

Submission
to the

Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

**Inquiry into the main economic and security challenges facing Papua New
Guinea and the Island States of the Southwest Pacific.**

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1 Understanding the Pacific

In 2008, three major events foreshadowed a new and deeper engagement between Australia, New Guinea and the Islands of the Southwest Pacific. Firstly Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's *Port Moresby Declaration* in March 2008, followed shortly after by an address "Australia's new partnerships with the region" by the new Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Affairs, Mr Duncan Kerr, when opening a conference on Australia-Pacific relations in April 2008, and thirdly the Australian Prime Minister's well-received attendance at the 39th Pacific Islands Forum at Alofi, Niue in August 2008. In the public perception of Australia's engagement, these diplomatic and benchmarks were overshadowed by the sympathetic full front page photograph of a smiling, enthusiastic young iKiribati woman wanting to become a temporary labourer in Australia under a new guest worker scheme. (*The Australian*, 29th August 2008)

An understanding of Australia's regional security needs and related contributions to the challenges faced by Pacific Islanders, and the solutions Pacific Islanders themselves have devised to meet these problems, is at best at the early stage. There are both positive and negative aspects to consider, including;

- At the political level the appointment of a Parliamentary Secretary, the Prime Ministers early visits to the region and consistent re-engagement with the Pacific Forum and island nations bilaterally after an uneven decade are all positive signs.
- At the academic level, the malaise, even decline in Pacific Island Studies in Australian universities, and its near absence in the school curriculum, suggests that Australian scholars and the future generation will not develop a deep and exemplary range of expertise in the region.
- At the public level, Australians rarely study, read about in books or magazines, or see the Pacific Islands in newspapers or TV or hear about it on the radio.
- Australia also fails to engage with and understand its own Pacific Islander populations, the *Kanakas* or Australian South Sea Islanders, as well as the large more recent communities of Samoans, Tongans, Fijians, Cook Islanders, and others, and those called FOB, or fresh-off-the-boat immigrants. The public perception is also distorted by media portrayals of alleged "Polynesian" youth gangs, unruly sportsmen, and criminal activities. That Australians resort to the term "Polynesian" is an indication of Australia's inability to understand the cultural diversity of the region.
- In 2008, the Australian government as well as the Australian people will also need to engage with Pacific Islander temporary workers who will arrive in rural and remote areas, work hard, and leave.
- A positive relationship is established through the many Australians who maintain a constant flow back and forth through tourism.
- A further positive sign is at the non-government level, where Australians engage in the region on a daily basis, such as running voluntary eye clinics, putting a new roof on a school, Church visits, and book donation schemes.

Australia has responded to the occurrence of security challenges, political instability and global threat rather than prepare proactively to forestall or manage appropriately an emerging crisis or worrying trend. The perception by Pacific Islanders of Australia

has been shaped by several key recent events. These have confirmed Pacific Islander's opinion that Australia's priority is always to act in its own interest or profit. The political, academic and public perception within Australia of these events has worked to downplay the importance of the region, and to portray Australia cynically as the "big brother", the benign benefactor and friend. The key events that have shaped Australia's engagement include;

- A late arrival in Timor, and then claims to have saved the East Timorese. (Not part of the Southwest Pacific, but for ordinary Australians, perceived as a neighbouring "island" nation)
- Failure to act in support of West Papuans campaign for autonomy, justice and Human Rights
- The failure of the policing element of the most recent aid package in PNG
- The obscure and excessive over-importance given to the Moti affair
- The embarrassment of the Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare airport shoe incident.
- The expulsion of Australian diplomats and officials from Vanuatu
- Imposing an Australian leader on the key regional organization.
- Sending our navy into off-shore waters to 'scare' Fijians after the 2006 coup
- Dumping refugees in Nauru (and Manus) and abandoning them
- Imposing a *Pacific Plan* for development in the region, but not contributing to its implementation
- Arriving late in the Solomon Islands, but with excessive force and an ill-prepared plan for revival, development and exit

Australia has emerged from the last ten years with a generally negative record of engagement, despite having contributed to many essential and innovative developments that are appreciated by Pacific Islanders. A conclusion drawn from this evidence is that Australians do not understand the Pacific.

Seeking solutions within Australia and working to develop bilateral and multilateral solutions in the region are the two parallel tasks of the coming decade. Ideas and practical, concrete proposals are listed in section 7 below.

2 Security challenges

The Pacific Islands are not a region of risk, an 'arc of instability' or characterised by 'failed states' that will endanger Australia's safety.

For example, Samoa is often cited as a positive case for growth, and while Papua New Guinea has many problems, it also has a GDP growth rate of around 6.5%. Other entities have had coups, changes of government, fragile political parties, rising crime and unequal relations with international organizations, multinational corporations and former colonial powers, but have shown absolutely no inclination to welcome dissident, terrorist or militaristic tendencies.

The only danger to Australia lies in the one entity that Australia refuses to engage with and which has been consistently excluded from Australia's definition of the Pacific. Yet **West Papuans** are Papuans – Pacific Island people. The challenge is for Australia to engage assertively and in a well-informed manner with Indonesia – the

colonial overlord – but also to give a much higher priority to a broad spectrum of relations with West Papua as a sovereign entity in its own right.

The proposed 25% reduction in **France's** military worldwide also provides an opportunity for Australia to engage more fully with France in the Pacific region. France retains its colonial possessions in New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna and French Polynesia. The Australian government's denial of a role by France, for example, in RAMSI, is a negative perception that needs to be overcome. Australia should develop a shared military and security relationship with France for a single strategic or security policy for the whole South Pacific region.

The idea that Australia is the **USA's** deputy in the region, an idea promoted by the previous government, needs to be laid to rest completely. The current Prime Minister's declaration that the former three foreign policy priority relations – with USA, China and Japan – have been replaced by a new priority ranking – UN, USA and Pacific Islands – is a welcome sign, but is not known or acknowledged around the region. My recent visits to Fiji, PNG and New Caledonia in June-August 2008, for example, revealed that no-one knew Australia's priorities had changed. Australia needs to develop a greater presence in the island nations, on the ground, through sponsorships, subsidising major events, festivals, public attractions, in order to establish clearly that we are not the USA's agent, and that the Pacific is a priority for Australia.

New Zealand is also an active agent in security matters in the region. It retains colonial possessions or negotiated forms of free association with Tokelau, Niue and the Cook Islands, and is active commercially in most of region that the Senate has set for this Inquiry. Australia's relations with the region, therefore overlap with New Zealand's and in several key events New Zealand has gained regional applause and clearly shown the initiative that Australia lacked – for example, over peace negotiations in Bougainville, an apology to indigenous peoples (in Samoa), and a Pacific Islander Guest Worker scheme. The presence of scholarship on New Zealand and Pacific relations and the absence on Australia-Pacific relations are reflected in several books on New Zealand's relations with the Pacific, including the most recent on *New Zealand – New Caledonia; neighbours, friends, partners*, (S Levine and F Angleviel, eds, VUW Press, 2008). Australia's security concerns and interests in the region are shared with New Zealand and a greater emphasis should be placed on developing shared Trans-Tasman Pacific policies.

France, New Zealand and Australia should be equal partners in the Southwest Pacific region. This should become a security, strategic and military priority.

3 Employment and Labour

Is there a link between improved employment prospects and a well regulated, growing labour market in the Pacific Islands, and the achievement by Australia of a secure and safe region? The link is tenuous. Certainly it can be shown that prosperity reduces crime, creates social capital, intellectual growth and parliamentary stability – and I have witnessed these first hand in visits to Port Moresby between 1992 and 2008. Creating jobs creates internal stability. Higher levels of employment in the region are a worthwhile objective and Australian aid should be targeting this development. But a

stable, expanding and well trained work force in for example, PNG, Fiji or Nauru, does not necessarily make Australia's borders more secure. Establishing a link between labour and employment and regional security demeans our assistance program. Australia should assist economically, but only for the reason that Pacific island entities have identified this priority.

4 Education and Training

Various schemes have been mooted to create a **better trained work force** in the Pacific. One proposal is to merge governance, security and economic targets by establishing a regional Training College, initially for the Solomon Islands and PNG but later extending to the region (see Moore and Jackson, separate submission to the Inquiry). As many submissions to the 2006 Inquiry pointed out, training Pacific Islanders to be motor mechanics might be good for the Australian motor industry later on, but surely marine, sanitation and water supply engineers, aircraft maintenance, radio/TV/internet technicians, and wind/wave/solar energy expertise are the types of training needed in societies where basic utilities are non-existent or break down regularly, roads are rare and air and sea communication the norm. Training Pacific Islanders to construct, for example, a local deep-water port facility, is a high priority. Australian assistance programs should acknowledge the needs of the Pacific.

Education in Pacific Island Studies at all levels in Australia needs to expand dramatically. The founding of the Australian Association for the advancement of Pacific Studies (AAAPS) was designed to achieve this **at the tertiary level**, and has already been active despite having little funding, with two conferences, several workshops, regional linkages, a postgraduate training forum and a national newsletter (attached as Appendix 1). A national report to be released by AAAPS in late 2008 will identify policies and practical ways to expand Australian excellence in teaching, research, and scholarship. It should be noted that the number of universities now teaching Pacific Island Studies, or providing an Institute, Centre or Program to facilitate Higher Degree research (Honours, Masters, Phd) is in serious decline, notwithstanding new moves at JCU and ANU and a continuing undergraduate presence at QUT (but now threatened). QUT is the only university that offers an undergraduate course in Australia-Pacific relations. After the 2008 AAAPS conference a "Declaration" including several practical suggestions was forwarded to the Prime Minister. (attached as Appendix 2) Support for AAAPS as a coordinating body should be a national priority.

At the school level, Australians need to understand more about the neighbouring Pacific Islands, and our long and broad historical and contemporary relationships, but this expansion in the school curriculum faces other equally pressing demands to know more about, for example, Australian History, Asia, foreign languages and crucial health and social issues. Expansion will be achieved only through incremental strategies, and a slow Pacificisation of the whole curriculum, rather than as stand-alone subjects.

There needs to be a quantum increase in the number of **scholarships** provided by Australia to Pacific Islanders to undertake study and training in Australia. This will create a personal reciprocity which will continue to link the returning leadership – the elite who will lead the next generation – with their alma mater, Professors and friends

in Australia. The Australian High Commissioner to PNG sadly noted that PNG had sent only 135 scholarship holders to Australia in the last year and this is from our former colony, a troubled nation of 6.5m people but which is also a neighbour, and prosperous, economic giant in regional terms.

