

Welcome to the second issue of “PasiRena Newsletter”!

In the Pacific Island nations, where rapid modernization in the postwar period has caused the decline of traditional culture, traditional knowledge has been often lost without proper documentation to record them. Accessible information on their cultures and histories by the local people, are largely limited. NGO Pasifika Renaissance (“PasiRena” hereafter, pronounced “pasi-rene”) was established by former Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) members and researchers in Japan in September 2014 (registered as a nonprofit organization) to endeavor to

preserve and promote cultural and historical heritage in the Pacific. In doing this we seek to contribute to islanders’ efforts toward the revitalization (“renaissance”) of their traditional cultures.

This newsletter will report PasiRena’s major activities in fiscal 2016. During this period, our activities have been mainly focused on the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and on dissemination of information through the internet, targeting Pacific islanders.

DOCUMENTATION, RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Oral tradition documentation in Micronesia

PasiRena has been filming Elders’ narrations of disappearing oral tradition on the islands of Pohnpei State in the FSM and sharing videos on the internet since its establishment. In 2016, we visited Mwoakilloa and Pingelap Atolls on a cargo-passenger ship and documented many stories. We were very fortunate to obtain The KDDI Foundation’s Grants for Social Contribution and Cultural Activities for the project for one year from June this year! As per our suggestion, we began to conduct the project in collaboration with

the Pohnpei State Historic Preservation Office, which is responsible for cultural administration in Pohnpei State and has been assisting our activities. Due to this, in addition to the outer islands where we have been working, we started to document tradition on the main island of Pohnpei. We have been sharing narrative videos on our YouTube channel (see page 2) to enable Pohnpeians both on Pohnpei and in the USA (where one third of the FSM population has migrated) to view them.



Interviewing a Pohnpeian Elder



Interviewing the Kapingamarangi chief

Educational programs on the Internet

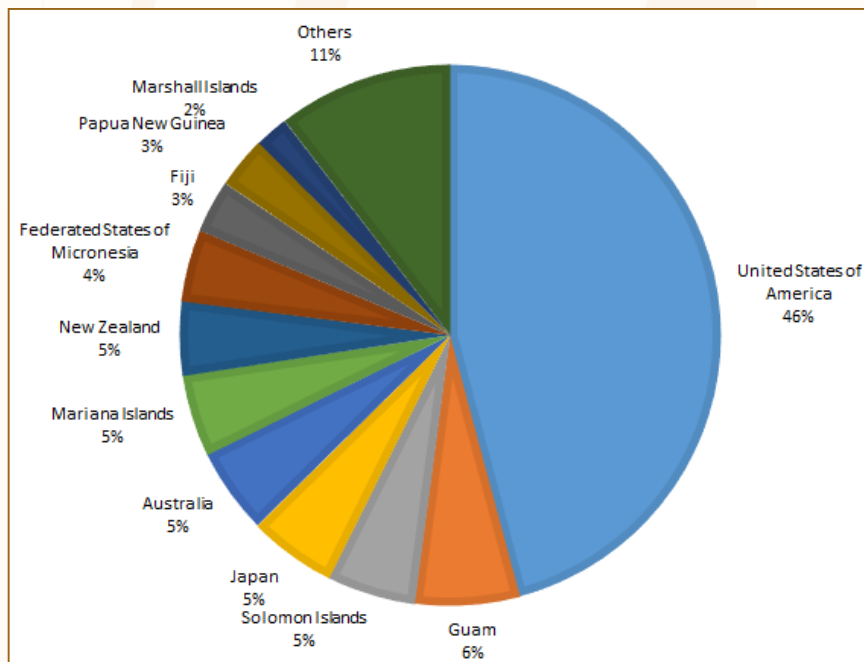
We use our Facebook page (<https://goo.gl/UMuhCp>) to share information on traditional culture and history of the Pacific Islands weekly to biweekly. At the end of the fiscal 2016, our page has 7,314 fans (increasing 2,050 fans annually) and was one of the most numerous fans of Pacific Island-related cultural organizations' pages. Those fans are from the USA and its territory Guam (52%), where many Micronesian people migrated, FSM (4%), Japan (5%) and other Pacific Island countries (26%).

