chatting about that period. But I wonder if perhaps if you can start talking about how you got to PNG in the first place and landed up in Sogeri High School.

MW. Well, I guess I got there by accident. In the early 60s, I went to Tanzania as a volunteer and my parents said why don't you go to help our people. They thought I was going to work in Australia, but in actual fact I have a bad circulation problem and the African climate suited me. That was one of the attractions, although I guess I was reasonably adventurous and liked a challenge. I am trained in finance, but more particularly in those days interested in sport at the school where I had been working in Geelong. I was actually also teaching Phys. Ed there, because I found the syllabus in the Australian system reasonably boring and uncreative. So, I went to Tanzania where I was still really involved in sport. But, I found that the real goal there was to train up Grade 10 students to do the Cambridge Overseas Certificate and that was completely lacking in any creativity whatever. I was in Tanzania for two and a half years. When I returned to Australia, I was still in my 20's, and I found suburbia quite unchallenging. Other people I'd known or trained with weren't interested in anything more than their new washing machine, or what they did at the weekend or going to the footy.

So, I went to warmer climes in North Queensland. In the school where I was teaching, there were quite a few girls who had grown up in Papua New Guinea. They talked about how great it was and then, when I was on holiday down in Melbourne, I saw an ad for people to go Papua New Guinea. And I thought, “This looks like interesting.” There was an American girl from the Amish area of Pennsylvania, who I'd known in Tanzania. We were like sisters; so, she was coming out to Australia and we both went to Papua New Guinea. I had only just got there a few months when I was asked to go back to Queensland as the Head of the school in Charters Towers where I'd been the year before. But I just wrote and said that Papua New Guinea was so interesting, I really wanted to stay there. I was in Rabaul at a regular High School up to grade 10 and the syllabus was New South Wales (NSW) or Queensland, I think it was the NSW syllabus that we had to follow where you had to teach kids about Monet and the Impressionists and the like, but there was so much about Papua New Guinea that seemed interesting.

Then our last white Director of Education, Professor Ken Mckinnon, had this vision to integrate the arts in one subject because he felt that the festivals in Papua New Guinea combined them naturally. They had acting dancing, singing, and visual arts altogether, because they painted their bodies and painted things that they used when performing. He couldn't see that you could

separate these activities and say that traditional dancing belonged to the music curriculum, or in art. It was all across the board. And he had this great vision to make “Expressive Arts” into a subject all of its own and his feeling, I believe, was to strengthen it. He made visits to our school in Kerevat and I think he considered I was a bit of a disciple, because we had already followed this path right from the start when I went there. I have brought a piece to show the conference; it is a design from back in 1969 or so, which is the story of a legend and very simple.

Now, from there, I think it was because of my interest in building the Papua New Guinea artwork into the syllabus that I was given the job at Sogeri, which was considered, in those days, the number one art teaching job. Sogeri was the only senior High School in those days. So, I went there and, of course, Ken was still the Director of Education. He would come up to various things like graduation and we would have work on display. I remember he came up at the end of '72 and was shown around the Arts department. The next week, we got a letter asking if we could use the sum of \$ 25,000 dollars for culture. We were able to secure some of that for a cultural trip to Australia. It gave Sogeri a big boost because, on top of that grant, we had to raise a lot of money; that spurred people on even more.

One of the fortes of Sogeri was that it gave students the opportunity to be creative, using their traditional designs with western media. It wasn't always easy to get bark to paint on and so the western media lend themselves very much to selling. We never really sold traditional things like wood-carvings or anything like that, but the village people do and that's their strength. The school focused on the contemporary, merging culture that came out of the '70's. It helped Sogeri students to fit themselves out for various things. For instance, we needed a set of grass skirts from Morobe province and the village people were prepared to make them for us. So, we needed to be able to buy those. In order to do that, some student art was used to print greeting cards. We would perhaps sell about 100,000 cards a year, not for a great lot of money, but it all adds up. One of the things I have to show is a selection of gift wrap which has repeat patterns. They are wonderful: some of them, I could never have designed myself. They are just so clever, the way they work out; it was a challenge that we gave our grade 12 students who took screen printing as an elective to do.

DM. Were you working mainly with students in traditional art forms or were they beginning to meet traditional imagery with western or contemporary imagery?