Australia already has a number of private **think-tanks, government-funded institutes and university centres** that focus wholly or partially on the Pacific Islands. The CDI, ASPI, Lowy Institute, ACPACS, SSGM and CIS release regular reports, run training programs and public awareness programs and take advisory roles to government. There have been recent proposals for a Pacific Centre within ANU (but not yet fully supported), and an innovative new Cairns Research Institute for Tropical Studies (at JCU). Government funding for a College of Diplomacy, which took \$4m+ from the \$7m dedicated to the five year life of the *International Centre of Excellence in Asia and Pacific Studies* (ICE-APS) is an example of elite resource capture, in which a centre was created that had little impact and has not produced outcomes that benefit the region. Do we need more centres? If the university sector expanded in Australia, there would probably be room for state-based, funded centres to act in

- A coordinating role for all Australian programs in the region, and to create greater linkages between Australia and the Southwest Pacific. (perhaps through AAAPS)
- As a training institution to develop a cadre of Australian bureaucrats and managers (in the manner that ASOPA prepared Australians to work in TPNG)

Education in the Pacific Islands needs to break the shackles of the colonial legacy (the region's independent nations gained their nation status only recently, between 1962 and 1994). They need to nationalise their curriculum. If Australia could replicate the successful program initiated by Vanuatu to nationalise their History, Society and Culture programs (for example, by producing an excellent 4 volume guide for teachers and students) we would be doing a great service to those nations created in the decolonisation era, but who may still be regarded as not yet a nation in terms of identity, unity and loyalties. A regional program to create national histories, in the same manner that the Australian government is mandating Australian History as an "Essential Learning" would be a good start, but would need careful consideration of the sparse teaching materials, support and services in Pacific island schools. Several practical ideas were submitted to the Prime Minister's office early in 2008 (by two academics with long engagement in the region), and these suggest that minimal funding could establish a long term program of national consciousness-raising. (attached as Appendix 3)

5 Regional Organizations

Since 1945 Australia has promoted a form of "Regionalism" in the Pacific Islands as a means to safeguard the small island states and territories (and now nations) from external threats – communism, the cold war, terrorism and other alleged fears. Australia along with New Zealand, Britain, the USA, in an atmosphere affected by global events, created a Southwest Pacific regional network that is heavily bureaucratic and hegemonic. Most Pacific Island nations now belong to regional organizations that coordinate, manage, plan and monitor the region's trade, shipping, environment, education, science, gender, health, fishing and other crucial developments and shared concerns. Their acronyms have become well known – SPC,

SOPAC, SPREP, SPBEA, USP and many have close links to Australia, such as PIMA, (the Pacific Island Museums Association), which now has a Museums Partnership program with Australia.

Are individual Pacific Islands better off by participating in all these regional forums, secretariats and councils, and more recently the creation of visiting “Eminent Person” groups? Yes, because they have made some advances which benefit individual nations in the region, and because in an international context they have established their membership and equal role in international forums.

Is Australia’s security any better preserved by having regional cooperation? The answer is negative. The unwillingness by Pacific Island nations to fully embrace regionalism, means that Australia has maintained its belief in regionalism – for fiscal reasons mostly associated with aid flows – at the cost of not acknowledging the specific problems and solutions emerging from individual entities. Australia’s recent obsession with governance and security at a regional level obscures the goals and innovative solutions emerging from within individual nations.

The most recent blunder has been to initiate, promote and underwrite the so-called *Pacific Plan*, a regional development program aligned with the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDG), but then to draw back and see it flounder as nations struggle to pay for the cost of being involved, who have put implementation well below other priorities, and who fail to see any advantages that regionalism through the *Pacific Plan* might bring to their own nation.

Australia needs to maintain its full support of the role played by the **Pacific Islands Forum**. Prime Minister Rudd’s appearance at the Niue Forum in August was noted with approval around the region, in the same manner that former Prime Minister Howard’s absences and Foreign Minister Downer’s early departure were noted negatively.

Should Australia play a more open and fulsome role in **regional organisations**? The answer is that Australia should be more generous with funding, and establishing reciprocal exchanges and professional development programs, but should restrain our role to only joining in regional forums as a partner, equal and friend. An anecdote often related in the region is that the best Australians are those willing to sit, patiently and talk things through slowly under a coconut tree – suits, briefcases, agendas, performance indicators and watches are useful, but in the Pacific Islands context, silence is more powerful.

6 Implications for Australia

Australia historically looked to Britain, but the imperial connections frayed and we turned to the USA. Australia later also turned to Asia and tried often and unsuccessfully to become a member of the Asian bloc. All this has been at the expense of maintaining a close engagement with our immediate neighbours in the Pacific Islands – just across the Coral Sea the capital cities of Port Moresby, Port Vila, Honiara and Noumea are all closer to Brisbane than the southern state capitals of Hobart, Melbourne and Adelaide. Cairns is now a hub for fly in-fly out employees from Freeport, Lihir and other sites in western Melanesia, and Darwin’s polyglot

tropical community reflects an Asian-ness and Pacific Islander culture not found in the south. Noumea's links to Brisbane and Sydney are invisible but extensive and continue to expand (current mining developments in Goro are in effect Brisbane-based) and thousands of New Caledonians fly each year to Australia for medical treatment. At various times we have paid close attention to events – the Fiji coups, Nauru's economic woes, rioting in Tonga - but in Political Scientist Greg Fry's words, the Pacific had fallen off the map.

The implication is that we need to be better prepared, better educated, and better trained and to have “deeper engagement and understanding” and closer relations with our neighbours. Australia needs to be proactive and forewarned about trends, patterns and events as they develop in the region, not reactive and relying on knee-jerk responses. For example, despite being in the Solomon Islands for three years, no one in RAMSI predicted the 2006 Chinatown riots and tellingly the Australian Federal Police's latest idea is to have Operations Response Groups (ORGs) ready in Brisbane to fly in - and put out fires should they occur. Australia does need to respond to emergencies in the region, but in the long term, being better educated, involved in reciprocal exchanges and training, and having a cadre of Australians well informed on the Pacific would benefit our bilateral and multilateral relationships.

The implication is that if Australia ignores the region, the fragile small nations could implode, or entangle Australia in global conflicts. This is unlikely, judged on recent global, Australian and regional affairs. The recently independent young nations of the Pacific, without Australia's hand on the tiller, have competently and efficiently charted the complex global waters of international relations, foreign affairs and diplomacy, and being or not being a friend of Australia has not been an important consideration. For many reasons, the Pacific Islands rarely look to Australia, and Australia in turn has consistently ignored the region. The enigma is that we remain on good terms on a nation-to-nation basis, and that is because Australians in the islands, individually do good deeds, act as mates and establish close friendships.

The implication is that Australia needs to do more in the region. Promoting economic growth, facilitating good governance and facilitating regionalism in accordance with MDGs will create a prosperous, stable and friendly neighbourhood. Australia can do more – but it needs to go about it differently.

7 Practical solutions

In this section I merely stress again the practical ideas noted in parts 2 to 6 above;

Security

- give a much higher priority to a broad spectrum of **relations with West Papua** as a sovereign entity in its own right.
- develop a shared military and security relationship with France for **a single strategic or security policy** for the whole South Pacific region.
- **develop a greater presence** in the island nations, on the ground, through sponsorships, subsidising major events, festivals, public attractions
- give more emphasis to developing shared **Trans-Tasman Pacific policies**.

- **France, New Zealand and Australia** should be equal partners in the Southwest Pacific region. This should become a security, strategic and military priority

Education and Training

- Emphasis in **training** should be given to marine, sanitation and water supply engineers, aircraft maintenance, radio/TV/internet technicians, and wind/wave/solar energy expertise
- Support for **AAAPS as a coordinating body** should be a national priority
- **Develop a government response** to practical suggestions forwarded to the Prime Minister in the 2008 AAAPS conference “Declaration”
- Pacificisation of the whole **primary and secondary school curriculum**, rather than as stand-alone subjects
- a quantum increase in the number of **scholarships** provided by Australia to Pacific Islanders
- funding of **two state-based centres** to;
 - Coordinate all Australian programs in the region, and to create greater linkages between Australia and the Southwest Pacific. (through AAAPS)
 - Train a cadre of Australian bureaucrats and managers (in the manner that ASOPA prepared Australians to work in TPNG)
- Develop and fund a ten year regional program to create **national histories** in each entity.

Regional Organizations

- maintain full support of the **Pacific Islands Forum**
- **be more generous** with funding, and establishing reciprocal exchanges and professional development programs
- **restrain and redefine our role** to only joining in regional forums as a equal, partner and friend

Implications and action

- **Be proactive and forewarned** about events as they develop in the region, not reactive and relying on knee-jerk responses
- **Be better educated** in Australia about the Pacific
- Be involved in more **reciprocal exchanges** and training
- Develop a **well-trained and well-informed cadre** of bureaucrats and officials ready to work in the islands
- **Do more** but go about it **differently**

Note; Appendices 2 and 3 contain several practical solutions. Most of these need further deliberation, to be fully costed and placed within a futures scenario and written into long-term government policy.

The author

The opinions and general observations in this submission are based on teaching, research and being involved in Pacific Island fieldwork, organisations and associations since 1973 in both Australia and in the Pacific Islands. For example, in

June-August 2008 I was in Viwa and Suva, Fiji organising my undergraduate overseas fieldwork and attending conference planning meetings for the 2008 Suva PHA conference, then in Port Moresby for two UPNG conferences “Book2Buk” and the revived Waigani Seminar, and then in Noumea carrying out research for two books jointly with ANU, UNSW and New Caledonian co-authors and organising a regional workshop for Pacific Islander History teachers. This submission is informed by activities in the region, research, personal experience and observation over a long period. I have taught *HHB245 Australia and the South Pacific* at QUT, Brisbane since 1993 along with a suite of other Pacific Studies units, and am currently Secretary of the AAAPS, and a Life member and Newsletter Editor for the PHA. This submission is private, and not as a representative of QUT, AAAPS or the PHA.

