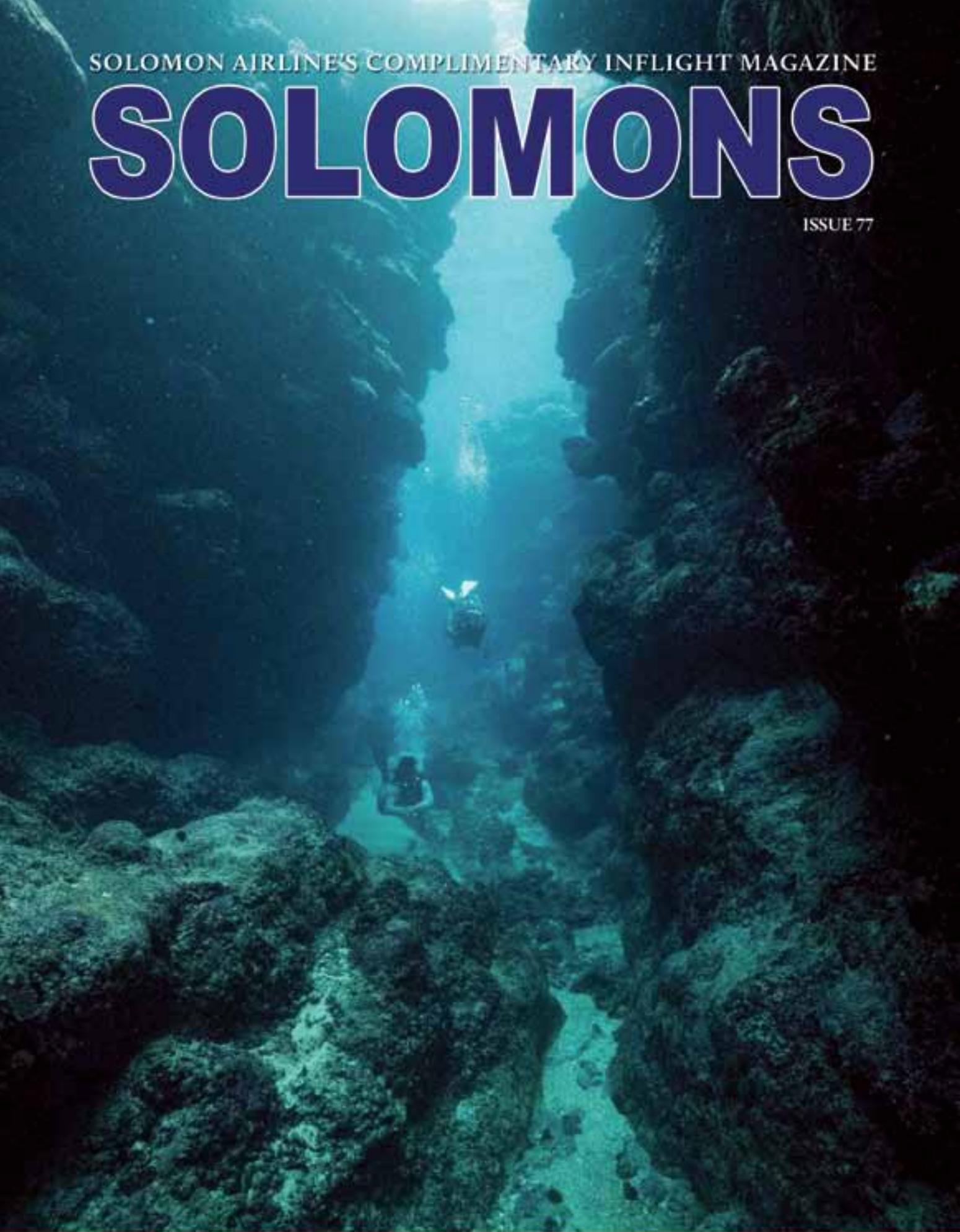
SOLOMON AIRLINE'S COMPLIMENTARY INFLIGHT MAGAZINE

SOLOMONS

ISSUE 77



BE THE CAPTAIN OF YOUR OWN SHIP

SolBrew

ESTD Lager 1993

Drink Responsibly

Our Telekom
Yumi blong iumi..

BUSINESS OR LEISURE

"We got you covered in more places across the Solomon Islands"

3G+ Higher Data Speed and Capacity

Biggest Network Coverage in the Solomon Islands

21164 www.ourtelekom.com.sb sales@telekom.com.sb follow us

Solomon Telekom Company Ltd.
P.O. Box 148 Honiara Solomon Islands

Roam like you're at home

Dial *888# to subscribe to prepaid roaming bundle.

Calls to SI and SMS to anywhere.

The Future is exciting.
Ready?

Globe Pass

Dial *444# to subscribe.

Call to over 190 countries.

bmobile | vodafone

1555
support@bmobile.com.sb
'bmobile.vodafone.solomons'
www.bmobile.com.sb

SOLOMONS

www.flysolomons.com

Welkam Frens

Mr Brett Gebers

The beginning of the year has always been an exciting time for me as we look for and implement new opportunities. 2018 has presented us with many potential business ventures as well as opportunities to improve service levels.

Our first project is to ensure that all our staff have been adequately trained to do their jobs. To this end we have instituted a significant training programme for all support staff, many of whom have not received formal training in the past. We believe this initiative will have a significant effect on efficiency and service levels.

Our second venture is putting Munda Airport to better use. The New Zealand Government is kindly in the process of completing a five-year long project of refurbishing Munda Airport to make it a suitable alternate for Honiara. We are going one step further and will install additional equipment and personnel to make Munda a destination for the A320.

Whilst originally planned from April, we encountered some unforeseen challenges and now aim to fly a weekly service from Brisbane to Munda and return via Honiara starting in July. This flight will benefit all resorts in the Western Province through shorter flight times and lower airfares. Some of our domestic aircraft will be scheduled to meet the A320 and whisk our passengers who are not remaining in Munda, off to Seghe and Gizo to start their holidays.

There are few resorts in the Western province that meet an attractive balance between room standard and price in a very sensitive market with lots of competition. The Australian High Commission's funding of a programme to define the minimum room standards has been perfectly timed. Taking all of this into account we have established the Solomon Islands Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund. Solomon Airlines has made the initial loan to the fund to get it going.

The prime aim of the fund is initially to provide loans to existing resorts to help them renovate and achieve the standard expected by today's tourist. Once the renovation phase has been completed and the fund has accumulated sufficient capital, it will be used as a vehicle to finance additions to existing resorts.

A Board of Trustees including Adrian Wickham, Millicent Barty, Sebastian Ila, Dennis McGuire and Colin Sigimanu, all of whom have donated their time to this project, has been appointed to ensure that the loans made are carefully controlled. We are extremely grateful to Wayne Morris of Morris Sojnocki and Dennis McGuire of Sol Law for their unstinting help and advice in setting up and managing the legalities of the fund. We would also like to thank the SIVB and the Ministry of Culture
and Tourism for their support in establishing this fund.

The other major initiative we will be launching during the year is to refurbish the Domestic Aircraft fleet, all of which whilst mechanically sound are showing signs of cosmetic wear and tear.

We will continue working with the authorities to repair and improve the Terminal Buildings particularly at Henderson Airport which currently leave a lot to be desired. We thank you for flying with us and for reading this article and as always, if you have suggestions as to how we can improve our service to you, we would love to hear from you at ideas@flysolomons.com

Tengiu tumas.

Mr Brett Gebers
Chief Executive Officer

You are in good hands with **AVIS**

To make a reservation, please contact:

Ela Motors Honiara, Prince Philip Highway Ranadi, Honiara

Phone: (677) 24180 or **(677) 30314**

Fax: (677) 30750

Email:avishoniara@ela.com.sb

Web: www.avis.com

Monday to Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm - **Saturday** – 8:00am to 12:00pm - **Sunday** – 8.00am to 12:00pm

AVIS® We try harder®

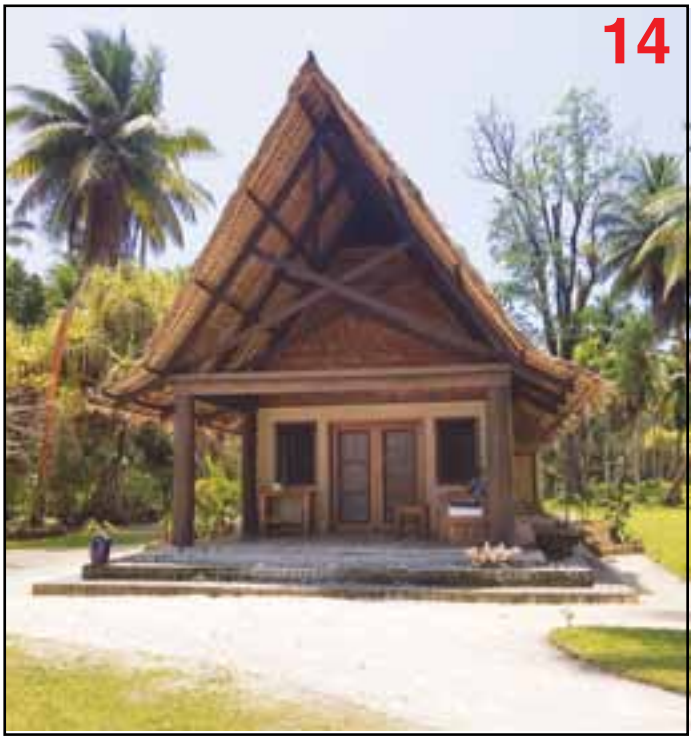
SOLOMONS

Inflight Magazine Issue 77

Cover photo:
Klaus Obermeyer

Contents

Mar 2018-May 2018



9 Out and About

14 Tavanipupu – oh what a view

18 Knowing Gizo

24 Its Hakubai at Kitano Mendana

32 Exploring Tawatana Cave

35 Living with the saltwater people of Taluaple

38 Bio-fluorescent turtles in magical Munda

43 Artists in uniform

48 Gold Coast's Games ready

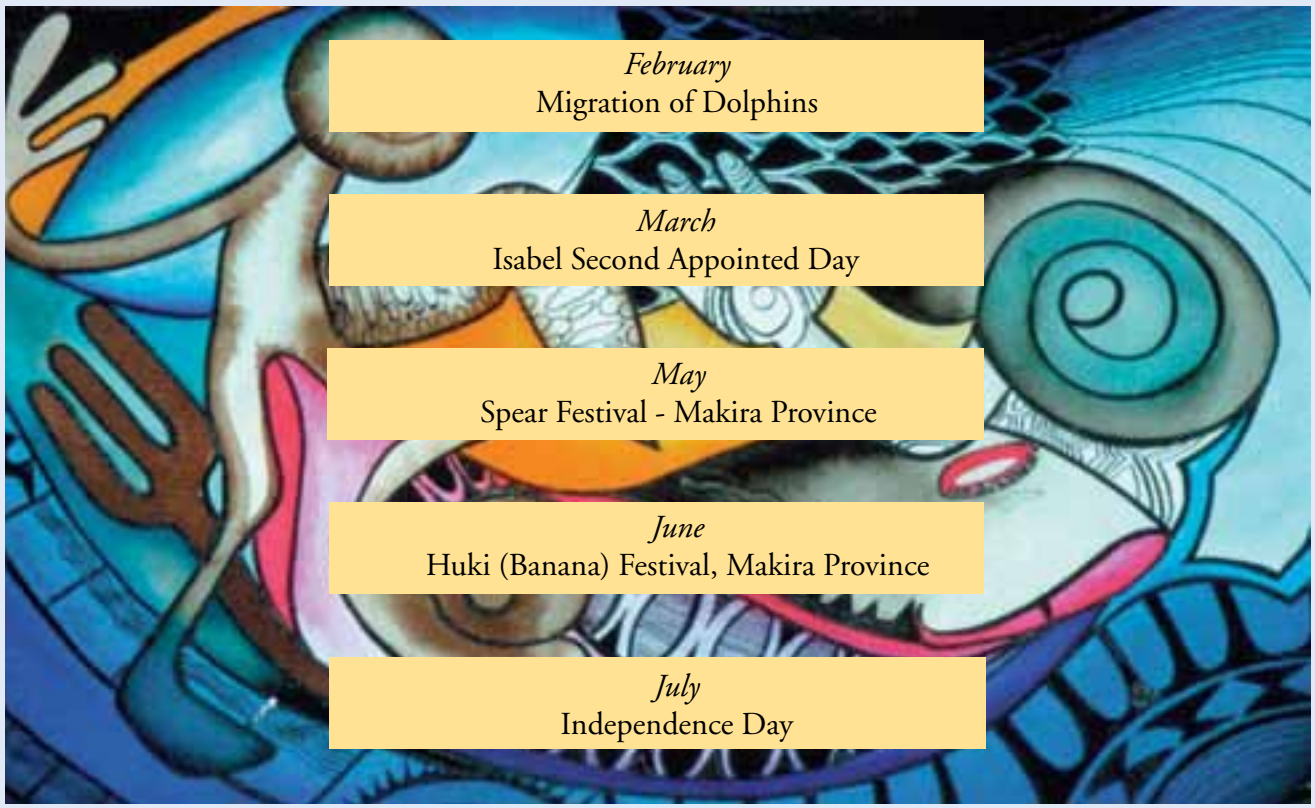
52 Solomon Airline Fact Sheet

54 Route Maps

56 Airline Nius

58 Island Sun Guide

What's On When & Where
2018



February
Migration of Dolphins

March
Isabel Second Appointed Day

May
Spear Festival - Makira Province

June
Huki (Banana) Festival, Makira Province

July
Independence Day

SMARTER WAYS TO BANK!