In addition, 3,040 people registered as members of the Facebook group "Pasifika Renaissance" (<https://goo.gl/7crV9f>) at the end of the fiscal 2016 (increasing 184 members annually). This group was created in March 2015 to post various information and promote the Pacific islanders' participation in the discussion. The islanders have been utilizing this platform

actively.

We share videos of cultural activities and events in addition to those of oral tradition documentation on our YouTube channel (<https://goo.gl/jp3kZ2>), which was set up in April 2015. In addition, we began to record public lectures and presentations on Pacific Islands and share the videos there in 2016 (currently 16 videos) to enable more people to learn from them.

Following the increase of shared videos from 42 at the end of the fiscal 2015 to 105 at the end of the fiscal 2016, the daily average view increased 1.5 times more, from 112 to 178. Due to the contents of those shared videos that are mostly related to the FSM, the views originating from the UAS (78.5%) and the FSM (12%) comprise 90.5% of the total views.



Countries and regions of PasiRena FB page's fans



PasiRena YouTube channel's daily views

Congratulations, Nan Madol is a World Heritage site now!

Congratulations, FSM! We are very happy to announce that Nan Madol has been just successfully inscribed on UNESCO World Heritage List as the first site in the FSM at the World Heritage Committee! Nan Madol consists of more than ninety artificial islets constructed on shallow reef and is one of the largest megalithic sites in the Pacific Islands. Past archaeological research shows the site was the politico-religious center of the island, which was constructed from AD 500-1500.

To inscribe the site on World Heritage List was FSM's long-term dream, although it had not been achieved due to a landownership dispute between local residents and governments and technical difficulties. However, after UNESCO Pacific Office's request, researchers from Japan, USA and Australia began to technically support the FSM's endeavor in 2011. Our NGO's Executive Director Takuya Nagaoka, who had participated as a member of the international cooperation team since 2012, assisted the FSM National Historic Preservation Office in coordinating with other members and relevant stakeholders and submitting the nomination dossier to UNESCO in January 2015.

However, as Nan Madol was simultaneously inscribed on the World Heritage List in Danger due to the site's conservation status at the same time, the inscription itself will not be the goal, but the first step for a long-term sustainable conservation and management of the site. We'll continue to assist the FSM's preservation effort, which will be supported by the Association for the Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan's affiliated organization. We hope this international recognition of the ancestors' great work will enhance cultural pride of the people of FSM and the Pacific Islands.



Mr. Augustine Kohler, delivering an address at the World Heritage Committee



Nan Madol

Completed a Yap Archaeological Survey Report!

On Yap Island, Micronesia, large stone money discs of 20 cm to 3 m in diameter are still used in ceremonial exchanges. These discs quarried in Palau until the early 20th century were transported to Yap over 500 km by canoes in the prehistoric period and by Westerners' ships after the 19th century. On Yap, they were set up at dancing grounds attached to village meeting houses and men's houses.

The FSM submitted a joint application to UNESCO with Palau to inscribe Yap stone money sites and quarry sites in Palau on the World Heritage List in 2010, although the application was not successful. Recently the Yap State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) and Palau HPO have been working to resubmit the application. To support this endeavor, Executive Director Nagaoka provided Yap HPO staff with hands-on training to

survey and inventory stone money sites, particularly dancing grounds ('malal,' often called "stone money banks") in May 2015. You can download the report on this archaeological survey of five stone money sites from <https://goo.gl/j5GHXw>.



Archaeological training at a stone money site

Sokehs Ridge Park Development

The FSM Government has been currently putting its effort in tourism development, and we have been assisting its effort in developing a historical park on Sokehs Ridge, Pohnpei. The area is paid attention as significant tourism attraction site, as there are fortifications built during the Sokehs Rebellion in 1910-1911 and Japanese World War II military facilities.