Appendices

- 1 **AAAPS Newsletter (August 2008)** (the author is Newsletter Editor)
- 2 **Declaration of the AAAPS conference, April 2008**
(the author is secretary of the AAAPS)
- 3 **Letter from McCall and Quanchi to the Prime Minister**

1 AAAPS Newsletter (August 2008)

Aust-Pac News

AAAPS Newsletter; No 1, August 2008
 Australian Association for the Advancement of Pacific Studies

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For information about AAAPS, contact Prof Clive Moore, President of AAAPS, University of Queensland, at c.moore@uq.edu.au; for editorial matters contact Dr Max Quanchi, Newsletter Editor, Queensland University of Technology m.quanchi@qut.edu.au

Around the States and Territories

News and shorter notices

Pasifika Australia is an ongoing ANU program in Canberra designed to celebrate and foster a deeper understanding of Pacific Island communities in Australia. Events include a theme dinner discussing identity issues for Pacific Islander Australians, a Fun Day at The Australian National University (ANU) celebrating Pacific Island cultures followed by a community forum, and a three-day workshop with ACT and Greater NSW secondary school students, which will provide a mini program on Pacific Studies at the Acton and Kioloa campuses of ANU. The Bruce Hall dinner for high school students is Aug 27, the Fun Day and Community Forum will be held October 30, and the Pacific Studies workshop and retreat for ACT/NSW high school students and ANU staff and students is Nov 21-23. All events feature special guests representing Pacific Islanders' achievements in academia, sports, dance, politics, business and the visual arts. During these events, students will be encouraged to actively participate by designing group projects using their own creative ideas and talents. For more information please contact Liz Comrie-Thomson; Comrie-Thomson@anu.edu.au Tel: +61 2 61252271

Deakin University (Melbourne) recently offered a postdoctoral fellowship for 18 months in the area of Pacific Island history, heritage and memory, a designated Pacific project. <http://www.deakin.edu.au/hr/employment/academic.php>. **John Ritchie** took up the Pacific post in mid-2008, one of the twelve fellowships offered, after a ten year absence from Pacific Studies while at Trinity College, Melbourne University. John spoke at the 2008 Waigani seminar in August about his research on public participation in the writing of the 1975 PNG constitution, and to a round of applause, about growing up as a young boy in Port Moresby.

The State Library of Queensland is hoping to extend its sixteen ***Indigenous knowledge Centres*** across Cape York Peninsula and the Torres Strait by making links with similar

community access projects in Papua New Guinea. The Centre's provide traditional library services (including information and communication technologies) as well as a means and a place to capture and preserve local history and traditions. "Indigenous Knowledge Centres are breathing places ... they keep our culture strong for our children ... look after our traditions, songs, language, stories and artwork ... bring back the things that guide us today for the future ... combining a meeting place for traditional business with modern library services". The first Centre was established in 2002.

The ***Guide to International Development Terms and Acronyms - Pacific Focus*** is a new resource for academics, students, development practitioners and others passionate about international development in the Pacific region. Published by the Development Resource Centre, Aotearoa New Zealand's independent not-for-profit centre on international development and global issues, the Guide gives concise, accessible definitions and critical summaries for more than 1,200 terms used in current development debate. The Guide is edited by experienced researchers and based on meticulous research and collaboration with academics, development practitioners and activists from around the Pacific. The Guide is available direct from the Development Resource Centre (www.dev-zone.org/devguide) for NZ\$20 (inc. p&p) to a New Zealand address, or NZ\$25 (inc. p&p) for international orders. All income generated is used to further inform and educate people to take action to create a just world.

The prestigious **Waigani Seminars** which ran at UPNG in Port Moresby from 1966 to 1997 have been revived. The first in the second series, the 2008 Waigani Seminar on the broad theme of the run down to independence in 1975 and current visions for the future, ran for three days in August, and was preceded by a two day "Boko2Buk" conference on books, writing and publishing. The Australian connection was again strong, less than in the earlier series of seminars, but many PNG speakers contextualised their papers in the context of Australia's withdrawal and the declaration of independence by PNG in 1975. The Australian High Commissioner, Mr Chris Moraitis, gave one of the opening addresses, and later chaired a session on "Village and the city" and others who spoke with long connections to PNG included Ted Wolfers, John Ritchie, Ian Maddocks, Anthony Regan, Ron Crocombe, Ann Turner, Max Quanchi, John Prince, Ron May and Robert Brown. As well as the critical mass of research on PNG by Australians being in decline, the flow of PNG students to Australia was also slowing – the High Commissioner noted that only 135 scholarships had been awarded in the last year to study in Australia.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) has released two books based on documents relating to Australia's relations with PNG. (see New Resources below). These and an amazing collection of books on PNG and the wider Pacific are available from the revitalised **UPNG Bookshop**, now under the guidance of John Evans. The book shop's shelves are groaning with rare copies of old and out of print books, new books, hard to get government reports and back issues of many journals. Contact John Evans on jevans@upng.ac.pg or visit the website www.pngbuai.com/buybooks

In an interesting commentary on books and access to communication in PNG, it was noted at the 2008 Waigani Seminar, that there are now no bookshops in Port Moresby (except for the newly revived UPNG Bookshop), that bookshops were selling 5000 comic books a week in the 1970s and now there are none, and that access to newspapers, TV and radio is still abysmal with only 48% of Papua New Guineans having access any form of media. But it was noted that mobile phone access by just one company, Digicel, has jumped from 160000 to 400000 subscribers in the last year. Across PNG in 2005 there were 60000 users, but in 2008 this had increased to 900000 mobile phone users.

An indication of the strong connections between PNG and Australia, its former colonial power, can be seen on Port Moresby TV every night. Programs from *Impara* in Darwin, channels 7 and 9, the ABC and SBS form the nightly viewing for many in Port Moresby, surely a phenomenon that needs research. Although there are few Australians now living in PNG, the full passenger lists on flights to Australia, and TV suggest many links remain.

One of the rare novels by an Australian author that is set in the Pacific, ***Dead Birds***, was released recently by Trevor Shearston (Sydney: ABC Books, \$22.95). The Pacific is a setting previously taken up in Shearston's novels, but strangely not a genre attracting many other Australian writers. New Zealand writer Lloyd Jones ***Mister Pip*** is another rare example, set in Bougainville during a civil war when a new young school teacher arrives but finds the war has driven all the villagers away. *Mister Pip* was short listed for the 2007 Man Booker Prize and was winner of the 2007 Commonwealth Writers Prize. Jones spoke about *Mister Pip* at the Brisbane Writer's festival in September 2008.

Adding to a long line of "Cook Books", John Gascoigne's ***Captain Cook; voyager between two worlds*** was released by Continuum Books. Cook has retained scholar's attention and books regularly appear, including the two by Nicholas Thomas and Ann Salmon, but the focus of all these works on is on Cook in the Pacific, rather than as the dubious "discoverer" of Australia. The latest Cook documentary and re-enactment was also screened again on TV recently, again indicating the public interest in his life and times.

Papa blong Chimbu, a brilliant new documentary about a young German woman's search for details of her uncle's life as a Catholic missionary in PNG screened on *Compass* (ABCTV1) in March 2008. The film has cutting edge film technique, an engrossing story and offers insights into colonial relationships, PNG society and the place of the Church. Check Air Nuigini's in-flight magazine, *Paradise*, No 4 2008, pages 28-32, for a story on Verena and the making of the film. For further information about the film contact www.papabilongchimbu.com or Verena at <verena.thomas@gmx.com> or buy directly from *Ronin Films* at www.roninfilms.com.au

An exhibition of Frank Hurley's Papuan photography will run at the Australian Museum, Sydney from March 2008 and March 2009. (Entry is \$10.) "**Frank Hurley; Journey's into Papua**" is based on Hurley's trips to Papua in 1921-1923. Hurley has been the subject of several books and his photographs are amazing record of Papua material culture, life and the Papuan people.

Meryn Jones, an artist who spent her early years in PNG, took the complex relationship between Australia and PNG as a motif for an exhibition of art works titles "**Mixmasta - Liklik Mary**" at Baboia gallery, Brisbane in April-June 2008. Meryn's art was an outcome of trying for decades to come to terms with leaving PNG.

The **Australian Federal Police** announced in January 2008 that it was rebuilding its numbers for an increased role in the region. Twenty officers were in Timor and the Solomon Islands, as well as others in Tonga, Nauru and Vanuatu. Three special Operations Response Groups (ORGs) were being established for a rapid response in the region.

Colonial Sugar Refinery (CSR) committed itself to \$30000 in support over the next six years for the Australian South Sea Islander Community Foundation. The Foundation assists students with undergraduate university studies. Since its inception in 2001, twenty scholarships have been awarded at James Cook, CQU and USC. Contact; www.qcf.org.au or Annie Kirwan on 61-07-33603854

Niuean **John Pule's** exhibition, *Amanakiaga*, his first solo show and only the second time he had been exhibited in Australia ran in Melbourne in November 2007. The exhibition centred on six huge white canvas pieces, Pule's Niuean heritage and bark cloth painting, and his "socio-political" concerns for the Pacific.

North Melbourne's Meat market hosted the **Tatana Village Choir** from Papua New Guinea in October 2007. The sixteen members were part of the "*We don't dance for no reason*" festival.

Check the **Canberra Times** archives for a commentary on the performance of RAMSI in the Solomon Islands, by Gaurev Sodhi. (February 4 2008)

In the run down to the 2007 election which saw John Howard ousted by Kevin Rudd, the **Lowy Institute for International Policy** released "An Australian voter's guide" on Australia's

relations with the Pacific, prepared by Malcolm Cook. This can be obtained from the Lowy Institute website, contact: www.lowyinstitute.org

In another demonstration of Australians willingness to donate to charities and work to help others, a **Solomon Island Tsunami Appeal** concert was rapidly organized at St Peter's Lutheran College, Brisbane in May 2007. The tsunami had caused widespread destruction in the Solomon's Western province.

Wanting to find out about **Fijian immigration to Brisbane**, go to http://www.usp.ac.fj/jica/ict_research/documents/pdf_files/negotiating%20cultural%20identity%20in%20the%20age%20of%20ICT.pdf

A **Kiribati independence celebration** was held in Brisbane on 12th July at the Merimac Centre in Annerley. It started at 5.30pm with a \$5 per person donation. This is one of many similar, annual Independence Day, and other community events, celebrated by Pacific Islanders now in Australia.

A **Solomon Islands Independence celebration** was also held in Brisbane on 28 June also at the Merimac Centre in Annerley, a few days in advance of the 30th anniversary of Independence on 7th July. Solomon Islanders in Brisbane had run several fund raising events in the lead up to the big event. Entry was \$10, with a huge Island meal included in the price, and door prizes included a return trip for two to Honiara on Solomon Airlines. The event began with a church service conducted by Father Gary Fagg and Brother Gabriel Maelasi. About 300 Solomon Islanders, including many children, attended.

