

George -

9/14/99

We are presently in Palau, having survived Chuuk & Pohnpei very nicely. Saw three Hawksbills on our first day of diving here and they were really fairly tame. We are enjoying the islands but are getting anxious to return home. We have one more week here & should arrive back in HI on August 24th.

Woror (and Palau in general) is a very pleasant & friendly

place. Chuuk, on the other hand, was a very unfriendly place. He basically locked up the hotel after 1900 hours & there are no taxis that operate after 1700 - Everyone we talked to said that no one should venture out after dark!

The wreck diving was interesting & the marine life was abundant.

Tomorrow will be another day of diving in Palau & then we will do a kayak trip through the rock islands. The legend depicted on the front of the card is neat - Thought you might enjoy it. I have commissioned a small storyboard carving of it.

Take care, Marc

TIME OF THE TURTLE

In Palau the women folk use a special money made from turtle shell. Long ago no one knew the habits of turtles, so this source of shell was by chance.

On a night of the new moon a youth from Peleliu and a maiden from Arakabesang held a tryst on Ngemlis Island. They talked away into the night. Next morning when she awoke, the girl found the back part of her skirt missing and turtle tracks beside her sleeping place. She fashioned a new skirt of palm fronds and agreed with her lover to meet there again at full moon.

During the second meeting they observed a turtle coming up the beach. Entangled on one of its fins was the missing part of the lost skirt. This was how the men of Palau knew that if a turtle has left a deposit of eggs on the beach, it will be back in fourteen or fifteen days.

Courtesy of Belau National Museum
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