

# Papua New Guinea Writing

No 7, Sept. 1972

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## PAPUA NEW GUINEA WRITING — Number 7, September, 1972

## EDITORIAL

Six hundred years ago very few Europeans were able to read and write. The few who could were church people and wrote only about religious matters.

But in the 15th century ordinary citizens were beginning to learn to read and there was a demand for books. It is believed that the first functional printing press was assembled by Johann Gutenberg in the year 1440. The time since has been called the Gutenberg Era. It could also be called the Age of Books. Since 1440 books have spread all over the world; they are to be seen everywhere and are used by people of all races every day.

Books were first introduced to Papua New Guinea only about one hundred years ago. At that time no Papua New Guineans could read or write. But across the short span of a century this country has advanced so rapidly that there are now many thousands of people who can read, write and who constantly require books to read for pleasure and for increasing their knowledge. Not only are the people of this country reading books in ever increasing numbers but they have also turned to creative writing and some of their best work now appears in "Papua New Guinea Writing". Only a few books have been written and published as full-length works, but soon we may expect to see more and more books on sale in this and other countries, written by Papua New Guineans.

It may be said that this country is at the beginning of its Gutenberg Era.

We are pleased to have received many letters for our 'Letters to the Editor' page. We like to know what readers think about our magazine, what they would like, and suggestions for improvement. Please keep writing!

One person has already sent in his idea for next year's cover design, but we hope to receive more in the near future. For our Christmas issue articles and stories are required, but to be included in the special Christmas edition, they must reach the editor's desk before 1st October.

Roger Boschman  
EDITOR

## CONTENTS

<b>CITY LIGHTS</b> By Siuras Kavani . . . . .	2
<b>TURNIM HEAD</b> By Benedict Timbi . . . . .	4
<b>NIGHT CLUB</b> By Joseph Saruva . . . . .	6
<b>SURRENDER TO THE SPIRIT</b> By Joseph Koroma . . . . .	8
<b>BRIDE PRICE</b> By Aloysius Aita . . . . .	10
<b>NATACHEE</b> Interview . . . . .	12
<b>CHANGING VILLAGE</b> By Confucius Ikoirere . . . . .	14
<b>POET'S CORNER</b> . . . . .	15
<b>YOUNG HUNTERS</b> By Charles Loubai . . . . .	16
<b>FORBIDDEN ISLAND</b> By Mary Paulisbo . . . . .	18
<b>CENTRE FOR CREATIVE ARTS</b> . . . . .	20
<b>LETTERS TO THE EDITOR</b> . . . . .	21
<b>ABOUT THE WRITERS</b> . . . . .	22

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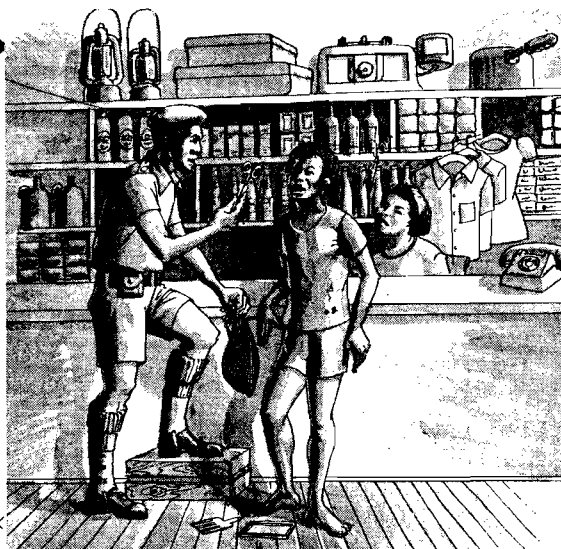
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# CITY LIGHTS

by Siuras Kavani



*Where did you get these?*

In the dark of the morning Alam said farewell to his kinfolk and started the four hour walk to Aruba, the nearest government station. "Mi laik Mosbi<sup>1</sup>," he said to some people at the airstrip there. They took some of his money and he boarded a Cessna.

The sun was high when the small plane landed at an airport in a larger town which he later learnt was Goroka. Again he said "Mi laik Mosbi!" Someone took an amount from the remainder of his money, issued him with a ticket and directed him to another plane, which was much bigger and more comfortable than the little Cessna. The big plane was a great experience as it flew smoothly over the mountains towards Port Moresby.

Alam knew that many of his kinsmen lived in Port Moresby. During the flight he thought eagerly of meeting wantoks<sup>2</sup> who had become citymen and who somehow had forgotten their village home. He expected to meet some of them when he landed at Jackson's Airport. Surely some of them would be about. Leaving the plane he strolled into the crowded terminal. He searched the faces of the crowd avidly but saw no person of his own clan he knew. One or two looked like men from his area, but their eyes avoided his. Confused by the crowd, the activity and the roar of aircraft engines, he thought it wisest to just sit, and rest and watch. Perhaps one of his clansmen would appear on the scene and offer him traditional hospitality.

Alam waited and watched until the sun was sinking and began to doubt if any of his wantoks would appear. He started walking from the airport along what he didn't know was the Hubert Murray Highway. Reaching what was called Six Mile he saw a row of shops and experienced a strong desire to look at the many items for sale. He was inspecting various tins and wondering what they contained, when a large pale-faced woman behind the counter spoke to him in English which he did not understand.

Alam studied her wonderingly, scratched his head, then walked away from the woman to the far corner of the store. There he stood eyeing another display of goods with fascination. The woman walked over and spoke a second time in English. Alam felt disturbed by her manner and replied in Pidgin that he did not understand. She answered in Pidgin, a different sounding Pidgin than he knew, at least he managed to understand what she was saying.

"What is it that you want here?" she had said. He thought to himself, what right has this 'white' woman to know what I want? He thought and wished women of his own clan were with him to show her proper behaviour towards a male. But at the same time he was frightened. He began to shake, and sweat gleamed on his face and arms.

Becoming suspicious, the Chinese woman went away and rang the police. Within minutes a van pulled up outside the store and a number of police officers stepped out, adjusting their belts as they entered the shop. One police constable snatched Alam's bilum and emptied it on the floor then went through the contents item by item. Alam turned red and clenched his fists. Two breaches of his people's customary behaviour in so short a space of time seemed too much. He was being treated without respect.

"Hai boi, yu kisim dispela we?" (Where did you get these?) asked the constable holding up a pair of scissors similar to some on display in the store. Alam attempted to explain that the scissors were given to him by his maternal uncle on his return from Port Moresby two months before. His Pidgin seemed very poor and the constables did not readily understand what Alam was trying to explain. Finally, two constables grabbed him and then forced him into the van.

The van reached the Central Police Station where its rear doors were opened. Alam crept out quivering

1. I want to go to Port Moresby.

2. People who spoke the same language.

with fear. He heard the word 'Kalabus', meaning Jail, which he understood and suddenly he tore himself from the grip of the officers and ran blindly and wildly across the street.

A large truck swerved to avoid him and crashed into the police van, but Alam dived through a hedge and kept on running. He stole a backward look to see the police officers arguing with the truck driver and a crowd of dozens of people had suddenly appeared.

Out of breath, Alam slowed to a fast walk, but kept on moving. Going between buildings, hedges, crossing and re-crossing streets, he moved in a semi-circle through a built-up area. A police van drove slowly past and he froze with fear, but no attention was paid to him. Feeling better he followed streets and changed direction at random.

Two more police cars passed him without stopping. When he again reached the wide highway he walked quite openly along its side.

With fear gone his hunger returned, and the wonderful smells from some food shops aggravated his appetite but he dare not take a chance entering another shop. Shops meant trouble and police.

He walked up a long hill and descended into an area of more exciting shops. But where were his wantoks? Two or three men before a shop could have been his cousins but they turned indifferently away when he stared at them.

Wandering along, looking at everything with a new amazement, Alam passed through a large area that could have been a market, but stalls were empty. He continued along the fine road as the sun was going down and suddenly he saw the 'big sea' for the first time from the ground. He had seen it when the plane had circled over Port Moresby but now it was different, near and real. He could smell it, he heard its waves lapping on the rock wall. Reaching down he put his hand in the water and licked his fingers. Salt! So it was true what he had been told, the ocean was full of salty water.

Alam felt very tired. The running, walking and excitement of the day had drained his energy and he began looking for a place to sleep. He had to sleep! He approached more shops and an area of trees where he decided to lie down and sleep. But it started to rain so he crept from the trees and found a dry place under a nearby building. Drugged with tiredness he was soon asleep.

He was awakened next morning by the noise of cars and trucks roaring past the building below which he had slept. Hunger gripped his stomach, making it growl. He felt almost too weak to get up and walk, so he watched the passing traffic for a time.

Suddenly a police car swung off the street and parked in front of him. It happened so quickly Alam could do nothing. Some officers jumped from the car but they did not see him. Going around the corner of the building they disappeared. Alam decided to escape at once and getting up shakily, walked from the building.

A yell of surprise above his head made him look up to see several policemen watching him from a window.

Moments later he was surrounded.

A senior officer called out, "Who is this man?"

"The one who ran away last night," replied the officer gripping Alam.

"Good of him," he laughed, "making it so easy for us to catch him." He laughed again. "Bad luck that he decided to sleep under Port Moresby City Police Station!" Again, Alam found himself in a police van. He was taken inside another police station and weak with hunger, could not follow the proceedings spoken in English. Faces swirled around him.

An officer switched to Pidgin and spoke sharply.

"Why is this man here?"

"Suspected of theft, Sir," replied a constable.

"Who is laying the charge?"

The Chinese woman was brought forward.

"Officer, please understand" she said in Pidgin. "I was frightened when this man entered my shop. When I asked him what he wanted he stared at me peculiarly and did not answer. I thought he would make trouble. I was alone when he came in so I decided to call the police for safety, I could not swear if he stole anything."

Alam mostly understood this conversation in Pidgin, but he understood nothing when English was spoken. Everyone looked at him suspiciously and he felt weak with fear and hunger.

"What have you to say," an officer demanded in English. Alam stared at him blankly.

A constable prodded him and said in Pidgin. "Yu mas i tok stret nau." (You must tell the truth).

"Mi no save." (I do not understand all this). That was the truth.

"This lady thinks you stole something" said the big officer.

"Yu stilim samting, o nogat?" another constable put in. (Did you steal a thing or not?)

"Oh!" cried Alam, "Mi no stilim." (I did not steal).