(Ed. If you know of any other similar events send the details to m.quanchi@qut.edu.au and we will publish them on the AAAPS website and in the Newsletter.)

Tell It As It Is, the autobiography, of Sir Peter Kenilorea, the first Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, was launched in Honiara as part of the Solomon Islands 30th anniversary of Independence ceremony. Clive Moore from the University of Queensland worked with Sir Peter as editor for two years to get the book ready.

About two hundred people attended the **Solomon Islands Association** picnic in New Farm Park, Brisbane, on 18 May. There were a large number of expatriate 'old hands', including ex-Police Commissioner John Hollaway and James Tedder, a long-serving District Officer who had copies of his recently published book, *Solomon Island Years: a District Officer in the Islands, 1952-1974* for sale.

A new Australian inquiry was announced by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade in July; **Inquiry into the economic and security challenges facing Papua New Guinea and the island states of the southwest Pacific**. "The committee will inquire into the major economic and security challenges facing Papua New Guinea and the island states of the southwest Pacific. This inquiry comes at a time when Australia is looking for opportunities to help countries in this region build a more secure and economically viable future. The committee is seeking views from people who have an understanding of the major challenges facing these countries. The committee is particularly interested in hearing from businesses and organisations actively engaged in the region that, based on their experiences, are well placed to offer suggestions on how Australia can, in concrete and practical ways, assist these countries overcome economic difficulties. In considering the security and economic challenges, the committee is to include an examination of: employment opportunities, labour mobility, education and skilling; barriers to trade, foreign investment, economic infrastructure, land ownership and private sector development; Current regional organisations such as the Pacific Islands Forum and the Secretariat of Pacific Community". The closing date for submissions is 30 August 2008. Contact: fadt.sen@aph.gov.au www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/fadt_ctte/index.htm

The June newsletter of **Polytoxic** welcomed three new members to the company. "We welcome the filthy gorgeous Amanda-Lyn Pearson who brings her Aussie larrikinism and hot moves, the high flyin antics and super six pack of Mark Winmill and the backflippin, island

flavor of Natano Fa'anana. After a very enjoyable initiation ceremony held on the 16th April 2008 our new members proved their commitment and dedication through a number of rituals performed in front of some of our loving supporters. The trio ploughed through difficult obstacle courses and tasks, performing under pressure with fabulous results and taking the Polytoxic oath, the first being: Food will always remain my highest priority and I will promise to bring lunch to all rehearsals. On a serious note this is a very exciting time for Polytoxic as they expand and broaden the company bringing in three amazing artists, all of whom are well respected and known as individual performers. After years of informal collaboration this uniting of talents comes as no surprise to avid Polytoxic followers. This Brisbane based dance ensemble has hard earned their local acclaim and is eagerly forging national recognition. The three original performers of Polytoxic bring quirk, energy and wit to the stage in a distinct and sophisticated fashion. Each performer's intricate background, performance history and physicality add a special ingredient to the twisted, exotic and yet accessible Polytoxic blend. The recent company expansion further explores this blend, with three new members promising to bring more flavours, skills and ingenuity. Mark, Natano and Amanda-Lyn all bring to the collective their immense circus, aerial and dance skills, however the unifying quality is a willingness to create clever, comedic, entertaining and most importantly unforgettable characters that tell quirky, inventive and diverse Australian stories". Contact; info@polytoxiclovesyou.com ; www.polytoxiclovesyou.com <http://www.myspace.com/polytoxiclovesyou>

State Library of New South Wales Fellowships. The CH Currey Memorial Fellowship (\$20,000) aims to promote the writing of Australian history from original sources including the collections of the State Library of New South Wales. The Nancy Keesing Fellowship (\$12,000) aims to promote the State Library of New South Wales for research on Australian history and culture. Closing date: 15 September 2008 For details telephone 02-92731467 or visit <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/about/awards> or <awards@sl.nsw.gov.au>

Sing sing: breaking the sound, a concert of Pacific music from PNG and the Torres Strait, was held around the nation in 2007. There was a great line-up of twenty bands, singers, dancers and performers including the world famous *George Telek* from New Britain, Airi Ingram (from *Drum Drum*) and the *Moab String Band*. David Bridie was the musical director and inspiration behind the concert.

Another David Bridie project is the inaugural **Australasian World Music Expo** in Melbourne in November 20-23rd 2008. Bridie's will perform his latest album at the Expo concert, which includes percussion beats from the PNG drummer Airi Ingram, and the song "Foreign Correspondent" a tribute to cameraman Mark Worth who died in Jayapura, West Papua in 2004. The Expo's aim is to increase the profile of acts from the Pacific and "emphasise the quality and diversity that exists".

Not many current events in the Pacific get turned immediately into a pop song, but Melbourne musician, David Bridie's band, **My friend the chocolate cake** has just released a new album *Home improvements* which contains an emotive and haunting song "**Weather coast**". This tells the story of events on the south coast of Guadalcanal during the 1998-2003 turmoil in the Solomons. Bridie is also well known for his long collaboration through albums and concerts with New Britain's George Telek. He was also instrumental in starting up **Wantok Musik Foundation**, which aims to promote Pacific Island labels and performers, recording and marketing, and to "generate and foster cultural exchanges between Australia and our neighbours throughout Oceania". Contact; info@wantokmusik.org

In August 2008, the *Powerhouse* in Brisbane hosted a five day festival known as **Pasifika**. The music, performance, theatre and other events showcased the Pacific Islands. It was all free except for the two highlight shows, "Wild dogs under my skirt" and "Vula", both not to be missed.

(Ed. The following items are taken from the *Pacific History Association* Newsletter, No 46, July 2008)

A proposal to establish a funded **Resource Centre** within ANU's Pacific Centre as a means to communicate ANU's interests in the Pacific and PNG to government, NGOs, regional governments and the media, was discussed recently in Canberra. The proposal is based on a model used by DIFD and UK universities. The meeting was attended by the Hon Mr Bob McMullan, Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance, his Chief of Staff and two AusAID staff, and ANU staff David Hegarty, Stewart Firth, Nicole Haley, Matthew Allen, Colin Filer, Chris Ballard, Peter Larmour, Anthony Regan, Elizabeth Reid, Kathleen Whimp, Simon Cann-Evans, Mike Bourke, Bryant Allen and Robin Jeffrey. Other matters discussed were PNG's universities, government and administration, food security, HIV/AIDS and the 2010 PNG census.

Pacific Studies teaching at ANU expanded in 2008 with the offering of Peter Lamour's *PASI8007 Ideas and issues in Pacific Politics*, and Paul D'Arcy's *PASI3000 Special Topics in Pacific Studies*. Under **Katerina Teaiwa's** leadership, ANU's new Pacific Studies program got off to a good start with a new postgraduate course *PASI 8001 The Contemporary Pacific: Culture, Society, Politics and Development* and good numbers in Paul D'Arcy's undergraduate core course, *PASI 2002 Pacific Encounters: an Introduction to History and Culture in Oceania*.

The 13th in the series of meetings convened by **Jim Burton** as part of his huge project to collect memories from all Australians who lived and worked in the Pacific was held in Brisbane's Carindale Library on July 11th. Jim invites former Island residents to gather and contribute to a nostalgic trip down memory lane by sharing some of their experiences, stories, photographs, music, and books or written papers. Morning tea and a long chat usually follow the round-the-room talks. For further details of Jim Burton's project see, *PAMBU* 5/24, June 2008, pp.9-10.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by ANU and the **Divine Word University** in Madang. The MOU opens up the possibility of a range of co-operation between staff and students of the two universities, without committing either institution to any particular action.

The **Pacific Paradise** exhibition, a history of photography that encompasses India through to the USA West Coast, was launched at the National Museum of Australia in July, as part of Canberra's six-month VIVID photography festival. Curator and author of the exhibition catalogue, **Gael Newton**, gave the Pacific Islands prominence in the exhibition, despite being overwhelmed by Asian, Australian, NZ and North American works. The final life size photograph as you exit is JW Lindt's famous Motu "Water carrier". The work of JW Lindt, Max Dupain and Pacific postcards were the subject of papers presented at a Asia-Pacific "Photographies" conference at ANU, run in association with the VIVID festival.

Helen Lee's latest book, the second outcome from the Pacific Diaspora and transnationalism conferences at Melbourne in 2004 and then Latrobe in November 2006, has just been released. *Ties to the homeland: second generation transnationalism* (CSP, 2008), contains an essay on Pacific Islanders in Brisbane and an introductory essay by Helen.

The winner of the **2006 Journal of Pacific History International Essay Prize** (postgraduate division) was *'Men behaving badly: sodomy cases in the colonial courts of Papua New Guinea'*, by **Christine Stewart**, a PhD student at the ANU. The 2007 prize was won by **Frances Steele**. Every year JPH offers two prizes of \$A200 plus a three-year subscription to *The Journal of Pacific History* for academic essays in English or French on any aspect of the history of the Pacific Islands. The essays should preferably be based on original research, and between 5,000 and 8,000 words long. A resident of any country enrolled for study in an accredited university (provided that the author is not a member of academic staff) can enter. One prize can be awarded to an undergraduate, and the other to a graduate student. For details contact Vicki Luker <vicki.luker@anu.edu.au>

Helen Gardner's book on George Brown was nominated for the prestigious Ernest Scott Prize, awarded annually to the book judged to be the most distinguished contribution to the History of Australia or New Zealand published in the previous year. Helen's citation read; "**Gathering for God: George Brown in Oceania**, by Helen Gardner, is a highly original

biography of a Methodist missionary in the later nineteenth-century. While the focus is on a single life, the book moves beyond a biography into a sophisticated engagement with the multiple texts produced by the book's subject, George Brown, with sensitivity to the form as well as the context of these texts. Gardner re-assesses missionary endeavour in the light of its acceptance and continued influence within indigenous communities. In documenting Brown's ethnographic collecting, Gardner uses the notion of 'gathering' to consider the interplay of Christian mission and social anthropology over time, and the role of both in the colonisation of the Pacific. Especially fascinating is the tension between Christian notions of similitude, fellowship and individual improvement in the light of Christian teaching, and contemporary scientific theories emphasising racial difference". (Ed. Of the three nominated books, Regina Ganter's *Mixed relations*, on northern Australia was the 2007 winner)

