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Palau Historical & Cultural Advisory Board First Regular Meeting for 2010



PH&CAB Members reviewing site nominations

January 2010 marked the initial meeting of new and incumbent members of the Board. There were ten members present which constituted quorum to commence the first official business of the Board.

Mr. Andrew Shiro of Ngaraard State was appointed Acting-Chair in order to conduct business until the Board members elect their Chairperson.

Introduction and roll call of the newly appointed Board members provided an opportunity for everyone present in the meeting to get acquainted, including the Director and the Registrar since they were relatively new to the Bureau.

The Palau Registrar gave a brief introduction regarding the role of the Advisory Board as well as the duties of the officers of the Board. Included in the introduction was a brief rundown of the Palau National Code (PNC) Title 19 to make clear the intent of historic preservation and other related matters.

The review and approval/disapproval of site nominations commenced thereafter. The sites under review were: (1) Asahi Plantation B: NM-4:4 of Ngaremlengui State, (2) Wakui Police Station B: NT-4:3 of Ngatpang State, (3) Roisebong Terrace Set B: IM-1:10 of Aimeliik State, (4) Remiang er a Medorm B: IM-4:8 of Aimeliik State, (5) Rael er a Risong B: NE-9:15 of Ngarchelong State, and (6) Beluu er a Ngeanges B: OR-16 of Koror State.

Of the six site nominations only three nominations were reviewed and approved. These sites include: (1) Asahi Plantation B: NM-4:4 of Ngaremlengui State, (2) Rael er a Risong B: NE-9:15 of Ngarchelong State, and (3) Beluu er a Ngeanges B: OR-16 of Koror State. The remaining three nominations were deferred for review at the next board meeting.

Intangible Cultural Heritage Workshop in Palau (ICH)



State Officials and off-island guests during the 3-day National Workshop

The UNESCO Field Office in Apia, Samoa and the Palau National Commission for UNESCO along with the Bureau of Arts and Culture/Palau Historic Preservation Office under the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs, organized and hosted a National Workshop on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Palau from February 23 to 25, 2010 at Bai er a Maiberel, Koror.

The three day workshop aimed to gather ideas in developing a strategy and action plan regarding the safeguarding of Palau's intangible cultural heritage. Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) refers to the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, (*continue on page 2: ICH Workshop*)

NCSHPO Meeting



Bureau of Arts & Culture Director Dwight Alexander and other Micronesian Historic Preservation Officers with officials from the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation

The Director of the Bureau of Arts & Culture, Dwight Alexander, attended the annual National State Council for Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO) Meeting held February 24 to March 1, 2010.

The first leg of his trip consisted of a stopover in Oakland, California where he met with Historic Preservation Officers (HPOs) from the region including FSM, RMI, CNMI and the Territory of Guam. They agreed to put together a united and joint effort to garner support for local historic preservation offices. Their meeting was facilitated and organized by Ms. Paula Falk-Creech who serves as the National Park Service Program Manager for American Samoa and Micronesia.

During the meeting the Micronesian Historic Preservation Officers shared a number of key issues that must be dealt with in terms of preserving cultural and historical properties in the region. They also addressed the need for increased funding for preservation programs as well as the need for a number of key programs including staff training and capacity building.

They agreed to meet with a number of key people in Washington D.C. to seek further support for the historic preservation programs in the region. Included were members of the US congress and John Jarvis, the new Director of the National Park Services (NPS). NPS provides funding support to the regional HPOs. The group also met with Joseph McDermott of the Office of Insular Affairs and with the ambassadors and members of the U.S. Congress representing the islands in Washington, D.C.

(continued from page 1: ICH Workshop) objects artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognized as part of their cultural heritage.

The purpose of the strategy and action plan is to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of Palau for the present and future generations. It was also meant to educate and develop a sense of respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned. The workshop also aimed to raise the public awareness of the importance of safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage, and to enable Palau to access international cooperation and assistance.

Off-island guests included the Director of the UNESCO office in Apia, Dr. Visessio Pongi, and Ms. Akatsuki Takahashi, Programme Advisor for Culture. They gave extensive and in-depth presentations regarding the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, its implications, and what it offers by way of assistance and support to the country. They emphasized the fact that the Convention is a tool to access international expertise and assistance to equip the country in its work to preserve, protect, and promote the national intangible cultural heritage. They also covered the operational guideline which paves the way for the country to implement the convention, and the convention's benefits and disadvantages.

