



MUSEUM meseña

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Welcome to our new Co-Chair Hannington Alatoa

M. Alatoa, could you introduce yourself to us?

I am Hannington Alatoa from Tavolavola village, North Ambae. I am married to Nadine Alatoa, currently the Secretary General to the Council of Ministers.

As a former ombudsman what thoughts do you have on how to make government in Vanuatu more accountable to voters?

In effect, the government is quite accountable to the people through the provision of social services, security, law and order, creating an enabling environment for business and CBOs/NSAs to operate. But these services may not meet everyone's needs or their way of thinking. It requires some listening and personal analysis as to what one might consider as 'being accountable'. I often ask myself – 'What can I do over time that improves and contributes to make myself and my family better people and my community and Ambae a better place to live in?'

What have you learnt about people from your experience running a nakamal?

Lessons from running the Nagotambu nakamal include maintaining quality, friendliness, providing a nice and quiet environment and our smiles.

How did you become interested in the Museum?

I have always been interested in history, and studied history at undergraduate level at University. I read history books and contemporary literature. There is much value in history and I am not doing enough to better appreciate history in relation to Vanuatu's development. A history book of Vanuatu as a set publication is essential in schools and technical colleges/rural training centers. Unless young people learn of their past, it is not possible perhaps to fully appreciate how, why and who does what they do now.

How do you envisage the future of Vanuatu culture, and what should be done to support Ni-Vanuatu culture?

The future lies in ensuring that our cultures are kept intact and not 'prostituted', if you appreciate what this means. 'Spirit blong ol bumbu' oli mas laef oltaem mo liv wetem pipol blong Vanuatu. We must ensure that we don't overuse culture for gaining VATU only, but co-exist with cultures to maintain identity.

Please tell us something of your leisure activities.

I was a middle distance runner in my youth, and I still do a lot of walking and personal exercises at home to try and keep fit. I also enjoy tennis, scrabble and listening to all forms of music. I aim to keep conflicts to a bare minimum and live happily. Life is too short to spend it worrying!

Welcome, Bienvenue à tous, to our first newsletter, post our 2007 AGM. Thank you to all members who attended the AGM and to all who have attended the talks in the past twelve months. I also offer a special welcome and thank you Mr Hannington Alatoa who joins us as our new Co-Chair. Thank you to Lady Hansen and Mme Martine Blanche, our outgoing Co-Chairs, and to all members of the outgoing committee whose willingness to contribute their time and energy has made so much possible.

Members of our Committee for 2007-2008 are:

Co-Chairs: Hannington Alatoa and Yvonne Webber

Honourary Member: Lady Hanson Mataskelekele

Treasurer: Eslie Turner

Secretary: Cleo Westhorpe

Membership Secretary: Macha Paris

Committee Members: Marcelin Abong, Nicolas Berlanga-Martinez, Martine Blanche, Sébastien Lecrampe, Sethy Regenvanu, Ralph Regenvanu, Giovanna Soldateschi, Jennifer West, Gene Wong, and Rachel Young.

The new committee takes over projects initiated by the previous committee. All are aimed at encouraging participation of members and the general public and some will seek to combine that with raising revenue. Our first exciting project will take place on Friday 16 November in the Museum itself, our 'Bigfala Trivia Night': a night in which all the trivia questions will focus on Vanuatu, history, geography, current events and cultural practices in addition the questions will be rotated through each of the three official languages so choose your tables wisely... We will be providing finger food, the chance to win a selection of wonderful prizes, and the satisfaction of being crowned the kings and queens of general knowledge! Tickets will be on sale soon for 2500vatu, you may wish to start recruiting now your 'brainiest' table of 10! We look forward to seeing you there.

- **Co-Chair, Yvonne Webber.**

Annual General Meeting

Treasurer's Report

I would like to thank the members of the Friends of the Vanuatu Museum for all the work done in raising funds for the year 2006/2007 and for all the work involved in carrying out various activities during this financial year. Special thanks to Jennifer West for her assistance in doing all the banking and payments before I took over and for assisting me in verifying some payments and receipts during the preparation of this financial statement.