The **Pacific Islands Museums Association** (PIMA), established as the first regional forum where heritage professionals could exchange their views and work towards improving the quality of the services they provide to the public, has moved office from Suva to Fiji. The first PIMA Board was appointed in 1994 and the Association's Vision, Mission and Aims were first developed in 1997. During the first years of PIMA, the Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC) hosted and supported the Secretariat. In May 1999, PIMA was incorporated as a non-profit organisation in Fiji, where the PIMA secretariat was located until May 2006. In June 2006, the secretariat relocated to its current base at the Vanuatu Cultural Centre in Port Vila. PIMA was officially accepted as an affiliated organisation of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in 1998. The new Secretary General of PIMA and ICOMOS Pasifika is **Dr Kim Selling**. She was previously with the Cross Cultural Task Force of ICOM, Paris, and the Pacific Asia Observatory for Cultural Diversity in Human Development (UNESCO). Check the upgraded Pacific Heritage Network website: <http://www.culturepacific.org/en/index.shtml>

AusAID recently announced a call for the submission of applications for the 2008 Funding Round for the **Australian Development Research Awards**. The Awards are a pillar of the recently launched AusAID Development Research Strategy which significantly scales up AusAID's development research program. Funding of \$50,000 to \$250,000 per year for up to three years in 9 priority theme areas: Development Effectiveness, Disability, Economics, Education, Environment, Food Security, Gender, Governance and State Building and Health. For further details and online submission see <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/research/awards.cfm>

The Macleay Museum, University of Sydney, ran an exhibition on "People, Power, Politics: the first generation of anthropologists at the University of Sydney" from February to July 2008. The exhibition looked at the period between 1923 and 1947 when Sydney was the only Department teaching Anthropology in Australia. In particular the exhibition focused on anthropologists and their engagement with fieldwork; including A.P. Elkin, Ian Hogbin, Ursula McConnel, William Stanner, Camilla Wedgwood, Ronald and Catherine Berndt, Raymond Firth, Charles Hart and Phyllis Kaberry.

Australian interest in PNG received another boost with a conference in June held by The Crawford School at ANU, on the **PNG – Australia Partnership**, particularly the PNG economy, labour mobility, seasonal migration, the impact of oil prices, food security in PNG, the Kokoda track and PNG and climate change. The seminar at the James O Fairfax Theatre, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra was part of a series on Papua New Guinea and was supported by the Australian government's aid agency, AusAID, and the *Pacific Economic Bulletin*.

The Pacific Islands do not feature that often in the Australian media, so a feature on *kava* recently stood out in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. You can access Hamish McDonald's article on *kava*, "**A relaxing drop in dire need of a Pacific solution**" (May 24 2008) at www.smh.com.au/interactive/2008/national/kava-in-tongan-church/index.html

A travelling exhibition of *tapa*, called **Talking Tapa** will soon begin a national tour of regional centres and capital cities in Australia. As well as the exhibition there will be workshops and story telling about their acquisition and collection. The host institution is BEMAC, the Brisbane Multicultural Arts Centre. The curator of the exhibition is Joan Winter, an ex-PNG resident, artist and Baboia gallery owner.

The University of Queensland's ACPACS (**Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies**) has been active on a range of Pacific issues, including a recent seminar from the Vanuatu Kastom Governance Research Symposium, called "[An Appreciative Journey](#)" with papers by Volker Boege, Anne Brown, Peter Westoby and Harriot Beazley, and a lunchtime seminar by Ron Crocombe on: "The changing role of Asia and Asians in Peace and Conflict in the Pacific Islands".

Ed. Much of the news above is from Brisbane, but future Newsletters will be more representative of events in all states and territories. Please send news items, notices, and other Australia-Pacific events to the editor at <m.quanchi@qut.edu.au>

Around the States and Territories

Comment, opinion and longer extracts

Pacific workers to ease labour shortage.

The *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney (9/6/2008) reported on **Pacific workers to ease labour shortage**. "Australia is preparing to open its shores to thousands of "guest workers" from the Pacific as part of a radical plan to ease labour shortages in the bush. Kevin Rudd's bold "Pacific solution" will see as many as 5000 islanders granted special visas to work on farms and in vineyards. Federal Cabinet could endorse the migration scheme as early as next week, with the Prime Minister keen to unveil his plans to revitalise the region at a meeting with Pacific leaders in August. It will help sweep away the legacy of John Howard's foreign policy. The former prime minister had a rocky relationship with many Pacific leaders during his time in power. The Coalition says it now has an "open mind" on a guest worker scheme, amid concerns it could undermine the integrity of Australia's migration program - and strip local workers of jobs. Under the plan to be considered by Cabinet, on June 19, workers from up to five nations - Vanuatu, Tonga, Samoa, Kiribati and Tuvalu - will be involved. But Fiji will be "black-listed" from participating in the trial - a move likely to further inflame relations between Canberra and Suva. Senior Government figures have confirmed islanders will be granted visas of up to seven months to work in regional communities. The Government will guarantee they receive Australian-award wages and conditions. Basic training will also be provided, in the hope these skills can be used when they return to their home countries. Known as Regional Seasonal Employment (RSE), the scheme has been successfully trialed in New Zealand, with Pacific islanders restricted to working in horticulture and viticulture. Mr Rudd's support will send a very positive message to Pacific leaders, who have been lobbying Canberra to back the plan for years. It will be a key plank in a longer-term plan for the Pacific, aimed at transforming so-called "busted arse" countries and making them economically viable. Each year, Australia funnels hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign aid into the Pacific. But concerns have been raised that Papua New Guinea and other close neighbors need a longer-term partnership in order to survive. Both PNG and East Timor are likely to be involved in the scheme over the longer term. The New Zealand trial has attracted strong interest, with the head of the Department of Immigration, Andrew Metcalfe, recently leading a high-level delegation to take a first-hand look. Shadow foreign affairs minister Andrew Robb is heading to New Zealand today, also to examine the guest worker scheme there. He said the Coalition has an "open mind" on the RSE plan. In a critical breakthrough, ACTU president Sharon Burrows and Australian Workers Union boss Paul Howes have both endorsed the RSE scheme."

The influence of USA gangs on Sydney youth.

The *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, 8/4/2008) reported on the influence of USA gangs on Sydney youth. "GLORIFICATION of American gang violence may be behind a horrific schoolyard attack involving five boys as young as 14 armed with machetes and baseball bats. Students of Merrylands High School yesterday blamed the emergence of young self-styled suburban gangs in Sydney's west for the attack. Members of a group calling itself Gee40, made up of

youths from Merrylands and Guildford, carried out the brazen, violent rampage, pupils told *The Daily Telegraph*. Police said they were aware of the existence of Gee40 as one of a number of so-called gangs in Sydney's west, but they were still investigating whether there was any link. However, it is believed the attack may have had a more personal motivation, with the five attending the school to seek out a male student over a grudge about a girl. The five, aged from 14 to 16 and dressed in jeans and hooded jumpers, launched a spectacular attack on 750 students gathered for morning school assembly in the school quadrangle about 8.50pm. Gee-40 emulates American "gangsta" rappers and boasts about their run-ins with police on the internet. Gang talk dominates their web chatter as members list their crimes and talk up their brushes with the law. On one website dedicated to the suburban gangs of Sydney, Guildford Gee-40 is listed. The site features numerous photos of youths of Pacific Islander background brandishing weapons. The site is also peppered with photos of graffiti with the words "Gee-40" scrawled on a wall. The website, entitled "Juvenile Justice and the Gangs of NSW", claims to feature "juvenile (sic) gangs ripping through Sydney". One blogger, Brett, says: "We can f... with da law about 1 in 100 things i do i get charged for so f... u". Another writer, calling himself I luv Carly, says: "F... da cops" and lists his crimes as assault, grievous bodily harm, attempted murder, break and enter, possession of an illegal weapon, and armed robbery. "Might be doing 6 to 18 months," he said. Gee40 is one of a number of juvenile "gangs" that inhabit parts of Sydney's west. There are gangs that say they hail from suburbs including Guildford, Merrylands, Parramatta, Auburn and Granville. They form largely along ethnic backgrounds and congregate on neighbourhood streets as they flirt with the law - carrying out offences such as street robberies. However, police claim they are not organised gangs. Rather, the groups give themselves names to make themselves feel important. Detective Inspector Jim Stewart said police were stunned by the brazenness of yesterday's incident. "It beggars belief they would attempt this kind of activity against innocent students," Insp Stewart said. "The information to us is they were coming here ... seeking someone." Ambulance officers said 18 children and one teacher suffered minor injuries, including from the broken glass. A male teacher, 43, was injured when bashed on the head from behind, as he tried to confront the attackers. A 13-year-old boy and a 14-year-old girl sustained minor facial injuries. All were taken to Westmead Hospital for observation before being released. Outside the school, students told *The Daily Telegraph* they believed the attack to be linked to a local gang known as Gee40. The gang - a loose gathering of youths who commit petty crime - is understood to be comprised of members of Pacific Islander and Maori background based around Guildford and Merrylands. One year 12 student, Tina, told *The Daily Telegraph* the attackers came to the school in search of a year 11 student. She said the gang was made up of local youths who did not attend school. The youths were expected to be charged last night with offences including affray and malicious damage. The arrested youths were two 14-year-olds from Carramar and Auburn, two 15-year-olds from Merrylands and Seven Hills, and a 16-year-old from Merrylands. One of the five is believed to have been bailed for armed robbery just last week. They were expected to be remanded in custody to face Parramatta Children's Court today. The Education Department said security would be reviewed".

What You See Is (not) What You Get

Jim Burton addressed the Centenary Ex-Serviceman's Association in September 2007 on the subject "**What You See Is (not) What You Get!**" "Good evening everyone Born in Bowen, and at four years of age, I must have heard the ABC radio news broadcast because my Mother often reminded me of my telling the neighbourhood kids 'The buddy Japs bombed Singapore!' From then on things became very tight and difficult for our family, community and Nation, as most of you will remember. My parents were young with three children. Dad worked in the freezers at Bowen's Merinda meat works during the season and took Allied Works' jobs in Ayr and Cairns, I recall during the off-season After my school years finished in Mount Isa, I joined Burns Philp and Company in Cairns. I returned home to the Isa in late 1955. It was in December 1955 on turning 18 that I received notice to attend National Service training at Wacol ... Some of the other chaps from Mount Isa did not appreciate the rigid training (so we thought) for the first six weeks, but soon came to appreciate it all as 'having a good time' at Wacol. Upon returning to Mount Isa, my office job was relocated out to the developing mining settlement and township of Mary Kathleen, so I was exempt from fortnightly parades, annual bivouacs etc. Within six months, I had itchy feet again and I was back in Brisbane looking for further travel opportunities. I was off to Fiji in mid-1957 for the next three years with Burns Philp, the Islands trading company. The Fiji Military Forces had

that year returned after some years in Malaya fighting the communist insurgents. The Fiji Army was then and today still is a powerful public force to be dealt with in Fiji, but for very different reasons.