Ms. Yumiko Nanaumi from the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties in Tokyo Japan also attended as a guest speaker. Her presentation showed how research institutions can provide training and support in the work being done by member countries and also how a Category II institution of UNESCO functions to help the member states of a convention

The three-day workshop also consisted of presentations from traditional chiefs, various local agencies, and NGOs, followed by general discussion in regards to intangible cultural heritage and the development of a strategy and action plan on the safeguarding of Palau's intangible cultural heritage (ICH).

The Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs and the Bureau of Arts & Culture, which are responsible for helping ensure the transmission of traditional knowledge and cultural expressions, hoped that the workshop would provide adequate information to convince the country's top leaders to ratify the convention. Invitations were sent out to both houses of the Olbiil Era Kelulau but only members of the House of Delegates, namely Vice Speaker Alexander Merep, Delegate Jerry Nabeyama, and Delegate Wayne Andrew attended. The Executive Branch hopes the three can work effectively with their colleagues in the Senate to ratify the convention.

The Bureau of Arts & Culture wishes to thank key supporters and donors of this workshop. Those who contributed of course included all the staff of the Bureau of Arts & Culture and the entire Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs as well as the Belau National Museum, Palau Visitors Authority, Palau Community College, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, PPUC, and others who generously provided support to make the workshop a success.

Historical Sound Recordings Workshop in Berlin

A workshop on Historical Sound Recordings was held in Berlin from March 9 to 11, 2010. It was organized by the Berlin Phonogramm-Archive-Ethnomusicology Department of the Ethnological Museum, Lansstrasse 8 in Berlin-Dahlem, Germany.

The aim of this workshop was to introduce the Phonogramm-Archive to Bureau of Arts & Culture staff, Sylvia Kloulubak, who went on this trip, especially focusing the historical recordings from Palau and to discuss practical issues and technical questions concerning the production of an Audio-CD.

The workshop was part of the project *Documentation and digital audio publication of historical Palauan chants and oral history (wax cylinder and phonogram recording dated to 1909-10 and 1936)* to be implemented in close collaboration and partnership between the Belau National Museum and Bureau of Arts & Culture, and the Berlin Phonogramm-Archive. The main goal of this project is to publish audio CDs of these 1909-10 and 1936 recordings.



Dr. Susanne Ziegler(left) handing over documentation and digitized copies of the 1936 chants by Siemer in Palau to Ms. Sylvia Kloulubak

The participants of the workshop included:

Mrs. Sylvia Kloulubak, Historical Preservation Specialist, Bureau of Arts and Culture; Dr. Birgit Abels, University of Amsterdam (former Ethnographer of Bureau of Arts & Culture); Prof. Dr. Lars-Christian Koch, Head of the Ethnomusicology Department, Berlin; Dr. Susanne Ziegler, Historical Collections, Berlin; and Albrecht Wiedmann,

Sound Engineer, Berlin.

The collaboration of the two countries is ongoing to ensure the production of the audio CD, which will be available to the people of Palau and others in the near future.

PCC Cultural Trip to Ngardmau State

On April 9, 2010, at the request of Project Beacon, Palau Community College, BAC Staff including, Ms. Sylvia Kloulubak, Ms. Filly Carabit, and Mr. Errolflyn T. Kloulechad and PVA Staff Mr. Melson Miko assisted several students in visiting historic sites in Ngardmau State. The students were accompanied by Ms. Adora Nobuo, Program Counselor for Project Beacon, and Ms. Midori Mersai, PCC Counselor. A staff member of Ngardmau State office, Mr. Rodney Esebei, also attended to assist as a tour guide.

The first stop was Ikeam el Diong in Urdmang, Ngardmau State. Students were shown the natural spring and were briefed about its oral history concerning an elderly woman who had been led to the spring by a bird so that she would know of its existence.

From there the group walked into the jungle and down to the mangrove area to the second site, Edub er a Ielech (a stone face on a stone resting platform) in Urdmang, Ngardmau State where students got to see and learn about its brief oral history of how the traditional chiefs' titles of Urdmang, Ngardmau State came to be and where they were from.

