

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE & HERITAGE ANNUAL REPORT 2000

A. FIJI MUSEUM

Tarisi Sorovi-Vunidilo
Director – FIJI MUSEUM

Year 2000 brought about many changes within the Fiji Museum. These wholesome changes provided significant platforms and new challenges for the new millennium. The results of these changes can be seen in this annual report, which contains the achievements of every department in this institution.

Despite the political upheaval in May this year, the Fiji Museum maintained its stand on the grounds of neutrality-without being swayed by external political forces. Most of the programs that were planned for the year were undertaken, even though there were financial setbacks that affected these programs one way or another.

Earlier in the year, we saw the departure of our long serving Director, *Kate Vusoniwailala* who has moved on to greener pastures. We also farewelled two senior professional staff, Museum Registrar *Sagale Buadromo* and Education Officer Kalpana Nand. Additionally, three of our older staff-*Joana Roqica*, *Sepeti Matararaba* and *Tevita Seru* reached their retirement and they were also fondly farewelled. These departures opened opportunities for new staff to be recruited to fill these vacant positions.

Being appointed as the new Director was indeed challenging. One of my main tasks was to conduct recruitments to replace those who have departed. Along with these tasks was the unpredictability of our financial situation, which demanded a lot of lobbying with the relevant government Ministries for their financial support. These support allowed the smooth operation of the recruitment process and the employment of new staff, along with the return of two retirees, *Joana Roqica* and *Sepeti Mata*, whose services were greatly needed. Their return was fully supported by the Board.

Another major important task was to ensure that our public programs were undertaken as planned. The *Lapita International Conference* was scheduled in June, to be held at the University of The south Pacific. Due to the political crisis, most delegates cancelled their participation on the conference, forcing it to be held at the Australian National University in Canberra. Furthermore, other archaeological expeditions planned for the year were re-scheduled for

next year. Researchers who frequently conduct research in Fiji offered their full support to the Fiji Museum during these trying times.

Our annual Open Day was very successful and the tremendous support of the corporate sector was overwhelming. Approximately 15,000 people thronged to the Museum and this event was well covered by the media.

The Friends of the Museum Society conducted various evening functions, which generated funds for specific museum projects. These programs also provide publicity for the museum.

Since the Fiji Museum has been incorporated within the framework of the Department of Culture, this allowed the Director to liaise closely with the Director of Culture in terms of budgets, compilation of relevant reports for the Ministers, meeting NGO's and the successful administration of PIMA (Pacific Islands Museums Association). The Annual General Meeting of PIMA in Noumea, in October saw the Treasurer position of the Association changing hands from one Fiji Museum Director to another. Kate's resignation provided another opportunity for a Fiji national to be part of this regional organization. This is a critical and a positive move for the Fiji Museum in terms of fostering network among regional museums and cultural centers.

The lobbying for the National Center for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) continued this year, and it is anticipated to be a critical venture of the Fiji Museum in the years to come. It is positive to note the support of the Ministry of Women, Culture and Social Welfare and the Department of Culture. This project is important to other related cultural institutions such as the National Trust for Fiji and the Fiji Arts Council. Their continued support would be greatly needed in the years to come.

The Director was also able to attend two Provincial Council Meetings, in Lau and Kadavu-presenting papers at both meetings with the aim of raising awareness of the protection of our cultural and natural heritage sites. This was well received and has resulted with interests and enquiries of archaeological sites management for both economic and non-economic purposes. The well known economic purposes of these enquiries relates to Ecotourism. The Fiji Museum is then encouraged to develop and maintain network with other relevant agencies such as the Native Land Trust Board, Ministry of Tourism and the Department of Environment.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Trustees for their continued support during the year. Even though the whole nation was affected during the political turmoil, the support of the corporate sector to many of the museum's activities and programs is greatly appreciated. To be part of the Department of Culture framework provided easier access to the Ministry of Women, Culture & Social Welfare through financial and in-kind assistance. Our regional counterparts should also be commended due to their unflinching support, in terms of training, workshops and scientific research. International institutions such as universities and research laboratories continue to make a mark in the international scene in terms of archaeological and

palaeontological research. Last but not the least, I would like to thank our hardworking staff for ensuring that our goals are met and our programs were delivered successfully. May our dreams for the new millennium come true!