After three and a half years in Fiji, and then marrying Joan in Mount Isa in early 1962, I again rejoined Burns Philp's Islands service. From mid-1962 to 1971, Joan and I lived in Port Vila and Luganville, Santo in the former New Hebrides Condominium, now known as Vanuatu. There were two ex-Servicemen's Associations in Vila – the British Ex-Servicemen's Association and the French Ancient Combatants. BESA welcomed me as a new member because, as I was told, I had worn the Queen's Service uniform. I was the youngest member of BESA when I joined. Then years later, 1974 to be precise, and still with Burns Philp, in my third Branch Manager's position in three different countries, in the days before computerisation mind you, we were living in Madang in New Guinea. Madang had a long and strong World War II involvement during the Jap invasion. The Coastwatchers' Memorial Lighthouse is a unique and most formidable memorial. The Light can be seen from about 17 miles out to sea on a reasonably clear night. Against that record, an ANZAC day dawn service at the foot of that Lighthouse, on the point of entry into Madang's Binnen Harbour, is just fantastic and very memorable. Commonwealth War Graves Memorial Cemeteries in Papua New Guinea are located at Lae, and in Port Moresby at their Bomana Cemetery. I have been to the Lae Memorial Cemetery three times. On each occasion it was an extremely personal and touching visit. I regret not having made my pilgrimage to the Bomana Cemetery outside Port Moresby"

Ignorance rife about Islander Australians.

For Pacific Islanders in Australia, **Katerina Teaiwa's** article in the *Canberra Times* (29 Oct 2007) "*Ignorance rife about Islander Australians*". "When it comes to the prominent Wallaby player, it's pronounced Lote, not "Lotty", and Tuqiri (pronounced Tunggiri), and not "Tukiri". Pacific communities are some of the fastest growing and visible members of the Australian population, but what do Australians really know about Pacific Islanders beyond the stereotypes of characters such as the reluctant student Jonah from the popular TV show Summer Heights High? Is Oceania out there or right here in our major cities? From rugby league and rugby union, to Australian Idol and Big Brother, Pacific Islanders are visibly contributing to the expansion and diversity of Australian popular culture. But unlike in New Zealand, a country that now describes itself as a "South Pacific nation", prominent Pacific people here are rarely identified by their island heritage. There are plenty of potential role models in Australia, but if heritage holds no social cache, it doesn't help young people struggling with identity issues. A young woman I spoke to in Sydney, concerned with her Fijian boyfriend's snobbish attitude to all things from the land of his heritage, described this to me as the "Anglicise me" syndrome. Many Pacific Islanders feel pressure to assimilate and forgo their cultures in exchange for acceptance. The choice impacts particularly on young island men as stereotypes of the violent, unruly Polynesian male continue to circulate in popular imagination. Recently in a lecture, a student asked me what I thought of the high-rating series Summer Heights High, the final episode of which aired on ABC this week. The incredibly clever and disturbingly funny serial created by Chris Lilley was flagged because it is one of the few on air with a star Polynesian character. The 13-year-old Jonah Takalua, who is Tongan, is the epitome of delinquency, obsessed with break-dancing, drives his teachers up the wall and has a violent father. The Year 7 b-boy crew, The Aussies, rivals Jonah and his Islander mates and allegedly tags their lockers with: "Go home FOB [fresh off the boat]", "We grew here you flew here", "Get back on the boat". In Episode6, the Polynesian Appreciation Day featured an ambiguous Pacific dance followed by a Poly rap video illustrating two of the strongest forces shaping young Pacific migrant lives: tradition and African-American popular culture. One is rooted in the strength of culture in the home island. The other is a strategy for maintaining a sense of efficacy and pride in the urban metropolis that continue to attract Pacific families searching for better opportunities.

What is striking about Pacific Islander migrants and the strategies that help them thrive in the Diaspora is the way in which they can build on tradition. Jonah isn't just obsessed with dancing because he's too stupid to learn. Most Islanders come from strong oral and embodied cultures and so excel at sports and the arts for good reasons. Let's look at a select list of Pacific Islander icons in Australia: Lote Tuqiri (Fijian, rugby league and Wallaby), Petero Civoniceva (Fijian, rugby league), Paulini Curuenavuli (Fijian, pop and R&B singer), Trevor Butler (Fijian, winner of Big Brother 4), George Smith (Tongan, Wallaby), Mark Gerrard

(Tongan, Wallaby), Mo'onia Gerrard (Tongan, Australian netballer), Wycliff Palu (Tongan, Wallaby), Willie Ofahengaue (Tongan, Wallaby), Mal Meninga (South Sea Islander, rugby league), Jay Laga'aia (Samoan, actor), Jai Turima (Maori, Olympic long jumper). The numbers of Tongans and Fijians featured in this line-up is fascinating when put into the context of Tongan representation in Summer Heights High, and Australia's stance on affairs in coup-riddled Fiji. Aside from Meninga and those with Anglo surnames, all other Pacific-Australian icons have their names regularly mispronounced or strategically shortened. Civoniceva is "Thivonitheva," and Laga'aia is "Langa'aia," with a soft ng like "sing". A small thing like getting this right goes a long way in helping Pacific youth feel they can be proud to be both Australian and Islander. It also goes a long way in the perception of people in the islands who see Australia as culturally insensitive and bossy.

The Howard Government's approach to the region has been of the distant and hard "Big Brother" variety, focused on security with aid tied to the mantra of "good governance". The Pacific, in the imagination of journalists, policy-makers and scholars, is strangely both paradise and nightmare and regularly focused "out there". In the meantime, the number of Pacific Islanders is swelling in NSW and Queensland. Maori numbers, in particular, are growing so much that on October 1, Pita Sharples, of the Maori Party in New Zealand, requested the creation of a new electorate for the one in seven Maoris who now live in Australia. So numbers grow, Fijians and Tongans are scoring the Australian tries, Australian museums and galleries are hankering for Pacific art and artefacts, and there is a strange and simultaneous increasing gap in understanding the islands in the streets, classrooms, sports fields, media and halls of government. With economic giants such as China and India occupying the minds of students, business leaders, scholars and politicians alike, what is assumed to be the "tiny Pacific" in fact a region that covers one-third of the surface of the planet has slipped from the centre to the margins in the Australian consciousness. Pacific Islanders must become Australian if they move here, but is it the case that Australia no longer needs to educate itself on the Pacific? For a region of incredible historical, economic and political significance, such a situation is of great concern. A 2003 Senate report that never received a formal reply from the Government made a passionate call for more education in Australia about Pacific cultures, lest Australia suffer a "dramatic loss" of influence in the region. As the Howard Government ignored many of the report's sensible suggestions, I can only hope that if Labour wins, it will take a new and fresh approach to Oceania and the talented Pacific Islander communities that help make Australia the diverse and prosperous nation we know it will continue to be."

National Report on Pacific Studies

Report on the survey of Pacific Studies in Australia; from Samantha Rose, Project Officer.

During the two months of my appointment as the AAAPS Project Manager, the priority has been to finalise the AAAPS National Survey (both paper-based and online format). Taking on comments and feedback made during the AGM (held at the AAAPS Conference hosted by ANU in April 2008), the preliminary survey has been extended and broadened. Engaging an Outreach approach, the survey hopes to attract a range of respondents from local community groups to non-government organizations as well as academics, artists, archivists, Australian Pacific Island communities and more. Focusing on the five key areas of teaching, collections, research, groups and associations, and government and non-government organizations, the survey assesses:

- what is currently being taught in Pacific Studies
- contrast between 'now and then' and what has changed and why, both negatively and positively
- collaborations between stakeholders
- how Australia is currently promoting the Pacific and the people, communities, institutions, organizations who are leading this development
- current relationships between stakeholders and how they could be improved
- strategies, policies, funding and recommendations that will ultimately raise the status of Pacific Studies nationally.

The survey has Ethical Approval and will be circulated via email, the AAAPS website and a formal letter to identified stakeholders by the end of August.

As a part of the process of developing the survey, a list or preliminary databank/contact list has been compiled of tertiary institutions, individual academics and researchers, organizations, community, sporting, religious-based, advocacy, environmental, ex-patriot, performance and national groups and Associations, collections, galleries, museums, archives, online groups, government and non-government organizations, media programs and agencies with Pacific links, connections and interests. As you can imagine, this is an extensive, ongoing project and it is hoped that the distribution and circulation of the survey will expand this list. Working with Paul Turnbull and IT adviser Andrew Bowness from Griffith along with Project Co-Coordinator's Clive Moore, UQ and Max Quanchi, QUT, the survey will soon be available for viewing on the AAAPS website.

New Resources

Australia's involvement in the Pacific war and allegations of Japanese invasion plans are the subject of Peter Stanley's *Invading Australia; Japan and the battle for Australia 1942*. "1942 was a key year in Australia's history. As its people had so long feared, White Australia, an outpost of empire, seemed about to be invaded by the Japanese. In that one year, Darwin was bombed, submarines torpedoed ships in Sydney Harbour and Australian Militiamen died on the Kokoda Trail. Each year, more and more Australians celebrate Anzac Day and honour the lives of those who fought for their country. There is even a push to create a new public holiday, in remembrance and celebration of the 'Battle for Australia'. But was there ever really such a battle, and how close did Australia actually come to being invaded? *Invading Australia* provides a comprehensive, thorough and well-argued examination of these and other pertinent questions. Peter Stanley writes compellingly about Australian attitudes to Japan before, during and after World War II, and uses archival sources to discuss Japan's war plans early in 1942. He also shows that rather than a 'Battle for Australia' there was a worldwide fight for freedom and democracy that has allowed the West to enjoy great prosperity in the decades since 1945". (2008, Sydney; Viking; Pb \$31.82).