The group then walked back up to the third site, Olketokel er a Udoud el Bad (a stone table for presentation of Palauan money) in Ngerutoi, Ngardmau State where the students were briefed about its oral history. The group continued walking on to the next site which was Orsachel er a Dub (a stone feature) in Ngerutoi, Ngardmau State where they were able to see the stone feature that is somewhat similar to a boat shape with six round holes aligned on its flat surface. The holes in the stone were used as mortars by the young men's club of Ngerutoi village to pound poisonous weed, used for fishing in the past to kill fish. This was done when the village was having a feast or other big village gathering such as a funeral where a large quantities of fish would be needed. The students then boarded their bus and went to the dock where they were shown an old Japanese building which had been used as part of the mining industry that had existed in Ngardmau State during the Japanese Administration. The trip was successful as students got to visit and learn about Palau's historical and cultural sites.



PCC Students at Ikeam el Diong one of the many historical and cultural sites in Ngardmau State



PCC Students at old Japanese dock Mining Building (historical site)



PCC Students at Orsachel er a Dub (historical site)



PCC Students at Edub er a Ielech (historical site)

Palau Historical & Cultural Advisory Board 2nd Regular Meeting for 2010

On May 13 and 14, 2010, the Palau Historical & Cultural Advisory Board met at the Bureau of Arts & Culture's conference room to nominate and elect the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board as well as to review nine nominations for inclusion onto the Palau Register.

Mr. Andrew Shiro of Ngaraard State was elected Chairman while Mr. Arbedul er a Ked Kuroy Arurang of Ngardmau State was elected Vice-Chairman.

The review and approval/disapproval of site nominations commenced thereafter. Nine site nominations were reviewed while only two nominations were approved. The sites approved for inclusion in the Palau Register of Historical Sites were: (1) Remiang er a Medorm, Aimeliik State, and (2) Klikm er a Ichaderuolu, Ngaremlengui State.



PH&CAB Members

Visual Documentation of the States of the Republic of Palau

One of the community's treasured assets are visual documentation that captures places and its people in a particular time period. This is especially important when considering that the Republic of Palau is at a pivotal point in its development. Palau is a young nation developing and modernizing at an extremely rapid rate. This is further compounded when considering the recent, 2007, completion of the Compact Road. The road has opened up areas of Palau previously less accessible which will likely quickly change the face of much of the Republic as citizens of Palau venture back to home states, construct new family houses, and develop new industries.

It is a commonplace to realize such change is occurring, to comment on it, and to observe it but not capture and document it. This year serves as a perfect time to visually document the circumstances of each of Palau's states.

In 2010, the Oral History and Ethnography Section will commence on a visual documentation project that will, in a methodical way, take photographs of as many of each states' maintained and accessible historic sites, state buildings, natural environments, neighborhoods, daily life, community groups, and functions during field visits. A selected number of these photographs will be published in a report and distributed to libraries, state government offices, and other such entities. Each state will be further provided a CD copy of all photographs taken of their state during the project.



Bai er a Ngkeklaui, Ngaraard State - built during TTPI time



Kayangel State west side -taken from the dock

Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs Staff Visited States for Senior Citizens Day Celebrations



Melekeok State Senior Citizens posing with the cake contributed by the Office of Aging under the Ministry of Community & Cultural Affairs

On May 5, 2010, staff from the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs celebrated Senior Citizens Day with senior citizens in each of the respective states of Palau. The Ministry's staff were divided into several groups each of which then went out to the respective states of Palau to deliver cakes, give support, and show appreciation for the elders who continue to contribute to the work of the community.

The Bureau of Arts & Culture staff went to Melekeok, Koror, and Ngarchelong and celebrated the day with the elders.

This was the second year that Ministry staff visited the states of Palau in celebration of senior citizens day.

Site Restoration & Development Projects for FY 2008 & FY 2009

This year two registered sites were selected as site restoration and maintenance projects. The Chelechol er a Orrak site (B:IR-01:17) in Airai State was selected as a FY 2008 Site Restoration and Maintenance Project while the Bai er a Olilai (B:NI-02:02-f11) was selected as a FY 2009 Site Restoration and Maintenance Project.

The actual restoration of the Orrak site commenced on May 1, 2010 and will complete on or before September 30, 2010. The Bai er a Olilai site restoration commenced on March 6, 2010 and will complete on or before September 30, 2010.

Every year, the Bureau of Arts & Culture (BAC) office awards \$2,000 to a selected state that applied for the grant. Airai State was chosen as recipient for the FY 2008 award while Ngiwal State was chosen as recipient for the FY 2009 award; both were awarded \$2,000 USD. Congratulations to Airai State and Ngiwal State for their great interest in participating to restore historical sites.