For the first time Alam realised he was suspected of theft from the first store he had visited in Port Moresby. He knew that in his native village he could be killed for stealing. To steal was as bad as adultery or murder. He felt anger and tears at the same time, then a cloud came over his vision, before he pitched forward face down on the concrete floor.

A Welfare Officer stepped forward and intervened.

"This man seems very sick," he said. "First he must be taken to the hospital. Charges can be made later."

Looks turned to the Chinese lady owning the store. "I think I should wait until tomorrow," she said.

The Duty Officer answered, "You must be sure there is a cause for the charge before you make it."

"I'll come tomorrow," said the woman and then quickly departed.

The Welfare Officer rang for an ambulance, and soon afterwards Alam was put into a hospital bed.

Alam dreamt that he was with his clansmen, in the mountains, everyone was excited. Fires were lit all around the clan's ceremonial land. Several of the huts were filled with food, water and heaps of bamboo sticks to be used as flares. The beat of drums and the invitation chant from the clan-hosts were gradually dying away. At the same time the drums and the chants of the arriving guests were growing.

The men of a neighbouring village had been invited to Alam's village for a pig-kill.

Alam sat happily with clan-brothers of his own age.

● continued on page 5.



# Turnim Head

by Benedict Timbi

Rui, a young man of the Lati clan, lived at Ambra in the New Guinea Highlands. He was about sixteen years old. One day he and his friends were returning from a successful hunt after killing several possums.

"The fur of these cuscus will make good bilas<sup>4</sup> for sing-sing time," said Rui.

"Yes," replied a friend. "My uncle told me to get plenty of cuscus fur for the sing-sing."

"When is the sing-sing to be held?" asked Rui.

"Not many weeks away now, and you know what that means!"

"What does it mean?" asked a very young man of the group.

"Perhaps you are too young to know!" laughed one. "But it is our custom that in the weeks before the big annual sing-sing the young men go courting with the girls at night. Each wants to find a suitable girl to marry during the sing-sing."

"That is why we go to the girls and 'turnim-head'."

"But what is turnim-head?" asked the same young man.

"Oh," laughed another young man. "You will have to wait and see. You must come courting to find out!"

Before the young men went their separate ways they made a date for the first night of courting. Rui went to his house and sat down quietly to think about the courting with the girls. It would be his first time to turnim-head, but he had heard something about it. It seemed that boy and girl sit cross-legged, facing each other. Then, when the courting song started, they would lean forward so that their faces touched. Then they

would sway their bodies from side to side while keeping their faces pressed together. When the courting song stopped, boys would find other partners and continue the turnim-head.

Rui was too young to be married, but he wished that he had a wife.

When the night of turnim-head came, the young men and boys sang on their way to the village. They were met by a man of that clan who led them to the girls' house. Rui was the first to enter the house, but feeling shy, he sat in one corner of the house and chose the girl whom he liked, and with whom he would do turnim-head when he had plucked up courage. Rui glanced shyly at 'his' girl whilst the other young men and girls began the ceremony. Ruk noticing his hesitation and shyness, whispered encouragingly.

"Go and sit beside that girl and turn head with her when the next song starts. After a while you won't feel embarrassed with so many people watching."

Rui agreed to go to her when the next song began.

Rui began his timid advances by sitting next to the girl he had chosen, his embarrassment lessened when he felt the girl move very close and press her face hard against his. When this happened the words from the wise old men of his village came flooding back:

"If a girl moves close to you and presses her face hard against yours, then she loves you. If she resists you and seems to resent your trying to move closer, then she doesn't like you."

During the course of the sing-sing Rui told 'his' girl that he loved her and wished to marry her during his clan's ceremonial sing-sing. She then said to him

1. Decoration.

while turning head, "I love you, but unless you've got enough bride price for my people I can't marry you." The turnim-head ceremony continued until daybreak and when the young men were returning to their hamlet, Ruk said to Rui:

"Well, Rui, now that you have experienced your first turnim-head how do you feel? I notice that you stayed with that girl a long time. You must like her." Rui shyly nodded assent but said nothing.

During further sessions of turnim-head Rui and his girl came to know each other very well. Both his family and hers knew that they would marry. Rui's family began to prepare the bride price.

At last the time of the annual sing-sing came. On the appointed day, the related clans gathered at the ceremonial sing-sing ground, food and water had been stored for several days of dancing, sing-sing and feasting.

It was a time of mass-marriage. When marriages were to take place during a sing-sing, the families of the couples were prepared. The bride price gifts had already been agreed upon.

Rui went out into the dancing ground and met his partner, they were surrounded by other couples who would be married at the same time.

The drums began to beat and the spectators began to sing. The engaged couples formed a huge circle and with hands joined started dancing. The drums beat faster and faster.

The dancing continued without a break until late afternoon. Then two chiefs, one from each of the clans, climbed onto a tall platform at the side of the dancing ground. The drums ceased beating and the dancers and the onlookers turned to look at the chiefs. The men spoke together as one:

"We now announce that all these young people who were marked for marriage are now married to the partners. When this feast ends, the girls must go home with their husbands. They must work hard and be very good wives. The bride-price payments will now be made." The two men climbed down from the platform.

Rui's family met with his wife's family and the pigs and shell-money were handed over to pay for the bride. Her parents gave her some pigs for her to take back to her new home.

Then all the people settled to feasting, talking and singing.

Rui knew the feasting and singing would go on all night. He did not wish to wait until the following day to be alone with his new wife.

So early in the evening the couple moved away and set out for their own new home.

## CITY LIGHTS *continued from page 3.*

They made many jokes and laughed among themselves. In the middle of this happiness a girl touched him on the shoulder. He thought it was the girl he was meant to marry. He thought of something to say and as he turned to her his eyes opened at the same time and he saw a hospital nurse who awakened him to take his temperature.

She put the thermometer under his tongue and indicated that he must keep it there. She held his wrist for a while, looking at her watch. She was a plump attractive Papuan girl. She took the thermometer out of his mouth, looked at it, then scribbled something on a board. Alam looked around and saw a number of nurses in neat blue uniforms. This is the real, big city, he reflected and knew he was no longer living in the mountains with his tribal clansmen.

A nurse brought him a tray of food, a dish of fish, a heap of brown rice and some biscuits. It tasted very good and as he ate he began to feel better. His strength was quickly coming back to him.

With the last grain of rice gone and the plate as clean as if it had been washed, Alam lay back and for the first time since arriving in Port Moresby felt happy and contented. Through a window he could see a tiny square of sky made crimson by the setting sun.

He got out of bed and walked slowly to the foot of the bed, and back again. Now he was quite strong.

A nurse came to him and asked if there was anything he wanted. He shook his head and watched her walk towards the doctor who had come into the ward. Alam's eyes were fixed on the roundness of her figure and was fascinated by her bottom which swayed rhythmically from side to side. He decided that she must be wearing a tight garment under the blue uniform to give her such smooth shapeliness and movement, so different from the women of his village.

The doctor asked questions of the nurse and looked

at the clipboard. The nurse returned to Alam and handed him a paper.

"This a discharge paper," she said slowly in Pidgin. "You are all right now and there is nothing to pay. The police are no longer interested in you." She smiled, patiently as it wondering if he understood what she had said. She spoke again.

"You can go home now," the nurse said in careful Pidgin. He wondered if she would ever know his true home was many miles from Port Moresby.

Alam felt strangely better in every way and walked cheerfully from the hospital and down the road. He looked back once to the light and warmth of the hospital. It was a strange place and he had nice thoughts of the brown rice, the tasty differently cooked fish, but most of all the shapely nurses and the wonderful way they walked in those tight uniforms.

He walked on, striding happily. Darkness fell as he came to the top of a hill and below him shone the beckoning lights of the city that for years he had so much wanted to see for himself. They twinkled like the stars over the mountains on a cloudless night and for a long time he just stood there and stared.

Alam had no friends in the big city and no definite place to sleep, neither had he more than a few cents to his name. But he felt he need not worry, any more now. The city he was approaching represented the greatest adventure of his life. Luck had quickly come to his side and who could tell, any minute now he might meet one of his wantoks. He would continue his adventure in the city, and every night he would be able to see the wonderful city lights.

Humming a comforting village song, Alam strolled resolutely down the hill towards those city lights.





Drawn by Esau Reuben

# NIGHT CLUB

by Joseph Saruva

Two young men walked casually along Scratchley Road, deep in conversation. Homaki, a newcomer to Port Moresby, was telling his cousin of his work.

"The job is not bad, Jujuma, except that too much trench digging is just about killing me."

"Count yourself lucky," said Jujuma. "There are hundreds of men here without jobs. They would give anything to do your digging and receive a wage."

Their conversation was disturbed by a commotion ahead of them. Jujuma and Homaki broke into a trot towards the sound of loud music and laughter. Rounding a corner they saw a group of men laughing and chattering. Some of them were half drunk and excited. They were peering through a fence.

Homaki and his cousin also peered through the fence and saw four girls on a verandah. They were dancing with each other to modern 'rock' music from a record player.

Two girls wore two-piece swim suits and the other two wore very short mini-skirts.

"Who are they, Jujuma?" asked Homaki.

"You are looking at some of the beauties of Moresby, my cousin," said Jujuma scornfully. "The Angels of Moresby."

"Angels?" said Homaki. "Not like the ones in the Bible!" The girls turned up the music and the wriggling of their hips increased with the tempo. Renewed applause intermingled with obscene language from the watching men.

"But what can they hope to gain by putting on this show?" asked Homaki.

"Most likely they are hoping to be picked up and taken to a night club."

"Who will pick them up?" asked Homaki, his interest rising.

"Some Europeans most possibly."

"Why Europeans? Don't any of our men try? I mean . . ."

"What do you mean, Homaki? Where is your money? Let me tell you this. There are girls who give themselves to men for money. They go around looking for men who can pay them for the use of their bodies. Money is the passport to everything in the city!"

"I see," said Homaki. "By the way, what is a night club?"

"I'll show you! On pay-day I'll take you to a night club, OK? Your pay and my pay will add up to a nice sum. It should be plenty for a big night."

From then until the pay-day, Homaki tackled each day's trench digging with renewed vigour, spurred on by the prospect of the night club. Finally, pay-day came. Homaki received sixteen dollars and Jujuma took him on a shopping tour for a pair of slacks and a bright shirt.

Homaki tried on the new clothes and smiled with delight at what he saw in the mirror.

On the street in front of the club they checked to make sure they were presentable, then marched to the entrance.



Inside the door a European lady was sitting behind a desk, collecting entrance fees. Her low cut dress was very revealing.

