

NEWSBITS:

TINIAN - Site of new Radio Station ? The "World of Radio" programme on Radio Station WWCR, Nashville TN reports rumours that Tinian is to be the site of an international shortwave radio station broadcasting the "Asia-Pacific Network". This was said to be a new U.S. Government sponsored station broadcasting to non-democratic countries in Asia and the Pacific. International shortwave radio stations appear to be something of a local industry in our area of interest.

SAIPAN - already hosts two international shortwave radio stations - The Christian Science Monitor operates a station at Agingan Point broadcasting a radio version of the Christian Science Monitor newspaper on weekdays and religious programming at weekends. These programmes are mostly in English and are directed worldwide.

The Far East Broadcasting Company has a station at Susupe broadcasting religious programmes. The target area is primarily Asia and the former Soviet Union, mostly in languages of the target area but occasionally in English.

PALAU: Radio Station KHBN operates from Koror - again broadcasting religious programmes primarily in Vietnamese. Chinese and occasionally English to South East Asia.

GUAM: A couple of religious stations operate on Guam. Trans World Radio Pacific operates Radio Station KTWR from Merizo beaming programmes to SE and East Asia mostly in the languages of the target area while the Adventist Church operates station KSDA broadcasting from Agat to Asia and the Pacific in English and languages of the target area. There could be others I haven't heard of!!

MARSHALL ISLANDS: According to a report by David North in "Pacific Islands Monthly" February 1996 reproduced in "Ki-Tu News" July 1996 [Kiribati and Tuvalu Philatelic Society] the Peace Corps will shortly leave the Marshalls entirely following a cut in their funding. Meanwhile a new U.S. Ambassador, Joan Plaisted, has been appointed to the Marshall Islands and Kiribati.

BIKINI: A report in a U.K. newspaper last year that the Local Government Council for Bikini was considering leasing Bikini Atoll for the storage of nuclear waste seem to contradict a comment in "Ki-Tu News" that a total ban exists on transporting nuclear material in the Pacific precluding the removal of nuclear contamination from the area.

PALAU: A contract for the design of the new national capital has been signed by President Nakamura and Architects Hawaii, Ltd. The signing took place on May 30, 1996 at the site of the new capital, Malekeok state on Babeldaob island. The U.S. Government is providing \$2.6 million for the design phase of the capital relocation project. [Report in The Palau Gazette, June 28, 1996]

PALAU: \$189,000 has been allocated by the Government of Palau for Post Office Renovation & Expansion. The project commenced on 13 February, 1996 and is due for completion on November 30, 1996. [Capital Improvement Projects listed in "The Palau Gazette" dated June 28, 1996]

CLIPPERTON ISLAND CENTENARY: - by O.W. Newport

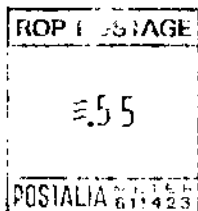
This article appears in the October, 1995 edition of "Pacifica" the journal of the Pacific Islands Study Circle of Great Britain. It deals with the postal history of this French Dependency which issued its first and only (local) stamps in 1895. The article covers the Mexican occupation of the island and shows postal markings of U.S and French ships visiting the island. Covers from a survey flight by an Australian aviator who landed on the island in 1944, from the U.S. Weather Station of late 1944/45 and from the research station operated by Murnel Communications in 1966/67 are also shown.

EXCHANGE REQUESTED - METER STAMPS: Gabriel Pustel would like to contact others interested in Meter Markings with a view to exchange. Gabriel Pustel, P.O. Box 1345, Jackson, NJ 08527, USA.

POSTAGE VALIDATION IMPRINT: Thanks to Gabe Pustel for advising me that the correct title of the item shown in editon # 13 of the "Bulletin" as illustration 13/14 is Postage Validation Imprint (PVI). Gabe confirms that these are now replacing Meters on the counters of some U.S. Post Offices.

REPUBLIC OF PALAU

KOROR, PW 98940: Gabriel Pustel sends a photocopy of a cover bearing a Postalia Meter stamp # 611423 dated Jul 31, 1995 from Koror. The user is the Palau Visitors Authority. Gabriel says they use stamps sometimes instead of the meter. This is the first meter I have seen from Palau since postal independence. Does any reader know of others from Palau, or indeed from the Marshall Islands or FSM ?



The Postalia Meter impression # 611423 is shown here as illustration 14/27

BABELDAOB ROAD COMPLETED For the first time in the history of the Republic of Palau the big island of Babeldaob has become accessible by road. The road now connects Koror with the states of Airai (just over the bridge from Koror), Aimeliik, Ngatpang, Melekeok, Ngardmau, Ngaraard, and Ngarchelong at the northern tip of Babeldaob. During the Japanese administration a road reached as far as Ngardmau about three quarters way up the island from Koror.

The opening ceremonies took place on February 16th 1996 when President Nakamura invited all state and national leaders and the general public to join him in a drive to Ollei in Ngarchelong in the far north of the island. Sixty Four four-wheelers and about 180 people began the journey and more people joined as the caravan rolled north.

Opening ceremonies for each stretch of the road were carried out at various points on the drive north. The drive back to Koror from Ollei took two hours and fifty-five minutes to cover the forty-four miles. People taking part reported the drive to be an experience highly recommended to those who care to see rivers, high mountains, pristine jungles and beautiful beaches never before accessible by automobile.

Babeldaob is the largest land mass in the Micronesian region next to Guam but is very sparsely populated. Prior to the building of the road access to most villages on Babeldaob was by sea. More than two thirds of the entire population of Palau live in Koror and most of those live in Koror town.

In addition to the road parts of Babeldaob now have access to electricity and fiber optic telecommunications systems and other infrastructure developments are in hand. The Palau government hope that these developments will result in a more even distribution of population throughout the state by the development of business and tourism. (Perhaps even another Post Office ? EB)

[The above is extracted from reports in the February 29 and March 29 issues of "The Palau Gazette"]

In "A Postal History/Cancellation Study of the U.S. Pacific Islands" Robert T. Murphy states that Post offices were authorised to be opened at Ngard Village (Ngardmau) and Ngchesar on Babeldaob island on March 1, 1971. These P.O.'s were only for the sale of stamps and the distribution of mail. They never cancelled stamps. BUT... postal datestamps were held at Koror Post Office and impressions were supplied by favour. The Post offices closed later in 1971. No Post offices have been reported on Babeldaob since 1971. Full details of these Post Offices can be found on pages 22 and 23 of "A Postal History/Cancellation Study of the U.S. Pacific Islands" by Robert T. Murphy