Mobile Banking |
Internet Banking |
EFTPos | Cards | ATMs

Rethink the way you bank today!

At BSP, we continue to invest in technology, providing smarter ways to bank that are dynamic, convenient, secure and cost effective for our customers.

WE ARE BSP

www.bsp.com.sb

BSP

Maria Rosa BISTRO

Market Street Kitchen

Hong Kong Bbq

Italian, Asian and American Cuisine
Level 1 Central Plaza, Mendana Ave
marketstreetkitch3n @marketstreetkitch3n

open 9am - 5pm mon - fri
8am - 4pm sat & sun
p +677 7312345

JING
SPA & BEAUTY

e jingspa@outlook.com
p +677 7203309 / 7203308
a Pacific Ace Plaza, Kukum Hwy

JING SPA & BEAUTY
open 10am - late
jing_spa @jingspabeauty

HONIARA'S FINEST

FOR BUSINESS OR TO JUST GETAWAY

HERITAGE PARK HOTEL HONIARA

- Luxurious waterfront rooms and suites
- Serviced Apartments: Studios to 3 bedroom
- Water's edge
- Business district
- Conference facilities - 250 pax room + smaller
- Club Bar
- Resort pool
- Restaurant, Coffee Shop, Waterside Bistro
- Gymnasium
- Reliable Wifi - 500MB a day Free
- Excellent Security
- Attentive Service

WHEN ONLY THE BEST WILL DO - Telephone: **(677) 24007** Facsimilie: **(677) 21001**

P.O. Box 1598, Mendana Avenue, Honiara, Solomon Islands Email: info@heritageparkhotel.com.sb Website: www.heritageparkhotel.com.sb

ENQUIRE NOW

"JING - The expression of pure essence of spirit"

Honiara has put itself on the map in the Pacific once again and this time in the ever growing market of day spas. Travellers can now enjoy a slice of heaven by the sea in Honiara with the opening of JING Spa & Beauty - A luxurious Day Spa with two floors of relaxation and pampering. A bespoke nail & beauty bar caters for ladies offering manicures and spa pedicures, however if it's pure relaxation you're after then JING takes "Spa Wellness" to another level. The combination of highly skilled JING Spa therapists, beautifully decorated treatment rooms and carefully selected spa products from Waterlily will make your JING experience like none other.

While JING Spa prides itself for the Spa Journeys - Traditional Thai & Balinese massage, foot reflexology and Spa Facials are also on offer.

JING Spa & Beauty is open 7 days from 10am to late. Walk in customers are welcome, however bookings are highly recommended. For de-stress and pampering sessions please call 7203308 to make an appointment.

Address: JING Spa & Beauty
Pacific Ace Plaza, Kukum Highway, Honiara.
Open: 7 days a week from 10am to late
Bookings: 7203308
Facebook: Jing Spa & Beauty • Instagram: jing_spa
WeChat: JingSpaBeauty

The Pride of Honiara

Our fully refurbished 100 rooms, 4 executive suites and 14 executive rooms, all boast splendid sea views, quality facilities and contemporary furnishings.

The New Capitana Restaurant offers international cuisine. Panoramic views of the historic Iron Bottom Sound can be enjoyed over drink and snack on the Raratana Terrace in front of Capitana Restaurant.

Traditional furnishings imported from Japan complete your dining experience at the popular Hakubai Japanese restaurant. Dine at the sushi bar or enjoy table cooking such as Teppanyaki, Shabu-shabu, Sukiyaki, and Yosenabe.

Our New Conference Centre accommodates from 20 - 150 people and is equipped with a modern communications system.

HOTEL KITANO GROUP
Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel,
P.O.Box 384 Mendana Ave.,
Honiara, Solomon Islands.
Tel: 677- 20071
Fax: 677- 23942
Email: reserv@mendana.com.sb

THE KITANO NEW YORK
66 Park Ave., At 38TH St.,
New York, NY 10016, U.S.A.
Tel: 1-212-885-7000
Fax: 1-212-885-7100
Email: reservation@kitano.com

HOTEL NIKKO HANOI
84 Tran Mhan Tong St.,
Hanoi, Vietnam.
Tel: 84-4-822-3535
Fax: 84-4-822-3555
Email: sale~nikkohn@hn.vnn.vn

Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel

PO Box 384, Honiara, Solomon Islands
Tel: (677) 20071 • Fax: (677) 23942 • Email: reserv@mendana.com.sb
Web: www.kitanomendana.com • Facebook: www.facebook.com/kitanomendana

Out & About

Voyaging Solomon Islands

If voyaging or sailing is your interest, a must visit page on Facebook is The Vaka Taumako Project. It promotes ancient Polynesian voyaging knowledge and involves people in Temotu Province.

Both their Facebook page as well as their website promotes the building and sailing of traditional canoes by documenting materials, methods and designs employed. There are a lot of education materials available to the enthusiasts.

The Vaka Taumako Project was started in 1996 by the paramount chief of Duff Islands, Koloso Kaveia with the help of Dr Mimi George, an American anthropologist and sailor who studies voyaging cultures.

For more information:

Check Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/pg/Vaka-Taumako/about/?ref=page_internal
Website: http://www.vaka.org
Email: vakataumako@gmail.com

Be a Tawatana Cave explorer

The community of Tawatana in Makira Province has unveiled a new product for tourists, a two hour long cave tour. The adventure comes with several tour guides, and the community has also built a resthouse for visitors and in addition to the cave tour at Tawatana, guests can also visit the marine park on the coast of Tawatana.

Contact: Facebook of Tawatana Community Conservation and Development Association, Makira Province

Solomon Islands Arts Alliance

Another good page to keep an eye on is Solomon Islands Arts Alliance on Facebook. From time to time, members post crafts including paintings, carvings or handicraft (examples are pictured) that are for sale. All at reasonable prices.

Publisher
Samisoni Pareti

Editor
Samisoni Pareti

Editorial Consultant
Colin Sigimanu

Advertising Consultant
Peni Totoka

Design Consultant
Dick Lee

Solomons is the complimentary inflight magazine of Solomon Airlines, the national airline of the Solomon Islands. It is published four times a year by Front Page Limited.

Correspondence to the airline to:
The Chief Executive Officer
Solomon Airlines
PO Box 23, Honiara
Solomon Islands
Tel: +677 20 031
Fax: +677 23 992

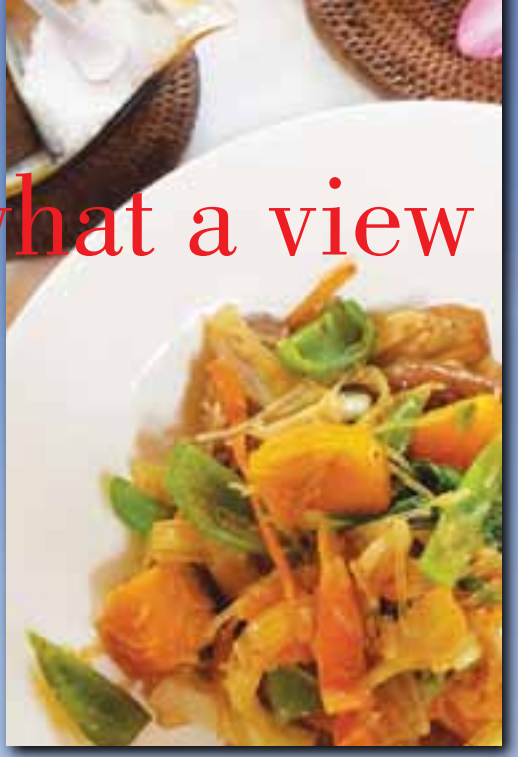
Editorial correspondence to:
Solomons
P O Box 12718, Suva, Fiji Islands.
Tel: +679 3303 108
Fax: +679 3301 423
E-mail: travel@islandsbusiness.com

Statements, opinions and points of view expressed by the writers are their own and do not necessarily represent those of the publisher, editor, or the airline. Information contained in this publication may be correct only at the time it was originally obtained by the writers and may be subject to change at any time and without notice.

© Copyright. 2018. All rights reserved.
No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher.

Tavanipupu – oh what a view

Words & Photos: Kate Webster



Meaning 'a place where the fish pass through', Tavanipupu is definitely not a place you want to just pass on through.

An exciting 25 minutes east by plane from Solomon Islands' capital, Honiara and a short but scenic boat ride, Tavanipupu Private Island Resort is the South Pacific's best kept secret.

That was until the Royals – Prince William and Princess Kate - came to stay. Since their visit in September 2012, this paradise in the Pacific has scribed its name on the map.

The five-star private island resort located in Marau Sound is all about space and privacy. The 13-hectare island once was a coconut plantation in the 19th century, owned by Norwegian traders who bought it off the locals for some ammunition.

Today, the coconut palms are less but are still very much part of the resort. Venture around the island resort and you will be spoilt with exceptionally beautiful bays and white-sand, beaches, sweeping manicured lawns adorned with some 13 private villas hidden under the coconut trees of the previous plantation palms. A couple of jetties branch out from the land over the close-in reef which teems with marine life.

Guests can do as much or as little as

Above - 'You game enough to paddle a traditional canoe?'
Below: Tavanipupu Private Island Resort where the beds are fit for royals and come complete with mosquito net canopies.

they please. Take a stroll around the resort and you will soon uncover many more hidden treasures. There are secret spots to snorkel and swim, secluded beaches to enjoy the setting of the sun at days end, and local villages to visit if you are game enough to paddle yourself in a traditional canoe. For the early risers, there is a lookout about 10 minutes' walk from the resort that overlooks the surrounding islands, a mosaic of lush greens and white sand beaches against the bluest of ocean backgrounds.

Rooms

There are only a limited number of bungalows at Tavanipupu which keeps the place secluded and private. Each spacey bungalow overlooks the water, with king size beds protected by a mosquito net and fan cooled rooms. The bungalows are well vented and their high roofs built with traditional materials keep them cool night and day. Their newest self-catering bungalow includes a deck built over the crystalline waters of the Coral Sea, complete with a kitchen, and separate bedroom and bathroom. The Royal

Kiribati's Ultra Fast 4G Network

www.athkl.com.ki

ATH KIRIBATI

Two of only 13 private villas on Tavanipupu Private Island Resort, once a coconut plantation in the 19th century.

Bungalow Suite (yes where the Royals stayed) features a king bed, expansive bathroom, private outdoor deck with shower, and sublime ocean and beach front view.

Dining

If you love fresh seafood, Tavanipupu is the place for you, with food sourced locally from nearby village and the ocean of course. Although they serve a variety of tantalising culinary specialties, their focus is on the exquisite seafood that thrives in the pure waters surrounding Tavanipupu. The dining is mostly communal under the main dining pavilion. However if you wish to have a private dinner this can be organised at one of the many scenic places around the resort. If you are lucky, you can enjoy the local dancing from the nearby villagers while you enjoy your meal. At the end of the day as the sun is setting, enjoy cocktail hour out on the boardwalk.