"It's three dollars, Homaki," whispered Jujuma.

He turned around to see if Homaki was there. He was, but staring at the European woman. Jujuma shook his cousin's arm.

"It's three dollars!" he stated firmly.

"For only two of us? It's a lot of money!"

"No! Three for you and three for me."

"Three each?" Homaki could not believe it, but he handed over his money. Following his cousin inside, he wondered about the attractive woman at the door. Was it some sort of a trick to attract men to come in and spend money in this place?

The club seemed completely dark at first. Then he could make out figures. There were lamps suspended from the ceiling but their light was faint. The smell of smoke and drink was strong. The entire place had an unhealthy atmosphere and the haze of cigarette smoke stung Homaki's eyes.

They chose a table in a corner close to the dance floor. From there Homaki could watch the whole room.

A European woman in slacks and black skivvy moved through the crowd, expertly holding a tray of empty glasses.

She stopped at the table, towering over them. She was very tall, thought Homaki. He felt insignificant. "Yes, Sirs?" said the waitress.

Jujuma ordered two Bacardis-and-Coke. The waitress took another half-dozen orders and disappeared into the crowd. How could she remember all those drinks? Homaki wondered.

His mind was put to rest when she appeared minutes later giving the right drinks to the right people. It was amazing and Homaki admired her. Coming to their table, she set down the drinks.

There were several other waitresses moving around briskly serving drinks to the customers. Homaki saw men's hands reaching out to touch and fondle the waitresses as they passed. The women did not complain. How could they allow this practice? he wondered. Perhaps the waitresses' tolerance was part of a scheme to keep customers happy while they spent money.

As he thought about this the woman who had served them drinks approached and placed two meals on the table; huge pieces of steak, fried potatoes and beans. This was included in the three dollars entrance fee. Homaki was pleased.

Jujuma ordered more drinks and began eating.

As they ate, the band exploded into music. There was a general movement of men racing across the floor in search of female partners for the dance.

"Drink up, Homaki. There's more on the way."

"I've still got this to finish," said Homaki, indicating his drink. "You can have two." The drinks arrived.

"Well!" said Jujuma, draining his glass in one gulp, "I'm out to dance." He disappeared in search of a partner.

Homaki finished his drink and got up to find the toilet. As he pushed through the crowd, someone caught his arm and asked him if he wanted to dance. He turned around to find a short, dark girl very close to him. He gathered enough courage to tell her that he was looking for the men's room.

"Well, come with me and I'll show you where it is," she said, and pulled him away. They made their way through the crowd and through a door. They were in the toilet, but it was the "Ladies".

There the unexpected happened. The girl became suddenly friendly. Her arms were tight around him and her lips searched for his. Things were happening so fast he could hardly think. He was getting excited.

"Do you have ten dollars with you?" she asked, feeling the pockets of his pants.

Homaki was bewildered but angry at the same time.

"Look here, I'm sorry but I have no money. I came here with . . ."

"Five dollars, then," said the girl.

"Not even five dollars, I'm sorry."

"Well, only two dollars," she pleaded.

"Look here, I don't have ten dollars, five dollars, two dollars, one dollar, not even one cent!" He pulled away from her and made for the door.

Blindly, Homaki fought his way through the dancing crowd and sat at the table. He began to collect his thoughts. That girl had really been after his money. It was lucky he had not been too drunk, or he might have been persuaded to hand it over.

The effect of one drink was wearing off and his head was beginning to clear. Homaki's anger abated and he began to feel sorry for the girl. It was a poor life for her, playing up to men in hope of getting money.

Homaki was also pleased at his will power in resisting the girl. He had about six dollars with him, but he was not going to part with it easily. The few minutes of pleasure she could give him would not keep him going for the next two weeks. Having a full stomach was more important.

Homaki looked around for Jujuma but could not see him. He saw a young man come out of a door nearby. He went to the door and found the men's toilet. When he got back to the table he was content to sit and just study the people.

There were some tables occupied mainly by male Papua New Guineans. They did not seem interested in dancing but concentrated on getting drunk.

At other tables he saw European men sitting with Papua New Guinean girls. He remembered Jujuma telling him money was the passport to everything. But surely his own countrymen had money; otherwise they would not be there. But perhaps they had only a little money and could not afford the company of girls.

For a few minutes he studied the girls. There were one or two who could be described as very pretty but the rest were not. For the most part, it seemed that real beauty and physical attraction had no place in a night club. Yet they all must have turned up hoping that someone would fall for them. Some might be desperate, like the one he met earlier.

Well, thought Homaki, so long as they are enjoying themselves, I suppose that's all that matters. But were they really happy? He noticed the reserved attitudes of the men. None of them appeared to be conscious of their girls sitting next to them. There was nothing to show these men, too, were enjoying the evening. They sat with blank faces; each probably thinking of what he wanted to do with the girl next to him later on! Homaki thought that the girls were conscious of this too.

● continued on page 11.

# Surrender to the Spirit

by Joseph Koroma



As the dusk drew close on that particular evening clouds gathered fast over the defenceless village. Up from the rivers and across the surrounding hills the engulfing wind blew as if to unearth everything. Then without warning the heavens opened. Lightning and thunder shook the miserable village and its inhabitants, in their dark houses, sat as if lifeless. Only the misty smoke from the kunai-thatched roofs testified to the existence of life.

The lightning and thunder had been meant for the village. The people could not remember the last time a similar thing had happened. Where did the lightning strike, if it did strike? And if it did, on whose land did it strike? The rain had come in torrents at first, but now it had eased. Dare any man step out of his house? The lightning could strike again without warning and a man would be unfortunate prey of the angry one above. Curiosity and fear thumped within them. But it was dark now, only the morning would tell.

Early the following day, just as the sun was rising, a distant call was heard in the early morning breeze. Soon the voice was recognised. It belonged to Tongia and he was calling Tekei who lived on the opposite side of the valley.

Tekei was well awake when the message echoed across. He had been kept awake all night by the annoyance of fleas which had stung him like nettles when he had lain his body down to sleep. He had slept in his wife's house that night as she had gone to visit her sister living further down the gorge. Half the house had been allocated to their pigs. He had slept there so the fire would be kept going to keep the pigs warm, also to ensure that the pigs did not fight or dig up the earth floor.

Hearing his name called Tekei rushed out of the beehive-like dwelling, the dust from the ashes blowing off him as he went. He answered, then waited to hear what Tongia had to say.

The message was short and explicit. The lightning had struck a tree which Tekei's deceased father had planted. For a moment Tekei felt a disturbance in his stomach as if landslides were taking place inside him. He shivered in the warm morning and for some seconds thought that what he had heard was false. But it must be true if Tongia delivered the message. Tongia was living near those trees Tekei's father had planted and Tongia would be the first to know if anything had happened to them.

Tekei gazed around fearfully, his fingers plucking at his tightly curled beard. He knew what was wrong.

Tekei and his wife Mokare had been unpopular in the eyes of Tekei's father's spirit. For a long time they had neglected their ancestors, the land which they had planted, and the place where they were buried. Tekei's father's spirit was unhappy because his burial place was engulfed by undergrowth and pigs roamed around the area. The place needed occasional clearing and fences so that the spirit would not be disturbed from its eternal sleep. The spirit had at times tried to bring Tekei and his wife to realise their neglect by bringing occasional sickness to members of the family. At another time the spirit had gone to the extent of hiding one of their pigs in the bush and it was never found again. But the situation had not fully dawned on Tekei and his family, they had never truly realised their neglect and things had continued without change. The spirit had to bring a halt to Tekei's attitude in a drastic way. He did this by striking a tree which he himself had planted whilst he was alive. For too long Tekei had forgotten his father!

Rushing into the house to get his axe, memories of his father returned. For the first time since his father's death Tekei visualised him with extraordinary vividness. He saw his bearded face, the hairy chest, with numerous protruding veins on his arms and legs as if they would fall out in tangles any minute. He remembered the scar above the right eyebrow, from the axe of an enemy.

Tekei could remember the times when his father was angry and knew well that this was another of those times. When he was alive he would do dreadful things when anger took control of him. Now that he was dead he had even more power, the power to destroy and construct at will.

Tekei's father now occupied a space in the mind of the living and wherever they went the spirit was

always with them. In many cases he was a continual menace, ever present with all his evil. The spirit was dreaded and had to be kept satisfied at all costs.

With his long-handled axe balanced on his right shoulder, Tekei rushed toward the scene of the stricken tree. By the time he reached the place his body was covered in sweat and his heart was beating at great speed.

Tongia was in his house near the stricken tree. He had settled on the land, with Tekei's permission, on which the stricken tree stood.

Tongia spoke of the incident with sympathy and fear. They inspected the tree carefully. From the top-most branches down to the trunk of the tree it had been virtually scraped and polished. The once greyish moss-bearing tree could now be described as red. It was the belief that the seriousness of the spirit's feelings was expressed in how badly the tree was struck. Of the many stricken trees Tekei had seen since boyhood he had never seen one struck to such a degree as this. He was so frightened he could scarcely stand.

Tekei must kill a pig at the site of the stricken tree as this would show that what the spirit demanded was now being taken into consideration, that steps were to be taken to improve the human-spirit relationship. Tekei looked up at the blinding sun and then down at his diminishing shadow. Noon was approaching so he had to hurry. He told Tongia to chop the tree down while he hurried to fetch back one of his pigs.

He had to sacrifice a pig which was part of his wealth. And this he must do no matter how strongly he felt about it. He knew that his only daughter was going to be married into another clan in a few months' time. For the marriage feast, he would be expected to kill many pigs, in addition to giving some live ones to his daughter so that she would have some pigs to start with when she entered her new home.

At the pig-house he found his wife Mokare waiting for him, for she had heard the news and hurried home. A decision was quickly reached. One of their two-year-old-pigs would be taken for the sacrifice and she accepted Tekei's decision. Even though it was she who cared for the pigs it was the right of the husband to decide what had to be done with them.

As the sun began its descent behind the rugged outlines of the mountains, a cloud of smoke rose near the stricken tree. Night drew close but the simple formalities of the sacrifice were carried out in all their crudity. The carcass of a bloody and gutted pig lay awkwardly on the ground. Tekei and Mokare were munching pieces of half-cooked liver, the raw juice flowing from the corners of their mouths and down onto their stomachs. The rest of the pig would be cooked in the morning. The dark figures of Tekei, his wife and Tongia looked like ghosts now. The sacrifice had been completed. It was hoped that a compromise had been made between the living and the dead.