Tarisi Sorovi - Director

CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

Nirmala Balram

The year started with the return of the conservator from Australia after completing studies at the University of Canberra. The department had been without a resident conservator for six months. The conservator plans all conservation activities after taking into regard resources available and urgency of the activity and with the museum assistant executes these activities. Majority of the conservation activities are on going programs throughout the year.

1.0 Meetings/Conferences/Workshops

China visit- A week long visit to China with the Minister for Women, Culture and Social Welfare to tour cultural institutions to observe quality of exhibitions.

Presentation at International Women's Group on role of the museum and the importance of conservation to the museum and the public at large

Australian High Commissioner for assistance for plans for funding to the Museum Director of Technical Cooperation Division from Japan

Conservation of a Travelling Exhibition workshop held in Noumea was attended by Museum Assistant.

2.0 Programs/Projects

2.1 Environment Monitoring

Daily monitoring of temperature and humidity, includes monitoring of air conditioning and surveying showcases regularly to ensure proper lighting and pest control is in check.

2.2 Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

A very difficult task due to poor design of museum building. Open windows and air conditioning only in limited areas pose major threats to the collection both in storage and display.

A comprehensive integrated program coordinated with Rentokil has been implemented to manage museum pests, such as wood borers, powder beetle, silver fish, wasps, hornets and other common insects like ants and cockroaches. Mold, which is very prevalent in our humid atmosphere, is contained through regular inspections and treatment.

"General housekeeping" falls under the care of the department.

IPM is also part of the Disaster Management program for the Museum.

2.3 Boxing/Storing Objects

Throughout the year parts of the collection that needed to be stored properly due to increase in deterioration were provided with supports and boxed for "safe keeping". Hundreds of other objects requiring similar treatment have been put on hold as the department awaits funding for conservation materials.

2.4 Remedial Conservation

Several objects that were very severely infested were brought to the laboratory for treatment. These were frozen and then cleaned and prepared for storage.

2.5 Storeroom Management

This includes environmental monitoring and proper storage, a huge task that will take years to fully bring to international standards. Large parts of the collection is still in need of proper conservation materials for storage and more is urgently required to ensure that the collection is preserved long term. Partial air conditioning of the ethnographic store rooms also poses a problem for maintaining proper environmental conditions. Archaeology store is limited in size and unable to house the growing collection. Most of the collection requires improved storage and work is underway to accomplish this. So far, with limited staff conservation can only maintain "house keeping" activities.

2.6 Condition Reporting of the Collection

In October 2000 the department began the process of condition reporting the collections in storage. This project will take about two years to complete depending on time and resources. Reports will also assist in comparative studies on the effects of air-conditioning.

2.7 Showcase Management

Throughout the year all showcases in the galleries including the cases themselves and the objects within are constantly monitored and treated or simply maintained. Lack of air conditioning in the galleries compounds this activity and often it becomes a continuous process. This year alone the showcases have needed treatment from two to three times

2.8 Fire Alarm System

Wormald, courtesy of Colonial, has installed a new fire alarm system. The main museum building has been equipped with heat and smoke detectors together with an alarm system that will provide quick response from the Fire Station.

2.9 Exhibitions

Preparations and setting up of the following exhibitions:

- Sheraton quarterly change over of exhibitions
- Embassy of Israel exhibition (Vibrant Israel)
- Sports exhibitions

2.10 Fire Door

A stalled project now due to lack of funding. Prior to 19th May negotiated building of the essential fire door exit because at the moment the museum has only one exit.

2.11 Preparing/Packing Objects for Shipment

An overseas collection of guns was inspected, condition reported and packed for overseas shipping back to New Zealand.

2.12 Media Relations

Both the Conservator and Museum Assistant have been involved in creating conservation awareness in the public through the media. Radio and television programs both in Hindi and Fijian have been used.