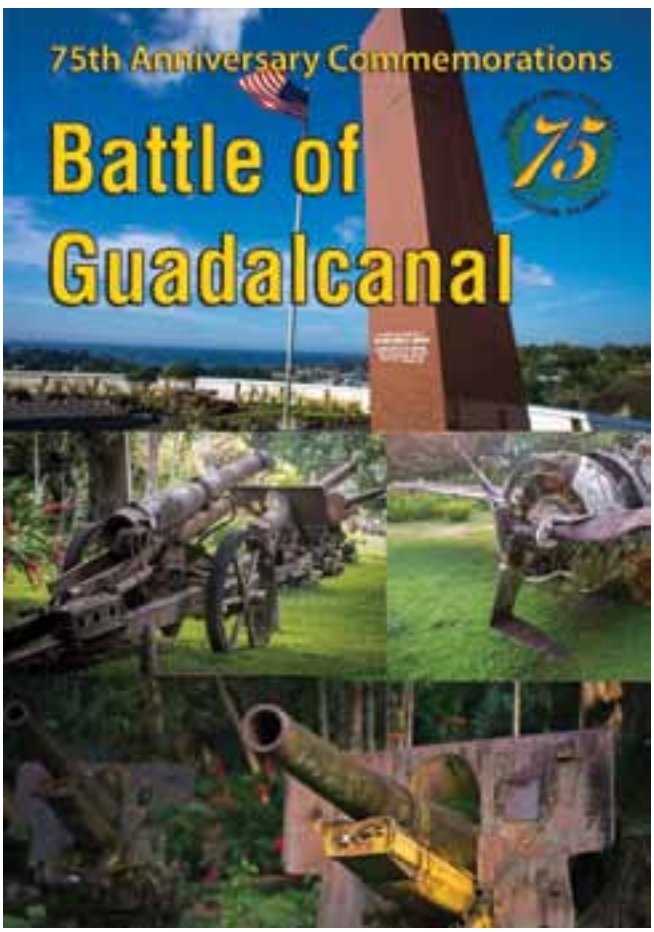
How to get there:

Solomon Airlines offers regular flights to Marau Sound Airport, where a short boat ride will take you to Tavanipupu.

Flight bookings can be done on www.flysolomons.com

For resort bookings and prices, contact Tavanipupu on (+677) 36082 or reservations@tavanipupu.com

Visit www.facebook.com/Tavanipupu-Island-Resort-113813035995920/



Knowing Gizo

Locals are friendly and happy to assist.

Handmade carvings for sale in open air stalls along Gizo's waterfront.

Bags and sarongs readily available for visitors to Gizo.

Words & Photos: Kate Webster

In the Solomon Islands they have a saying, "so Solomons, so different," and this couldn't be more true than in Gizo.

Located on the island of Ghizo (different spelling, same pronunciation), first impressions of Gizo could be described as a Pacific shanty town. It is in fact the capital of the Western Province and the second largest town in the country.

The main street runs along the coastline and is scattered with small stores and an open-air market. The view from the waterfront looks out across neighbouring palm tree peppered islands ringed by coral reef and clear waters. It is when you adventure out onto this horizon from town, that you can escape into an area of

Morris & Sojnocki

Chartered Accountants

accounts for more business in the Solomon Islands

Leaders in Audit, Accountancy & Business Services

Morris & Sojnocki is the largest and most established accounting firm in the Solomon Islands. That's why we account for more business.

Our broad range of services covers:
• Audit • Taxation • Accounting • Finance
• Insolvency • Computer Consulting • Data and Payroll Processing
• Investment Registration and Company Formation • Work and Residency Visa Applications

Morris & Sojnocki is conveniently located in the heart of Honiara.

For specialist business advice, call ***Morris & Sojnocki,*** the experts in the Solomon Islands.

Morris & Sojnocki
Chartered Accountants
1st Floor, City Centre Building
Mendana Avenue, Honiara
Telephone: 21851 Facsimile: 23342

Fatboys Resort, Bar & Restaurant situated 100 metres out atop crystal clear waters and surrounding reef

the Solomon Islands that ring true, so different. From the land to the sea and delving even deeper below the ocean surface, Gizo will mesmerize you and have you wanting to return for more.

The destination is as raw as it is diverse. It has a unique culture which can be explored throughout the region, rife in history of headhunting tribes. Visiting villages in the area is welcomed, but do be respectful and mind your manners.

The diving in Gizo is world class, with some of the most incredible wreck dives in the region. This stems from violent history, with many islands and surrounds still scattered with remnants from the war in the Pacific. Diving highlights include the intact Japanese transport Toa Maru, three WWII aircraft (including Hellcat – the US fighter jet that sits fully intact on the ocean floor in about 9 metres of water), unlimited wall diving, coral gardens and exciting drift dives for the more experienced divers.

Being an island nation, there is no denying the fishing is top class

and the many surfing breaks provide empty waves for the taking.

The local WWII war history in and around Gizo is also a main draw card for visitors. The Western Province's World War II history is scattered across the region with many well preserved American and Japanese war relics still visible on the land and in its waters. Even in Gizo Town you will find the shops are war relics, being operated out of abandoned American aircraft hangers.

Getting there

When travelling to Gizo you need to be flexible. The destination is raw and still learning to deal with tourist numbers and demands. This is what makes it so genuine however. The locals are friendly and happy to assist in anyway, just be polite and ask.

Gizo is serviced by multiple daily flights to and from Honiara with Solomon Airlines, taking about an hour to an hour and a half tops. Some flights will stop at Seghe and

SINPF Hibiscus Apartments

The SINPF Hibiscus Apartments is located in the heart of Honiara, along Hibiscus Avenue. It contains three floors of 24 executive self- contain style apartments.

SINPF Hibiscus Apartments is your home or office away from home, complete with separate bedrooms, living, dining and outdoor areas, work stations and fully equipped kitchens, laundry facilities with 24 hour security and quality housekeeping services.

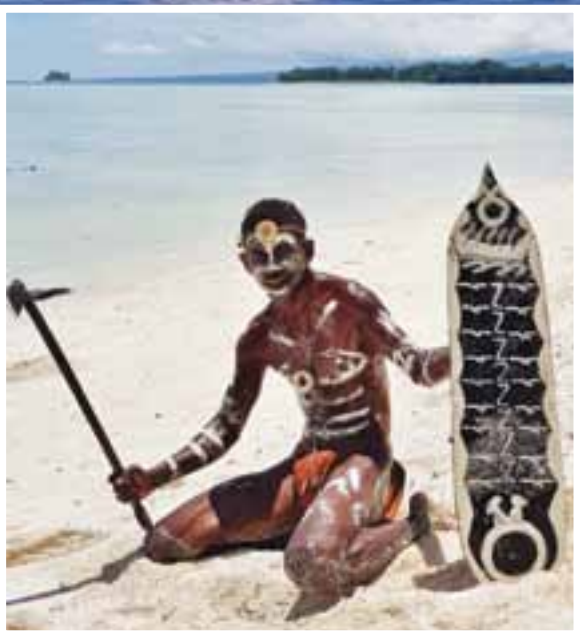
All apartments have access to the swimming pool, outdoor entertainment and BBQ deck.

SINFP Hibiscus Apartments is managed on behalf of SINPF Board by Prestige Property Development and Management Limited.

Contact
PO Box C43, Honiara, Solomon Islands • Phone: (677) 7426319
SINPF – (677) 7498969 • Email: geoffkaka@yahoo.com.au

PRESTIGE IS A MEMBER OF AAA Accommodation Association of Australia

'So Solomons, so different couldn't be more true than in Gizo.'



Young Solomon Island dancer.

World War II relics are scattered across the island.

Traditional leaf house.

Munda en-route to Nusatupe Airport, which is Gizo's small landing strip on the nearby island of Nusatupe to the north east of the town.

For those arriving by ship, the new government wharf holds more than one vessel. Cruise ships have started visiting Gizo, with tender boats delivering passengers to the waterfront, while temporary stalls line the streets all vying for the tourist dollar.

Where to stay

Fatboys Resort

Arrival at Fatboys brings you to Fatboys Resort, Bar & Restaurant, which is situated 100 metres out atop crystal clear waters and surrounding reef. Whilst at Fatboys Resort, it is hard not to become "Joe the Fatboy." Enjoy an ice-cold Sol Brew beer, a plate of fresh crayfish pan fried in lime juice and butter, a game of pool, or simply kickback and be mesmerized by the myriad of tropical fish swimming underneath you. There are five bungalows that offer spectacular views of an early morning sunrise, watched straight from your bungalow. You really feel at home in your bungalow as it is constructed of traditional leaf and local hardwoods, which blend in with the magnificent surroundings. Featuring four private bungalows and one Beach-House each with large veranda's capturing the seductive views of Solomon Islands famous crystal-clear water and stunning natural scenery. All accommodation is situated on the water's edge with a short stroll to Fatboys Restaurant & Bar located along our private jetty, 100m out over the reef. Guests do have to book a minimum of three nights to stay.

How to get there:

Solomon Airlines offers daily flights to Nusatupe Airport in Gizo from Honiara's domestic airport. For bookings, log onto www.flysolomons.com

SOLTUNA®

PREMIUM

Proudly Solomon Islands made

Spicy Tuna Delight

Taste the Difference

SOLTUNA

SolTuna Limited
PO Box 965, Dowling Drive, Pt Cruz, Honiara
Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands
f: +677 23462 **p:** +677 21664

NOW AVAILABLE IN AUSTRALIA

www.soltuna.com.au

Its Hakubai at Kitano Mendana

By Hennah Bolaitamana

Nestled in the corner of the Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel on Mendana Avenue in busy Honiara is the popular and highly rated Japanese eatery - Hakubai Restaurant.

The restaurant has been operating for the past 20 years and is popular with locals as well as visitors who frequent Honiara.

The setting of the Hakubai Restaurant is very quaint,

with soft instrumental music playing in the background and partitioned sections to divide certain parts of the room for privacy.

The Hakubai chef is Filipino who is well trained in Japanese cuisine. There are eight cooks in the kitchen and six service attendants on the floor.

I arrived around 6.30pm when Hakubai had just opened for Sunday night business and it was already half full with diners.

I met the General Manager of Mendana Kitano Hotel, Mr Kei Hidano and was ushered in with warm greetings as we got settled in the coolest air-conditioned corner, overlooking the outside lawn and seaside terrace of the hotel.

After our introductions, green tea and a briefing of the history of Mendana, Mr Hidano ordered our dinner for the night, highly recommended by him – "Shokado Bento."

Bento is a style of serving where you put a variety of Japanese cuisine in one box.

It was a delicious combination of chicken, pork, sashimi, salad and rice,

The popular and highly rated Hakubai Restaurant.

Your logistic solutions provider in Solomon Islands

BJS Logistics Solutions

International Freight Forwarders
Global Service
Import Air Freight - Worldwide
Import Sea Freight - Worldwide
Customs Clearance Service
Export Air Freight - Worldwide
Export Sea Freight - Worldwide
Project Management
Bonded Customs Warehouse
Customs Clearance

DHL Express & DHL Global Forwarding

We have all your logistics solutions covered.

International global freight forwarding by air, sea and road. Warehousing solutions from packaging, to repairs, to storage; mail deliveries worldwide; and other customized logistic services - with everything DHL does, we help connect people and improve their lives.

bjs agencies ltd

PO Box 439/Commonwealth St •Point Cruz
Honiara • Solomon Islands

Phone +677 22393
Email bjs@bjs.com.sb
Facebook www.facebook.com/bjsagencieslimited
Web www.bjs.com.sb

BJS Recycling Specialists

BJS Recycling are Solomon Islands leading scrap metal buyers.

We buy all non-ferrous and some ferrous metals. Our buying prices are very competitive and our staff are experienced and passionate recyclers.

Honiara's Japanese restaurant, Hakubai at the Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel.

Prestige Apartments
Solomon Islands

Prestige Serviced Apartments is your home or office away from home, complete with separate bedrooms, living areas and work stations, pay TV, internet, fully equipped kitchens, BBQ decks, laundry facilities, 24hr security and quality housekeeping services based on Australian Standards. A secure Expat Compound with Quality Apartments & Value for Money.

Located at Upper Tinge Ridge Hillside,
access via Ngossi Valley Road, West Honiara
P.O.Box C43, HONIARA, Phone: (677)7426319
Email: geoffkaka@yahoo.com.au

PRESTIGE IS A MEMBER OF AAA

served in the lunch-box styled plates, and tasted exquisite, delicious and fulfilling, all at the same time.

Orders were also done without delay and smiling staff served us throughout the whole seating ensuring our comfort as well as the comfort and quick service of the other diners.