From the surrounding hills and up from the valleys the smoke created by Tekei had been seen. All the people knew that a valuable pig had been slaughtered. But they knew that the village could go back to sleep again undisturbed. The demands of the spirit had been met.

In a land such as their spirits played an important role in the activities of everyday life. These people considered it much wiser to surrender to the spirits than to wait for further demands.

One could be dead before he knew it.

# BRIDE PRICE

by  
Aloysius  
Aita



★ ★ ★

The moon shone over the calm sea. The barking of dogs could be heard around the village. From the distance came the melodious sound of guitars and ukeleles.

Ane Badi washed quickly as she did not want to be late for the dancing. Lomi would be waiting for her.

She was an attractive girl and nearing her twenty-first birthday. Since the age of eighteen she had been wooed by many young men of her village, but upon learning of the high bride-price her parents demanded, each man had unhappily gone away.

Ane had known Lomi for many years. She remembered the dark-skinned boy who had loaned her his spare pen when her pen had run out of ink during school examinations. It had saved her she felt and had enabled her to go on to secondary school. Lomi too had gone into high school and during a year there Ane had come to know more about Lomi and his people. She had learned that although his people were regarded as primitive, they were really civilised and generous, surely Lomi was living proof of this. Had he not shared with her any small gifts received from his elder brother who had a good job?

After changing her dress and tidying her hair, she came from her room to find her parents talking in the living room.

"Are you going to the gathering?" her father asked.

"Yes, father," Ane replied, pausing at the door.

"Well, don't be too long," her mother put in. "Get some good rest because I have some heavy work for you tomorrow."

"And if I hear you are fooling around with that Lomi chap again," her father warned, "you won't be having any more nights out."

"But why?" Ane asked. "Such talk has ruined my chances of marrying already . . ."

"Three thousand dollars in the sum I, Badi Vagi, have set as your bride-price," her father replied. "Anyone with that amount is welcome to you."

Ane lingered defiantly at the door for a few seconds before stepping out into the moonlight. The cool, fresh sea-breeze cooled her round pleasant face. At the sound of music her step quickened as she thought of meeting Lomi.

Arriving at the gathering she looked around. The crowd was bigger than ever before, it took Ane five minutes to realise that Lomi was not there. She swallowed hard as she saw other girls dancing to the lively beat of music with their boy friends. What use is there in staying? she asked herself. She might as well go home and sleep.

Returning home she found her parents in the sitting room.

"You're back early," her father said. "Is anything the matter?"

"No," Ane lied. "I just realised that I am too tired to dance tonight."

Retreating to the privacy of her room to avoid further conversation she threw herself on the bed and lay thinking.

She must do something in order to marry Lomi in spite of her parents' opposition, Ane told herself. He may not be rich, but what are riches compared with genuine love?

Suddenly she sat up as an idea flickered across her troubled mind. She giggled to herself in mischievous delight. There was one way she could achieve her goal. If *that* happened her parents' protests would stop!

Two days later she put her plan into operation. She met Lomi at the usual night gathering. She took him aside and whispered her plan to him. Lomi looked surprised.

"I'm afraid, Ane," Lomi said.

"But it is the only way," she said firmly. "My parents may become angry but they will not ask for the bride-price."

"I did not know how much you wanted me," said Lomi, "I thought you would stand with your parents and wait for someone who would pay the bride-price of \$3,000."

"No!" she cried. "Nothing will stand in our way. I love you and you love me. We will not allow two money-hungry parents to separate us after all our plans for the future!"

Lomi had already given up all hope of marrying his sweet Ane. Now he saw a ray of hope. She was right. They would get around the bride-price.

"All right," he said, wrapping his strong arms around her, "I apologise for my little faith in you in the past. I really want you very much . . ."

"Please Lomi," she whispered, "come with me now."

The moon was behind a solitary dark cloud when two silent figures made their way to a lonely hut on the beach.

"I warned you many times," her father fumed. "See what you have dragged yourself into. Pregnant! You're a disgrace to me, to your mother, to your clan . . ."

"But you wanted to sell me! Why?" Ane asked defiantly. "So that could hold up your family prestige?"

"Not sell, but . . ."

"Oh yes. You can deny the word but that's what you intended doing," Ane retorted. "You wanted to sell me for \$3,000 and feed your pockets with easy money while I struggled to start a home of my own. D'you think I'm a car or a pig that a price can be put on?"

Mr Vagi sat in silence, thinking. In one way she was right. He was demanding a price for her. He and his wife were ready to accept that price from the first person who offered it, but he could not admit it to Ane.

"Look here, Ane . . ." he began.

"Don't call me Ane," his daughter cut in. "You might as well call me Pig-for-Sale, or Car-for-Sale."

"How dare you cut in when I'm talking!" he burst out in anger. "Get out of my house. Marry that black son-of-cannibal before you have your bastard child!"

Ane frowned and turned away from her father's wrath. Secretly she was delighted. She had achieved her objective.

She turned again to her parents.

"Did you oppose my marriage to Lomi just because he is black and his ancestors were cannibals?" she asked. "What does colour tell about a man? Isn't it personality that makes a human being? Does cannibalism still exist in this part of the country?"

Her parents could not answer her flood of questions. She was right, perfectly right. The modern age was coming and old customs were difficult to uphold. Now children could tell parents about matters that had once required wise elders to explain.

Looking at her parents Ane felt sorry for them. Her mother had not said a word since the argument started. She sat quietly, shifting her gaze to one or the other when her husband and daughter were arguing. That was natural. Before the coming of the white man, women had little or nothing to say in matters of major importance.

They remained completely silent and Ane left the room. She had been told to get out of what had been her home since childhood. It meant that her parents, relatives and clan were cutting themselves off from her. She knew she would be an outcast. Yet she knew that Lomi would be worth much more than her parents, relatives and clan. She went and packed her few belongings.

## NIGHT CLUB *continued from page 7.*

His attention was then caught by a couple sitting in the far corner, especially by the girl. She was thinly built and looked in need of a solid meal. He was amazed to see her so lively and full of laughter. There is a girl who is happy, thought Homaki. But then the attitude of her partner made him think otherwise. Was she putting on a front to keep her partner interested? Was everyone in the place putting on an act? Why was everyone so artificial? Why the false pretence and the forced laughter? Their pretentious living during the night was a sad attempt at happiness and would end with the break of dawn.

Suddenly Homaki was sick of the place. Jujuma had not come back to the table. Homaki got up to look for him. He found Jujuma with his head on a table, sleeping.

Shaking him, Homaki said, "Come on let's get out of this!"

Leading Jujuma, Homaki pushed his way through the crowd and out through the door. As they moved away they heard the rumbling noise of the night club band. They breathed in the clean fresh air.

To Homaki, it was like awakening from a bad dream.

# NATACHEE

## *Distinguished POET of Papua New Guinea*



*A. P. Allan Natachee*

For this interview with A. P. Allan Natachee, the Editor and Assistant Editor of 'Papua New Guinea Writing' flew to Bereina Station in the Central District, then travelled a further forty-five minutes by four-wheel-drive vehicle to the tiny village of Amo Amo. They found the famous poet in his tiny house of bush materials. There were few signs of sophistication but during the interview he proudly produced large certificates suitable for framing. They were sent to Mr. Natachee by the President of the United Poets Laureate International, a world-wide organisation with headquarters in the Philippines.

One certificate was headed: 'CARTA OF AWARD' and read: 'Be it known that A. P. Allan Natachee, of Papua, is by virtue of outstanding achievements in the field of poetry recognised and proclaimed by this world association of Poets Laureate and equivalents as Distinguished Poet of Papua; 15th October, 1966'.

Another refers to him as "Poet in Residence of Papua" and is dated 30th May, 1970. Still another describes him as "Premier Poet of Papua".

On special occasions he wears the laurel-leaf crown of membership in the international society to which he belongs.

P.N.G.W.: You started your schooling in Yule Island?

NATACHEE: Yes, in 1930.

P.N.G.W.: I believe the name Natachee comes from America.

NATACHEE: Yes, it is an Apache word. One of the Sisters at Yule Island used to call me Natachee because she said I used to run around and play and never sit still, just like an Apache child.

P.N.G.W.: What is your real name?

NATACHEE: Avaisa Pinongo, but I'm mostly called Natachee.

P.N.G.W.: Who gave you the idea of getting something published?

NATACHEE: Mr. Cochrane of the Department of Information and Extension Services. He got me started writing poetry. We used to work in the Broadcast Section, Konedobu, and there I wrote about "Aia", later published by Ulli Beier.

P.N.G.W.: When was your very first publication?

NATACHEE: 1950-51. It was some poetry in the Australian magazine "Oceania".

P.N.G.W.: Do you write poetry every day?

NATACHEE: I write any time, even when going somewhere. I'm always thinking.

P.N.G.W.: How do you go about writing?

NATACHEE: I write it first and then I correct it again, and then revise again later.

P.N.G.W.: Do you carry pencil and paper with you while you're working?

NATACHEE: I have a fountain pen and a book with me always.

P.N.G.W.: Do you ever stop suddenly when you're in the middle of other work and write something?

NATACHEE: Yes, I do that. Even when I am in Bereina Station that can happen, in spite of all the people around me.

P.N.G.W.: Have you written anything this past weekend?

NATACHEE: No, I've been revising old poetry.

P.N.G.W.: Do you write in your language first?

NATACHEE: I try it in my own language, then translate. I translate some traditional poems into English too.

P.N.G.W.: Is some of the meaning lost in translation?

NATACHEE: A little perhaps.

P.N.G.W.: Do you think our writers should write in their own languages and translate into English for overseas?

NATACHEE: English is a universal language and I like it. I hope that everyone here will write poetry in English. In our languages we have not enough words.

P.N.G.W.: What about Pidgin<sup>1</sup> as a language for literature?

NATACHEE: Pidgin is an easy language but I do not like it, I prefer Motu<sup>2</sup> and English.

P.N.G.W.: What do you think of poetry currently being published by Papua New Guineans?

NATACHEE: For young poets, it is good.

P.N.G.W.: Would you like to try drama or fiction writing?

NATACHEE: I would, but I concentrate best on poetry.

P.N.G.W.: Do you have religious beliefs?

NATACHEE: I belong to the Roman Catholic Church.

P.N.G.W.: Do you believe in magic and superstition?

NATACHEE: No, but I like the traditional stories about magic and superstition.