2.13 University of the South Pacific- Student Projects

This year, ten students from the University of the South Pacific were guided, taught and provided assistance with their conservation projects.

2.14 Private Conservation Work

Conservation treatment was carried out on six objects from the Pacific for a private client.

2.15 Staff Training

Conservation assistant attended the following training programs during the year:

- Introduction to Windows 98 at USP computer center
- GTC Training for personal development
- Conservation of a traveling exhibition in Noumea

3.0 Equipment/Materials

The department received new stocks of some essential materials from Australia on the return of the conservator and a freezer was purchased to carry out preventive conservation on the premises. At the moment essential conservation materials are limited and much needed materials must be purchased for effective work to continue.

4.0 Additional Projects

4.1 Gala Night

Conservator was actively involved in the organisation of this fundraising activity that had to be stalled for this year due to current political situation in the country.

4.2 Fiji Museum Cafe

Conservator assisted in setting up the newly renovated museum café.

4.3 Housekeeping

The department supervised all housekeeping activities in the museum until cleaning services were removed. Post coup the department took over the cleaning and maintenance of all first floor galleries and laboratory in addition to the store rooms.

4.4 Occupational Health and Safety

Conservation head is a member of the OHS committee

4.5 Disaster Preparedness

The conservator has prepared and written a customised disaster preparedness and management plan for the museum, which needs to be implemented.

Conclusion

The year started very well for the department with rejuvenation of the department after the departure of the previous conservator. Unfortunately, the rhythm of the pace of work was stalled after the political upheaval of 19th May and for sometime work involved only maintenance of the displays. Fortunately, much of the routine conservation work does not need much finance, and the department was able to revamp and begin anew a maintenance program for the rest of the year. Conservation work never ends and there are many different angles to it, therefore for the moment the department is concentrating on preventive conservation for now.

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Jotika Ramos

1.0 Meetings/Conferences/Workshops

- **Consultative Meeting on Regional Cooperation in Cultural Heritage Protection in Asia and the Pacific** (February 29-March 3, 2000), hosted by the UNESCO Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO (ACCU) in Nara, Japan. I was selected by the UNESCO National Commission in Fiji and the Ministry for Women, Culture and Social Welfare to represent Fiji. I presented a paper on Cultural Heritage Management, present situation, problems and the future of cultural heritage management in Fiji. This paper has been published in the proceedings of the meeting.

Singh, Jotika (2000) Cultural Heritage Management, present situation, problems and the future of cultural heritage management in Fiji in ACCU (ed) *Consultative Meeting on Regional Cooperation in Cultural Heritage Protection in Asia and the Pacific*. Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO (ACCU): Japan. (Pages 94-7)

- **Experts Meeting on Training Programmes for Cultural Heritage Protection in Asia and the Pacific** (March 3-6, 2000), hosted by the UNESCO Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO (ACCU) in Nara, Japan. I was selected by the UNESCO National Commission in Fiji and the Ministry for Women, Culture and Social Welfare to represent Fiji. I conducted a countrywide analysis of the Heritage Sector in Fiji and presented a country report focusing on *Training Strategy, on the current situation, problems and needs regarding training in Fiji*. The paper has been published as part of the proceedings of this meeting.

Singh, Jotika (2000) A paper on Training Strategy, on the current situation, problems and needs regarding training in Fiji in ACCU (ed) *Experts Meeting on Training Programmes for Cultural Heritage Protection in Asia and the Pacific*. Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO (ACCU): Japan. (Pages 71-5)

- **Cultural Heritage Management and Tourism: Models for Co-operation among Stakeholders**. A Norway – UNESCO Funds in Trust Regional Co-operation Project (April 6-18, 2000) in Bhaktapur, Nepal. I co-presented a *Case Study of Levuka, Fiji*. The case study was the culmination of a 12 months UNESCO LEAP project conducted in Levuka to determine whether heritage tourism could be used to fund the conservation of the historic town of Levuka. The presentation was followed by the formulation of an action strategy that would be implemented in Levuka over the next few years.