We conducted an online survey to discover the

opinions of stakeholders and other interested individuals on the proposed park in September 2016 and obtained 80 responses. We also carried out an archaeological survey in the area in collaboration with the Pohnpei State Historic Preservation Office. Further, we participated meetings of relevant officials and interviewed them. We will produce a development plan, management plan and tour guide manual.



Japanese anti-aircraft gun on Sokehs Ridge

Co-organized Nan Madol Photographic Exhibitions

To celebrate the inscription of Nan Madol, Pohnpei on the UNESCO World Heritage List, we cosponsored “Photographic Exhibition: World Heritage Site Nan Madol: Searching for Traces of Megalithic Culture in the Pacific” with the Kansai Gaidai University in Nara (January 31-February 5, 2016) and Tokyo (February 7-12, 2016), Japan (in collaboration with Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties). We had 100 visitors at Nara and 150 visitors at Tokyo. The exhibitions were taken up by a major Japanese newspaper, Yomiuri Shimbun.



Nan Madol Photographic Exhibition, Tokyo

Our Video Won a Prize!

We are very pleased to announce that our video has won the Distinction Prize (third prize) in the 2016 Asia-Pacific Intangible Cultural Heritage Multimedia Contest, which was held by a UNESCO-affiliated institution, International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP)! Under the theme “Intangible Cultural Heritage in Our Daily Lives,” this contest aims to raise public awareness about the value of intangible cultural heritage. Our video entitled “Festive day on Sapwuahfik Atoll, Micronesia”

(<https://goo.gl/dNn7Wa>) depicts a festive day on the occasion of the International Women’s Day in 2015, which was celebrated in a traditional manner, by welcoming visiting Sapwuahfik islanders from the main island of Pohnpei. It includes footage of preparation of food and dance attire, ceremonial procession of a gift float and an accompanying chant, and a traditional dance on that day as well as recording of a historical song composed to commemorate WWII and a traditional sailing canoe. We are very glad that the small Micronesia island's culture was recognized.



Sapwuahfik canoe

Publications

In 2016, Executive Director Nagaoka published four articles and papers on Nan Madol. First, an article entitled “The Current Research Status of a Megalithic Site, Nan Madol, Micronesia and its Inscription on the World Heritage List” (in Japanese), which was co-authored with Tomo Ishimura and Osamu Kataoka, was published in a Japanese academic journal “Cultura Antiqua.” A paper entitled “Nan Madol from the Perspective of Archaeology and Oral Tradition” was published in a Japan Government’s Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research report (downloadable from <https://goo.gl/v9EAEp>). He also published two papers in the series

(planned four papers totally) for the general public, “New World Heritage Site: Nan Madol,” in the newsletters of Non-Profit Organization Association for Micronesian Development, in which he serves as an advisor.

Our NGO’s Director Hisao Sekine (Professor, Tsukuba University) published an article “Why unsustainable?: An example of organic agriculture outreach in the Solomon Islands” (in Japanese) in “Anthropology of Global Assistance: From Changing Field of NGOs and Social Movements” (Showado, 2017).

Others

Following a Mwoakilloa Elder’s request, sailing canoe building classes will be held to pass down this dying art to younger generation, using the FSM Congress’ public work expenditure. Since Executive Director Nagaoka organized a similar project as a JOCV volunteer member in the early 1990s, he was requested to assist in the classes and attended Mwoakilloa people’s community meetings to produce a detailed plan.

We began to assist a local NGO of Pohnpei, Kousapw Roasdi, in producing a book on Pohnpeian traditional culture and secured a grant of the Pacific

Development and Conservation Trust (established by the New Zealand Government) in 2016. Since then we have continued to attend knowledgeable experts’ meetings to discuss the contents of the book. Copies of this book will be distributed to schools and libraries in Pohnpei and make it available to download on the internet.

