

Palau Register of Historic Places and BAC Research Library

End of the Year Report

Overview

The Palau Register of Historic Places was created by the Palau Historic Preservation Act better known as PNC 19 (Palau National Code –19). Administered then by the Division of Cultural Affairs. But after the reorganization of the Palau government in 2001, the DCA became a bureau under the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs. In the Palau Register Manual it says that the Palau Register of Historic Places is intended to serve as the official inventory of all those historical sites and tangible cultural properties which are deemed of significance to the Palauan people, hence worth preserving. It includes properties of national and state significance as well as those of local importance. It is an authoritative guide whereby government officials, private groups, and ordinary citizens can indicate which properties through out the nation should be protected from destruction or impairment. The Palau Register is the legal instrument to ensure that registered property or properties that may be eligible, threatened by the public or private development will be subject to comment and review in accordance with the procedures prescribed by law.

Register Staff (The Register Staff shall consist of the Keeper of the Register and the Registrar)

The Registrar shall receive all nominations to the Register and make sure that such nominations are properly documented (for example, the description and survey information are adequate, etc). The Registrar shall then either recommend that the board (Palau Historical and Cultural Advisory Board) consider the nomination or return the nomination to the preparer for revision. The Keeper of the Register (PHPO) may direct the Registrar to personally nominate properties to the Register. (Provision of Sub Section 131 of PNC-19, (b), and Sub Section 141, (c) of PNC-19.

Bureau of Arts and Culture Research Library

Under the provision of Sub Section 133 of the Palau Historical and Cultural Preservation Act (PNC-19): Depository for Certain Specimen and Objects

The Division, now Bureau of Arts and Culture shall serve as, or shall determine the depository for, all field notes, photographs, negatives, maps, artifacts, or other materials generated or recovered through historical and cultural preservation projects supported in whole or in part by the Republic or taking place on lands owned by the Republic.

Since 1980, the Division now a Bureau has maintained the depository for all these important documents and continue expanding its list with more collections. The Depository within the Palau Register (Palau Register Archive) then, was always referred to as 'omsengelel a klalo er a ibetel a cherechar'. It literally means the storage basket of the past. Much recently it was named BAC Research Library to complement the expansion of its collection and its service to the public. From 2001 to 2003 Jason Seva, a Peace Corps Volunteer was hired by BAC to help organize the BAC Research Library and develop a computerized archival database of over 500 collections in the library to meet its increased usage and collection. In his report, Research Library Final Project Report July 2001-August 2003, Mr. Seva recommended that the library operation and responsibilities be transferred to the Register section, for reasons that they are sharing the same office space area so it is closest to monitoring and maintaining the library. He mentioned too that Ms. Moline Smaserui, a preservation specialist, who worked with Ethnography section at the time but her background is in the library, should be an excellent candidate for librarian. In August 2004, BAC Director assigned Ms. Moline Smaserui to tend the BAC Library under the supervision of the Palau Register. Since then the BAC Library looks orderly and accessible. See library report attached.

Section's Task and Responsibilities

- 1) Solicit / prepare nominations of significant sites and recommend for review and approval of the board (PH&CAB) for inclusion into the Palau Register Historic Places. Palau Register's goal is to complete ten (10) or more site nominations each year. To date a total of 143 sites have been registered into the Palau Register. Twenty six (26) of them were being restored to date. This year (2005) the board (PH&CAB) met twice and reviewed and approved ten (10) site nominations.

The board first meeting on May 24, 2005, met and reviewed and approved the following site nominations: 1) Chilong / Ilong (B:NM-3:2 F.12), Ngeremlengui State 2) Olbatel Terrace Set (B:NM-2:19), Ngeremlengui State, 3) Ked ra Kaliol (B:NC-9:1), Ngchesar State, 4) Petroglyph (B:NA-2:20), Ngaraard State, 5) Disechir ar Turang (B:IM-6:6), Aimeliik State.

Second meeting on October 6, 2005, the board met again and reviewed and approved the following site nominations: 1) Olngembard (B:NR-14:1), Ngardmau State, 2) Ngetilai / Terrace Set (B:NR-1:2), Ngardmau State, 3) Coastal Defense Gun / Jap WWII (B:NC-5:9), Ngchesar State, 4) Bai Platform, Ngis Village, (B:NI-2:6 F.11), Ngiwal State, 5) Desengong Traditional Village (B:NA-2:18), Ngaraard State.

- 2) Monitor regularly the registered sites and all eligible sites to ensure their protection and preservation under the law.
- 3) Maintain the BAC Research Library. Protection and preservation of all important documents, artifacts, and other materials with historical values held in the Research Library.
- 4) Coordinate with all sixteen states the annual Site Restoration and Development project at the beginning of each year, and assist and monitor the implementation of the project with the respective state selected to restore and interpret a registered site each year. This year, 2005, Beluu er a Ulong (Ulong Traditional Village-B:OR-20) in Koror State Rock Island was restored.