- **ICOMOS Australia World Heritage Conference** (November 18-19, 2000) in Canberra, Australia. I have been invited by ICOMOS Australia to present a paper on *Intangible cultural heritage in the Pacific Islands: identification and management*.

2.0 Public Lectures - Fiji

- I regularly present public lectures on Cultural Heritage identification, research and management issues in Fiji at National and Provincial Levels – an ongoing project the Fiji Museum initiated as part of an awareness raising project.
- Fiji Institute of Technology Culture Lecture Series (October, 2000) – I presented a paper on *Analysis of the Cultural Heritage Sector in Fiji and the role of individual institutions in the protection of heritage sites in Fiji*.

3.0 Cultural Heritage Management Projects in Fiji

Levuka, Ovalau

The Museum is part of a joint Historical Archaeology project with the Simon Fraser University. The project aims at reconstructing the history of Levuka and at understanding the material culture of the early inhabitants of Levuka. This is a long-term project and I have been selected by the Fiji Museum to work on this project.

National Site Register

I initiated a joint project between the Fiji Museum and the National Trust for Fiji to conduct a review of all heritage related legislation in Fiji and to formulate new legislation that provides better legal protection for both, movable and immovable heritage in Fiji. This is an ongoing project. We aim to produce a legal framework that will assist us in setting up a National Site Register of Heritage sites in Fiji, as well as, drawing up site management guidelines for the listed sites.

Consultancy Work

At present, there are only a few people working in the field of Cultural Heritage Management in Fiji. As a result, I do most Archaeological Impact Assessments (AIAs) in Fiji.

National Fieldwork Program

As part of its program, the Fiji Museum Department of Archaeology maintains a national fieldwork program through which it regularly carries out archaeological survey of sites around Fiji in conjunction with research partners both locally and overseas. I assist with the facilitation of the Archaeology Department fieldwork program.

4.0 Quarterly Newsletter

I am the editor of a quarterly newsletter in Archaeology, entitled ***Trowels and Tapes*** that aims to promote Cultural Heritage Management in Fiji. The first issue was published in October 2000.

5.0 Archaeology Laboratory Project

I am currently working on a project with a volunteer to catalogue and study excavated material from field trips I was involved in. This will provide reports on the fieldtrips and clear up the space currently being occupied by these materials.

6.0 Publications

Ramos, Jotika (2000) Investigations of Anthropogenic Investigations in Qaranilaca, Vanuabalavu Island, Fiji in *Archaeology in New Zealand* Vol 43:1. New Zealand Archaeological Association: New Zealand.

Ramos Singh Jotika and Buadromo Sagale (2000) Oral History in Fiji in *Domodomo* Vol 13:1. Fiji Museum: Fiji Islands.

Singh, Jotika (2000) A paper on Training Strategy, on the current situation, problems and needs regarding training in Fiji in *Experts Meeting on Training Programmes for Cultural Heritage Protection in Asia and the Pacific*. Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO (ACCU): Japan. (Pages 71-5)

Singh, Jotika (2000) Cultural Heritage Management, present situation, problems and the future of cultural heritage management in Fiji in *Consultative Meeting on Regional Cooperation in Cultural Heritage Protection in Asia and the Pacific*. Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO (ACCU): Japan. (Pages 94-7)

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Kalpana Nand

1.0 Meetings/Conferences/Workshops

Attended International Council Of Museums/ Committee for Cultural and Education Action Conference in Christchurch, New Zealand from 31st Oct-2nd Nov 2000. Presented a paper at the conference titled: " Fiji Museum in the Post-Colonial Era". Received funding from the New Zealand High Commission.

2.0 Publications

Only one issue of "Kidz News", a newsletter for school students and teachers was published by the department with information about museum activities and exhibitions. The other two issues were not printed due to a lack of funding. The newsletter was circulated to schools with assistance from the Education Offices in various districts.

3.0 Projects

3.1 Visits were made by the Education Officer and by the Field Officer to make inspections on the Museum *drua*. Reports were submitted to the Director.