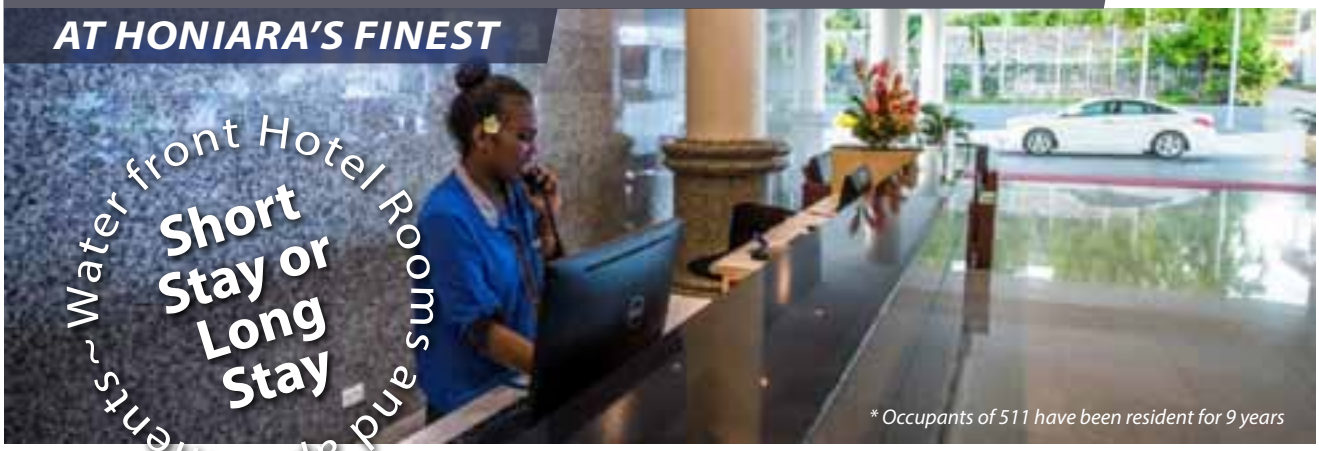
Many Japanese and other customers filed in as we ate, revealing the popularity of the place by the quick turnovers of diners throughout the night, most of them greeting Mr Hidano as they passed at one time or another.

Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel belongs to the Kitano Construction Group with hotels around the world and in Honiara.

Hakubai Restaurant opening hours:
Monday – Saturday 12pm-2pm, 6.30pm – 9.30pm,
Sunday 6.30pm – 9.30pm.
Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel is located on Mendana Avenue in downtown Honiara.
Ph: +677 20071 Email: reserv@mendana.com.sb

ENJOY A NIGHT OR 10 YEARS

AT HONIARA'S FINEST



** Occupants of 511 have been resident for 9 years*

HERITAGE PARK

H O T E L

H O N I A R A

- Luxurious waterfront rooms and suites
- Serviced Apartments: Studios to 3 bedroom
- Water's edge
- Business district
- Conference facilities - 250 pax room + smaller
- Club Bar
- Resort pool
- Restaurant, Coffee Shop, Waterside Bistro
- Gymnasium
- Reliable Wifi - 500MB a day Free
- Excellent Security
- Attentive Service

WHEN ONLY THE BEST WILL DO - Telephone: **(677) 24007** Facsimilie: **(677) 21001**

P.O. Box 1598, Mendana Avenue, Honiara, Solomon Islands Email: info@heritageparkhotel.com.sb Website: www.heritageparkhotel.com.sb

ENQUIRE NOW

Solomon

Ballalae
Choiseul
Suavanao
Kagau
Gizo
Ramata
Munda
Seghe
Honiara
Guadalcanal

Islands

Isabel
Fera
Auki
Atoifi
Malaita
Afutara
Arona
Santa Cruz
Marau
Kirakira
Makira
Santa Ana
Bellona
Rennell

Honiara's Most Contemporary Boutique Resort

BOOK NOW! CALL +677 26 288 – OR EMAIL US

RECEPTION@CORAL-SEA-RESORT.COM

TWO RESTAURANTS ON SITE

Great array of "East Meets West" cuisine designed to sway your taste buds...

GET YOUR 'VEGAS' FIX

Baccarat • Blackjack • Casino War • Coral Sea 21
Roulette • Sic Bo • and 64 Poker Machines

TRAVEL MONEY

Get the Best Currency Exchange Rates at
Coral Sea Casino!

CORAL SEA RESORT & CASINO

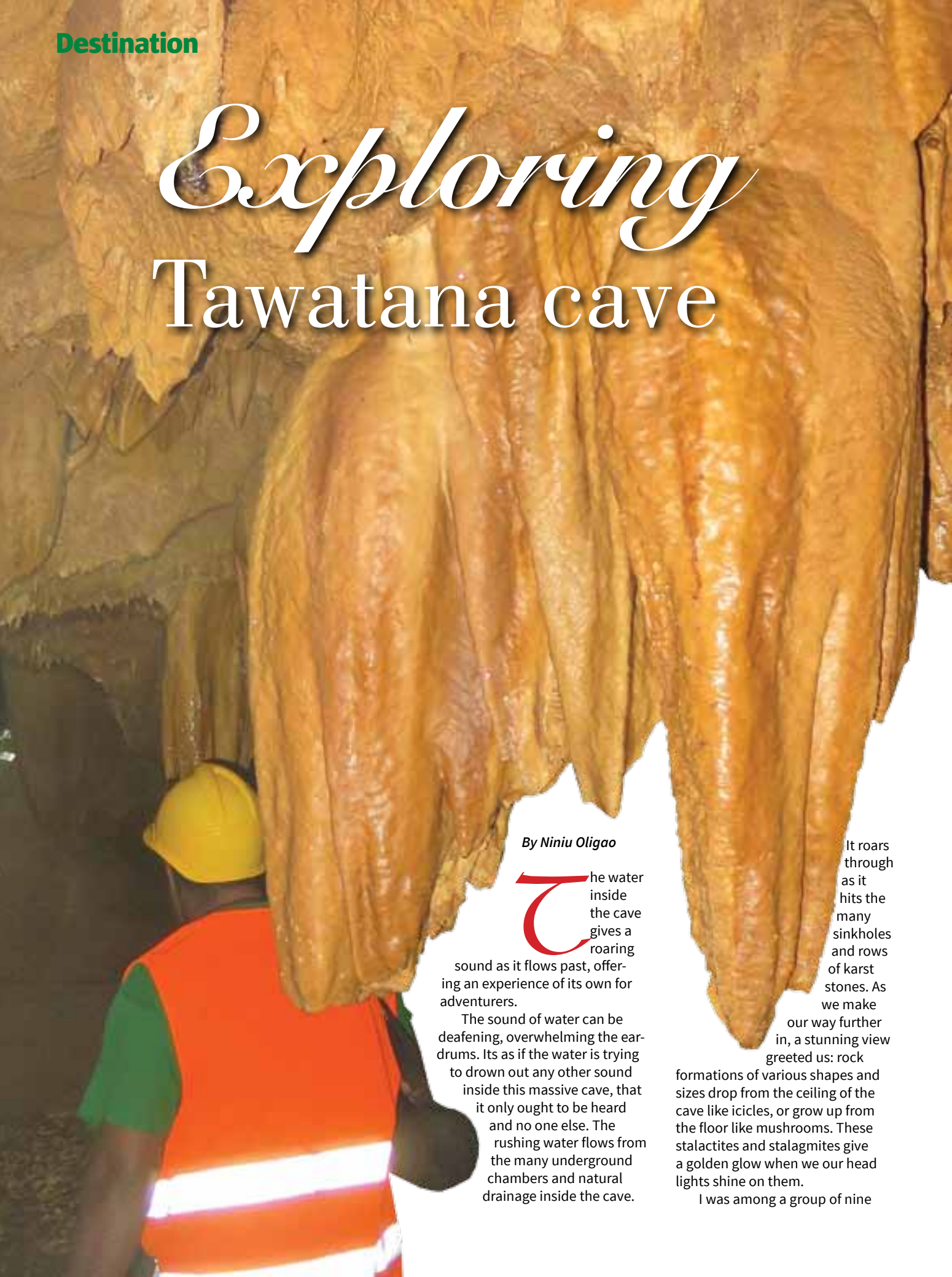
TANDAI HWY, TOWN GROUND, HONIARA

WWW.CORAL-SEA-RESORT.COM

PERFECT SECLUSION AND RELAXATION

Five Luxury Waterfront Villas and 30 New Hotel Suites!

Exploring Tawatana cave



By Niniu Oligao

The water inside the cave gives a roaring sound as it flows past, offering an experience of its own for adventurers.

The sound of water can be deafening, overwhelming the eardrums. Its as if the water is trying to drown out any other sound inside this massive cave, that it only ought to be heard and no one else. The rushing water flows from the many underground chambers and natural drainage inside the cave. It roars through as it hits the many sinkholes and rows of karst stones. As we make our way further in, a stunning view greeted us: rock formations of various shapes and sizes drop from the ceiling of the cave like icicles, or grow up from the floor like mushrooms. These stalactites and stalagmites give a golden glow when we our head lights shine on them.

I was among a group of nine

southpacificoil

Suppliers of Quality Fuels & Lubricants in Solomon Islands.

A 100% locally owned company
Celebrating 10 years of fuelling our islands.

+677 21838
Sales & Operations

+677 36142
Henderson Depot

+677 61077
Noro Depot

sales@spo.com.sb
www.spo.com.sb
southpacificoil

Tawatana marine conservation area at dawn,

Stream that is sourced from Tawatana cave

that recently toured Tawatana Caves. This is in west Makira, an island lying to Guadalcanal's south-east. The community in Tawatana wants to open up its massive cave system to tourists, and I had accompanied a government delegation from the Ministry of Tourism in Honiara to check on the caves.

Six volunteer rangers accompanied us on our arrival in Tawatana. We were led by Alfred Homuless- a ranger who has vast knowledge about the caves. Over the past years he has guided researchers and adventurers into the cave.

As we continued our trek deep into the cave, I wondered about the source of water that shaped these rock wonders in stalactites and stalagmites. Could it be from the rain or from the water table. Or both.

Midway through our two-hour trek, we stopped at a unique looking rock. Someone in the group says it looked like a granite rock.

When I shone my head light on it, crytals in a variety of colours were reflected. It was an amazing sight.

The cave is home to hundreds of bats and black nest Swiftlet- a small black bird which uses its saliva as glue in constructing its nests, and these nests are said to be edible and they fetch very high prices in the international market. According to the National Geographic magazine, Switflet nests are harvested in Indonesia as it is a much sought after Asian delicacy.

It's good to see that the local people of Tawatana are serious about preserving natural wonders like Tawatana Caves. They have formed the Tawatana Community Conservation and Development Association to assist them. The threat they see is the logging of virgin forests on Makira.

During the time of our visit, we learnt that the community employs 10 volunteer rangers. Their job is to ensure that their 6000 hectares of tropical rainforests and their coastal waters are preserved and free of poachers.

“We look to tourism as one of our income activities besides village canteens, bakeries and piggery. We encourage our women to actively participate in all our business activities”, explains Selwyn Aharoniha’a. He is the coordinator of the Tawatana community projects.

Also part of the conservation initiative is the construction of a rest house in Tawatana.

“We owe it to the future of our children. These are the last resources we have been protecting for the past 12 years," says Aharoniha'a. "We will continue to protect our natural resources for the sake of our children.”

Back at our cave tour, I was so relieved to be walking out after our two hour trek. It was tiring but well worth it given the wonders that nature has in store for those who make the effort to go inside.

On the trek back to the village, one of the two women rangers, Matilda Tae talked to me about her work and her thoughts about preserving the cave.

“If anyone wants to help us protect our natural resources, then come and visit us. Your visit and stay at our guest house will help us fund our work and keep our conservation work going”, Tae says with a smile.

The community of Tawatana is a two-hour open boat ride from the nearest airstrip at Kira Kira. Not the most comfortable ride there is, but if adventure is what you want, then there is no better way to travel than this.

Expect to be surprised in what awaits you at Tawatana.

To book a trip, visit the Facebook page of Tawatana Community Conservation and Development Association.

Solomon Airlines mount regular flights to Kira Kira. Book on www.flysolomons.com

Nest of the nest black Swiftlet in the cave

A nest black swiftlet

A Tawatana boy with the day's catch.

Living with the saltwater people of Lau

Words & Photos: Niniu Oliga

It's another December sunrise. Children are already out playing in the water in their small dugout canoes. Their mums are busy in the makeshift kitchens, preparing hot breakfast. From where I sit, I can see my uncle John, younger brother of my father, and his two sons fishing. The lagoon looks so peaceful. Only the laughter of children playing in the water disturbs the serenity.

I am here at Taluabu. This is my home. It is one of nearly 30 artificial islands in the Lau Lagoon, lying northeast of Malaita. To get here, it is a three-hours drive from Auki town, the capital of Malaita Province along the north road.

Three generations of my people have lived on this man-made island. It is a fairly new island when compared to older islands like Foueda, Sulufou and Kokoefou. These ones had been built and occupied by many generations. According to one of my uncles, my

grandfather, the late Serobino Lao Lao and his three younger brothers moved from the Kokoefou artificial island around 1952 to build Taluabu.

My family and I always enjoy going back to Lau Lagoon. It is known for its classic surf breaks, manmade islands and its friendly people, locally referred to as the salt water people of Lau.

Like many other Lau Lagoon artificial islands, ours is built in waters not far from the mainland. Just a couple of hundred metres is my estimation. We have developed a distinct way of life in comparision with our neighbours living further inland of the mainland in east Mbaelelea. In Lau, the sea is a key part of our daily lives.