P.N.G.W.: Do you think living in the bush helps you write?

NATACHEE: Yes, here where the speed of modern change is slower, I am closer to nature than in the town. I, as a traditional poet, feel closer to my people and to nature. I can write about them undisturbed with sensitivity and truth. When I walk on the bush tracks or along the river, I get good ideas. I get my best thoughts sitting by the river.

P.N.G.W.: You are a bachelor. Did you at one time marry?

1. Neo-Melanesian Pidgin English.

2. A language of the Central District.

## LAW AND LORE OF NATURE

*According to law and lore of our nature,  
 Man is bound to go on and on,  
 Solving adventure after adventure,  
 With an endlessness leading him on!  
 And for that cause that which is yet unseen,  
 And that which is yet unknown:  
 On the morrow it shall be seen!  
 On the morrow it shall be known!  
 Around and above the margin of earth's airy space,  
 There shall for evermore revolve,  
 A-man-made-world for his problem to face,  
 And his problem of space to solve!  
 A-man-made-world shall indeed be strong,  
 To stand against mighty attacks,  
 From debris of lost world — but not for long;  
 Man shall again repair the cracks!*

*This poem was written  
 by Natachee in 1940 at  
 the age of 16.*

NATACHEE: I thought of it, but decided not to. Alone I have time to think and write.

P.N.G.W.: What do you do for a living besides writing?

NATACHEE: I work in the rice fields and help people fix fences in the village or work on the roads.

P.N.G.W.: What is it most important for you to do with your lifetime?

NATACHEE: To help my people by writing for them the traditional songs and poems, especially for the younger generation to read and understand. We can teach people a lot through poetry. A poet works at people from the inside. I write for our people to liberate them from their ignorance, drawing upon my personal experience.

P.N.G.W.: What would you call this present era in Papua New Guinea?

NATACHEE: We are undergoing a period of mobility and change.

P.N.G.W.: What is most difficult for Papua New Guineans making the transition?

NATACHEE: Some of us want a village living standard and some of us want urban ways. We are standing on a crossroad.

P.N.G.W.: What do you think you can do to preserve village tradition?

NATACHEE: I think everyone who writes on traditional lines can help. Our culture must be preserved.

P.N.G.W.: I believe you belong to a family of Chiefs?

NATACHEE: Yes, my elder brother is the Chief and I'm the second.

P.N.G.W.: Are you still on the Local Government Council?

NATACHEE: Yes, I am still a Councillor. I am going on a tax patrol next week.

P.N.G.W.: Have you thought of trying for the next House of Assembly?

NATACHEE: I have thought of it.

P.N.G.W.: What about self-government?

NATACHEE: Self-government must come by 1973. It's no use waiting. We can learn by our mistakes, so it is better to have it by 1973.

P.N.G.W.: How long do you think you should wait between self-government and independence?

NATACHEE: Independence should come six or eight years after self-government.

P.N.G.W.: What about the war in Vietnam?

NATACHEE: As mankind advances, wars seem to advance also. In this way, the more we know, the more modern are our weapons. As we move forward, war follows us. But if we truly loved each other there wouldn't be any war. We could have a good life and be civilised people; if we hate each other the war will come here just like Vietnam.

P.N.G.W.: What do you think each of us can do to stop wars?

NATACHEE: Hard-hearted men make wars. We poets can use kind and sensible words to soften the hearts of these men.

P.N.G.W.: What can people who are neither writers nor poets do towards world peace?

NATACHEE: They can do good work and help each other.

P.N.G.W.: What have you attempted to get published lately?

NATACHEE: I have several articles which will be printed in a 100-page magazine published by the United Poets Laureate International in the Philippines.

P.N.G.W.: How did they hear of you?

NATACHEE: They saw my work in "Oceania" magazine and contacted me. Now I am a member.

P.N.G.W.: What about the silver crown you wear?

NATACHEE: It's a mark of membership, sent from the Philippines by the United Poets Laureate International.

P.N.G.W.: Are you a member of any other writers' society?

NATACHEE: No, but I'd like to unite with other writers if such a society were formed here.

P.N.G.W.: It has been good talking to you. Our congratulations to you on your work of recording literally a part of a culture which has been oral for so many years. Thank you.

## AIA

*Aia walks on the road*

*Aia all naked.*

*He walks on the road.*

*Aia my hand is faultless,*

*Aia all naked,*

*My hand is faultless!*

*Aia you shake your spear,*

*Aia all naked,*

*Aia shake your spear!*

*Aia in war decoration*

*Aia all naked*

*Aia in war decoration.*

★ ★ ★

## RED LEAF

*My red leaf I swing  
 see its redness!*

*Take my red leaf  
 and come!*

*Take my green leaf  
 and come!*

*The bud of my green leaf  
 the tip of my red leaf!*



# CHANGING VILLAGE

by Confucius Ikoirere

Kinawale looked out of the side window of the truck. The sun was setting over the mountains, illuminating the countryside with red-orange rays. The scene was beautiful but at the same time he was conscious of something disturbing about it.

As the truck rumbled on, Kinawale sat deep in thought until presently, the driver nudged him and he looked up.

"What is it?" he asked.

"We reach your village in five minutes," answered the driver.

The sun vanished beneath the mountains. The night began to close in, with the air still and chilly. He shivered. It seemed the menace he had felt earlier was not ending with the coming of the night. Suddenly he sat upright. Ahead were the lights of a cluster of houses. The brightest lights came from a big house on a hill. "My father's house," he thought. His father was headman of the village. Kinawale became excited at the thought of seeing his father again. His father and mother would be very glad to see him. He had not seen them during his four years at school. He wondered if they would recognise him. True, he had grown from a 'gwama'<sup>1</sup> to a 'tubu'wau'<sup>2</sup> but some of his features had not changed. He still had those bright brown eyes and that sharp nose which inspired his friends to call him 'Binama'<sup>3</sup>. But he had let his hair grow much longer.

Soon the truck stopped in front of the houses. The little children, first to notice the truck, had already gathered to see the passengers. Here, a truck rarely appeared and the arrival of one was a novelty, especially to the younger children. The arrival of a wantok<sup>4</sup> on a truck made them feel proud of their village. So Kinawale was not surprised when he alighted and found himself within a ring of grinning young faces.

Kinawale searched the faces there and he recognised Kalapi, his younger brother. As recognition dawned on Kinawale so it did on Kalapi. Rushing forward, they embraced each other, Kalapi crying with joy. Kinawale felt the hot tears on his cheeks and remembered that he had not seen his brother for four years. The other boys and girls, seeing the two embracing each other, realised that the new arrival must be Kalapi's brother. Kalapi had boasted about him, that he was the only one from the village who was in high school. Now they were seeing him.

One boy shouted and then everyone joined in yelling, screaming and talking joyously. The younger ones who could not raise their voices above the roar of the reception, raced to the houses and began telling the elders the chief's son had returned. Presently the chief and the villagers arrived.

Releasing himself from his brother's embrace, Kinawale strode forward to his father. As he grasped his father's outstretched hands he acted like a man. He



was big now, yet he felt small in front of his father.

But the feeling he had known earlier returned. He looked around and noticed there was not a single 'tubu'wau' face. When Kinawale had shaken hands with the villagers, he went with his father up to the house.

Greeting his mother and sister, he put his baggage on the floor and sat to eat the food they offered him.

After his meal he felt strong and refreshed. He was anxious to clear the mystery that he felt was hanging over his village like a ghostly blanket. His father was smoking his pipe when Kinawale spoke to him.

"Father, where are all the young men? Is there something wrong?"

"Natugu,"<sup>1</sup> answered his father, "you do not understand. The young men have left to seek the 'mane'<sup>2</sup>, 'kaliko'<sup>3</sup> and 'masura'<sup>4</sup> of the white men. They do not live here. This is a place of old men, women and children."

The mystery was explained, but a new feeling descended upon him. It was the feeling of sorrow, mixed with helplessness.

"So that is why I saw so many of our wantoks in the town. I have seen some going into prison; I have read news about them in the papers. This is bad for us, Father."

They sat talking for a long time after the others had gone to sleep.

There was no pride left in their culture, customs and crafts. Gradually these were being forgotten as the old men passed away.

"The women try to stay here but in time they also leave the village. They marry in the towns; others sell their bodies to the drunkards," his father said bitterly.

"How do their parents feel?" asked Kinawale.

"It is very shameful for them, my son, but what can they do? Nothing. Nothing my son."

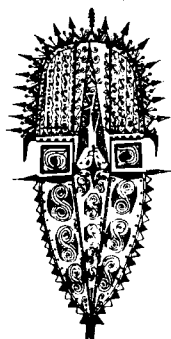
After talking for a long time they went to bed. Kinawale could not sleep. He wondered what the country would be like without its culture. This change was taking place and it seemed impossible to stop the urban drift.

Unqualified people looked for jobs in towns; but unable to find them, all too often turned to stealing, killing and other crimes, ending up in prison.

The mystery he had felt about his village was solved. How sad, he thought. The real problem remained!

<sup>1</sup> small boy   <sup>2</sup> teenager   <sup>3</sup> bornbill   <sup>4</sup> tribesman

<sup>1</sup> my son   <sup>2</sup> money   <sup>3</sup> clothes   <sup>4</sup> food



## POET'S CORNER

With Jack Lahui

### POETIC INTEGRITY

Each race of people has its own poetry, whether it is written or oral. Papua New Guinea only recently joined the mainstream of written literature.

Poetry is a part of the national literature as an historical piece of writing. A piece of writing is recognized as a poem because it has direct binding with the people of the writer's society. A poem shows the pattern and thinking of the people; their aspirations, dreams, fears, hates, loves and all relationships with their fellow beings. It is therefore right to say there is no other literature so National as poetry, for whereas other forms of writing can create and elaborate, poetry merely denotes what springs from the heart of the people in an authentic way and with a down-to-earth truthfulness. Devices and tricks alone do not make a poem.

People may not be aware of trends in their society but become aware through the eyes of the poet. In this very sense, a poet becomes a cameraman of his own people while they are his audience. The audience can be treated objectively, subjectively, or invited to see what the poet sees and feels about them. Metaphorically, a poet is a mirror of self-examination in which a person finds for himself what he is and what confronts him daily. Self-evaluation is not a discriminative practice, rather it is a method by which a poet considers his people in relation to their environment. If poetry were an implement of discrimination it would suggest that cameras do discriminate.