Our total receipts have increased from Vt1,772,421 at 31 August 2006 to Vt1,807,208 at 31 August 2007 giving us a net increase of Vt34,787. Items contributing to the increase are calendar sales with a profit of VT398,714 and donations. A donation cheque for Vt250,000 was received from Telecom Vanuatu Limited. Membership fees have declined consecutively from VT357,100 in 2005, to VT242,200 in 2006 and to VT74,000 in 2007 indicating an urgent need for us to actively introduce new members and to promote our various activities and functions. We still managed to spend more than what we received. Total expenditure for year was VT2,234,611 giving us a net deficit of VT427,403. Areas of review would be donations, wages and workshops.

During the 2006/2007 financial year we expended the following amounts on the Cultural Centre: Museum Equipment and Improvement - VT358,303 (2006 Vt25,000) comprising: Internal alterations to the Cultural Centre to install hung doors VT 245,363; Shop Bulkhead - Deposit VT 104,940, and Museum Sign VT 8,000. During this financial year we contributed VT484,000 towards the wages for a Museum Guide and VT80,505 for the Saturday morning workshops.

In summary, the 2006/2007 year has sent us into a deficit first time in the last four years. Our financial position at the moment is one of treading water. We are looking at evening functions and hopefully this will swing our position in the right direction. As treasurer, I think the members can be proud of the contribution they have been making on an on-going basis towards the improvement of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre and hosted other wide range of trips, activities and events.

Again, my thank you goes to all the committee members for their support during 2006/2007.

Esline Turner, Treasurer

Secretary's Report

Memberships

We currently have 79 memberships, the family resident and individual resident categories proving the most popular (26 and 30 respectively). Our membership remains stable, but we are always keen to welcome more Friends to the organisation. More Friends means more activities, programs, and support that we can offer to the cultural community of Vanuatu.

Talks

We have run a particularly successful talks program, and continue to have wonderful support from the Friends and interested members of the community who attend our talks. As always, if you have any suggestions for

speakers we would love to hear from you. In 2006, we heard from Dr Stuart Bedford regarding Lapita, Thierry Moli Toa on Indonesian cultural exchange, and Dr Lissant Bolton on traditional dress. In 2007, we were privileged to hear from Hilda Lini on Traditional Money Banks, Jean-Christophe Galipaud on the shipwrecks of Vanikoro, Koji Lum on Molecular Anthropology and Malaria in the Pacific, Matthew Spriggs on the Pacific islands as a 'crossroads', Ralph Garruto on Kuru and Mad Cow Disease in the Pacific, Anita Herle on John Layard's work and photography, Francis Hickey on the canoes of Vanuatu, Morris Harrison on Volcanoes, and Prof. Ludger Kühnhardt on custom economy vs. economic integration.

Newsletters

Two newsletters have been published this year, May and July – and the next issue due out in the coming weeks. I am aiming to publish a smaller newsletter bi-monthly, and preferably distribute by email to save on paper.

Launches

The Friends played an active role in supporting the development of the John Layard in Malekula book, recently launched here in Vanuatu a few weeks ago. We were privileged to have two of the authors here with us, Anita Herle, Deputy Director of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, and Fred Numa Longge, the Director of the Malekula Cultural Centre. The launch of the book was complemented by a Friends talk, and a double-page spread in the Independent newspaper featuring photos and an introduction to Layard's work.

Field Trips

Six Roi Mata Field Trips have been organised by the Friends over the last five months in co-operation with Chief Roi Mata's Domain Committee to help increase their profile before working with commercial tourism operators. This relationship has dramatically improved the profile of the tour, particularly within our own membership family.

Kastom Skul

The Saturday Kastom Skul program continues to be successful, and is led by Eddie and Timo. Our end-of-semester graduation ceremony celebrated the achievements of sixty-three pikininis who have attended on their kastom skills. You may have seen their pictures in the paper in July! One of the students, Rosnet Lowonbu, travelled to China as part of a delegation representing Vanuatu in the art of 'sandroing' for a UNESCO intangible heritage conference. The focus for the rest of the year will be on kastom music, and we hope to have some funds available soon to contribute to purchasing kastom instruments to complement this already wonderful program.