You see it every day. The sea itself comes alive, putting up a constant display of a symphony of colours; from alice blue to baby blue, then sky blue to turquoise. It is mermerising. If you care to look to the sea bottom, assortment of colours in corals and fish greets you. Any time of the day, the lagoon will have men or women out fishing in their dugouts.

Being artificial islands, fresh water is a challenge. Growing up, we are taught to view fresh water as precious commodity. Rarely would you see any islander - an adult or child alike - to be wasting drinking water. In Lau Lagoon, water is treated like gold.

"We only use fresh water to cook and drink. We wash our kitchen utensils like plates, pots, spoons, and cups in salt water," Maria Orumae tells me.

Any trip across to mainland is not wasted. Each time my cousins paddle across to Takwa or Nadi, they load empty containers which will be returned filled with fresh water. Collecting drinking water is a household chore for everyone in the lagoon.

Our attachment to the sea has offered us the opportunity to prepare seafood in many ways. We use coconut milk or ovens of hot stones.

"There are many ways we can prepare seafood. We bake them in hot stone ovens, smoke them on open fire, but sometimes we wrap the fish in Kwai kwai (leaves growing on mainland)," says Anna Aneka, my aunt. "Having fish wrapped in Kwai Kwai is very delicious and many of us love it."

In a space barely twenty square metres, two blond brothers, Benedict Samo Junior and my namesake Oligao are playing football. Here in Solomon Island we call the sport soccer. There is a lot of yelling and laughter as they jostle for control of the ball.

"Pass come, pass come!"

Many Solomon Islanders will remember a great goalkeeper in the name of Severino Aefi. Well he is from Taluabu, and it is in small patches of earth like this that he started from. Aefi is my uncle. Other great soccer players in the country are from

Lau including Robert Mark, Charlie Aluta and Peter Eke. Like them, my uncle Aefi developed his passion for football at a very young age.

"I also do have a dream to become a great footballer like uncle Aefi someday," says young Samo Junior

For someone who works in the city, I am aware of the debate on climate change and what's happening in the world. Here on Lau Lagoon, my people live and breath about the sea and the impacts of a changing climate.

I am lucky that my end of the year holiday was not disrupted by king tides or a storm. Here in Taluabu, they are always ready for any sudden change in the weather. Houses are secured, fresh water is stored, crops harvested from gardens in the mainland and firewoods stockpiled.

I am proud to be called one of the saltwater people of Lau Lagoon. I love the sea as much as I love the mountains. I count myself lucky to find these two natural wonders not far from home- the perfect evening backdrop of the mountains while children paddle their canoe from the mainland to Taluabu. It's farewell to another day in the lives of the saltwater people. Flame-red sunsets over the Lau Lagoon is just what photographers like I live for - those perfect moments!

Getting to relive those magic moments mean the world to me in this place I call home.

Contact:

Solomon Airlines offer regular flights to Auki Airport, from where you can travel by road to the Lau Lagoon. You will need a local contact before you visit the region. For flight bookings, log onto www.flysolomons.com

We are the leading engineering and architectural firm based in the Solomons and the South Pacific region.

Kramer Ausenco is the largest engineering, architectural and project management company in the South Pacific Region. For more than 35 years, we have been delivering world-class solutions for our clients.

We offer services throughout the entire project lifecycle, from initial concept and design right through to construction and commission across a range of industries particularly hospitality, aviation, maritime, education and health.

We are strategically located across the South Pacific region, with offices in Papua New Guinea, Australia, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji and Vanuatu. Our commitment to the ongoing development of the South Pacific region is seen through our presence and our people in the local communities.

Our services

Kramer Ausenco provides a diverse range of services to our clients, including:

- infrastructure – civil and structural engineering, building services engineering
- construction management
- project management
- procurement and planning
- architectural design
- surveying
- environment and sustainability
- energy
- minerals processing
- pipeline systems
- transportation systems
- ports and terminals.

Kramer Ausenco

www.KramerAusenco.com Phone: +(677)21996 Email: Honiara@KramerAusenco.com

Papua New Guinea | Australia | Solomon Islands | Vanuatu | Fiji | Samoa | Tonga

Hawksbill Turtle at night in Munda.

Boat ride to the Cave of Kastom Shark

Wreck of a WWII Wildcat plane

Bio-fluorescent tur

"The more I fly over vast untouched regions of our globe, the more clear it becomes what an incredible accomplishment it is when human beings do absolutely nothing." **Robert Edison Fulton**

This quote kept resonating in my mind as I flew from Honiara over Solomon Islands to Munda on a film/dive expedition I was directing for Canon and their ME20F-SH low light camera.

Renowned biologist Dr. David Gruber had stunned the world when he discovered the first bio-fluorescent turtle at night during an expedition to Solomons in 2016. Canon wanted to shoot something amazing underwater that showcased the low-light capabilities of their technology and I suggested to Grey (Canon's advertising agency) on the idea of filming the bio-fluorescent turtle Dr. Gruber had discovered. To my delight, they got excited about it.

It is not everyday that I convince a large multinational company to travel 45 people for multiple days from around the world to gamble on the chance of finding and photographing a bio-fluorescent turtle somewhere at the end of the Earth.

Needless to say, I was already feeling quite lucky and honestly still enjoyably inebriated in quiet disbelief.

As a very young boy I often spent my time rotating the globe around and around in our living room and trying to determine what the most interesting places on Earth would be and I distinctly remember imagining that Solomon Islands must be incredible because of their isolation, the vast number of islands and their proximity to the warm equator. I sensed that the Solomons was still wild and largely undiscovered and I was right.

I had often travelled to Hawaii as a young child and experienced how beautiful warm water and tropical South Pacific islands could be, however, I would always imagine and deeply contemplate what it must have been like to be the first ever to discover them, before people had ravaged them. Since then I have always yearned longingly to get that opportunity of true discovery somewhere and sometime in my life.

All those memories were playing in my mind as I excitedly watched countless untouched islands and healthy reefs fly by from the window of the only Dash 8 aircraft in the entire 1000 Solomon Islands as we began our descent into Munda.

I was excited and ever so slightly stressed for many reasons not the least of which was the risk of not finding competent dive professionals or even seeing a turtle after I had gotten everyone excited about this crazy idea not to mention all the hype on the internet of malaria, dengue, crime and saltwater crocodiles (that theoretically hunt the same turtles at night that we would be trying to film) but all that just contributed to the euphoric adrenaline high that was building as we touched down.

Within the first steps off of the airplane I was introduced to Belinda Botha who had taken over a small dive shop the year before and had trained a team of locals into a powerfully competent and passionate group of dive professionals. I immediately felt relieved meeting Belinda as her confident introduction and radiant smile melted away any doubt about the dive team upon whom the success of the entire job would be depending. We then all walked a few hundred yards from the dirt strip through a tiny town center to Agnes Gateway Hotel, which would become our charming new home and our base of operations.

Belinda Botha (right) with children and women of Sasavele Village.

Belinda & James at 'TheBlue Wall'

tles in magical Munda

It became immediately clear to me that Munda and Solomon Islands in general were on a knife edge that would either fall to the side of continuing to exploit their resources to rapacious logging companies and succumb to short-sighted greed, or they would take a path of eco-tourism and resource conservation which would preserve the natural beauty and magic of the islands for generations to come by bringing prosperity and long term employment to their people.

It became instantly clear that Belinda and her brilliant dive operation were the key to that bright future as divers in search of real adventure have the resilience, passion and disposable income to travel the extra mile for an amazing experience and they deeply appreciate untouched natural beauty and underwater wildlife. The past year had already shown proof of concept in that Agnes

Gateway Hotel had seen a huge bump in occupancy from Belinda's dive tourism and she had employed a team of ten locals in her dive shop alone, not to mention the extra housekeepers, cooks, hotel staff and business to local shops, artisans, fisherman and farmers that benefit from dive tourism.

I knew that by providing film and photography of the amazing dive sites, WW2 wrecks, healthy coral reefs and unspoiled islands; those images could be used as a powerful tool for Belinda to increase sustainable tourism, which would ultimately lead to a path of conservation and long-term economic success for the local people. So we decided to shoot during the day to capture images of her awesome dive sites and use our nights in order to accomplish the job of filming a bio-fluorescent turtle for Canon. It turned out to be the most amazing diving adventure of my life, by far.

Besides the completely otherworldly coral reefs and wall dives, Solomon Islands were the site of the most ferocious air, land and sea battles, which changed the course of WW2 and multiple hundreds of aircraft and ships, remain missing and undiscovered in the surrounding area of just Munda alone. Belinda guided me on several dives, one of which was my deepest dive ever, at 170 feet.

We went on to dive multiple World War II wrecks, including airplanes and a Japanese supply ship, the Kashi Maru, that had been sunk right off shore. We also dove the coolest cave that defies the imagination.

The entrance of the dive is situated within a small island 40 feet inland from the shore; we hiked our equipment in over land to get to the small entrance and dove down through a spectacular cave opening with photogenic cavernous sections to a depth of 100 feet. The dive ends up leading back out into open ocean through a vacuous underwater cave exit. Once you are birthed back into the light and into open ocean (at a depth of 100 feet) the dive then transforms into an incredible shear wall dive for pelagics. This location and dive profile are completely unique in the world and currently in danger of being destroyed by a Chinese shrimp farm if the government approves it. We must share this incredible dive with as many divers as possible and get this unique treasure protected.

At night we would dive Mbigo Mbigo for its amazing clarity, unmatched coral formations and turtle population. By shining blue light on the corals and turtles combined with using a yellow filter on the camera we were able to see incredible bio-fluorescent life forms and uncover the mystery of how turtles see their underwater world at night.

Using the Canon ME20F-SH, we ended up shooting the most incredible bio-fluorescent turtle footage ever captured on the first and second night, which completely released stress for the entire team and allowed us to focus calmly on telling the rest of our story with brilliant night cinematography of our expedition team. Happily, our clients left the island with revolutionary footage and resounding success as a reward for their faith in our expedition.

Invest in Solomons

There's never been a better time to invest in Solomon Islands

On the back of strong economic growth over the years and several economic reforms, the Solomon Islands is attracting increasing interest from foreign investors.

Opportunities exist in the following major sectors:

Tourism / Agriculture / Fisheries / Mining / Infrastructure & Other Services

Register Online

www.solomonbusinessregistry.gov.sb

- Foreign Investment
- Company
- Business Name

InvestSolomons
Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour & Immigration
P.O.Box G26, Honiara
Solomon Islands

Phone: (677) 20521
Website: www.solomonbusinessregistry.gov.sb
Email: investsolomons@commerce.gov.sb

Belinda Botha (standing sixth from right) with her Dive Munda staff

have made a career of finding rare beauty and being the very first to capture it, however, I have never had an opportunity like this, for my work to help create a lasting and positive impact on a magical place like Munda in Solomon Islands. My hope is that by sharing my experience and images of our expedition with the dive community that we will all help Belinda on her quest to preserve one of the last healthy underwater eco systems on the planet for future generations, by simply visiting Munda and diving this underwater paradise. Each person who books a trip gives strength to the theory of sustainable tourism and can be a powerful force at this crucial time in Solomon Island history.

By the way, I only saw one mosquito and oddly it was on the airplane back to Brisbane. I used repellant and took no malaria meds. The people of Munda were open, friendly and delightful and crocodiles don't like coral reefs because they have soft bellies and they stick mostly to the swampy mangroves, but they do add exotic dimension to the stories and keep out meek vacationers, which I see as a total benefit. **- Word & images by Klaus Obermeyer**

About the author:

Klaus Obermeyer is a bold, modern-day adventurer, visionary leader and true inspiration to all who have had the distinct pleasure of being swept away by his brilliance. He is a superbly talented cinematographer and creative commercial director, driven by finding true beauty in exploring uncharted territories and gifted in sensitively uncovering and awakening human greatness. As ocean advocate, Klaus is passionate about protecting delicate marine ecosystems and conserving the vast jungles of the last frontiers on earth. Klaus also knows how to embrace life: days are filled kite-surfing, scuba diving, freediving and skiing.

For dive bookings,
email: divemunda@dive-solomon.com.
Check their website
www.mundadive.com. Find them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TripAdvisor.