MW. Well, that's quite a difficult one, because there were both. The Papua New Guineans that we worked with were 50% fairly westernised because they came from towns and some had come completely from villages. I think when you look at some of the work, you sort of get an idea. We did make efforts to have students painting landscapes but they didn't seem to like it as much. Before I went there, landscape was the only thing in evidence. Sogeri was in the hills and misty scenes were common. A previous arts teacher had got the students to make these misty scenes and the ones who couldn't do that fell away. So we tried to offer something where the majority would get a reward from what they did. Also, in a simplistic way, I guess, we were trying to preserve something of the culture, something of the pictorial culture of the people.

DM. So you were more interested in that, than in the sort of direction someone like Kuauge was taking: using modern imagery, but still from their own aesthetic base.

MW. Kuauge is a completely different sort of thing. The whole concept of Kuauge and the influence of the Nigerian art that came in there was a completely different story. Someone made some comments in a publication that, if you saw work from such and such an institution, it looked like that institution; but, if you saw artwork from Sogeri, it looked like the artist was not from Sogeri, but from wherever the student had come from... like Madang or Rabaul. My philosophy is that an art teacher should never impose their own ideas on people; art teachers should be facilitators, providing the materials and teaching skills if you need to, and then giving the student as much opportunity to create from inside them so that they can express themselves. When I was talking about these repeat patterns, we taught them about the concept of repeat patterns. Students could see that, when they went into a fabric shop to buy dress material, there's a repeat pattern. So, someone has to design that. But, then, once they had that concept, we let the students work the rest out for themselves. When I think of individuals that I knew at Sogeri, they liked that challenge. They felt they weren't doing this to please the teacher, because the teacher wanted them to draw a Kundu drum. They were doing something that they knew from home and they were doing something that they liked.

There's a whole seminar in this point... on how we teach art. In my lifetime, I've been to many conferences where these things have been discussed and the thing that I felt most about Papua New Guinea was that it was great that there were no colour-in copy books. That is what inhibits our own white kids; with my own relations and family, I have tried to provide the opportunity to create because that is the only way to bring out local feeling. It was important, in that time leading up to independence and beyond, that the national feeling for Papua New Guineans was based on motifs from village life. It gave them a good feeling. In Tanzania, for the exam, the instruction was to have a rose in front of each kid and they had to paint it. Well, we didn't have roses there, so we gave the children hibiscuses. But they were judged on how much it looked like a rose, since the work had to be sent to Cambridge to be marked. Well that was a complete disaster.

DM. So they were not drawing from any model. It was just the models that they knew from their own background.

MW. It depended on what the syllabus asked them to do. For instance, I've got a set of pictures here to put up if I can have a chance tomorrow; they're ten drawings from a book. The book's called "Time Before." It has 162 drawings on A3 size, drawn with pencil and then they're either inked in, painted in or students used Rotring pens to get certain effects. But it's village life and it's when they first came in, the very first thing that they do.

EE. Marjorie, we know that Sogeri High School has been one of the more important high schools in the history of the country for producing artists of all sorts, and many prominent people have come and gone through the High School. Sometimes when you're at a moment in history, you know it; and, at other times, you are unaware of the importance of the moment. I'm just wondering, if you can think back to those years when you were at Sogeri... did you have a sense, or was there a collective sense of something happening there. What was it like to actually be there? Who you

were working with and what kinds of conversations did you have with people about where you were taking the students in the school and where they were taking you?

MW. Well, really that's a very good one. First of all we had a job to do; we had to give the students the opportunity in this subject, "Expressive Arts," along with four other subjects English, Maths, Science and Social Science. And we had to be of a matriculation standard; yet we had to realize that, in the future, this country was going to be independent. Who were going to be the leaders in the country? Some of our students were going to be those leaders. Now, Sogeri might have a name for culture and art but it also had an extremely high academic reputation in all those subject areas. A lot of the very highly placed people graduated from the school. One of our students who was also loved Arts went on to be a doctor. His name is PowesiuLawes and he's now a gynecologist in PNG and he produced this work and then he contacted me after he had left school a couple of years. He said he had done all this work and could we publish this work for him. So for this ex-student, we published this book, *Wati Kui*, which is an absolutely fantastic book.