To access the archives of the **PNG Association of Australia**, now held in the Fryer Library at the University of Queensland, (collection 387, with 17 boxes and folders), go to the catalogue record, <http://library.uq.edu.au/record=b2112774>

Pacific Economic Survey is out and available on the sites below (though some of the background papers it refers to are not on the website). <<http://www.pacificsurvey.org/site/>> <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pdf/pacific_economic_survey08.pdf>

Search newspapers online. The Australian National Library's online newspaper resource has just gone live. This allows extraordinary online access to the resources of one newspaper from each state. The most amazing feature is the search function that allows text searching of words and combinations of words. For example, 'Malaita' produces 100 items; 'Guadalcanal' produces 49; 'Tulagi' produces 82; 'Solomon Islands' produces 3,810. And it will improve as more pages are put on line. In early August there were 89,238 pages consisting of 792,703 articles available to search. This will revolutionize research. <http://ndpbeta.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>

The **Centre for Democratic Institutions**, based at ANU, released its latest newsletter. The June-July 2008 issue of *CDI.News* is now available on http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au/cdinews/D_P/200708/2008_05_CDI.News_JUN_JUL.pdf

Intervention and state-building in the Pacific; The legitimacy of cooperative intervention Edited by Greg Fry and Tarcisius Tara Kabutaulaka, HB978-0-7190-7683-1, \$158.00, 234x156mm, 256pp, Manchester University Press, available from 1/7a Prosperity Parade, Warriewood, NSW, 2102, Australia, ph 02-99973973; fax 02-99973185; email; sales@footprint.com.au

Australia's arc of instability: the political and cultural dynamics of regional security, by Dennis Rumley, Vivian Forbes and Christopher Griffin, Dordrecht: Springer, 2006. (\$USD169)

Full Circle: Australia and Papua New Guinea 1883–1970, which examines the bilateral relationship and contains previously unpublished photographs, provides an absorbing account of the relationship between Australia and PNG from the late nineteenth century to 1970 with a particular focus on the post-Second World War period and the gradual acceptance in both Australia and PNG of the need to move towards decolonisation. *Full Circle* was launched on 16 September 2007 to coincide with PNG's 32nd anniversary of Independence. It was produced with assistance from the PNG National Archives and Public Records Service. Many of the photographs in the book come from the PNG National Archives collection and several are being published for the first time. It is a companion to the reference work, ***Australia and Papua New Guinea 1966-1969***, launched in Port Moresby in 2008. *Australia and Papua New Guinea 1966-1969* provides a detailed record of the classified communications that informed and determined Australian policy in Papua New Guinea between 1966 and 1969. Taken mainly from the files of the Department of Territories, the documents tell the story of how Australian governments of the 1960s tried to maintain a slow pace of political change in PNG while accelerating economic development. Highlights of the volume include Canberra's reaction to Papua New Guinean interest in joining the Australian federation; the genesis of the Bougainville problem; conflict with a quasi-nationalist movement in the Rabaul area; early analyses of PNG's unique parliamentary politics; fears of a break down of law and order in Port Moresby; and the formulation of a massive five-year plan for economic growth. The book also documents an increasingly vigorous internal debate on whether to hasten the tempo of political change in view of growing social strains in Papua New Guinea. Both are available from DFAT at \$49.95 (pb). To order; http://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/oz_orderform.html

AAAPS News

An initiative of **Susan Cochrane** and AAAPS, along with the National Museum of Australia and the Pacific Partners project (linking Australian and Pacific museums), a series of Australia–Pacific Museums workshops were held on the theme “**Pacific Cultural Heritage in Australian Museums and Galleries: A regional dialogue**”. These were held in Brisbane and Canberra in November 2007. The purpose was to enhance cultural engagement and dialogue between museums with delegates from both the Pacific and Australia, together with representatives of Pacific communities resident in Australia.

'Writing the Pacific', on Monday & Tuesday, November 17 – 18th, University of Wollongong. The conference is convened by **Paul Sharrad**, Faculty of Arts, University of Wollongong and **Stewart Firth**, Pacific Centre, College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University. Pacific Studies has been one of Australia's strengths, but the 'turn to Asia' and a now ageing university staff nationally, has prompted a move to promote renewed interest in the Pacific and to foster a new generation of scholars. This two-day workshop will provide opportunities for postgraduates in Pacific Studies to generate morale and synergies by meeting others in the field, to check their methodologies and insights against work from different disciplinary bases, hone writing skills and think through issues of cross- or inter-disciplinary work. Ten selected postgraduates will work closely with experienced academics in the field. The aims of the Workshop are:

- To explore recent work which critically engages with the question of writing the Pacific
- To assist doctoral students to enhance their academic knowledge and expertise
- To provide opportunities for feedback on writing and advice on publication
- To reflect on the nature and challenges of interdisciplinary studies
- To enhance the postgraduate experience with a view to promoting research in Pacific Studies

Participants will speak to their theses and papers and receive feedback from the panel of leaders, with discussion from all participants to share different disciplinary approaches and opinions on each topic. Discussion will identify writing strategies for addressing a range of readers across disciplinary boundaries and how to bring together differing methodologies. A panel of experienced supervisors from several disciplines will lead discussion both from the

point of view of polishing the research project, and as a means of developing part of that project for article publication and/or conference paper presentation. Thesis-based submissions will be supplemented with examples from the work of scholars in a range of disciplines (including the workshop facilitators) to allow reflection on cross/inter-disciplinary practice. This workshop will address the Asia Pacific Futures Research Network (APFRN) 2008 signature theme: "Crossing Borders of Cultural Meanings in the Asia Pacific". The recent Canberra conference of AAAPS revealed a common interest in indigenous epistemologies and how these translate into modernity, and cross social borders into Australian and Diaspora contexts. This gives a focus for discussions about how such experience also crosses into the rubrics of academic disciplines, and how these rubrics cross with each other in an interdisciplinary framework. The workshop will provide opportunities for postgraduate research students to think long-term on research collaborations/ directions in the field. Above all, the workshop will bring together people from around the country in keeping with the APFRN aim of 'integrating regionally dispersed' work to build a sense of cohesion in a currently dispersed and under-represented area of teaching and research. (For more information on the APFRN go to the website at <http://www.sueztosuva.org.au>) The conference is supported by grants from APFRN and the Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies as a project of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Pacific Studies. **Applications:** Postgraduates working in the area of Pacific Studies (ideally around a third to half-way through their candidature) are invited to submit to the Convenors:

- an outline of the project; details of topic, research approach and supervision (1 page)
- an indication of work to be submitted to the workshop (chapter/article draft and topic)
- any relevant information on track record
- a letter of support from one or more supervisors.

The panel will select to produce a mix of institutions and a spread across the various disciplines, and according to the quality of the applications and track record. Successful applicants will be covered for cheapest reasonable mode of return travel, three nights' accommodation and two days' meals. **Closing Date:** Applications should reach Paul Sharrad by **5pm. Friday, September 19 2008**. Contact <paul_sharrad@uow.edu.au>

AAAPS Conference 2008

This report was published on several ANU websites by the conference convenors, Katerina Teaiwa, Margaret Jolly and Stewart Firth.

The 2nd Australian Association for the Advancement of Pacific Studies (AAAPS) conference, Oceanic Connections, at the ANU April 18-20. Dr Katerina Teaiwa was a co-organizer with Professor Stewart Firth, Head of the Pacific Centre, and Professor Margaret Jolly, Head of the Gender Relations Centre. This was a very successful event, attracting one hundred and forty registrants, eighty-five presenters and a vigorous program of cultural activities and dance performances. The conference commenced with a welcome to country by Ngunnawal elder Louise Brown. It was then formally opened by the Hon Duncan Kerr, Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs, who spoke to the Labor government's approach to the Pacific as embodied in Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's Port Moresby Declaration and the Pacific Partnerships for Development plan. He was honoured by a moving song performance by Surnameke, a dance group led by Julia Gray from Darwin, who shares diverse family links to Australia and Papua New Guinea. Then Deveni Temu, the Pacific Librarian at the ANU, led a Papua New Guinea community group in welcoming the first keynote speaker Dame Carol Kidu, with a dance and a song in Motu which honoured her connection to the family of her late husband. The conference was punctuated by a series of exceptional keynote speakers: Dame Carol Kidu, the only female Member of Parliament in Papua New Guinea who spoke passionately about the contemporary challenges for community development in Papua New Guinea; Professor Matthew Spriggs of ANU who consummately explored Oceanic connections in deep time through the fascinating lens of Pacific prehistory and Ralph Regenvanu, Director of the National Cultural Council of Vanuatu, who spoke brilliantly on *kastom economi* there and the threat to sustainable development occasioned by land speculation and real estate development by expatriates, including Australians, on coastal Efate and Santo. There was also an excellent plenary panel on undergraduate and graduate education in Pacific Studies which involved speakers from the ANU, the Queensland

University of Technology, the University of the South Pacific, Auckland, and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa.

As can be seen from the full program posted at the Pacific centre website (<http://rspas.anu.edu.au/tpc/>), the program ranged widely over topics of boundaries, environment, economies, education, governance, ideas and practices, performances, representations and subjectivities. The program was jam packed with four parallel sessions running at most times and with three or even four papers in some panels. Despite the time pressure and thanks to the consideration of speakers and excellent chairing, most sessions worked very well, catalysing excellent discussion and debate, which spilled over into teas and lunches. Two recent films about Papua New Guinea were presented: Martin Maden's *Crater Mountain Story* and Verena Thomas' *Papa Bilong Chimbu*, the latter with the director present for discussion. A well organised team of volunteers kept the registration desk and the several rooms in Coombs and Coombs Extension in good order, and we thank George Darroch, Amanda Myers and Nicholas Mortimer especially, and Huw Slater for his calm efficacy in dealing with IT issues as they arose.

The Pacific spirit and style of the conference was notable from the poignant opening ceremonies to the last farewells. The 'Gods' catering was superb throughout, including for the opening nights events in the Coombs tea room. The Coombs tearoom was the venue for the launch of the new undergraduate and postgraduate Pacific Studies program convened by Katerina Teaiwa in the Faculty of Asian Studies, launched by Margaret Jolly, Stewart Firth and Kent Anderson, as part of an integrated initiative Learning Oceania, connecting Pacific research, education and outreach in ANUs College of Asia and the Pacific (CAP). Books by Max Quanchi (on *Photographing Papua*) and Ron Crocombe (*Replacing the west: Asia in the Pacific Islands*) were launched, along with *Re-membering Oceanic Masculinities*, a recent Special Issue of *The Contemporary Pacific*, edited by Margaret Jolly. The crowded Coombs tea room never looked so good with *lava lavas* (sarongs) hanging over the upstairs balcony and pandanus baskets and *tapa* cloth adorning the walls. We thank Nicholas Mortimer, Amanda Myers and our hard-working team of volunteers for this set up. *Sunameke*, under the direction of Julia Gray, performed an intriguing and sometimes hilarious series of dances under the theme of 'Weaving the Map'.

