



IBETEL A KLEBELAU

Quarterly Newsletter

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Melekeok State Awarded FY'11 Site Rehabilitation Project

Every year, through the aid and assistance of the National Park Service, the Bureau of Arts and Culture offers incentive grants to aid local government in rehabilitation of their registered cultural sites.



BAC Staff with Melekeok Leaders during a meeting for the signage of the Site Project Cooperation Agreement

For Fiscal Year 2011, Melekeok Sate was selected and awarded a \$2,500 grant to rehabilitate Bai Melekeong *me a ike el euang el chades* (Melekeok Traditional

Chief's Meeting House and the four stone paths). The site is within Melekeok Traditional Village, Melekeok State. The project entails clearing, cleaning, restoring fallen rocks, and interpretation of the sites. The project was made possible through a grant from the US National Park Service, Department of the Interior and the in-kind services from

state government including the chiefs and people in the communities. The actual rehabilitation work is tentatively scheduled to begin in the early part of April 2012 and end on or before September 30, 2012. The sites are important because they can provide a sense of Palauan identity and help educate our youth concerning our heritage. With the rapid rise of eco-tourism has come the need for tourists to have interesting places to explore and learn about Palauan culture.

BAC Held Radio Talk Show

The Bureau of Arts and Culture/Palau Historic Preservation Office held a live radio talk show at Eco-Paradise FM Radio on April 19, 2012. The radio talk show was part of the on-going effort to provide public awareness about Palauan cultures and historical treasures. Additionally, the radio talk show is

part of Bureau's yearly series of events that both informs the public and explains to them, its tasks, projects, and responsibilities. This also was an opportunity for the Bureau to hear and collect public concerns, comments, and suggestions for protecting and preserving Palau's cultural and

historical treasures.

The Bureau welcomes the public's written comments and suggestions regarding the protection and preservation of our cultural heritage. They can be submitted to the BAC office located in Civic Center Building at Ngerbeched, Koror.



BAC Director Dwight Alexander and two of his staff at a radio talk show



Maris Stella 6th Grade Class Cultural Trip to Ngaraard State

On May 3, 2012, at the request of the Maris Stella 6th grade teacher, Ms. Tanya Patris, BAC staff including, Ms. Filly Carabit and Ms. Sylvia Kloulubak, accompanied and assisted twenty four (24) sixth graders along with two additional teachers and their homeroom teacher in visiting two of the many historical sites in Ngaraard State. These sites were: Elab Traditional Village and Ngebuked Traditional

Village. The visit extended the students' knowledge about Palau history and culture and its connections to the Palau's cultural and historical sites. This was also an opportunity to build awareness about the need for preservation and protection of Palau's Historical sites. BAC would like to thank the Ngaraard State Government and Mr. Herman Orrak, for permitting us to go to these sites and for assisting as a local tour guide.



Maris Stella 6th Grade Students at Elab Traditional Village

Traditional Village Posters & Poster Descriptions Delivered to Schools



This year the Oral History and Ethnography Section hand-delivered over 300 Palau Traditional Village posters and a poster feature description to the public and private schools of Palau. The schoolchildren and faculty's faces lit up when they saw the poster which was illustrated by well-regarded artist Ado Imetuker. An important element of the poster was to have people of all ages, including children, conducting daily life activities in the village.

This project was a cooperative effort. The Bank of Guam, the University of Guam's Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC), and the CNMI HPO worked together to print hundreds of posters to ensure that each library and each classroom received a copy. (Copies of the poster are also available in Guam through MARC).

The Omesodel a Beluu er a Belau er a Irechar (Features of a Typical Palau Traditional Village) is a two-page supplement to the poster. The first thing it does is state, "Talk to your family and village elders for understandings about your village and state" because no one depiction or description of traditional villages can capture the unique elements that made up each of Palau's many traditional villages. Instead, it encourages families and village elders to share their village's special aspects with the upcoming generations so that the knowledge and core values about living in traditional villages will live on.

The description discusses the typical construction, location, and features of 17 elements that made up a traditional village, from the *bai er a rubak* (chief's meeting structures), *bai er a cheldebechel er a*

mekekerei el chad (warriors/young men's meeting structure), *odesongel er a blai* (stone platform next to a house), *euatel* (defense feature), to the *btelul a chang* (dock), and the *mesei* (taro patches). It took some eight months to compile after much discussion and verification of information with elders such as the Klobak er a Ibetel a Cherechar (Society of Historians), Belau National Museum specialists, archaeologists, and cultural experts; though each village will have elements that differ from one village to the next.

It is hoped that teachers will use these posters and its accompanying supplement as tools for their classrooms. The Bureau encourages teachers to develop worksheets or assignments and share them with each other to maximize the potential of their efforts. Teachers can request a powerpoint presentation from the Bureau of Arts & Culture/Palau Historic Preservation Office for their classrooms. As next steps, the Bureau would like to work with the community again to produce posters depicting typical traditional villages in the rock islands and in the Southwest Islands.

4th Palau-EU Film Festival

The Bureau of Arts and Culture under the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs; the Ministry of State of the Republic of Palau; and the Spanish Embassy (EU President) in a collaborative effort hosted a 4th EU-Palau Film Festival in Palau from May 3-6, 2012 at the Koror State Capitol Assembly Hall.

The EU-Palau Film Festival showcased films from eight (8) countries, namely from the Czech Republic,

Belgium, Finland, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Austria. The films were shown each evening at 6:00pm for the first film and at 9:00pm for the second film. Entry was free and all were invited through advertisement via flyers inserted in the two local newspapers and via radio and TV announcements, posters, and word of mouth. A total of 272 viewers totaling in the four days film Festival

showed up which made it a success.