3.2 The Education Officer continued to make guest appearances on Fiji Television's Children's Program "Get Set". The program continued to receive favorable response from children and is an excellent medium with which to educate children about the museum. Various topics on Fiji's history and culture were covered on the museum slot as well as news and information about Museum activities.

3.3 The Education Officer facilitated press releases about all museum activities and projects. Constant contact with the media was maintained.

Projects covered in 2000

Sports Exhibition

Naigani Island Excavation

Museum Staff- movements

Archaeological Excavation, Levuka

Israeli Exhibition

Quarry Project in Savusavu

Lau excavation

Visit by Cabinet

School Holiday Program

PIMA workshop

Friends of the Museum Quiz Night

Museum Open Day

Olympic Torch donation

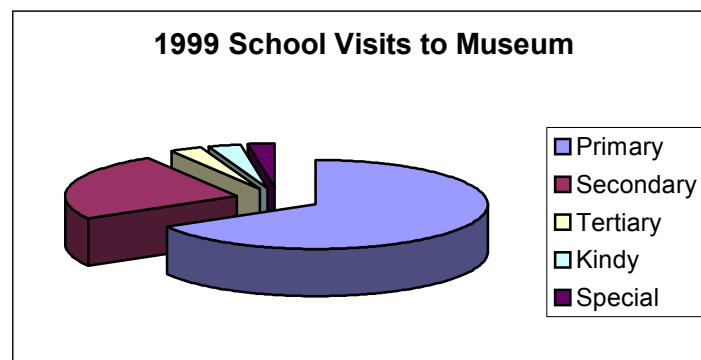
3.4 Up-dated schools data-base on computer

3.5 Coordinated arrangements for the Fiji Museum Open Day on the 11th of October. The Museum received sponsorship from various business houses to assist with preparations for the Open Day. Publicity for the Open Day was as follows:

- Fiji Times and Daily Post
- Fiji TV:
- FM96/Navtarang/Viti FM: FOC: pre –sell as well as live broadcasts on the 11th of October from the Museum.
- Craft demonstrations were also held.

3.6 Presented a lecture to FIT Design students about the Museum.

3.7 School students continued to make excursions to the museum in large numbers. A total of 13603 students visited the museum from January till December, 2000 The students included those from Pre-school, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Institutions as well as from Special Schools. The museum's increasing profile in the community through the media has helped to generate a greater interest for children.



3.8 The Education Officer acted in the capacity of the Director from the 8th of May- 8th of June 2000 and from 23-27 Oct. 2000.

3.9 Regular radio programs on the Hindustani network of Radio Fiji was held. However this ceased after the events of May 19th due to a budgetary cut in Radio Fiji.

3.10 A supplement was organized in the Daily Post and Fiji Sun about the Museum and its activities.

3.11 The Education officer organized the Annual General meeting for the Friends Society in March 2000.

3.12 Programs were also made on the Schools Broadcasting Unit's Hindustani and English segments about how teachers and students can utilize the Museum.

3.13 A music competition was organized in conjunction with Fiji Television on its Ready to Roll program in March 2000.

3.14 The Youth Day was celebrated at the Museum by holding a pottery making workshop for children.

3.15 A Quiz Night was held in April for the Friends of the Museum as a fundraising activity. Sponsors were sought for the prizes. This was very successful and a sum of \$600 was collected.

3.16 A Photographic Exhibition was organized for the Sangam Convention during the Easter weekend in Suva.

3.17 A holiday program was held during the May School Holidays. Activities included a pottery workshop, face painting and rides and food stalls.

3.18 The Education Officer together with the Conservator presented a program about the Museum on Fiji Television's "Jharoka" program.

3.19 A book display was organized for the Annual Principals Conference held at the Centra Hotel, Suva in April 2000.

3.20 The Education Officer met the following people during the course of the year and had an opportunity to talk to them about the department and its objectives:

Australian High Commissioner to Fiji, Ms Susan Boyd, American Ambassador to Fiji Mr Osman Sadique, Pre-Coup Cabinet of Fiji, Cultural Consultant, Dr Amareshwar Gahlla, Princess Pilolevu of Tonga and the Minister and Assistant Ministers for Women, Culture and Heritage and Social Welfare.