Some people find poetry the ideal means to express their feelings of suppression and inequality. This is a very common practice all over the world. An example of this is the Negro literature and musical compositions during the early days in America. We must accept this as a very natural occurrence, and allow it to flourish and take its course.

Is there truth in poetry? First of all, we must answer whether what is written in the poem is true. If it is a person's fantasy, it doesn't have to relate to actual conditions, but a real problem comes up when a writer tries to imagine what happens in an actual society. It makes good reading, but surely doesn't give a true picture. He could attempt to lie and people would sooner or later discover that he wasn't writing the truth.

Let's accept the responsibility to tell the other tribes and races about our lives and our experiences and never be afraid because we definitely know we are telling the truth. This, I believe, is POETIC INTEGRITY.

### THE RAIN AND THE LITTLE OLD MAN

"O how I hate this rain,"  
Said the little old man,  
"Where I can't go and hunt,  
And I can't go and fish;  
I just sit by the fire,  
And just sleep and sleep and sleep,  
I just sleep in the house,  
Like a fowl sitting on its eggs."  
The little old man closed his eyes,  
And started on his journey through the  
Cold wind and the cold rain,  
To the brightness of the sun;  
He saw many of his little friends,  
Going to and fro,  
Working in their gardens,  
And fishing in the lakes;  
Suddenly, there was a crash!  
It drove the little old man's thoughts away,  
He came back to his senses;  
And as he sat beside the fire,  
He heard the rain tearing at his roof,  
"I wish I could stop this rain",  
He said again.

N'Drasal Purai

### DOG IN THE BUSH

Away in the bush,  
The dog barked at the goose,  
Off flew three,  
The geese on the tree.  
Running through the jungle,  
The dog broke its ankle,  
The geese dived into the pool,  
And of the dog they made a fool.

Paul Gogoba

### THE FEAST

There is a feast in the village,  
There is a feast in the village,  
The drums are beating,  
And the dancers are dancing;  
The drums are beating,  
And the dancers are dancing,  
Put on your dress,  
There is no time to rest;  
Put on your dress,  
There is no time to rest,  
The dancers are dancing,  
And the people are feasting;  
Let us go and dance,  
And hold the ladies hands,  
And hear the rhythm of the beat,  
And hear the thundering of the feet;  
But when the dawn is breaking,  
It will be time for parting,  
There'll be no more feasting,  
And there'll be no more dancing;  
Where are the sounds of laughter,  
And the sound of the drums  
Shall we hear again,  
When the feast is over.

N'Drasal Purai

# YOUNG HUNTERS

by Charles Loubai



*The next moment he was tossed in the air like a feather.*

There was unusual activity in the village. Some men sat near their houses sharpening spears, knives and axes. Moteaku knew the reason for all the bustle. On the morrow there was going to be a pig hunt. He felt a tingle of excitement stir in him. He had never been in a hunt before. Since he was small he had been living on an agricultural station. This was certainly going to be a new experience. These thoughts flowed through his mind as he sat near his father's house cleaning his shotgun.

"You like this, Moteaku? I made it for you!" his friend Misinko interrupted.

Moteaku looked around inquiringly. Misinko smiled as he held up a newly-made hunting spear. Moteaku smiled back and held up his shot-gun:

"This is my hunting spear," he mused. "And it's better than that spear of yours," he added after a pause.

"Don't you think it would be a good idea to carry both?" Misinko asked dismayed. He had spent a good part of that day making the spear for his friend.

"You keep it," answered Moteaku, still occupied with the work of cleaning. "I learned shooting while working at the agricultural station. Man, you just wait till I meet up with a pig. He'll be sorry he ever came across me," he assured Misinko rather convincingly. Misinko was not convinced.

"Moteaku, I still think it would be a good idea to carry this spear. The rest of us will be carrying two spears each for safety. Your gun-spear might misfire and you could use the old style spear".

But Moteaku remained adamant. Misinko went away. He left Moteaku admiring the shiny gun.

Next morning everyone was up early, including the dogs who were impatient to get started. Breakfasts were hastily cooked and eaten and as the first shafts of sunlight pierced the morning mist the men started towards the hunting grounds. Misinko lingered along the road waiting for his friend who presently showed up.

"Good morning," Misinko greeted his friend cheerfully. But his grin died when he saw Moteaku's boots.

"Do you really need footwear?" he inquired worriedly.

"Whats wrong? Do you want me to cut my feet out there?" Moteaku replied with a touch of anger.

"They could hinder you. Pigs are dangerous when hunted and you have to be light on your feet. You might even have to climb a tree and boots would slow your progress."

"Look here Misinko!" Moteaku cried. "I have shot charging bulls with this gun, a pig is nothing! To your spear it matters, but with my gun . . . well, you'll see when the hunt starts that I am not a coward who runs from pigs!"

Misinko turned away unconvinced. He kept his worried look as they walked into the bush.

As the two friends warily proceeded along a pig-run, Moteaku slipped a shell into the gun's breach.

Except for an occasional snapping of dry twigs under the feet of the steadily advancing men, weird quietness seized everything. Nature seemed to have sensed the growing menace in the form of these grim-faced men. Suddenly, the men in the lead stopped and stood like statues, ears straining to catch the faintest sound. The two friends did likewise, nerves on edge. Suddenly, a blood-curdling squeal ripped the dense silence, followed by savage barking. The squeals and the barking grew louder and louder until through the dense foliage Moteaku could see men and dogs causing havoc among the frightened and fleeing pigs. He gripped his shotgun

tighter and glanced at Misinko who was in a crouch, body tensed, waiting.

"Moteaku, behind us!" Misinko shouted, startling him. Moteaku whirled around in a crouch. A huge boar was charging at them, not along the pig-run, but through the dense undergrowth. It was moving fast, with its curved tusks gleaming evilly, zig-zagging as it ran. Misinko patiently waited for it to come within effective spear-throwing distance. Moteaku tried to line up his sight on the twisting and darting beast. It was now too close for comfort. Cold fear gripped him. That animal which twisted and turned around tree trunks was unlike shooting bulls which were bigger and steadier targets. Sweating and trembling he let off a shot at the pig. At the sound of the shot the pig stopped and stood still. He had missed! Frantically he dug into his pocket for a cartridge.

Moteaku's misfortune was Misinko's good fortune. The instant the pig stopped, he threw his spear. Letting forth a high-pitched squeal, the pig, with the spear embedded in its hide, shot like a cannonball towards Misinko who pole-vaulted over the pig on his remaining spear, shouting at Moteaku to run clear.

Moteaku looked up from his frantic attempt at loading the gun. What he saw transformed his face into a mask of horror. With blood gushing from its side, the charging pig was only a few feet away. Overpowered by fear, Moteaku leapt frantically to avoid the oncoming fury but his left boot caught on a creeper and he sat down heavily. With upraised arms he tried in vain to ward off the evil tusks. The next moment he was tossed in the air like a feather. He returned to earth with a dull thud, the pig continued its charge for ten yards, then stopped and fell dead. Misinko ran to Moteaku. He was breathing irregularly. The pig's tusks had hooked viciously into the flesh of his chest, but no internal damage seemed likely . . .

Moteaku's eyes fluttered open and he looked at his friend. He could not yet speak, but a look of understanding was on his face.

Next time he would carry a spear.



## TOWN

Steam rises, smell of rice and meat  
People go to their respective places.  
Showers start to fall  
As the early workers get ready for their work.  
Streets are so busy  
People rushing here and there.  
The old man wakes up  
With a strange feeling,  
What a busy morning,  
Flies buzzing irritating  
The smell of rubbish lying around.  
The children play on their way to school.  
No-one notices the old man.

Mabata Tarube

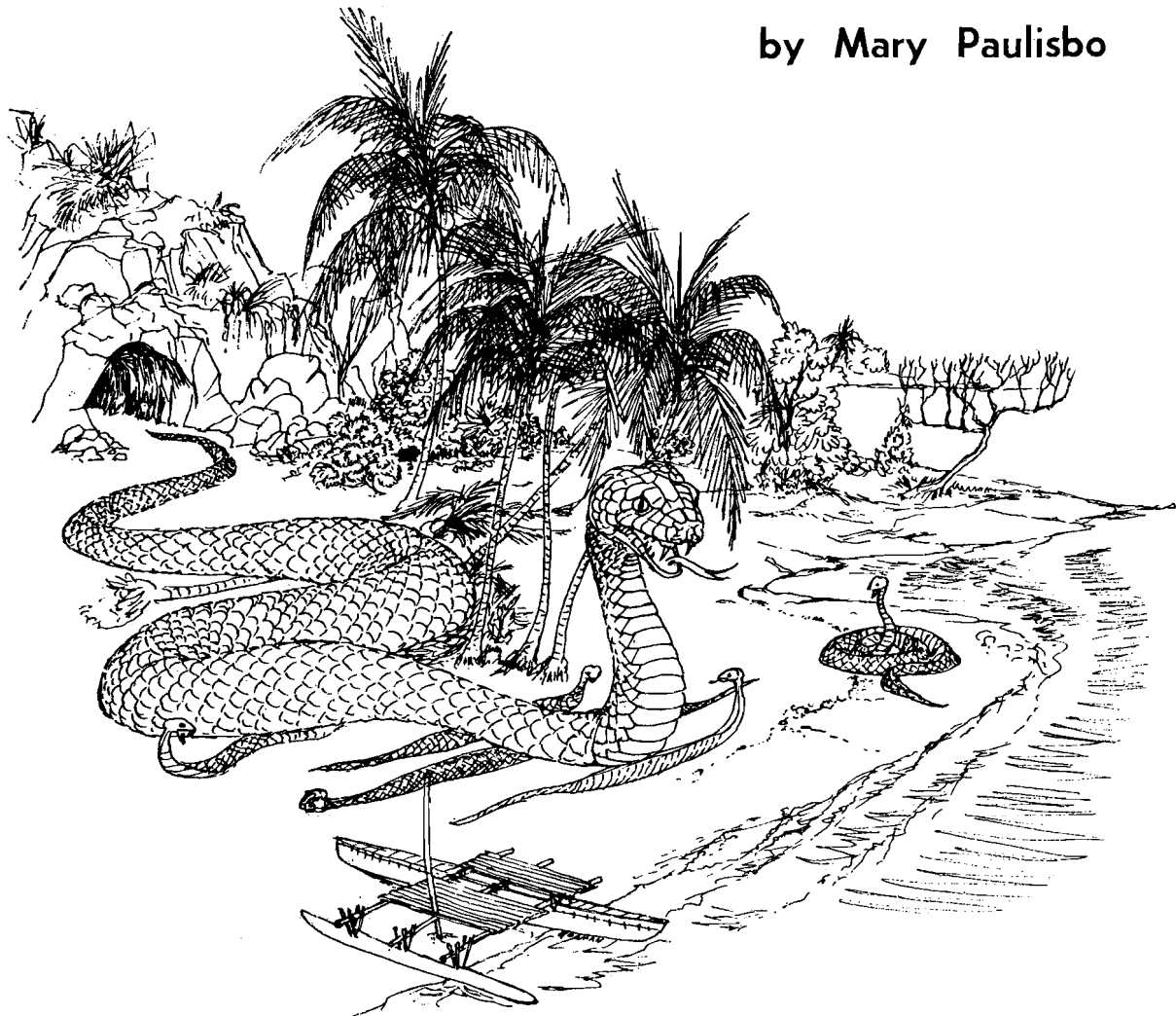
## THE NEW WORLD

The winter is passing,  
And the sun is rising,  
The creatures and the plants,  
Are creeping from their hiding places;  
This must be a new world!  
Thought the creatures and the plants,  
For we have been in the graves,  
Where we could not see the light;  
What a happy world!  
What a joyful world!  
Now we will roam the earth,  
And see the wonders of its vastness.