Exhibitions

The 'Ol Kenu Blong Vanuatu' exhibition is the first new permanent exhibition this year, and the resulting work is a fine example of the Exhibition Team's achievements. The Friends of the Museum contributed funding to this exhibition to cover costs for the wonderful seascape background, painted by Nawita artist Sero Kuautonga, and also funded our accompanying public program. Expert canoe-cutter Billy Tauman from Lelepa carved a canoe over a period of three weeks at the Museum, and we gave many locals and visitors the opportunity to see these traditional skills in action. On the final day of Billy's work, we had over one hundred students observing the process and asking questions of Billy and Francis Hickey of the Cultural Centre. The Friends also assisted in our cross-

cultural opening night, where we screened the Australian film 'Ten Canoes' to highlight the importance of this mode of transport across the Asia-Pacific.

Museum Re-Design

We are well on our way to completing the Museum Shop renovations, and you may notice the new bulkhead which has been constructed with Friends funding to improve the look and feel of the museum, and also to provide additional security and storage for the Museum Shop. Further additions are in progress, such as the carving of the upright wooden posts and the painting of the bulkhead with VKS and Friends logos. Designs were submitted to Melanesian Furniture only a few months ago, they have done a wonderful job and we thank them for their craftsmanship.

As Secretary to the FOVM, one of my key aims is to increase awareness of the Friends and our activities to the Port Vila and wider community. With nearly forty advertisements and articles in the Vanuatu media in the last six months, we are proving to be an active group with a passion to preserve and create awareness of Ni-Vanuatu culture. As always, your support is invaluable, and on behalf of the Committee, I thank you for joining us again in 2007 and beyond.

Cleo Westhorpe, Secretary

Upcoming Talks Prochaines Conférences

Dr Noël Boemare: 2 October / Oktomba / Octobre
"Striking a Balance: How agriculture can be respectful of the environment" / << L'intérêt de maintenir une agriculture respectueuse de l'environnement >>

Sara Lightner: 16 October / Oktomba / Octobre
Ples Blong Olgeta Sista: Ni-Vanuatu Catholic Sisters
Navigating Places and Spaces / << Histri Blong Olgeta
Filles de Marie, ol Katolik Sista long Vanuatu >>

Dr Lissant Bolton & Dr Julie Adams: TBC October
/ Oktomba / October

Le stringband une des voix du Vanuatu

Etant donné que peu ou pas de recherches ont été faites sur le stringband au Vanuatu, on sait peu de choses sur lui. Et pourtant, ce style de musique populaire vieux de quelques décennies est aujourd'hui extrêmement répandu dans tout l'archipel. La plupart des villages ou des communautés Ni-Vanuatu ont leur propre stringband, qui anime mariages et autres rassemblements festifs. Le stringband est aussi une distraction touristique commune, et nombreux de stringbands sont engagés pour jouer à l'aéroport, dans les hôtels et autres resorts, afin de distraire les touristes et produire l'ambiance de 'paradis tropical' tant recherchée.

Un stringband est formé de cinq à dix musiciens environ qui se partagent les instruments et les voix. Il y a d'abord le ukulélé, petite guitare au son aigu utilisée dans tout le Pacifique, puis la busbe qui assure le rythme de la basse,