4.0 CONCLUSION

School visits to the Museum totaled students for 2000. There was a drop in the number of students visiting the Museum due to the crisis. The department was also responsible for coordinating press releases about Museum programs. The Open Day, coordinated by the Department, was a huge success close to 15000 people turning up on the day. The Open Day proved to be a good Public Relations exercise for the Museum. The Education Officer represented the Museum at the ICOM/CECA Conference in Christchurch, New Zealand where she presented a paper about the Fiji Museum.

A number of programs scheduled for the year had to be cancelled due to budget cuts. However, the Department continued to make a steady progress despite the events.

COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT

Sagale Buadromo

1.0 Meetings/Conferences/Workshop

1.1 Gender Sensitivity Training, GTC, Nasese – Sept 2000

The Registrar was nominated to attend this workshop at GTC, Nasese. The workshop looked at Gender issues and was instrumental in the making of another upcoming workshop in Gender Sensitivity for the Cultural institutions, that is, the Arts Council, The National Trust and the Fiji Museum.

1.2 PIMA's workshop # 5 "Conservation and Design of a Travelling Exhibition", Noumea, New Caledonia 18-27th October, 2000

1.2.1 The Registrar, along with the Assistant Conservator (T. Raikaci) and the Director (T. Vunidilo) were invited by PIMA (Pacific Islands Museums Association) to attend this workshop in Noumea on the 18th –27th of October.

1.2.2 In the first week, Mr. Francois Leurquin, a free lance adviser and Preventative Conservation Consultant of CARE (Care and Restoration And Expertise Ltd), New Zealand, taught the participants on how best to prepare for a traveling exhibition especially with the conservation and handling of documents.

1.2.3 In the second week, Dr. Carol Mayer and Darrin Morris of University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology taught the participants on how best to show off their artefacts by best utilising materials, colours to accentuate artifacts, and signage when designing an exhibition.

1.2.4 All in all, it was a hectic and practical workshop and the small traveling exhibition was opened to the Public in Noumea from the 27th of October.

2.0 8th South Pacific Festival of Arts Exhibition

The Registrar and the Assistant Conservator, Sagale Buadromo and Tubuka Raikaci, helped set up a small photographic display on the subjects Tattooing, Boats of Fiji and House building in the Maritime Museum in Noumea as part of the South Pacific Arts Festival.

3.0 Museum of Anthropology of the University of British Columbia work attachment. Aug 2000 –Jan 2001

3.1 The Photographer, Mr. William Copeland was chosen to represent the Fiji Museum in a 5-month work attachment in Vancouver, Canada. The Museum chosen was the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia as part of a North-South Exchange project through CUSO.

3.2 William will be looking at the Fijian Collection at the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia and also learning about Audio-visual technology there.

4.0 Publications

4.1 The role of the Fiji Museum in collecting oral traditions

The Registrar, Sagale Buadromo, and Jotika Singh, from the Archaeology Dept. wrote the above article for the latest Domodomo issue Vol. 13 #1.

4.2 Friends of the Fiji Museum Society and Newsletter

The Publications Officer/Website Programmer, Ms Stephanie Hornett has been working on the new newsletter and has also been instrumental in resurrecting the Friends of the Fiji Museum Society and Committee. With the help of Sagale Buadromo, Mereia Luvunakoro and Mereoni Seru the Friends of the Fiji Museum Society is now an active group. The newsletter is published quarterly with the society's program of activities for the members.

4.3 Friends of the Fiji Museum Society and Domodomo Scholarly Journal

The Friends of the Fiji Museum Society has taken on the Domodomo project and is continuing the publication of this important journal. The latest issue will be Domodomo Vol. 13 #1 specialising in Fijian and Pacific articles pertaining to any science and art subjects.