N'Drasal Purai

# FORBIDDEN ISLAND

by Mary Paulisbo



Just off the shores of Dregerhafen in the Finschhafen Sub-district lies an island where today a beacon light stands. This story concerns that island.

Long, long ago, there lived on this island a young Masalai man. He was the master of all the snakes that lived on the island, and all the other snakes obeyed him when he called them. The Masalai man was a great big snake himself and he lived in a cave in the centre of the island.

It happened that he had a wife, the great and beautiful Clam who lived in the middle of the channel between the island and the shores of Dregerhafen.

So the Masalai man lived his life in two different worlds within the year. The first half of the year he lived on the island in his cave; the second part of the year he lived in the water with his wife.

The people in the villages along the coast were forbidden to go fishing anywhere near the island. They were told that if they fished there, and if by any chance they swore, they would be doomed to roam about the island until such time as they could find a way to break the spell that bound them to it.

Despite such warnings the villagers learned from their elders that one young man had gone to the island. He had beached his canoe on a stretch of coral sand and wandered off into the middle of the island looking for green leaves of a certain rare plant that grew there. His mother would cook the leaves with the fish he caught and this provided a special and captivating dish.

Unfortunately the young man had tripped over a rock. Alas! He had sworn and realised too late that he was doomed to roam the island until such time as the spell was broken.

North and south, east and west, in and out of the thick bushes he restlessly wandered, always searching for a way out. Although he could hear the surf breaking on the reefs and the waves washing on the sand he could never reach his canoe no matter how hard he tried.

A search party of ten men from the young man's village had gone to the island and started a hopeless search. They knew that it was futile because even though they could hear him when he answered their call they could never find him. They were compelled to depart and leave him to face his fate.

After the young man had been on the island for some time, he heard a low rumbling sound. It felt as if the whole island was rocking as if by earthquake. He had climbed a tall tree and sat there holding on to the branches.

Looking down, he suddenly witnessed a fantastic sight.

Emerging from a hole in the side of a small hill was the largest and longest snake he had ever seen. From the mouth of the hole to the beach and down to the shoreline were snakes. Snakes! Snakes! Snakes! Snakes of every size, colour and length lay like poles put down by somebody so that a canoe could slide over them into the water.

So surprised was he by this weird sight the young man found he could neither move nor speak for some time.

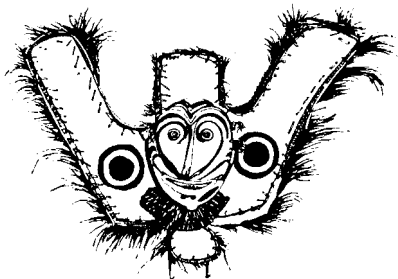
He watched the great snake (who was the Masalai man), come from its hole and glide over the other snakes that lay stretched across the sand, to the edge of the sea. The sea then lifted up the great snake carrying it across the waters to the channel where the great and beautiful Clam lived. With the young man still looking on, the gigantic snake sank below the greenish-blue waters.

After resting in the tree for some time, the young man then found he could easily find his way back to his beached canoe.

Reaching his canoe the young man got down on his knees and thanked the Great Snake for setting him free from the spell that had bound him to the island. With a last look at the island, he pushed his canoe into the water and paddled back to his own village.

The people in the village were overjoyed to see him again. After arranging a feast for his safe return they asked him to tell them of his adventures on the Forbidden Island.

But from that time to this, no one in the young man's area has ever dared again to set foot on the island.



### THE GHOST

*Pitched ghost, terrifying ghost  
Just outside my house  
Stares at me every night  
I turn round from my sleep  
Only to startle at his sight:  
A figure of unassembled bones.  
Every night I wake up  
And witness his hollow eyes:  
They move around me  
Until the day breaks  
When he turns into a tree  
Into a stump.*

Arthur Jawodimbani

### GOOD DAY

*Black is the hour of sleep  
Bright is the hour of day.  
Steep are the slopes of the mountains  
Green is the grass of the valley.  
Love is for God and His people  
Hatred is left to us.  
Good life for all of God's people  
Suffering for the rest of us.  
Good is this humid day  
But dullness is in our hearts.*

Meakoro Opa

### BEAT OF THE NORTHERN DRUMS

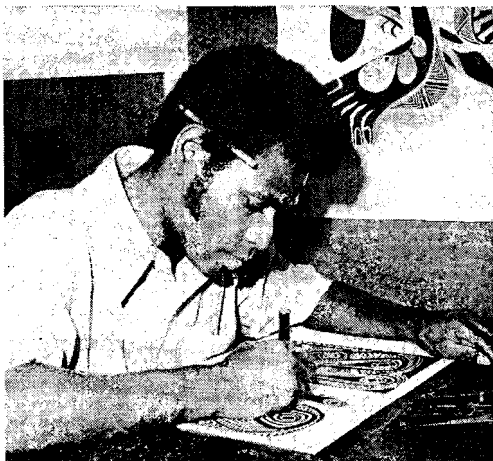
*I walk through the thicket of the jungle,  
Listening to the beat of my pounding heart,  
Then to the clicks of insects, chattering of  
the cockatoos, splashes of water as the  
toads dive in for a bath, and the splashes  
of water as it passes stones in its way.  
But what is that beating? I hear the  
distant echo. Who can tell? I can!  
It is the beat of the Northern drums.*

Javoko Bauba

### SUN

*Oh sun above, can you see me?  
I see you moving round the world,  
But you produce too much heat and light,  
That melts my body and makes my eyes blind,  
Oh sun, I cry for your help,  
In case you might hear my call,  
Oh sun I can't understand what you are.  
Because you make me feel too small.*

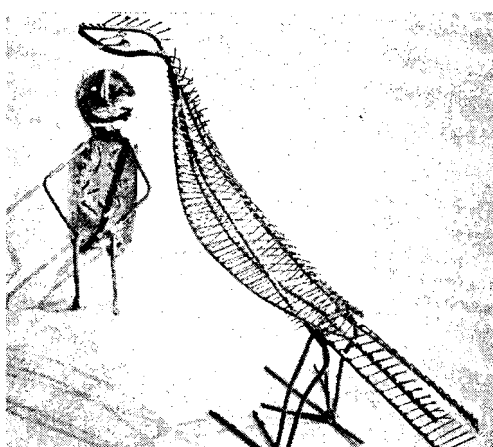
Patrol Maino



Kambau Namaleu

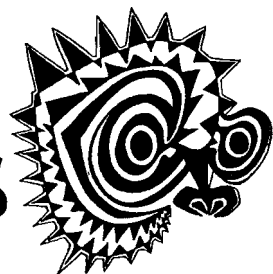


Ruki Fami and his work



Fine welding by Ruki

# CENTRE for CREATIVE ARTS



The rapidly developing Centre for Creative Arts is situated on a twenty-acre block near the University of Papua New Guinea at Waigani.

The Centre will provide facilities for the continuation of Papua New Guinea art in all fields. It fills a great need in a country where the clash between old and new tends to destroy traditional culture while nothing is developed to take its place. At the Centre both traditional and modern themes are encouraged.

The Centre will provide living and working space for artists, materials and equipment and instruction for their needs.

The Centre is a joint project financed by the University of Papua New Guinea and the Department of Education.

Mr Tom Craig is in charge. He was formerly head of the Arts Department at Goroka Teachers' College and holds a Diploma in Fine Arts from the Glasgow School of Art.

Kambau Namaleu is in charge of the Art Department and graduated as an art specialist from Goroka Teachers' College in 1971. He is also a well-known actor and writer.

In charge of the Literature and Drama Department is John Wills Kaniku. Mr Kaniku took up acting as a club activity at Goroka Teachers' College, later formed his own group in Port Moresby and is founder of the Papua New Guinea national theatre, 'Theatre New Guinea'.

People working at the Centre are not asked for academic qualifications. They are considered on their demonstrated artistic ability and encouraged to pursue and expand their creative activity on their own terms.

Four types come to work at the Centre. First there is the Member who may or may not be resident. An example is the now-famous Kauge who works at his home. He may sell his work independently or through the Centre. Kauge makes pictures in beaten copper which are gaining widespread popularity.

Secondly there are Associateship-holders who work full-time at the Centre. An Associate is Ruki Fami, a trained welder. His work has been exhibited and further exhibitions are planned along with the work of Kauge and the poetry of Apisai Enos, illustrated by Kambau Namaleu.

Thirdly, there are Fellows of the Centre. The Governing Council of the Centre may invite either people from within Papua New Guinea or from the international community to become Fellows of the Centre. Fellows work at the Centre where Associates may learn from them.

Fourthly there are Student Members who may be given space to work at the Centre.

In the publication field, production has begun on a series of 'poster-poems' entitled 'Poetry for the People'. The first of these, now on sale, is the popular 'O Meri Wantok' written by Bede Dus Mapun and illustrated by Kambau Namaleu. (See advertisement inside our front cover).

In the field of drama, the Centre has financed the conversion of a building at Port Moresby Teachers' College where Mr Kaniku has presented several successful productions.

Completed buildings at the Centre include one house and one studio-workshop. But three studio-workshops and a duplex are near completion.

Building plans include a 400-seat theatre on the site.