Fly to Munda on Solomon Airlines and you can book, and buy your tickets on www.flysolomons.com

The **Solomon Islands** Silver Coin Collection

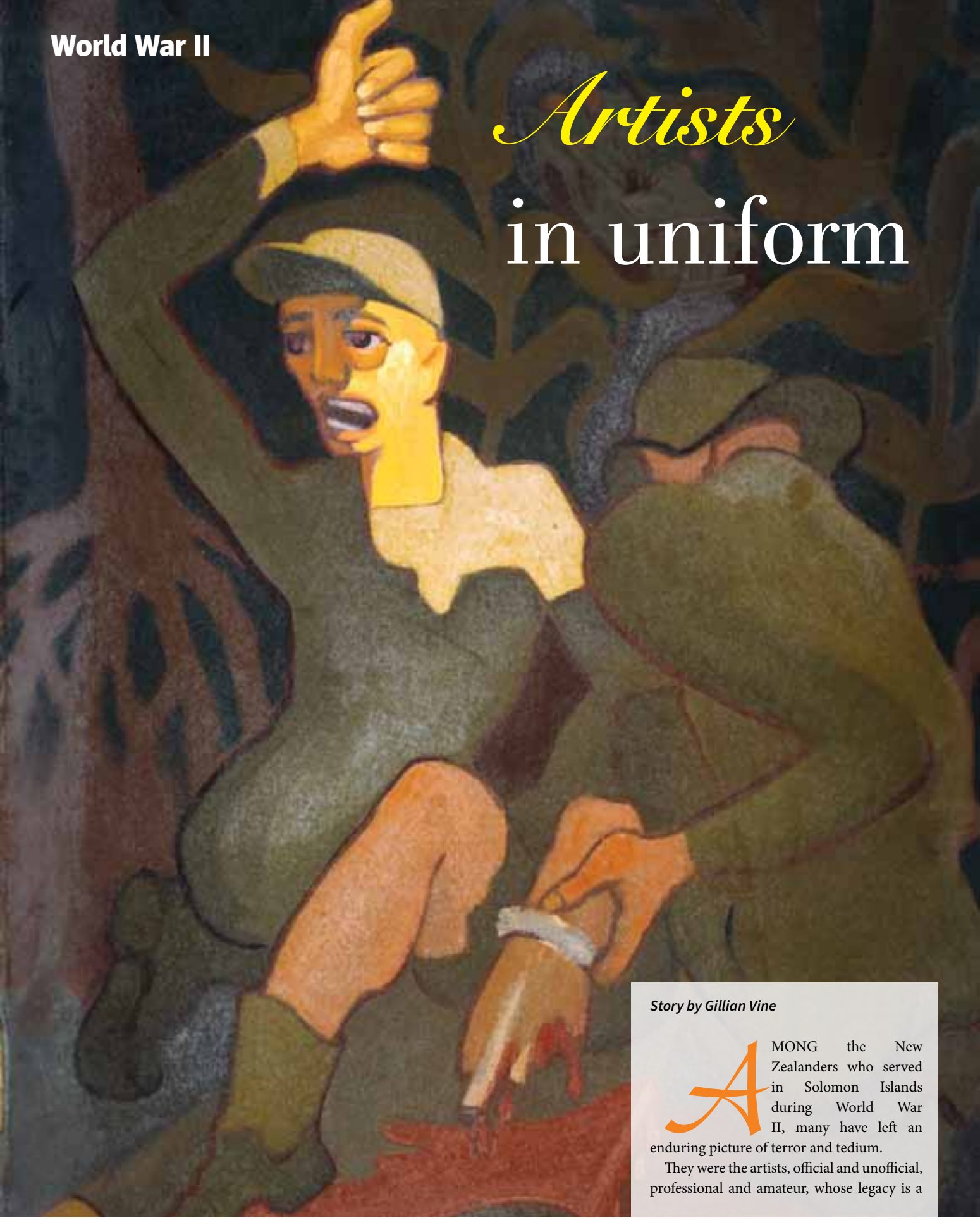
Five stunning coins struck in 99.9% fine silver by the
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN MINT

To view and order this coin set please visit Central Bank at **www.cbsi.com.sb** or email **info@cbsi.com.sb**

Central Bank of Solomon Islands

RAMSI1201

Artists in uniform



Story by Gillian Vine

AMONG the New Zealanders who served in Solomon Islands during World War II, many have left an enduring picture of terror and tedium.

They were the artists, official and unofficial, professional and amateur, whose legacy is a

In "Stretcher bearers", a 1945 oil, Herbert James (Jim) Bowkett Coe took an almost Münch-like approach to suffering. ***Photo:*** *Archives NZ, AAAC 898 NCWA 122*

Russell Clark's "Night action off Guadalcanal" showed HMNZS Kiwi and a submarine. ***Photo:*** *Archives NZ, AAAC 898 NCWA 311*

What it wasn't . . . F. D. Choate's 1943 pen-and-ink cartoon "Lure of the islands" satirised many people's idea of the Pacific War. ***Photo:*** *Archives NZ, AAAC 898 NCWA 280*

"Band on the road", from one of Ralph Miller's sketchbooks. ***Photo:*** *Miller Family Archives*

unique take on the Pacific War.

New Zealand had appointed three official war artists to the region – two in the NZ Army and one Royal NZ Air Force painter – but dozens of other men picked up pen and paper to record their experiences.

After Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japanese on December 7, 1941, New Zealand and Australia recognised the very real likelihood of being invaded, so both countries gave strong support to the Americans, with New Zealand's army, navy and air force making significant contributions and losing 636 men, with many others wounded.

The Pacific War was totally unlike that of the Northern Hemisphere conflict, as Allied forces faced the challenges of the tropical climate with frequent downpours, diseases like malaria and no entertainment except for movies screened at the Americans' open-air cinemas or performances by New Zealand's 8th Brigade band.

Band member and artist Ralph Miller (1956), from the quiet South Island city of Dunedin, summed it up in a letter home as "mud, mud, more mud and hurricanes", adding that they were shelled daily while playing most nights on the front line.

Yet, despite this, there was a perception that the brave, poorly equipped Kiwis had it easy, spending

BISHOPS
Visit www.bishopbros.com.pg for our specials
Solomon Islands' Leading Industrial Supplier
Bishops is a leading industrial and safety equipment supplier in Solomon Islands, with over 40 years experience in providing expert knowledge and the largest range of quality industrial products. With its branch located in Ranadi, it also has six industrial branches across PNG, Bishops is able to supply all facets of industry.
Come into our Honiara Bishops branch today for some great deals.
HONIARA
SOLOMON ISLANDS
Prince Phillip Hwy, Ranadi
Ph: (677) 30046
Fax: (677) 30047
PORT MORESBY
LAE
KIMBE
MADANG
MT HAGEN
KOKOPO

their time lounging under palm trees. F.D. Choate's 1943 cartoon sums up the attitude and the derogatory term "coconut soldiers" was still in use long after the war.

New Zealand's first official Pacific War artist was Allan Barns-Graham (1906-2006), an Auckland portrait painter, who won the role after entering a competition. He tended to concentrate on portraiture, mainly officers, but his pencil/watercolour of four soldiers resting in a jungle clearing highlights ordinary soldiers' exhaustion. His pastel "Two bodies on a beach" is an even stronger reminder of the realities of the conflict, although the men shown were probably Japanese, as the NZ censors would have frowned on showing Allied dead.

The other two official NZ artists were Russell Clark (1905-1966), attached to the Army, and the RNZAF's R. Maurice Conly (1920-1995). They, too, were subject to censorship, Conly once being told to add a row of coconut palms to a painting of an Air Force base so the enemy couldn't pinpoint the location.

The unofficial artists had no such restrictions, painting and drawing exactly what they saw, which is what makes their portrayals of great significance.

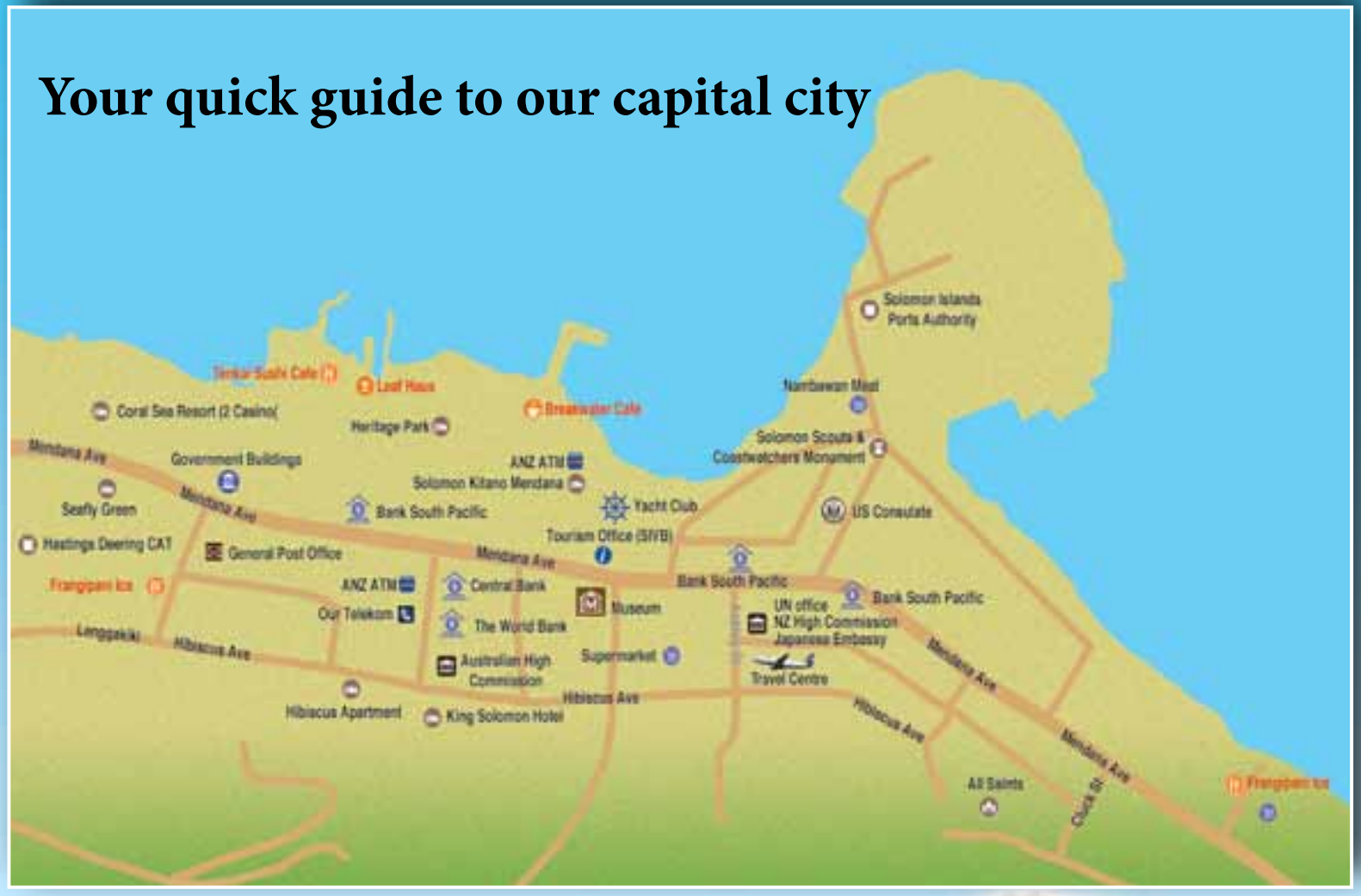
Ralph Miller was probably the most prolific of this group and his family holds some 500 of the wartime sketches and paintings he sent home to his wife.

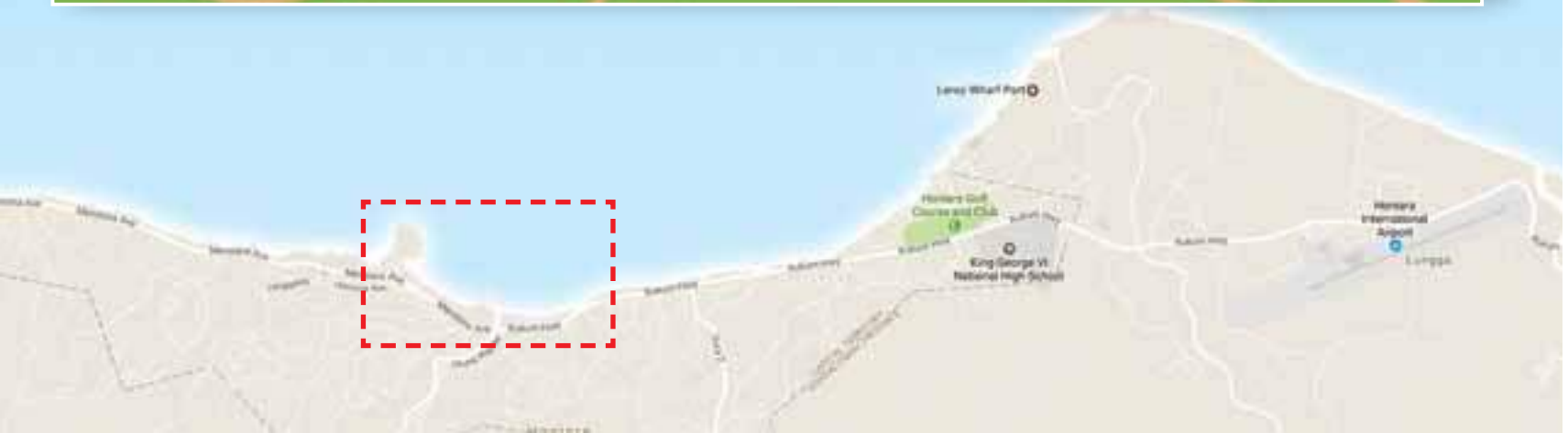
A signwriter and prizewinning horn player before the war, how Miller found time to fill numerous sketchbooks is a source of wonder, as the band had challenging schedules, playing at night and route marching by day. In one two-month period, the bandsmen clocked up 3000km and 70 concerts, one of which had an audience of 7000.