Then we took it on as part of our school work to do this sort of thing. That inspired students to see that we were doing things for ex-students. So, Sogeri worked out like a big family where everybody supported each other. One thing I'd like to mention in the symposium is the Independence celebrations. We were known as a school for culture and our school was chosen to as a cultural aide to all the overseas Heads of State. But all the teachers, whether they taught Maths, Science, whatever, they all served as patrons of a group during independence. So, in actual fact, as well as having a fantastic Expressive Arts staff, most of my years there, I also had great support from other members of staff. And a lot of those people, as soon as they heard about the book that's being published on the history of the school, have been asking for multiple copies. I believe that it was the cultural life of the school that helped to hold it together, you see.

EE. And that was really, in a sense, a microcosm of what the administration was trying to do in using culture to prepare the people for Independence.

MW. And my feeling was that the education system brought these kids out of their villages to another place, to be in a boarding school, to go to school. If they were at home in their village they would take part in their festivals, so we had to have our own festivals. And they absolutely loved those festivals. They got into it with great gusto and some of the people in this conference who will tell you about that, too. Anna was one of our students and so were Deveni Timu and others. This feeling of belonging, not just to Sogeri necessarily, but to Papua New Guinea was really important because it was an emerging nation and if they didn't have the opportunity to build on their own culture, then it would have been a real pity.

That whole drive for the National Culture Council was developed in the 1970s had a great influence. From what I gather these days, there's scarcely ever an art exhibition from any institution, which is very sad, because it's not a difficult thing to do. I just wish I was another 20 years younger and could spend some time there in helping. But when we came to live in Australia, it had been such a wonderful experience teaching in Papua New Guinea that I found I would have been restless in a regular school system in Australia. So I opted to work with aborigines and did that for my last 13 years or so before I retired. And I had a very similar experience, because the art

culture was not known to the aborigines so much. But the technique that I used in working with the Papua New Guineans worked well with quite a few of the aborigines. And now I have quite a lot of aborigines who are good friends, and have done well, gone to university and got themselves a degree as an adult with very basic education in the beginning. So they have the self esteem that's generated from self-expression. That has been really fantastic.

EE. I am a teacher as well and I know that when you go from place to place, you tend to think, "OK, what do I know and what can I apply?" But then you look at the situation you are in and you think. "That won't work. I'll try something else because it doesn't always translate across." Certain things do though. And you've been a teacher for some many years starting In Tanzania and then coming to.....

MW. And Australia before that.....

EE. Yeah, what I'm interested in at this point is whether, aside from the foreign and imported Cambridge system that you were working with in Tanzania, whether or not, there was any way in which Africa served as a strong model. For example, the socialist Ujamaa experience in Tanzania during the time you were there appealed, in particular, to the missions, as a means of helping to make Melanesian identity, village life and village structures a little bit more stable. I'm wondering whether or not any of that came across the ocean with you when you came back, or whether you were so turned off by the Cambridge model you thought you'd start all over again.

MW. Well, the Cambridge model was really only for grade 10. I taught all levels and the other ones, in years 7,8, and 9, they had much more interesting work. But you know, they did have to get through to be chosen for grade 11, or whatever they went on to do, so you could'n't spoil their chances. So, you had to go along with certain things. Not only that, at our school In Tanzania we would put on drama and the Arts section worked with the drama people, which was also very interesting. In fact, now that I think of it, there was a whole lot of preparation for my Papua New Guinean experience in the Tanzanian. But it just so happened that when this opportunity came to just toss out the Australian syllabus and re-do the curriculum, which I was involved in for most of the time I was in Papua New Guinea, it was such a good opportunity that I jumped on it immediately great enthusiasm.

EE. Did you for feel yourself to be a pioneer?

MW. No, because I knew there had been other people who had done new things like at Goroka Teachers College. But I did know that the Arts were so important to Papua New Guinean people traditionally, that it wasn't really fair that they only learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. Even so, there is no reason why reading, writing and arithmetic can't be creative. I know because I have nearly always, except at Sogeri, taught maths, which was actually my best subject at school. I was always top in maths but not top in arts. I might be second in arts, but I wanted to do art because as a school kid I realized that, in my class about only 3 of us knew what the teacher was talking about in maths. And what a boring situation, in my teaching career, I saw that many of the math teachers have left it after some years, whereas arts people stay with it. There is this reward when you teach the arts, although I think it depends on how you go about it. Even in the suburb where I live, there's an art teacher who teaches all sorts of people but, in particular, retirees. I can tell that

she gives her students their own creativity experience because the people she teaches exhibit at our local gallery. She has her psychology, the way she works on it; she gets them to do it and that, I think, is the secret with art teaching. But to do as the old masters did that you paint this leaf like this or you're no good, this is not on as far as people feeling confident about what they achieve.