The second night at the Papua New Guinea High Commission was equally splendid with over a hundred guests enjoying Pacific style food from a *mumu* cooked by Canberra's PNG community, complementing that from 'Kitchen Witchery'. Again we were engaged by excellent performances from *Sunameke* and by *Lava Kinship* (Latai and Seini Taumoepeau) from Sydney. We thank Colonel Norrie and Helen Sanny of the PNG High Commission for their warm welcome and consummate organisation and Dr Katherine Lepani, as wife of the PNG High Commissioner, for making this such a memorable night. Our final closing session on Sunday was moved back to the Coombs tea room where the temperature proved warmer than the Coombs Lecture Theatre. There we witnessed a very moving final dance performance by the Phoenix Performing Arts Group, based at Gorman House in Canberra led by Siua Lafitani-Tofua'ipangai. The conference was funded by the Pacific Centre in CAP and the Asia-Pacific Futures Research Network, Central and Pacific nodes, and by the fees of the participants. Many of the volunteers in this conference were students in the PASI 2001 Learning Oceania course. We thank all involved for making it such a great occasion!

AAAPS Conference 2010

2010 AAAPS conference convenor, **Helen Hill** reports from Melbourne: "A booking has now been made for the 12th floor Conference Centre at 300 Flinders Street, VU City Campus for two days of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Pacific Studies three day conference in 2010. It is a great venue, with a magnificent view of the Yarra River and Flinders Street Station, but the cost is pretty high, which is why I suggest we have only two days at the Centre, Friday (a working day) and Saturday (a non-working day) and we have the third day as a 'community' day, i.e. hold morning sessions, and the AGM at CERES Environmental Park, or the *Convent Abbotsford*, which will encourage more participation of Pacific Islanders. If funds can be found to cover the costs of the Conference Centre for two days then the conference fee can be kept very reasonable and inclusive. It would be good to have a public lecture the night before (Thursday) with a Pacific Island Prime Minister or similar speaker at the Iwaki Auditorium, possibly getting Radio Australia to co-sponsor. The

dinner could be charged separately and could be somewhere such as the Museum. It would be great to have a Pacific Film Festival at ACMI just before the conference and to do some lobbying work within the Victorian Ministry of Education on the teaching of Pacific studies in Secondary schools and have a session on that at the Conference. The Churches will also be alerted as many of them bring postgraduate students and others to Melbourne at various times of the year. It is also proposed to have a pre-conference of Civil Society leaders from the Pacific and East Timor possibly at Sunbury Campus to discuss sustainable development. In the few days just before the conference, it would also be good to have a pre-conference of Postgraduates working on the Pacific, including hopefully Pacific Islanders. As for the title, the last one was 'Pacific Connections', what about 'Pacific Transformations?'

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2 Canberra Declaration of the AAAPS conference, April 2008

STATEMENT ON AUSTRALIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Australian Association for the Advancement of Pacific Studies, Biannual Conference, Australian National University, 19 April 2008

As a group of concerned Australian scholars of the Pacific Islands in Australian universities and institutions, we recommend that:

- Pacific Studies be included in the proposed national curriculum for all schools in Australia.
- The Youth Ambassador For Development (AYAD) scheme be strengthened and focused on the Pacific Islands, particularly on Papua and New Guinea.
- The Australian Volunteers International (AVI) scheme in the Pacific Islands be strengthened and expanded as part of a national program to expand volunteer's efforts by Australians. Existing innovative programs of undergraduate and postgraduate Pacific Islands Studies at James Cook, UCQ, QUT, Deakin, ANU, Wollongong, UNSW, VUT and other tertiary institutions be strengthened and expanded by targeted funding initiatives.
- The number of scholarships for Pacific Islanders to study in Australia be dramatically expanded to reestablish long-term collegiality between Australian mentors and their returning graduates.
- A training institute be established in Australia in order to create a cadre of culturally sensitive and well informed Australian personnel prepared for service in the Pacific Islands.
- That a national Pacific Studies Resource Network be established across all states and territories, based on AAAPS.
- The Australian Government acknowledge and facilitate the above actions to "reinvigorate and deepen our engagement" with the Pacific Islands, as noted in the "Ambitions for 2020" listed in the *Australia 2020 Summit Initial Summit Report* (p. 35).

Discussed at the AGM of the AAAPS on Saturday 19 April 2008, and drafted by the Executive, on behalf of 320 AAAPS members. For further information contact Professor Clive Moore, President of AAAPS, School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics, The University of Queensland (c.moore@uq.edu.au; Mobile 0419676123)

3 Letter from McCall and Quanchi to the Prime Minister

Brisbane
6th April 2008.

The Prime Minister
Hon Kevin Rudd MP
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

Your initiatives on Australia's international commitments to and engagement with the region give Australians hope for a major change in the way our country moves in the world. Nowhere is this more crucial than in the Pacific Islands, the region of which we are a part and where we have long standing historical, trade and cultural ties. When we write of the Pacific Islands, we include a vast region with one third of the earth's surface, and the 21 members of the *Secretariat of the Pacific Community* (SPC) along with West Papua and Timor-Leste, whose leaders have indicated they would like to be seen as part of the Pacific Islands.

We commend the policy importance you have placed on relations with Pacific Island countries through your speeches before and after the election and remarks that you made during your recent visit to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. We further commend the appointment of The Hon Duncan Kerr SC MP as the Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs.

We urge your office to consider several major initiatives in Australia and in the region which will demonstrate Australia's partnership with and commitment to the region. (The costing for these new approaches is indicative and estimates only.)

We write as two concerned scholars, with long experience in, and continuing commitment to Australia's excellence in Pacific Studies. We shall be attending the 2nd AAAPS conference in Canberra 17-21 April 2008. We are happy to be available for discussion on these proposals.

Yours sincerely,

Grant McCall
Max Quanchi

A NATIONAL PLAN FOR A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION

Project Summary

These initiatives in Australia and in the region will demonstrate Australia's partnership and commitment (the costing is indicative only).

1 National Management and consultative body

There is an urgent need for an Australian wide management and consultative body concerned with Australia's research on and relations with the Pacific Islands. The recently formed *Australian Association for the Advancement of Pacific Studies* (AAAPS) is such a body. Formed in 2006, AAAPS is composed of university researchers and teachers, galleries, museums and archives and community leaders from around Australia, including the two academic Centres concerned with the region, at the ANU and UNSW. The first conference, at QUT in Brisbane, featured 82 presentations and 137 delegates. We propose AAAPS would act as the national coordinating body for the projects below.

Costing over three years; Core administration; \$75,000 x 3 years - \$225,000

2 National Pacific Studies Curriculum Guide

We propose that a national curriculum statement and guide on Pacific Island Studies should be developed and implemented throughout Australia. We have experts in curriculum design in State and Territory Education departments, Education faculties, Teacher Associations and the National History Project who can carry out that task as well as utilizing contacts through AAAPS to Australia's expert knowledge base on the region.

Costing over 6 months; Curriculum project; \$70,000

3 Performing Arts Tour of Australia

We propose that a Pacific Islander performance group, sourced from the region, tour Australian cities, schools and other institutions, demonstrating their unique cultures to a wide audience and providing direct exposure of their rich heritage directly to the capital city and regional public. This public awareness program could be organized in conjunction with the Pacific Festival of the Arts.

Costing over 1 Year Pilot scheme; \$210,000

4 Media Briefing

We propose a national capital city seminar program to update print, TV, radio and electronic journalists on current developments in the region and to familiarize them with the broad issues and developments that will influence Australia's relations with the region, and counter over-reliance on coup/cyclone/disaster reportage. The touring program would rely on two established Australian Pacific Journalists (eg., Sean Dorney and Rowan Callick) and a local scholar in each city.

Costing 1 month Pilot project: \$37,000

5 Pacific Collections in Australia

We propose, in cooperation with ICOM-Australia, the compilation of a national database on Pacific Island cultural resources in Australian institutions, such as museums, archives, universities and art galleries. This is an in-principle support for the collecting, maintenance, preservation, access and repatriation of Pacific Island collections in Australia, noted as a priority at the inaugural AGM of AAAPS. This program would enhance the current ICOM-Australia "Museums Partnership Project" which links Australian and regional institutions.

Costing 3 Year Project: \$225,000

6 On-Line Knowledge base

We propose the compilation of an on-line encyclopedia of the Pacific Islands based on Wiki technology that would assemble Australian expertise on the region, making it available to

school and tertiary students, as well as a wider public as a demonstration of Australia's understanding of where we live.

Costing 3 Year Project: \$600,000

7 Indigenous Australian Performing Tour of the region

We propose a program by a performance group of Indigenous Australians. This tour to capital cities in the southwest Pacific would enhance cultural exchange and broaden our people-to-people relationships within the region.

Costing for 1 month Project: \$120,000

8 National History Curriculum in Pacific Island Schools

We propose for each Pacific Island nation, the development of a national History curriculum. This is a crucial development for new nations which lack a consciousness of the modern state, and their national identity. The project promotes participation in civil society and good governance. This would involve workshops and publications (building on the successful TTPF/HistoryCOPS project 1995-2003).

Costing for a regional 3 year Project: \$600,000

9 Guest Worker Scheme workshop

We propose a national workshop on a Guest Worker scheme, to gather stakeholders and develop a national and regional strategy. The outcome would be advice to the Australian Government that reflects community, economic and political realities.

Costing for a 1 month project; \$40,000

Budget Summary

National Management and consultative body	
3 year project; @ \$75,000 x 3 years;	\$225,000
National Pacific Studies Curriculum Guide	
6 month project;	\$70,000
Performing Arts Tour of Australia	
1 Year Pilot project;	\$210,000
Media Briefing	
1 month Pilot project:	\$37,000
Pacific Collections in Australia	
3 Year project; @ \$75,000 x 3 years	\$225,000
On-Line Knowledge base	
3 Year project; @ \$200,000 x 3 years	\$600,000
Indigenous Australian Performing Tour of the region	
Regional 1 month project;	\$120,000
National History Curriculum in Pacific Island Schools	
Regional 3 year project: @ \$200,000 x 3	\$600,000
Guest Worker Scheme workshop	
1 month project;	\$40,000
Total for three-year funding period	\$2,170,000

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