

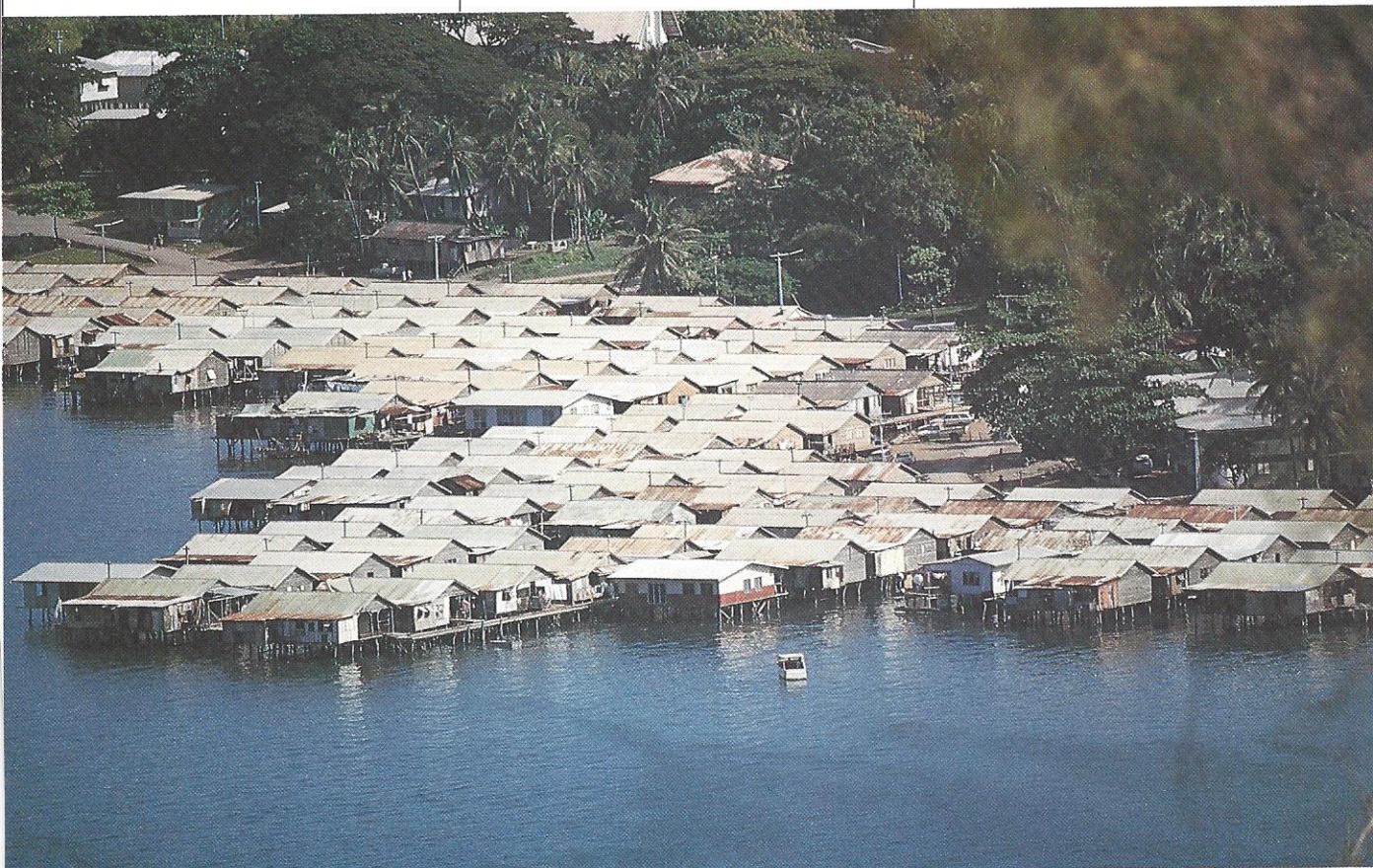
cial expedition, wanted to appoint a chief but had only one spare uniform — extra large size — on board. After twenty candidates had tried it on, Boe Vagi stepped forward, fitted into it best, and got the job.

While his pretty daughter-in-law slipped in and out of the room bringing refreshments, Morea Hila related stories about his great grandfather, describing how Boe Vagi, resplendent in his naval finery, took part in the ceremony

flag in hand, marched into the office of the Resident Magistrate to seek her husband's release. As Boe Vagi had been buried wearing the uniform's trousers, Gabadi's regalia, with her contrasting grass skirt, was too much for the Magistrate and he promptly let her husband go.

Morea Hila's parting thoughts to us were a lament on the changes he had seen in Hanuabada in recent years, transforming the villagers from fishermen and growers

along the main highway — Boe Vagi Road — Noi Helalo, half a century younger than Morea Hila, had his own thoughts about changes. He believed that the young people of Papua New Guinea were determined to experience the new ways of the modern world without necessarily letting go of the traditional culture. Through his work as a graphic artist, he was aware of the interest foreigners had in his country's art forms, craft work and colorful ceremonial festi-



when the British formally annexed New Guinea in Hanuabada in November, 1884.

He also told a sequel about Gabadi Boe, a daughter of Boe Vagi, who had inherited the uniform and the symbols of authority which her father had so proudly borne. When Gabadi's husband, Nonuka, had once been jailed for igniting grass fires that had damaged crops, Gabadi donned the gold-trimmed blue coat and cocked hat and, with swagger stick and

of vegetables into wage earners who shuttled back and forth into Moresby, weakening their traditional values *en route*. As Morea sadly saw it, the tribal cultural roots were rapidly losing out to new, unproven lifestyles. But he smiled cheerfully through betel stained teeth as he shook our hands and sent us off with that most memorable of Papuan sayings: "You come as a stranger, you leave as a friend."

Driving back to Port Moresby

vals. But he felt, too, that it was the increasing desire for education and a better life that had done so much to bring the country to nationhood ●

Text and photographs by  
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Philippine Airlines participates in a joint service which flies every Friday and Sunday from Manila to Port Moresby and every Thursday and Saturday from Port Moresby to Manila.

A bird's-eye-view of Port Moresby's unusual suburb.