For an artist, the hot, humid climate with frequent downpours made it difficult to paint outdoors, while poorly lit accommodation made indoor conditions almost as bad. Moreover, paper went mouldy or disintegrated, paint tubes burst in the heat and even supposedly indestructible clay-based conté crayons struggled to cope. The official Army artists solved the problem by concentrating on preliminary sketches, worked up after returning home. Because most others, like Miller, Duncan McPhee and Herbert James Bowkett Coe, did not have this luxury, their work tends to look less polished but it was life as the men saw it, providing a unique and revealing record.

Many of the artworks from these men's Pacific War experiences are held in New Zealand's National Archives (http://warart.archives.govt.nz) and form an enduring memorial to an aspect of Solomon Islands history that no camera could capture.

Your quick guide to our capital city





Gold Coast's Ga

By Steve McCully

The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games has a blue koala named Borobi for a mascot but there isn't a white elephant in sight.

Unlike some Olympic host cities and even some previous Commonwealth Games, the organisers of the Gold Coast Games have overcome that biggest of worries - the venues not being ready on time.

And they have also avoided the post-Games problem of being left with a handful of expensive but basically unwanted "white elephants."

Even better, the venues already are raking in money and helping pay their way.

So ready is the city for the Games it could, with a minimum of fuss, bring on the event early.

Having the venues ready has allowed for any bugs to be sorted, has given the local community a chance to become familiar with them and has even allowed some athletes the opportunity to train where they will compete come April.

Amazingly, more than two million people have already used the Gold Coast venues.

Since 2014 the Coast has attracted more than 160 sporting initiatives, including state and national championships, as well as elite training camps.

These have directly pumped more than AU$53 million into the region's economy.

Well before the Games were announced, the Gold Coast was known as a sporting city and this was reflected by the fact that 80 per cent of the venues already existed.

An injection of about $200 million has brought them up to Games' standard.

The design of each has included environmentally sustainable elements to help offset costs and reduce their impact on the environment.

The Gold Coast Sports Centre is the centrepiece of the Games.

It includes the Gold Coast Sports and Leisure Centre which has two large indoor multi-use halls that will host badminton, para powerlifting, weightlifting and wrestling.

Also sitting in the precinct is the Gold Coast Suns Football Club training and administration facility.

Adjacent are three new multi-sports fields known as the Southern Sports Fields.

Visually, it is Metricon Stadium, the site of the Games Opening and Closing ceremonies that catches most eyes.

The home of the Gold Coast Suns, a national AFL side, Metricon has undergone a full makeover and can now hold 40,000 people.

Metricon is also known as Australia's first "solar stadium." It has 600 solar panels, each weighing 110kgs, built into its roof.

The system can generate about 20 per cent of the stadium's forecast annual energy needs - the equivalent of powering 50 Queensland homes.

And it is not just the locals using the venues.

The Coast has become the base for many international training camps with the athletes training where they will eventually compete.

Among the camps confirmed so far are the Canadian swimming and hockey teams, the New Zealand bowls contingent, the Northern Ireland athletics and swimming squads and the Singaporean swimming side.

The Australian boxing side is confirmed, with other sports likely as negotiations continue with a number of other countries.

GAMES VENUES IN BRIEF

BROADBEACH BOWLS CLUB
Sports: Lawn Bowls

A $4.95 million facelift has changed this leading bowls club into a state-of-the-art facility capable of hosting an international

mes Ready

event. It has four international competition-standard greens, new outdoor sports lighting, a modernised and expanded dining hall, meeting rooms and a new commercial kitchen. There is room for 2500 spectators, including full disabled access.

Close to the beach, the club is in a perfect position for players and spectators to enjoy the Gold Coast climate. The upgrade was finished in June 2016, in time for the club to host the World Junior championships that same year. In 2019 it will be home to the Asia Pacific Championships and the following year, 2020, will host the World Bowls Championships.

COOMERA INDOOR SPORTS CENTRE
Sports: Gymnastics, Netball Finals

THIS $40-million brand new facility at Coomera, almost next door to Dreamworld theme park, has already boosted sport in the northern Gold Coast suburbs. Designed as a multi-purpose building, the centre is home to netball, volleyball, basketball and gymnastics sports.

Opened in 2016 it was named building of the year at the Australian Institute of Architects 2017 Gold Coast-Northern Rivers Regional Architecture Awards. It hosted the Johnny Warren State Futsal Championships, Karate World Championships and the International Netball Festival. There are eight mixed-use sports courts and a gymnastics arena. Other facilities include change rooms,

meeting rooms and a kiosk.

GOLD COAST AQUATIC CENTRE
Sports: Swimming, Diving

THE old Southport Olympic pool complex was the first Games venue to be completed.

It was finished in 2014 at a cost of $41 million, with the resulting complex bearing little resemblance to the previous council-owned pool. There is permanent seating for 1000 people but that will be expanded to seat 12,500 spectators during the Games.

In 2014 it was host to the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships and the FINA Diving World Cup. There are two 50-metre Olympic standard pools, a learn-to-swim pool, children's play pool and dedicated diving pool. It also has a large professional gym, dry dive facility, meeting rooms, crèche and café.

GOLD COAST CYCLE CENTRE/ NERANG MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS
Sports: Mountain Biking

NERANG National Park is the site for the Games mountain bike events with the start and finish line at the Gold Coast Cycle Centre. Built at a cost of $3.2 million and opened in January 2017, the trails were designed in line with Commonwealth Games requirements in consultation with community and biking enthusiasts.

The cycle centre underwent an upgrade that included construction of a new amenities block, fit-out of the change rooms and work on the car park on Hope Street, Nerang and there is seating for 300 overlooking the velodrome. The centre has been used for regular cycling events as well as the annual Kokoda Challenge and the bi-annual University Games.

VILLAGE ROADSHOW STUDIOS
Sports: Squash, Boxing Table Tennis

A MASSIVE project that involved the City of Gold Coast, the Queensland Government and moviemakers Village Roadshow saw the construction of the largest sound stage in the Southern Hemisphere.

Situated at the Village Roadshow studios at Oxenford, adjacent to Movie World, Sound Stage 9 was used during filming of Marvels' Thor: Ragnarok blockbuster.

During the Games it will convert to a sports venue and host squash, boxing and table tennis.

The fully soundproofed venue has industry standard equipment including steel grids, catwalks, air conditioning and extraction fans. After the Games, it will revert back to being a stage for the stars.

GOLD COAST HOCKEY CENTRE
Sports: Hockey

THE Gold Coast Hockey Centre redevelopment at Labrador cost $16.5million. It saw the resurfacing of two synthetic pitches and the realignment of one to face north-south. The replacement and realignment of the turn pitch is part of the project but will be done after the Games.

A new, large clubhouse with change rooms, meeting rooms, offices, first-aid room function room, bar and kitchen was built. Perhaps the best feature is a large balcony overlooking the hockey fields where spectators can enjoy an unimpeded view of the action. The balcony has permanent seating for 200 while during the Games temporary seating will cater for thousands more. The field have been in regular use since they re-opened in June 2017 and the centre has the potential to be host to training camps and major competitions.

GOLD COAST SPORT AND LEISURE CENTRE
Sports: Badminton, Weightlifting, Wrestling, Para powerlifting

THIS centre is one of four key elements of the Gold Coast Sports Precinct. It is a multi-use complex that includes two large indoor halls with mixed use sports courts, change rooms, meeting and function rooms an indoor café and commercial kitchen. It sits next to Metricon Stadium, the site of the Games' Opening and Closing ceremonies and there are also three new multi-sports outdoor fields.

The Gold Coast Suns' training and administration facilities are also part of the centre. This centrepiece of the Games cost $110 million in a funding deal involving the City of Gold Coast, the Queensland Government and the Australian Government. It formally open in April 2017 and from then to June 2017, had 5214 hours booked and a further 17,932 hours are booked for future events.

Since its opening the complex has hosted the World Badminton Mixed Team Championships which had a global viewing audience of more than 400 million people; the Queensland U12 Basketball Championships, National Judo Championships, FIVB (International Volleyball Federation) Men's Volleyball World League Group finals, Australian Open Table Tennis Championships, Brisbane Bullets v China basketball match.

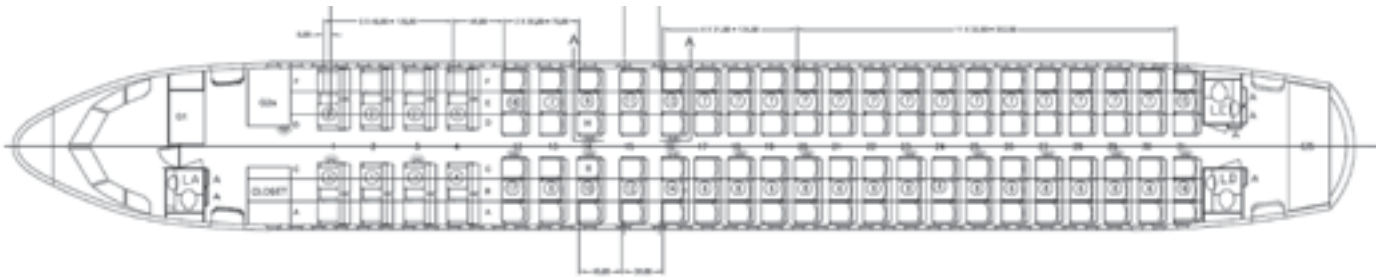
**** Steve McCully works as Senior Communications Officer in the Commonwealth Games Media Unit at the City of Gold Coast***

With Solomon Airlines flying into Brisbane four times a week, it offers a quicker way to reach the Gold Coast and to be part of the Commonwealth Games from April 4 -15, 20018.

SOLOMON AIRLINES FACT SHEET

AIRCRAFT: A320

Registration:	H4 -BUS
Length:	37.57 m
Wing Span:	34.10m
Range:	3,000 nm
Cruising Speed:	830 kpm
Seating capacity:	136
Configuration:	Business:16 Economy: 120
Current Routes:	Brisbane, Nadi, Port Vila



With an elegant leather finish, our luxurious cabin is specifically configured for space and comfort. Our 16 business class and 120 economy seat configuration provides all our customers with more personal space and privacy. Our traditional in-flight full service is second to none and allows customers to enjoy simplicity in a sophisticated modern setting.

BELAMA CLUB

Membership Types: Belama Plus, Corporate, Family, individual

Benefits:

- Priority Check in and Express Clearance (Brisbane)
- Additional baggage allowance/ Priority baggage
- Preferential seating
- Belama Club Lounge access for all members (Honiara)
- Brisbane, Qantas Lounge access (Belama Plus Members)

Our Point of Difference!

Email: belama@flysolomons.com

Our exclusive club caters for Corporate Executives, Individuals & Families. Annual membership fees range from $8,990 SBD (Belama Plus) to $3,940 SBD (individual) and are streamlined to a standard calendar year.