et qui est similaire à la contrebassine que certains groupes de musique de rue utilisent en Europe. Il s'agit d'une grosse caisse de bois retournée, équipée d'un manche et d'une corde, sur laquelle le bassiste s'assoit pour jouer. Viennent ensuite les guitares, d'un nombre variable, qui assurent l'ossature rythmique de la musique. Enfin, différentes percussions sont utilisées, souvent de fabrication maison, bien que le tambourin et les bongos achetés dans le commerce aient souvent les faveurs de beaucoup de stringbands de la capitale. Les instruments assurent la rythmique, et les mélodies sont produites par les voix des musiciens. Et c'est là que se trouve le génie du stringband: alors que les morceaux sont presque toujours construits sur la même structure, ce sont les voix qui "font" un bon morceau de stringband. Bien souvent, il est difficile voire impossible de savoir, avant que le chant ne commence, en quoi le morceau que l'on écoute est différent du précédent! Le chant du stringband s'articule autour de plusieurs niveaux de voix, et la plupart des groupes ont un chanteur soliste appuyé par plusieurs choristes. Les morceaux sont courts, rapides et les prestations sont souvent ponctuées de quelques morceaux plus lents.

Bien que l'on retrouve le stringband dans tout le Vanuatu, il semble que ce courant musical soit originaire d'Efate, et plutôt du Nord de l'île. Nguna et en particulier Emao sont considérés comme étant ses berceaux, et certains grands noms du Nord Efate, tels Souwia, Lautano et Saratokowia se passent de génération en génération. Une ancienne de Nguna raconte qu'elle se rappelle, enfant, avoir vu ses pères, oncles, frères et cousins fabriquer des ukulélés avec des boîtes de pilchards récupérées, sur lesquelles ils tendaient de la peau de chèvre sauvage. Les anciens, qui jouaient à l'époque où le pays s'appropriait à prendre son indépendance, dirigent les jeunes d'aujourd'hui, en leur transmettant le droit d'utiliser le nom de stringband que leurs pères et oncles leur avaient déjà transmis voilà une trentaine d'années. Les anciens font aussi office de garants du style, et on fait souvent appel à leurs services pour composer des morceaux ou pour préparer un stringband qui s'apprête à entrer en studio pour enregistrer un album.

Les thèmes abordés dans les textes des chansons de stringband sont relativement divers. Comme ce style musical est souvent utilisé comme une "vitrine" du Vanuatu pour les visiteurs, beaucoup de textes décrivent le Vanuatu comme un paradis tropical préservé, ou l'on peut se balader sur de longues plages de sable blanc, admirer la faune et la flore, apprécier la sympathie et l'hospitalité Vanuataise, se régaler des produits locaux, et ainsi de suite. Beaucoup de textes de stringband souhaitent la bienvenue à un nouvel arrivant ou à un invité de marque, ou encore évoquent des souvenirs lors d'une fête de départ. Mais une autre facette du stringband, c'est qu'il est aussi porteur des valeurs nationales. Des concours de stringband sont organisés toute l'année, à Port-Vila et dans les îles, et lors de ces événements, les stringbands doivent, en plus de leurs propres compositions, présenter des chansons écrites sur des thèmes imposés par les organisateurs dudit concours. Ainsi, on trouvera, entre beaucoup d'autres, des textes sur le tourisme, les ressources naturelles du Vanuatu, l'unité entre les différentes provinces, les bienfaits de l'aélan kakae et bien sûr cette année, sur l'économie traditionnelle. Lors du Fest'Nalenga 2007, qui était organisé par le Wan Smol

Bag, il a été demandé aux stringbands de composer une chanson sur des thèmes de santé publique chers à cette organisation, comme la contraception, la prévention du SIDA ou les grossesses chez les adolescentes. On retrouve aussi dans les textes de stringbands des thèmes issus de la vie quotidienne : mésaventures amoureuses, voyages dans les îles, joies de l'utilisation du téléphone portable, glorification de l'île d'origine des musiciens, chansons en l'honneur de la Sainte Vierge... la liste est longue. Enfin, il est important de signaler que le stringband reflète parfaitement la diversité linguistique du Vanuatu, puisque les textes sont en Bislama, langues vernaculaires, Anglais et Français. Et l'on trouve plus d'un album de stringband ou les musiciens chantent en trois voire quatre langues.