EE. I guess one of the reasons that I asked you about the transferability of some sort of African experience or African model is because of the power of that particular model through the Beier's who were in Nigeria before they came. They had, in fact, brought with them a way of approaching the work that they were doing.

MW. Ulli and Georgina had a completely different power than we had at Sogeri. They had the Beier's power, I think. Whereas at Sogeri it was a different. It was, as I said before, more a family show and I don't think my particular drive was probably with me in Tanzania. But, I think, the actual collection of art work from Nigeria came to Papua New Guinea with the Beiers; and it was seen by the Beier artists. And what happened was that those people like Kauage and... I can't think of the other.....

DM. Akis

MW. Akis, yes, and other artists in that group. Because Ulli was the literature person at the University, the books of poetry that he published had his pictures on them. And they got into the schools; so, all the provincial high schools were doing drawings like that. It spread through the school system like Aussie rules. That is the way that African art spread through Papua New Guinea. And then to counter that, not consciously, but I'm sure we tried to counteract that a bit by offering different kind of projects to give the students a different challenge so they wouldn't just go to the library and select those books and redraw these little drawings with arms sticking out and so on. It was a completely different culture.

EE. Do you remember what you did about it later, because the Beiers essentially were gone from PNG after '78, I think.

MW. That influence will be there to stay. Oh yeah, definitely, because its charming. I mean, if you have an influence that's like that, if you get a music group like the Beatles and its charming, it stays forever even when people who love the Beatles weren't alive when they were singing. So you know that sort of thing and there's nothing wrong with it -- it's the Beier's influence -- that Nigerian influence was really fantastic.

EE. Oh, I'm not criticizing. I'm just trying to see it in context.

DM. Do you see the Nigerian influence kind of artificially laid on top of PNG, or do you think that those artists brought something that was a natural fit for PNG?

MW. Well, the Nigerian artists didn't come but their work did. But it was reasonable, because that could be any influence. I mean, Michaelangelo's influence came into other places and

DM. Yeah, but then it's obvious because it turns into another idiom. There's something that exists before the influence arrives. So, I am wondering whether the Nigerian art remained as a sort of template and the art that came from that was derivative. Or whether it was translated into something that organically had some sort of PNG'ness.

MW. I think there was such dearth of the arts before Ulli came that there was this acceptance of what he brought. One of the reasons for the success of Sogeri in the 70s and 80s was that we were heading to independence and looking for anything that could give it character. And here was this fantastic opportunity. And there wasn't anything. People were hungry, even the expatriate, I mean, certainly the expatriate population was really hungry for this kind of thing. And it was charming. There's a lot of charm about the Papua New Guinean.

We'll just take for an example the interest of people in Papua New Guinea. We had a trip to Australia in '73. It was organized by the art teacher, art master of Scots College, who was a very good artist in Melbourne. Paints a lot of scenery and realistic stuff and so on. Don Cameron. Before our kids came down, he came up for a couple of weeks and did a lot of painting of the scenery in the area and portraits of the people. So that when our students' work came down, he was going to exhibit that. It was all going to be in a bank, a walk through bank in Collins Street. Now, I think not one of his paintings, his pieces was sold, but people bought a lot of the students' work because it was different, and because it was harmless. It was non-threatening.

Here is a book that will show you. That piece, I've got to hang up. I've got a wall painting with that on it. But not printed in those colours and I wanted to say something about that. It tells a story about the crocodile who comes to the village and watches the girls. Now this one is quite fascinating. A student produced a screen with just that on it. Not symmetrical, not rectangular, not a triangle. But that he started trying it out and printing it, he got this swastika sort of look, which is quite fascinating. And then this is another individual who is from Central Province, so he used a lot of symbolic stuff. Sepik.

Some is in western style, we wouldn't consider that with a lot of picture composition or whatever. But, you didn't always put in only the things that you only liked; you had a consensus to work out what to put in. This one is from Roland Berger; his father's picture is in the book, the history book. He's dead now. Tao Berger was an old student of the school. So there's a family where there has been several generations. And that's Powesiu Lawes again. His book, *Wati Kui*, if you can get hold of that, that's really something. But this book was designed, so that the pages can be cut out and framed.

EE. This is produced at the school?