EMAIL: belama@flysolomons.com

www.flysolomons.com

AIRCRAFT: Dash 8-102

Length:	22.25 m
Wing Span:	25.91 m
Range:	2040 km
Cruising Speed:	490 kph
Seating capacity:	36
Crew:	3 Crew including 1 cabin crew
Current Routes:	Honiara; Seghe: Munda; Gizo; Kira Kira; Santa Cruz
Aircraft in Fleet:	1

AIRCRAFT: Twin Otter

Length:	15.77 m
Wing Span:	19.81 m
Range:	1350 km
Cruising Speed:	338 kph
Seating capacity:	16
Crew:	2
Current Routes:	All Ports in the Solomon Islands
Aircraft in Fleet:	2

SOLOMON AIRLINES
GENERAL INFORMATION

Head Office
Henderson Airport
P.O.Box 23, Honiara
Solomon Islands
Ph: +677 20031
Fax: +677 20232

Travel Centre
Hibiscus Avenue
Ph: +677 20152
Fax: +677 23992
Email: corporate.travel@flysolomons.com.sb

Australia
Brisbane International Terminal
Level 1
Tel: +61 7 38605883
Fax: +61 7 38604351
Toll Free: 1300 894311 (Aus)
0800 424980 (NZ)
Email: reservations@flysolomons.com

Fiji
Nadi Airport
Office 27, First Floor
Tel: +679 6722831
Fax: +679 6722140
Email: solomon@connect.com.fj

WEBSITE: www.flysolomons.com

International Connections

Papua New Guinea
Port Moresby
Solomon Islands
Honiara
Tarawa
Los Angeles
Cairns
Townsville
Brisbane
Australia
Perth
Adelaide
Sydney
Canberra
Melbourne
Vanuatu
Port Vila
Nadi
Fiji
Auckland
New Zealand
Christchurch

SOLOMON AIRLINES
www.flysolomons.com

For all bookings, ticketing and flight enquiries:

AUSTRALIA
Australia Cargo GSA
Aircraft Loaders & Packers
Unit 3c, 17 Sugarmill Road
Eagle Farm
Ph: 07 3260 2603
Fax: 07 3260 2959
Mobile: 0419796065
Email: rob@qldcargo.com, or
alp@qldcargo.com
www.aircraftloaderspackers.com.au

NEW CALEDONIA
Axxess Travel, 22 Rue Duquesne,
Espace Moselle,
Quartier Latin, Noumea
BP 336, 98845, Noumea
Tel: (687) 286 677
Fax: (687) 274 050

NZ PASSENGER GSA
Airline Marketing New Zealand
Level 9, 120 Albert St, P O Box 6247
Wellesley St, Auckland 1141
Ph: DDI: (64 9) 969 7610
Mobile +64 274167562
Email: flysolomons@airlinemarketing.co.nz

NZ Cargo GSA
GSA Cargo Services New Zealand Ltd
Carolyn Evans| Director
PO Box 107 027, Auckland International
Airport, New Zealand 2154
Phone: +64 9 2758767
Fax: +64 9 2758707
Mobile: +64 21757400
Email: carolyn@cargogsa.com

UNITED STATES
Solomon Airlines
North America Sales & Marketing
5000 Birch Street -# 3000
New Port Beach
California 92660
Tel: (949) 752 5440
Fax: (949) 476 3741
Email: flysolomons@gmail.com

UNITED KINGDOM
Solomon Airlines
Flight House
Fernhill Road, Horley
Surrey, RH6 9SY
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (870) 443 0757
Fax: +44 (870) 240 2208
Email: web@solomonairlines.co.uk

VANUATU
Surata Tamaso Travel Limited
La Casa D'andrea,
Lini Highway, Port Vila
Tel: (678) 22666
Fax: (678) 24275
Email: tamaso-tours@vanuatu.com.vu

VANUATU Cargo GSA
Ridley Daniel
Right Freight Services
PO Box 1407, Port Vila,Vanuatu
Phone:+678 24690
Mobile:+678 7744690
Email:rfs@vanuatu.com.vu

Domestic Connections

Choiseul Bay
Kagau
Suavanao
Ballalae
Fera
Mono
Gizo
Auki
Atoifi
Ramata
Munda
Afutara
Seghe
Arona
Honiara
Solomon Islands
Marau
Santa Cruz
Kirakira
Santa Anna
Bellona
Rennell

Solomon Islands Offices

Head Office	P O Box 23, Henderson Airport, Honiara, Solomon Islands
Administration	Tel: (677) 20031 • Fax: (677) 20232
Finance	Tel: (677) 20031 • Fax: (677) 20232
Sales & Reservations	Tel: (677) 20031 • Fax: (677) 23992 Reservation - 177 (Local calls)

Airport Offices

HONIARA

Operations	Tel: (677) 36048	• Fax: (677) 36244
Engineering	Tel: (677) 36104	• Fax: (677) 36040
Cargo	Tel: (677) 36071	• Fax: (677) 36372
International Terminal Traffic	Tel: (677) 36077	• Fax:(677) 36076
Domestic Terminal Traffic	Tel: (677) 36048/36251	• Fax (677) 36244

SANTA CRUZ	**Sales & Reservations**	Tel: (677) 53159	• Fax: (677) 53092
GIZO	**Sales & Reservations**	Tel: (677) 60173	• Fax: (677) 60202
MUNDA	**Sales & Reservations**	Tel: (677) 62152	• Fax: (677) 62152
KIRAKIRA	**Sales & Reservations**	Tel: (677) 50070	

Overseas Administration Offices

AUSTRALIA - Brisbane Airport

Administration	Solomon Airlines, Level 1, International Terminal, Brisbane Airport, Eagle Farm, QLD. 4007 Tel (Aust Wide): 1300 894311 • Tel (Outside Aust): 617 3860 5883 Fax: 617 3860 4351 • Email: reservations@flysolomons.com
Operations	Solomon Airlines, Level 1, International Terminal, Brisbane Airport, Eagle Farm, QLD. 4007 • Tel (Aust Wide): 1300 894311 Tel (Outside Aust): 617 3860 5883 • Fax: 617 3860 4351 • Email: reservations@flysolomons.com
F I J I - Nadi	Solomon Airlines P O Box 10229, Nadi International Airport, Fiji • Tel: 679 672 2831 • Fax: 679 672 2140

MUNDA Airport is just about ready

Works to get Munda Airport upgraded to handle jet aircraft have progressed well, thanks to funding support from the government of New Zealand.

So much so that Munda is poised to receive its first international flight in July when Solomon Airlines will introduce a direct Brisbane to Munda service. This flight is expected to continue onto Honiara before it returns to Brisbane.

The airline is planning the Brisbane to Munda direct flight to take place on Saturdays.

Former New Zealand Foreign Minister Murray McCully said when he opened the upgrade of Munda airport back in 2013, that it was the centerpiece of a major infrastructure investment scheme by the governments of New Zealand and Solomon Islands.

"The improved runway will open up Western Province to tourism and create opportunities for village-level and large-scale operators. It will also allow for the safer and more effective movement of passengers and freight."

Four years on and that sentiment has finally materialised with the national carrier seizing the opportunity to introduce international flights to Munda.

Speaking at a tourism focus seminar recently held at the Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel in Honiara, Solomon Airlines' CEO Mr Brett Gebers emphasised that this new international service would be a major boost not only for tourism but the national economy as a whole.

KNOW your crew

Visiting a new city each day of the week is one of the many joys of being a cabin crew. This is so true for Anna and Doris, two familiar faces of Solomon Airlines. Read about what they love the most about their jobs and how they spend their days when they are not flying.

Insert: *Anna Michael (right) with colleague Doris Zinihite (seated)*

Q. Tell us a little about yourself, name, where you originally from, how long you've been with the airline?

Anna. I'm Anna Michael from Tikopia, Temotu Province and this would be my 8th year working for Solomon Airlines

Doris. My name is Doris Zinihite and I am from Malaita Province

Q. What do you like about your work?

Anna. It widens my knowledge on good customer service and hospitality skills and there's nothing more satisfying than serving a customer. It also gives me the opportunity to experience international culture, meet different people with different expectations.

Doris. What I like the most being a flight attendant is the fact that I act as an ambassador between the airline and its customers by making passengers feel comfortable during a flight. The most important duty, however, is seeing to the safety of everyone on board.

Q. Why you wanted to be a Flight Attendant?

Anna. A flight attendant's job has always fascinated me as you get to travel overseas, meet new people, places and different cultures.

Doris. Flying in an airplane intrigued me since I was a little kid and when an opportunity came in 2000, I applied without any hesitation and 18 years on, am still enjoying it.

Q. What's your favorite destination and why?

Anna. Brisbane obviously as we fly there four times a week, and there is good shopping.

Doris. I don't have any particular favourite destination really as each destination has its own uniqueness and that's the beauty of travelling.

Q. What you like to do when you are not flying?

Anna. I love spending quality time with my little family, going out with friends, go to the beach, or just enjoying my day off at home

Doris. Spending quality time with my little family, cooking and catching up with my other household chores.

Q. What are your future plans?

Anna. I love flying but I guess I will not do this job forever so going forward, I intend to do my own thing, may be run a small family business.

Doris. Being a flight attendant can be very demanding especially as you get to travel all the time but looking ahead, I intend to venture into other undertakings.

The Island Sun

RISE WITH THE SUN, NEW NEWS, MORE NEWS

Your Guide to the Solomon Islands

Things to know as visitors to our shores:

Climate … Tropically warm and humid with coastal day temperatures averaging 28C (82.4F). April to November tends to be drier and November to April wetter.

What to wear … Light and casual. Keep brief beachwear for the beach.

Immigration … Commonwealth, United States and most European visitors do not need holiday visas but need return or onward tickets. People intending to work must have a work permit.

Honiara … The capital is eight kilometres (4.97 miles) from Honiara International Airport.

Airport Tax … SB$100 payable by passengers (12 years and over) boarding international flights, and these are generally added onto your air ticket.

Health … Malaria is a problem. Take anti-malarial medication a week before arrival, once a week during your stay, and for four weeks after departure. Consult your chemist or doctor about an appropriate brand of tablet. Maloprin is usually recommended.

Currency … $100, $50, $20, $10, $5 and $2 Solomon Islands notes. Coins are $1, 50c, 20c, 10c and 5c.

Business Hours … Government and some business offices open Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm with a one-hour lunch break normally beginning at noon. Shops and some offices open Saturday 8am – noon.

Banks … Bank South Pacific opens Monday to Friday 8.30am to 3pm; ANZ Banking Group open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm. Pan Oceanic Bank Limited opens 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday, and its Panatina Plaza branch opens 10am to 1pm on Saturday. Bred Bank Opens 9am - 4pm

Telecommunications …Local and international calls may be made from Our Telekom public card phones which are in prominent locations in Honiara and provincial centres or from GSM Mobile services. Telephone and Internet cards are readily available through shops, hotels and Our Telekom offices and bmobile and Vodafone outlets. GSM prepaid and postpaid mobile cards are available in Honiara, Gizo and in some provincial centres.

Tipping … Not expected and not encouraged.

Transport … Taxis and buses are readily available in Honiara. Rental cars are also available from Avis, Economy, Travel Car Solomon and Zome.

International air … National airline, Solomon Airlines operate out of Honiara International Airport. Other carriers include Fiji Airways, Virgin Australia, Air Niugini and Air Nauru.

Domestic …Solomon Airlines operates services throughout the country.

Electricity … 220-240 volts in Honiara and some outer island centres.

News Media … The country has a vibrant media business offering choice in both English and Pidjin languages. Radio services are offered by state radio, Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation and private operators and some religious bodies. Our Telekom relays BBC and other satellite TV networks while The Island Sun and Solomon Star are the two daily news papers, with a couple of monthly business and lifestyle magazines

Provinces

The Solomon Islands is made up of 992 islands which are divided into nine provinces:

Choiseul - *Provincial capital:* Taro • **Central** - *Provincial capital:* Tulagi • **Isabel** - *Provincial capital:* Buala

Renbell/Bellona - *Provincial capital:* Tigoa • **Guadalcanal** - *Provincial (& national capital):* Honiara

Makira/Ulawa - *Provincial capital:* Kira Kira • - *Provincial capital:* Auki

Western - *Provincial capital:* Gizo • **Temotu** - *Provincial capital:* Lata

Malaita

The Solomon Islands are divided into nine provinces as follows:

Province	Area	Population	Highest Point	Capital
Guadalcanal	5,336 km²	141,403	2,447m	Honiara
Central	1,000 km²	27,928	510m	Tulagi
Western	5279 km²	81,214	1661m	Gizo
Ysabel	4,014 km²	26,310	1,392m	Buala
Malaita	4,234 km²	159,923	1,303m	Auki
Makira	3,188 km²	40,386	1,250m	Kirakira
Temotu	926 km²	24,412	923m	Lata
Choiseul	3,294 km²	25,870	1,060m	Taro
Rennell & Bellona	276 km²	3,025	220m	Tingoa

Our Subsidiary

Sun Printing Ltd

PROVIDING OFFSET AND DIGITAL PRINTING SERVICES

ANTHONY SARU BUILDING, GROUND FLOOR

P : (677) 21992 E : SALES@SUNPRINTING.COM.SB

Szeto Enterprises Limited Tel: +677 30304 Email: sel.quotations@gmail.com | | Szeto Breweries Limited Tel: +677 22729 Email: saragoldsolomon@gmail.com

PACIFIC CASINO HOTEL

HONIARA'S ENTERTAINMENT HUB

CANOE BAR | THE GARDEN BAR & RESTAURANT | PACIFIC FLEX
SUPREME CASINO
Phone No. (677) 25009

Email: reservation@pacificcasinohotel.com

P.O. Box 1298, Kukum Highway, Honiara

FREE WIFI