Malgré la popularité croissante du reggae et de la "pop", le stringband au Vanuatu semble toujours avoir de beaux jours devant lui, avec de nouveaux groupes qui se forment régulièrement et font évoluer le style. La production d'albums se porte bien et de nouveaux studios d'enregistrement amateurs se sont créés récemment sur Port-Vila. Et comme tout courant culturel populaire, il est accessible au plus grand nombre. En effet, tout le monde peut jouer dans un stringband : il n'est pas nécessaire de dépenser des sommes astronomiques pour l'achat des instruments, ni d'être entré au conservatoire pour apprendre les quelques accords nécessaires. Le stringband n'a pas besoin non plus d'électricité, on peut donc le pratiquer partout. Pour terminer, voici une petite sélection de quelques excellents albums de stringband :

- "Ol stringband we oli talemaot indipendens" (compilation, VKS productions)
- Dausake "Mi stanap yet" (Vanuata productions)
- Tokotakia/Souwia "Sarafenua dream blong Vanuatu" (Tropik Sound)
- Lautano 2 "Port Vila Bay" (Tropik Sound)

Sébastien Lecrampe

Kalja Kalenda

What's happening in Vanuatu? Que se passe-t-il au Vanuatu?

Oktomba : October : Octobre

- 5: Constitution Day / Konstitusen Dei / Jour de la Constitution
- 15 - 26: Women Fieldworker's Workshop / Filwoka Woksop blong ol Woman / Atelier des Femmes « Fieldworkers »

Novemba : November : Novembre

- 1 - 10: Wan Smolbag Photo exhibition / Foto Eksibisen blong Wan Smolbag / Exposition Photo au Wan Smolbag
- Sanma Mini Arts Festival / Mini Festival d'Arts
- 15 - 17: Exhibition at the National Museum: Lyn Croxon / Eksibisen blong Lyn Croxon, Nasonal Miu-sium / Exposition au Musée National - Lyn Croxon
- 16: Friends of the Museum: Bigfala Trivia Night!
- 17: Culture Day at the Cultural Centre / Kalja Dei long VKS / Journée de la culture au Centre Culturel du Vanuatu
- 29 Oct - 9 Nov: Men's Fieldworker Workshop / Filwoka Woksop blong ol Man / Atelier des Hommes « Fieldworkers »

Book of the Month...

John Layard long Malekula 1914-1915

The Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, and the Friends of the Vanuatu Museum are proud to announce the publication of this beautiful set of photographs by anthropologist John Layard in the islands and villages of Malekula.

Available to Friends at the Museum Shop: 1500 vatu
All proceeds go to the Malekula Cultural Centre

Livre du mois ...

John Layard long Malekula 1914-1915

Le Musée d'Archéologie et d'Anthropologie de l'Université de Cambridge ainsi que les Amis du Musée sont fiers d'annoncer la publication de cette très belle collection de photographies de l'anthropologue John Layard prises dans les îles et les villages de Mallicolo.

En vente à la boutique du Musée : 1500 Vatu, Tous les bénéfices seront reversés au centre Culturel de Mallicolo

Les Amis du Musée vous invitent à une...

The Friends of the Museum are proud to present our

BIGFALA TRIVIA NIGHT! GRANDE SOIREE QUIZ & CULTURE

A battle of the minds at the National Museum!

Come along to wine, dine and test your general knowledge of Vanuatu and beyond with a table of friends, and help raise funds to contribute to the preservation and awareness of Ni-Vanuatu cultures - with the chance to win fantastic prizes on the night.

Where: The National Museum

When: Friday 16th November from 6:30pm

Cost: 2500vt per person, tables of 10, food platters provided, refreshments available at bar.

Les esprits se rencontrent au Musée!

Venez manger, boire et tester vos connaissances sur le Vanuatu, et plus encore. Réunissez vos amis autour d'une table et aidez nous à récolter des fonds pour la préservation et la reconnaissance des cultures du Vanuatu. Nombreux prix à gagner !

Où : au Musée National

Comment : vendredi 16 novembre à partir de 18h30

Coût : 2500 VT par personne, tables de 10 personnes, repas compris, boissons au bar.

Contact: Secretary FOVM: Cleo #22129
museumfriends@vanuatu.com.vu