MW. Yeah! This was in '75; it was re-done. This was the first edition. Now Barry Eisen was the person; he was the teacher on my staff who got this book together. After he left PNG, he worked mainly in Asia facilitating for Asian groups and even back in Melbourne, I still have exhibitions of his work from Bangladesh and so on and Myanmar that his people do. He uses the techniques that they know, like the hand loom and so on. He was another very powerful person.

DM. Where was Powesiu Lawes from?

MW. Manus Island. So that's that one. But this one is also interesting [showing the interviewers some images]. This was, he got this one done in '75. This was to give all the overseas Heads of State and that crest was there because 200 of the copies had the government crest on it. And they were part of a whole bunch of gifts given to them at the Independence celebrations. Our students were the cultural aides and they were dressed in kaftans, and lap lap and Afro shirts for the boys. Five in each group were dressed traditionally. The traditional ones were led in followed by two in the sort of semi-western style clothes. They presented these big Bougainville baskets filled with goodies from Papua New Guinea and the thing that Sogeri produced was this book; it went to every country that was represented. I think it was the 35 countries.

DM. What was involved in the Expressive Art curriculum?

MW. Creative writing. And oral history was part of Expressive Arts. Expressive Arts was art, music, drama, oral history, creative writing and traditional studies. So this is a combination of all of those.

EE. There's really nowhere in the English curriculum where the creative writing could happen, I think, because it was teaching the language, wasn't it, the English class. This is the thing I find so the fascinating about Expressive Arts is that it is this combination where you don't worry about where the borders are or if there are borders.

MW. But when you first talked to me about being involved in this, that's why I suggested that the best person to get would be Ken McKinnon, because he was the one whose vision it was and here was I just a little ordinary, almost lowest level teacher at that time. Oh, I suppose I wasn't, I was Head of the department at Kerevat, but I was still pretty ordinary compared with the Director of Education. But Ken was always, I think, very proud of how Sogeri worked and followed it with interest.

EE. That's why he's with us at the conference giving a paper because I.....

MW. You found him!

EE. Oh, yes we did.

MW. Here is the book we produced for that Independence celebration; it has section for each of the districts and we gave each one, 4 to 5 pages. It was up to them to meet in their group to work out what they wanted to put in it. Now, whether they wanted to put initiations, see, invitation of guests for the initiations, preparation for the initiation, initiation of a chief in Chimbu. This is a typical highland drawing and in this set of pictures that I will put up tomorrow, there's a picture of women -- they also had that sort of look. And yet, you get others where the artwork is very decorative like this is; that's possibly by Powesiu. He was there at Independence. Here you have work from Madang; the Madang artists were fantastic. On Thursday, I'm going to wear something by one of our really famous Madang students because, since he went to Arts school, he was one of the first graphic graduates at the Arts school. Kasua Ruai. And he did some material and send it

down for me to sell to people which I did. I bought some as well and made an outfit and I wore it to this big exhibition that you probably heard of "Luk Luk Gen!"

MW. Now Hugh Stevenson wrote that catalogue and I actually talked to him on the phone the other day. He lives here, in Stanmore but he has a very bad emphysema and even just talking to him on the phone was difficult for him. But Helen Dennett is really interested in his art collection and what's going to happen to it. He was a primary school teacher and I actually got to know him when we had exhibitions. He would come early to the opening, make a list of the numbers he wanted and he'd be at the beginning of the queue. That's how art work sold up there with the students' work. When we had an exhibition, we didn't make it obvious where the person writing receipts was going to sit. They had to have the book in their pocket. They were usually one teacher or another. It was always someone different. They had the receipt book in their pocket and we had a little card table somewhere that we just setup as soon as the opening was over. Because if not, you had people standing in a queue which spoilt the atmosphere of the opening. You know, the opening is like a celebration but if you had people queued up as if they're getting their footy tickets.... So that just gave you a bit of the idea of popular things were. Nowadays in Melbourne, if you have an opening of an exhibition and three paintings sell at the opening, you think you're doing well.

But, you know, we could sell artists like Kasua Ruai, the one I mentioned earlier. He came back to Sogeri as a technician before he went to Arts school. He didn't want to go to Arts school at that stage, because they didn't offer a certificate. You just went to the Arts school and did courses, but you didn't get anything. So he asked me if we could employ him in the department. I discussed it with the principal and we hired him; he actually earned his salary by the work he did. He never misused his work time to do his own work but always did that at weekends. You'd see him going over to the school. He produced these fantastic exhibitions that we had at the Australian High Commission and it would be almost a complete sellout. Because, as I say, the work was charming. There's a certain charm about these designs that immediately attracts. People look at the work, they look at these designs and they don't feel threatened.