THE CENTRE FOR CREATIVE ARTS LOOKS FORWARD TO A BRIGHT FUTURE.



# Letters to the Editor

*These people wrote to tell us what they think about 'PAPUA NEW GUINEA WRITING'!*

Dear Sir:

We have been looking through your March issue (No. 5) with interest and would like to get in touch with your short story writers . . . A short story can at times convey a great deal more about a country than an article can. May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on the encouragement of the Arts in Papua New Guinea.

Russell Henderson,  
Editor,  
HEMISPHERE MAGAZINE,  
Melbourne.

★ ★ ★

Dear Sir:

I would like to make a short comment on the March (No. 5) issue of "Papua New Guinea Writing". I was confused by the way some of the titles of stories and illustrations are placed. For example on Page 3, there is a photo of people in Koki Market. Under the photo is a line of bold type which asks the question "Where Are These People Going?" But in the photo the people are not going anywhere. They are standing in the market.

Also on Pages 7 and 14, I was confused about who wrote the articles and who drew the pictures. In both cases there is a person's name on the lower right corner of the picture. Is it the name of the artist or of the writer? I think it will clarify confusion if the titles and authors' names were printed separately from the picture. On the whole, "Papua New Guinea Writing" in its recent change looks pleasing and very beautiful. Congratulations!

A. K. Waim,  
KRISTEN PRESS INC.,  
Madang.

★ ★ ★

Dear Sir:

Received "Papua New Guinea Writing" and read it with great interest. I was most impressed with the literature of your country.

Edith M. Schwartz,  
CHAPMAN COLLEGE,  
Orange, California.

Dear Sir:

I do want to congratulate you on the further up-building of literacy and literature in this country through the March edition of "Papua New Guinea Writing" . . . . I have presented the publication at two recent writers' workshops, where it was eagerly received. Hopefully, some of those workshop participants will send manuscripts to this year's literary competitions.

Glen W. Bays,  
Literature Training Officer,  
CREATIVE TRAINING CENTRE,  
Madang.

★ ★ ★

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is \$1 for a year's subscription of "Papua New Guinea Writing". Copies passed on to me by a friend were excellent. Keep up the good work.

J. Owen O'Connor,  
University of the South Pacific Officer,  
Wellington, New Zealand.

★ ★ ★

Dear Sir:

I want to congratulate Vincent Eri for his encouragement in his interview (centre pages, June, 1972 issue). He emphasizes that foreign language English very difficult to write. He said just write what you know and concentrate on the subject and forget about grammar and punctuation not completely of course. On behalf of all writers I give prestige to his emotions and suggestions.

Lailly Laho,  
Port Moresby Technical College,  
IDUBADA.

**Please write and tell us what  
YOU think! Your letter may ap-  
pear in the next issue.**

## YOU CAN HELP US...

Writers sending their contributions for publication in Papua New Guinea Writing, can help us by enclosing a short note about themselves. We like to know the name of the writer's village, the names of the primary and secondary schools he has attended, and the school form or job he is in at present.

If the contribution is used, this information will be used in the section called 'About the Writers' or the one called 'About the Poets'. It would also be helpful if story writers would enclose a photo of the type seen on Page 22.

The Editor.

## Papua New Guinea Writing

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you have any difficulty in getting your copy of Papua New Guinea Writing write directly to the Editor, Literature Bureau, D.I.E.S., Konedobu. The subscription rate is \$1 for four consecutive issues, including postage. For students it is 50 cents a year (including postage); For bulk orders of at least 10 copies for class sets it is 40 cents for four issues (post free) per subscription.

# About the writers



## Siuras Kavani

SIURAS KAVANI is from Tuempingka Village near Koinantu. He went to Koinantu Primary School and Goroka High School. In 1969 he attended Administrative College and obtained his Stage 2. He is now a third-year Arts student at the University of Papua and New Guinea. His story won First Prize in the Tertiary section of the National Short Story Contest, 1972.

## Aloysius Aita

ALOYSIUS AITA, from the Gailala sub-district of the Central District is a regular writer in our pages. His education includes Form 6 (N.S.W. syllabus) and three years tertiary study at the Major Seminary, Bomana. Early this year he stopped studying for the priesthood and joined the Post-Courier newspaper as a reporter. One of his stories has been published in the Australian magazine, "Overland".

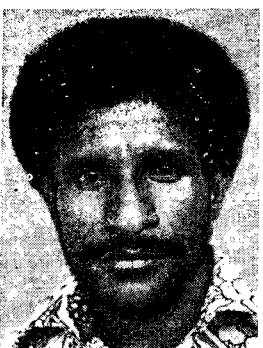
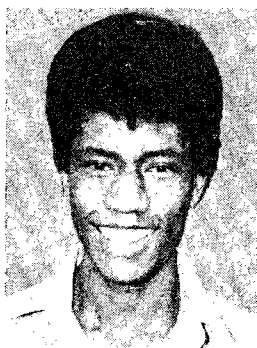


## Benedict Timbi

BENEDICT TIMBI was born in Weitmul Village near Mt. Hagen and went to the Catholic Mission Primary School at Mun. He did two years secondary at Fatima High School, then a further two at Lae Technical School. He is now in his first year (Form ) at Sogeri Senior High School.

## Confucius Ikoirere

CONFUCIUS IKOIRERE is from Dobu Island in the Milne Bay District. He took his primary schooling at Esa' ala and Logea Island and his secondary at Cameron High School. He is now trainee Community Development Officer with the Department of Social Development and Home Affairs in Madang.

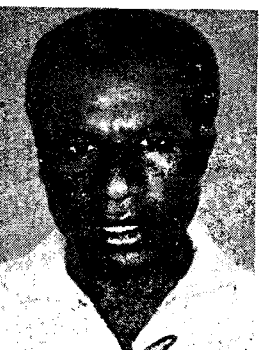


## Joseph Saruva

JOSEPH SARUVA — Born at Kokoda, he was educated at Martyrs' Memorial School, Pongdetta and Mitcham High School, Victoria. He took a Diploma in Teaching from Goroka Teachers' College and taught at Goroka Technical School. In 1972 he joined the University of Papua and New Guinea where he is studying Arts and Education.

## Charles Loubai

CHARLES LOUBAI was born in Wgukau Village, near Buin on Bougainville Island. He went to primary school at Turiboiru and finished secondary schooling at St. Joseph's High School, Rigu, in Kieta. Charles was top student in Papua New Guinea in the School Certificate Examination. He is now in Preliminary Year at the University of Papua and New Guinea.



## Joseph Koroma

JOSEPH KOROMA was born in Bononi Village near Bundi, Madang District, attended St. Francis Primary School, Bundi, and took Form One at Maiwara near Alexishafen. Forms Two to Six were done at Christian Brothers College, Gympie, Queensland. He is now in his second year at Goroka Teachers' College.

## Mary Paulisbo

MARY PAULISBO is from Moveave Village in the Gulf District. She completed her Queensland Junior in 1959 and trained at Port Moresby Teachers' College. She is now teaching at Panaeti Primary School, via Misima, in the Milne Bay District. An earlier story was published in the Australian magazine, "Overland".

(Photograph not available)

# NEWS ABOUT THE COMPETITIONS

**THE NATIONAL UNITY PLAY-WRITING COMPETITION** — Sponsored by the Political Education Committee and conducted by the Literature Bureau, the competition closed on 30th April with 27 entries. Some of the entries were of excellent quality; writers had put long hours of hard work into their plays.

First-place winner was Peter Wandau of the University of Papua and New Guinea. His play, "The New Dawn" showed how life at the university helps to break down language and other barriers among the people from different parts of Papua New Guinea. Mr. Wandau's prize was \$100.

Second-place went to Eleanor Perno of Lae for her play, "A Many-Sided Sacrifice". Her prize was \$50.

The third prize of \$25 went to Rowan Allain Jaria, De Boismenu, for his play, "Walk Every Step".

Five other worthy entries gained Special Prizes. The writers were: James Garasalek of Madang, Russell Soaba of U.P.N.G., J. B. Bray of Marawaha, Ellen Lyons of Limi and Bernadette Kouye of Port Moresby Teachers' College. These writers received \$5 each.

**THE NATIONAL UNITY POSTER COMPETITION** — This art competition, conducted by the Literature Bureau and sponsored by the Political Education Committee, was a huge success. There were three sections with generous prizes offered in each. Entries totalled 408, the majority being in the Primary School Section.

Judges selected six prize-winners in each of the three sections. In the Primary Section, First Prize (\$25), went to Ian Abernathy, a Grade 4 student at Aiyura, via Kainantu. Second Prize (\$15), went

to Rowan Draper, who is in Grade Three at Gordon's Primary School, Port Moresby. Third (\$5), was won by Janet Forster, age 10, of Upper Ramu Primary School. Three special prizes of \$3 each went to Mark Baka, Karia School, Kagua, Joye Bass, Aiyura and to Paul Dirakis of Lae Primary School.

In the Secondary Section, First Prize (\$50), was taken by Joseph Loi of Iarowari High School, Central District. Second (\$25), went to Maino Gena, also of Iarowari High School. Third Prize, (\$10), was given to Ebe Gabua of Kwikila High School, Central District. The three Special Prizes of \$5 each went to Felix Terra, St. Fidelis High School, Alexishafen, Namana Rolu of Iarowari High School, and Bodger Pudia, Martyrs Memorial School, Popondetta.

In the Tertiary-Adult Section, First Prize (\$50), went to Trevor Freestone of Watabung, Eastern Highlands District. Second, (\$25) was taken by Ula Pokana of Goroka Teachers' College. Third (\$10), went to D. A. Jones of Wau. The three Special Prizes of \$5 each went to Mervyn Wilkinson, Alotau, D. A. Jones and Martin Bainor, St. Benedict's Teachers' College, Kaindi, via Wewak.

Total Prize-money was \$254.

**THIRD ANNUAL PLAY AND POETRY COMPETITIONS:** The two competitions closed at end of July. Results will be published in our next issue. The **FOURTH NATIONAL SHORT STORY CONTEST** also closed at the end of July. Results will be known in our next issue.

**THE NATIONAL FILM AWARD:** Entry forms are available at the Literature Bureau. Films must be sent in by 30th September.

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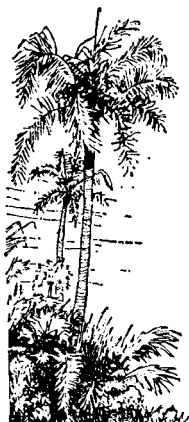
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