Opening Ceremony of the 4th Palau-EU Film Festival

Society of Historians 1st Bi-Annual Session in 2012



Historians visiting one of their ailing member Mr. Iechadairikl Renguul Kloulechad

From June 18-22 of this year, the Society of Historians held its first session for 2012 to compile the first draft of the Traditional Place Names of Palau: From the Hills to the Shore (*Ngklel a Beluu er a Belau er a Rechuodel: Ngar er a Ked el mo er a Kebokeb*) as their next publication. The His-

torians met and discussed collected Place Names, which they will compile and publish as a booklet. On their last day of their one week session they went to visit the other Historians that were unable to attend the session due to their ailing health.

New Member of the Society of Historians



The Bureau of Arts and Culture welcomes the new Historian, Smau Amalei Ngirngesang. Mr. Ngirngesang was appointed and certified to replace the deceased Ngirabrekong Jonathan Koshiba from Peleliu State. The new historian who represents Peleliu State was able to join the first session of Historian for this year 2012 that was held from June 18-22, 2012.

Archaeology and Ethnography Visual Documentation Training Completed



This year's Reconnaissance Level Survey of the Interior of Ngaremlengui State included a training element to update the survey skills of both the Inventory and Survey/Archaeology and Oral History and Ethnography Section's staff. Such updating of skills should occur on a regular basis, especially given the speed at which technology is developing, new technology which provides opportunities for conducting survey work more effectively. This training of Palau HPO staff in survey methods will allow them to do just that—conduct their future projects, including the ongoing annual interior surveys of each state, more effectively.

This training strengthens the Palau HPO's ability to produce quality records which will be used in all its ongoing work mandated by Title 19 of the Palau National Code. Additionally, there is a continuing effort for the Palau HPO to raise awareness of the importance of cultural and historic heritage in Palau. Both sections have been investigating ways to generate interest and support from the public and government sectors for the potentially fragile and significant archaeological sites found through-

out the states and the intangible heritage, such as the oral histories that provide much of the significance to such sites. The question of how to best record and document these sites led to an interest in various photography and videography techniques that can offer a more detailed accounting of the sites and provide compelling visual stories to encourage community commitment in protecting significant historical and cultural sites, oral histories, and cultural knowledge.

The training exercise had three goals. One, to train the staff in Visual Ethnographic documentation which is a specialized set of skills. Two, to build up a series of photographs and video footage to document sites and oral history as well as to document the Palau HPO staff as they are conducting their work. The final goal was to receive training on visual ethnographic considerations in selecting and presenting photographs in a visually engaging book geared toward creating public awareness and appreciation of and support for Palau Historic Preservation Office efforts. Owing to the speed of the participants in picking up photography and videography skills, an additional result was that the Palau HPO has one or two short videos explaining their survey work which may be appearing on local TV sometime in the near future.

This was the first time that a survey was combined with a training exercise. While the survey is ongoing, the completed training was very successful. Palau HPO staff learned

what makes both a good survey photograph, how to make historic artifacts or interviewees 'speak' through photographs and video, as well as how to make them more relevant for historic preservation specialists and more compelling for the general public. The Palau HPO will plan more of such trainings in order to update staff skills more regularly, keeping them more relevant and more proficient at their work. To keep the class at a workable size, the number of people that could participate was limited. However, as a pilot training exercise, the Palau HPO was able to invite a few participants from fellow entities and nearby state offices, including participation from Ngaremlengui state where this year's survey is being conducted. The office thanks the Belau National Museum and the states of Airai, Koror, and Ngaremlengui for allowing their staff time to participate in this capacity building exercise. The hopes are that those staff will share their knowledge with other preservation partners and that future trainings will be able to build on this pilot project's success to invite staff from other state offices and like entities to participate. The office also thanks the Aging Program and the generous Mechesil me a Rubekul (male and female elders) who allowed us to film and interview them. Their willingness to share their knowledge and skills with staff members and younger generations was inspiring.

PNCC Sponsors “States of Palau” Booklet Reprint to Benefit Youth



Airai, Palau. Palau National Communications Corporation (PNCC) and the Bureau of Arts and Culture (BAC) of the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs are pleased to announce a joint effort to distribute copies of a new historic preservation booklet to all schools and libraries in Palau.

The 120-page booklet is called “Visual Documentation of the States of the Republic of Palau: Creating a Sense of the Social, Cultural and Infrastructural Landscapes of Palau’s States.”

The purpose of this Bureau of Arts and Culture project is to educate Palau’s youth about the unique and special aspects of their states, and help build a sense of pride in themselves and their place which can be challenged by today’s fast-paced changes and exposure to foreign influences.

In 2010 and 2011, the Bureau visited communities throughout Palau and visually documented them, capturing their unique characteristics and social and physical infrastructure. The Bureau is mandated to document different aspects of Palau’s culture, traditions, and lifeways. The main goal was to document this particular stage in the states’ development, especially with the opening of the Compact Road which is ushering in numerous changes.

Six pages of photographs per state were selected while a description was also written detailing a typical village in Palau in contemporary times. The photographs capture elders, children, community clubs, community events, *bai*, state government offices, schools, senior citizens centers, recycling efforts, and much more.

BAC Director Dwight Alexander highlighted that a main goal of the Bureau of Arts and Culture is to not only document features which make Palau unique but to make sure to share the documentation with the community, especially the youth, and encourage the continued transmission of knowledge from elders to the next generations.

For more information about the States of Palau booklet, please contact Sylvia Kloulubak or Kelly Marsh of the Bureau of Arts and Culture at 488-2489/3361.

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 and Culture/Historic Preser-

Bureau of Arts & Culture/Palau Historic Preservation Office (Obis er a Ibetel a Cherechar)

Ministry of Community & Cultural Affairs

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