DM. Did you feel that there was other art being done elsewhere that did make people feel threatened?

MW. I didn't really know about that. I did know about the influence. Once we'd published books, we found other books being published by other schools, high schools with very similar work to the, you know, the African things. But, we couldn't help it, I mean, it was just how it was. And so, when you found that was happening, then you'd start something else. You purposely started to do things in a different way.

These ones [showing the interviewers some pictures], are the ones I wanted to put up. You see, these were village activities. They're just drawings by several different students. That's my favourite. Can you see what it is? See, that's three traditional people, two girls and a boy keeping up the tradition. This one, is trying to be western. He's pushed in the background. Isn't that concept interesting? This is a Sogeri book that was published after I left. Half the work was done before I left, not by me, it was another teacher. And it never was launched in PNG; it was launched

down in Melbourne. So we got about 50 of the originals and had them framed. We got the local council gallery to exhibit them; we had these prints made which sold to help meet, pay the costs. Now, you see what I mention about the Highlands figure, the drawings, very similar to the one in here and that was probably about the middle to late 80s and that one would have been the early 70s. Now I don't think a lot of influence came out of the high schools because most of our kids had never really done much expressive arts before they came to us. That was the story a lot of them had.

DM. How would you sum up your PNG experience?

MW. It was, the experience was so marvelous, I think as I said before, when we were to leave there I said to my husband "I'm retiring when we get to Australia." He did comment and after we'd unpacked, he said, "When are you going to get a job?" And I said, "But I told you, I was retired." I was less than 50 when we went to Australia. Anyway then, because I realized, he said "What a waste of a person. You know, if you've got such ability, why just play golf?" "Well, I needed to play golf" Then I found this group of aboriginal women who wanted to have a course designed for them. I remember the very first day I went to talk to them; I even took some of those wrapping paper designs to show them. One of the ladies actually produced aboriginal wrapping paper and it was charming, it also was lovely, different but very nice. But they all had different influences; if you look at all these, they are all completely different styles. You couldn't say that that one sat next to that one and got the idea of drawing.

EE. How much would you attribute that, Marj, to individual artists as opposed to people working out of a sense, perhaps, that things needed to be relevant from their own culture and country.

MW. Well, this book was produced under a teacher who was an English and history specialist. Most of the students had never had any drawing experience in their schools; they only had reading, writing, arithmetic because the schools had to do that to get them into senior high school or university. So they couldn't waste time on arts, because that was a "waste." If you were enjoying yourself, then that was not work. So he gave them talks about remembering their traditions, also just to help them not to feel homesick. They came up with their own organization. He gave them plenty of time to work on it; he didn't say that he wanted them to do this and this. So, that's why I think they're really very interesting.

Some are telling stories, some are legends, some are about festivals. But it's a lovely set. And so we sold those at that exhibition and book launch opening. The exhibition was on for two weeks. The teacher who replaced me sent me a copy of this book in '88, three years after he had started at Sogeri. I showed it to the then director of our local gallery. And she said "Ah! This would be, make a fabulous exhibition if you could get the originals of this." So we did get the originals and had them in frames and then we had some artifacts with it. For instance, it just so happened that we have in our collection a canoe prow from the Trobriand Islands. And there's a canoe prow in that drawing as well as a canoe. So we were able to do an interesting job curating the exhibition. It was very interesting to bring work like this to Melbourne and also to help our people understand a bit, because, you know, Papua New Guinea is a long way up there. Even so, most Australians have someone who's visited there or worked there or known someone. But it's another thing

altogether to actually know much about the culture -- a lot of people who go and work up there have never been to a village. They've only lived in towns.

EE. Do you find these days there are curated exhibitions of PNG art? Are galleries interested in showing the work. Does the work sell?

MW. Yes. Well, there is. The other day my niece told me that she'd seen in a city near us in the big town hall that there was an exhibition of African art. So she and the kids and I all went to see it; and, you know, it was absolutely fantastic -- wood carvings from all parts of Africa. But people are very interested in it. Now, if I hadn't been in PNG, if Ulli Beier hadn't been there, if a few others who were forerunners hadn't been there, I don't know what would have happened. Certainly, without Ken McKinnon's push nothing much was happening in the arts in education.