4.4 Friends of the Fiji Museum Society Calendar 2001

The Friends of the Fiji Museum Society has printed a 2001 calendar in a bid to raise funds. These funds will be used for the benefit of the museum. So far the Society has helped to repair the Accounts Office computer, paid for entertainment at one of the museum's functions, and half of the total payment for the repair of the Fiji Museum's photocopier.

5.0 Projects

5.1 Domodomo Vol. 13 # 1

This issue is ready to be printed and is currently awaiting editing by the Domodomo editorial committee and for funds from the sale of the new calendar to facilitate publishing.

5.2 Fiji Weapons and Warfare

The Friends of the Fiji Museum are currently working with Mr. Fergus Clunie to try and revise and update the information in the Fiji Weapons and Warfare publication. This publication is already out of print so the revised edition would be just as popular.

5.3 WWII documentary

This documentary is still ongoing, due to the limited number of staff trained in the field of editing. This project has always taken second priority to other projects. The Registrar in an effort to complete this project has written to the Pacific Community to address this issue. They have agreed to help edit this program.

5.4 Friends of the Fiji Museum Society

The Collections Department have been instrumental in getting this Society off the ground and running again. With the strong support of new staff member, Ms Stephanie Hornett the Friends Society has taken off to a new level. We hope to get a lot of funding to help the Museum with much needed funding.

5.5 Subsidiary Display

This project was stopped in early April due to the attempted coup in May of this year. Attempts to get Vatulele Resort was not successful as the hotels are not willing to get involved till things improve economically.

5.6 Inventory of Storeroom 1 and 2

This project has been completed in February of this year and is currently being re-checked for any mistakes etc. All information is already entered in the database.

5.7 Inventory of Library

This was completed in June of this year. Sela Rayawa is currently re-checking his cards to be updated. From this inventory it was found that several books were missing.

5.8 Inventory of Archives

This was completed in March of this year and all information is now printed and bound into two copies, one for the Collections Dept. and the other for the Librarian. This book enables people to gain easier access to the Archival material in the Archives.

6.0 Conclusion

The Collections Department has managed to carry on with its main projects. It has however not been able to carry out its subsidiary displays, which were a major source of funding.

Thanks to the dedication of Mereia Luvunakoro and Mereoni Seru the inventories of the Storerooms 1 and 2, Library and the Archives were completed making it easier for access to materials.

On the whole of this year has been a year where the museum staff has had to overcome huge obstacles to keep the museum on an even keel and show the general public that we are here for the long haul.

B. FIJI ARTS COUNCIL

Introduction

Since its inception in 1964, the Fiji Arts Council has been engaged in various activities to encourage our craft people to appreciate their contribution to Fijian society. Traditional arts and crafts represent a true expression of the people's cultural identity, which has been nurtured in harmony with the natural environment. Craft development is also becoming recognised throughout Fiji as a viable tool for economic growth. The Fiji Arts Council, with the assistance of government and private groups, has been able to coordinate programs, which promote our traditional handicrafts, encouraging their preservation and development.

Our Vision

The vision for this institution is that it would serve to promote excellence in the arts, crafts, and other cultural expressions of Fiji. We aim to ensure that the cultural heritage of Fiji preserved in the new millennium, as a viable and integral part of our society.

Mission Statement

The Fiji Arts Council provides support and encouragement to the arts and crafts community of Fiji. We work to develop networks within this community, and to foster public awareness of Fijian culture, at both the national and international levels.

Our Purpose, Principle, and Practice

Within the framework of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Heritage and Civil Aviation, we provide management, advice, and support to all artists particularly indigenous artists, crafts people, and institutions involved with Fijian arts and crafts, and assist in educating the Fiji youth about their cultural heritage. We work with both local and international collaborations in organising exhibitions, which highlight the unique culture of the Fiji Islands. We train and educate our craft people by conducting workshops on the traditional crafts of Fiji.

Council's Objectives

Our objectives include the following:

- Promote public awareness of the arts and crafts of Fiji
- Encourage economic growth through the development of arts and crafts industries, while at the same preserving the integrity of the Fijian Culture.