Nagaoka was appointed as a consultant advisor in the production of a Japanese TV program “World Heritage” on Nan Madol, which was on air on November 20, 2016, with Professor Osamu Kataoka (Kanasi Gaidai University).



Members and pro bono volunteers

Annual membership fees and donations are an important source for PasiRena's activities, as we have had difficulty in obtaining official grant assistance or other income for our activities on this field, in the Pacific region. Your support and participation are very much welcomed and needed for our sustainable activities. Anyone who agrees with our mission is very

welcome to become a member (Regular Members, Supporting Members, Corporate Members), and we would greatly appreciate your assistance. Membership payments can be made to PasiRena's bank account. Please email us at pasifika.renaissance@gmail.com for the details.

Membership	
Regular Member	Individuals who participate in our activities and administration. Obligated to attend general meetings in person, by skype or by proxy.
Supporting Member	Individuals who support our activities with financial contribution. Not obligated to attend general meetings.
Pacific Islands Member	Individuals from Pacific Islands who support our activities with financial contribution. Not obligated to attend general meetings.
Corporate Member	Organizations which support our activities with financial contribution.
Annual Membership Fee (FY, from April 1 to March 31)	
Regular/ Supporting Member	US\$ 50
Pacific Islands Member	US\$ 10
Corporate Member	US\$ 200
Member Benefits	
Regular/ Supporting/ Pacific Islands Member	Members receive our newsletters and event information with the opportunity to be involved preferentially.
Corporate Member	Members receive our newsletters and event information with the opportunity to be involved preferentially, and are introduced, listed, and linked on our newsletters and website.

We would like to express our appreciation to all the members and pro bono volunteers for their support.

◆ **Regular Members** (hereafter alphabetical order, titles omitted, only those who agreed to publish their names)

Ben Schultz, Chihiro Shirakawa, Daisuke Takekawa, Hanae Shimizu, Hideji Ono, Hiroyuki Mitsuhiro, Ikuko Matsumoto, Hiroyuki Saito, Hisao Sekine, Ikuko Inoue, Izumi Kobayashi, Junko Konishi, Keiko Yokoyama, Ken'ichi Sudo, Masakazu Kawakami, Miyazawa Kyoko, Noriko Fujiki, Osamu Monden, Satoshi Toyoda, Takuya Nagaoka, Yumi Schultz, Yoshiko Isozaki, Yuji Inoue

◆ **Supporting Members**

Akane Tate, Hiroaki Shirakawa, Hiroko Kawabe, Kanefusa Masuda, Keiko Ichikawa, Kei Uekihara, Masato Azuma, Mitsuhiro Iwabuchi, Satoru Toyoda, Shiho Ohno, Takako Suzuki, Takehiro Nishimura, Takuro Furusawa, Tetsuya Konishi, Tomoko Akita, Umeo Koganemaru, Yasuo Ohno, Yoshiko Watanabe, Yukihiko Adachi, Yuri Shirakawa



◆ Corporate Members

Morikaku Kanseidou

(<http://www.morikaku.org/>, <https://www.facebook.com/morikakukanseidou/>)

jpms Inc. (<http://www.jpms1125.com/>, <https://www.facebook.com/jpms1125/>)



The First Ferry (<http://www.thefirstferry.com/>, www.facebook.com/thefirstferrydubai)



Association for Promotion of International Cooperation (<http://www.apic.or.jp/>)



◆ Pro Bono Volunteers

Yuuki Muroya (Accounting), Davidson Syne (Design), Garry Scott LLB (Hons.), David Vega, Josh Levy (English Proofreading)

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Partners



FSM Historic
Preservation Office



Pohnpei State Historic
Preservation Office



Yap State Historic
Preservation Office



KDDI Foundation

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Pasifika Renaissance is a non-profit organization that endeavors to preserve and promote cultural and historical heritage in the Pacific Islands to revitalize their traditional cultures and empower local communities. The name Pasifika Renaissance means "Pacific Islands'/ Islanders' revitalization of their traditional cultures."