Each year each state has an opportunity to apply for this award. The principal objective of the Site Restoration and Development Project is the protection and enhancement of historical and cultural sites listed on the Palau Register of Historical Places. This goal is in accordance with the Bureau of Arts & Culture's responsibility to maintain and develop significant historic properties for the interest and education of the public. Additionally this project is intended to bolster state level preservation activities via direct involvement of traditional leaders and villagers.



Bai er a Olilai, Ngiwal State Site Restoration Project in its clearing and cleaning stage.



Ngaraseseb Women's Club of Airai State restoring the Orrak Site, Airai State Site Restoration Project.

Society of Historians Complete Work on Latest Publication

From March 8 to 19, 2010, the Society of Historians met at the Bureau of Arts & Culture office to edit the booklet entitled "*Cheldebecher*" (Clubs). The next stage is to implement the Historian comments and complete the final editing and layout of the material for printing. This booklet will be published in both Palauan and English, and will be the fifteenth (15th) such booklet in an ongoing series of publications on topics of traditional Palauan culture.

Society of Historians Publication on "Stories with Moral Lessons" Completed

The Society of Historians, completed the preparation and editing of the booklet on Stories with Moral Lessons. The Historians produce their booklets with the assistance of the Bureau of Arts & Culture using funding provided by the U.S. National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund Grant.

The Historians met for two sessions with BAC Staff Historian, Ms. Lynda Dee Tellames to edit and finalize the draft of the booklet entitled "Stories with Moral Lessons."

This booklet will be available in both Palauan and English, and is part of an ongoing series of publications on topics of traditional Palauan culture.

The booklet is being printed and will be available at the Bureau of Arts & Culture office later this year.

JAL Group "Skyward" Visits Historical Sites

On January 28, 2010 per request by the Japan Air Lines (JAL) in-flight magazine "Skyward" the Bureau of Arts & Culture Historic Preservation Specialist, Ms. Sylvia Kloulubak, assisted the group in visiting and taking photographs of historical sites, specifically Bai ra Rengarairai in Airai State, Bai Melekeong in Melekeok State, Malsol's Tomb and terraces in Aimeliik State, and Badrulchau in Ngarchelong State. Descriptions of these historical sites were also gathered for the magazine read by millions of travelers all over the world.

The photos of Palau's historical sites were published in "Skyward" on May 2010; an excellent way to showcase our unique cultural and historical heritage and promote sustainable eco-tourism.

HISTORIANS CORNER

Omengermodel

Omengermodel is to secretly seek skills and knowledge outside of one's home. Traditionally, *omengermodel* was a way for children to appropriate culture knowledge from other sources than those readily accessible to them. A child would sneak out at night to hide under their neighbor's house, listening to what they were teaching their own children. Most families of higher clans had special skills and knowledge that they would pass on to their children in the seclusion of their own place. These included discipline, family history, skills, knowledge, and practices. These were different than those of ordinary homes, and they intended to share them exclusively with their own children. It was mostly the children of lower clans who performed *omengermodel* in order to obtain knowledge that would further their opportunities. Also, children who had lost their parents, or whose parents had limited knowledge to pass on, would turn to this option. There is a quote that neatly describes children who *mengermodel* ('do the *omengermodel*'): "Those who sneak out to earn skills and knowledge (*mengermodel*) lack them in their own homes, and those who have them in their possession (*ar meluchet er a techerakl*) do not need to sneak out to get them." It was considered shameful for children to *mengermodel*, and an insult for their family because it exposed a family's lack of skills and knowledge. In any case, few children were smart enough to think of the possibility to obtain more skills and knowledge from other families' homes.



The diagram shows the traditional educational system as used long ago in Palau. Among all the components, respect (*omengull*) was a must for all kids, and they needed to practice it at all times. Without respect, it would be impossible for children to successfully accomplish the other components listed in the diagram. Source: "Osisechakl er a Rengalek er Belau er a Irechar" *The Traditional Education System of Palau by the Palau Society of Historians*

REGULATION FOR HISTORICAL/CULTURAL PROPERTIES

It is illegal to take, remove, alter or damage any historical or cultural properties, including artifacts, sunken WW II vessels and parts thereof, WW II relics, historic landmarks and cultural properties. Detailed information on Public Laws regarding historical and cultural properties can be obtained from PNC Title 19 and its subsidiaries. To ensure compliance with these laws you may contact the Bureau of Arts & Culture/ Historic Preservation Office at (680) 488-2489/3361 or email hispres@palaunet.com.

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