- Develop networks between artists, craft persons, art school, businesses, and other institutions, so that they may support and help each other.
- Provide training for artists and crafts people.
- Promote the culture of Fiji on an international scale

Council's Strategies

To ensure the outlined objectives are met, the Fiji Arts Council will employ the following strategies:

- Continue hosting art exhibitions and workshops, with the aim of capitalising on the momentum we have built through past events.
- Develop a database of information related to arts and crafts in Fiji.
- Promote Fijian Culture on the World Wide Web.
- Seek alternative sources of funding for special events.
- Recruit volunteers from overseas organisations with technical skills.
- Train our staff in the information technologies

Council's Work Output

1 Australian Expert Services Overseas Programs Officers (AESOP) Volunteer (Nov99 – Feb2000)

The Fiji Arts Council decided to improve its organisations and management by establishing database of crafts & artisans in Fiji and had asked AESOP to deploy a volunteer with IT, database and computer skills. Now the Council can truly say that a significant portion of Fijian crafts and artisans are now safely recorded on a new database created by Andrie Gavlik and Helen Engisch. The 2 volunteers spent three months sharing their skills with Fiji Arts Council.

It was an enormous task as much of the Fijian population is involved in some form of craft and Andre and Helen spent considerable time interviewing artists, craftspeople and educators, scouring through records and displays, and researching relevant materials. They travelled around the islands to find and record craft materials, write biographies, and take photos of the artisans.

The database will be regularly updated as it forms the basis for arts/crafts programmes and participation in cultural life. It keeps track of art, crafts and cultural collections, as well as artisans in the Fiji Islands in order to maintain a record of the craft names, points of contacts, designs and the artisans specialty, to provide a linkage amongst craftspeople and strengthen the coordinating role of the Fiji Arts Council. Helen & Andre were very happy with the outcome.

2 Tenant Creek High School (23- 29 Feb)

The Fiji Arts Council organised and co-ordinated cultural activities for a visiting school from Tenant Creek Northern Territory, Australia. The group visited local institutions such as Montfort Boys Town, Fiji Institute of Technology, Graphic Design department, Fiji Museum, Fiji Television, Soqosoqo Vakamarama, USP Oceania Centre, Toberua Island and Kula Bird Park. They were later invited to a luncheon hosted by the Australian High Commission. The FAC then organized a small Craft Fair where leading craftspeople demonstrated to them the art of weaving, masi making, carving, pottery making and contemporary crafts.

3 Cuso Volunteer (Mar-Jun)

Through the assistance of the Canadian Volunteers Organisation, Mr. George White arrived in Fiji in March, to continue with the updating of our database. Unfortunately his 6 months of stay was not utilised due to the May 19th coup.

4 Fiji's Participation at the 8th Pacific Festival of Arts (23 Oct– 3 Nov)

The Assistant Minister for Culture, Adi Senimili Dyer, led the Fiji delegates for the 8th South Pacific Festival of Arts. This was also the first group to leave Fiji's shore for a cultural exchange during the height of the May coup. The event coordinated by the Fiji Arts Council and the Department of Culture & Heritage saw the participation coordinated and organised the participation of a 50-member contingent to the Festival of Arts in Noumea. They participated in dance, music, visual arts, books & literature, clothing, arts & craft & philately.

5 Council's Yearly Events

All Council's yearly events were put off as a result of the May 19th Coup. Primary reason was the location of the Fiji Arts Council within proximity of the Parliament Complex.

6 Council Staffing

The Council had to lay off a staff Ana Melino due to the 12.5% cut from the annual grant of \$20,000.00. The Council is left of with the Council Secretary who is a Civil servant & two Council employees, the Accounts Clerk Tulia Seduadua and Typist Ann Nacewa.

7 Conclusion

There is a need to seek new ways of encouraging traditional crafts people to practice their honored crafts, and promote international cooperation and the exchange of ideas for the advancement of traditional arts & crafts. The achievements of the Fiji Arts Council over the past years have been remarkable given its limited resources.