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## **Personal reflections on working with Professor Glenn Summerhayes in Papua New Guinea**

Roxanne Tsang and Jason Kariwiga

### **Roxanne Tsang**

Professor Glenn Summerhayes is one of the most compelling New Guinea/Pacific archaeologists I have ever worked with. He was primarily involved in my archaeological career during my honours degree at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG). As I recall from my archaeological field school seasons with him and other New Guinea archaeologists, namely: Professor Jim Allen, Dr Anne Ford and my UPNG lecturer and mentor Dr Matthew Leavesley at Motupore Island in PNG, and his lectures at UPNG, Glenn is one of those rare speakers that make listening to archaeology for hours a joy rather than a chore. I appreciated how he explained archaeology in its simplest terms; cutting down complex concepts to their barest essentials and inspiring his students in the process to do the same. For example, my fondest experience from working with him at Motupore was learning how to set up a dumpy level—I still remember how patient he was with me and other students. He is a true gentleman teacher!

In tandem with his practical mentorship, Glenn frequently circulates academic opportunities. To use another personal example, it was Glenn who shared the 17th International Speleology Congress Scholarship—an event which greatly interested me. Thanks to Glenn's support, I not only applied for but secured my first grant, which was used to attend and present at my first international conference in Sydney. There, I presented my first conference paper which also led to a publication, and coincided with my first caving excursions in New South Wales, culminating in my first consultant-archaeology job in Australia. This was just one of the many instances where Glenn was pivotal in paving the way for the future of archaeology. I remain indebted to him for constantly keeping our UPNG cohort in his thoughts and actions. Lastly, I want to sincerely thank him for his immense contribution to PNG's growing body of archaeological knowledge, and for his influence more broadly in the Pacific. His professionalism will continue to inspire me and many other students to carve out our path in a time of both uncertainty and opportunity. I wish him all the best for his retirement!

## Jason Kariwiga

There is an old social science textbook once issued by the PNG Department of Education and used to teach primary school-aged students about the country's history. Published sometime in the late 1980/early 1990s, this book will have been the introduction to PNG's past for many generations of primary school students, including myself. Its title, author and most of its contents escape me—I'm not even sure if it's distributed across schools anymore. However, two short sections still stick out in my mind. The first of these outlines the magnificent Kuk and its ancient drainage ditches associated with early agriculture. The second describes the Pleistocene highland sites around Kosipe, complete with Peter White's initial occupation date of 26,000 years. I have since been fortunate enough to visit both places, but Kosipe stands out for me—it would, years later, be the first place I ever did fieldwork and excavation. It was also at Kosipe that I first met Glenn Summerhayes.

Well, perhaps more accurately, I first met Glenn on a typically sweltering Port Moresby morning in early November 2008 at an Airlines PNG (now PNG Air) airport terminal. Terminal is too generous a word—it was more an open iron-roofed enclosure—but that's where I was introduced to Glenn by my UPNG lecturer Matt Leavesley. We were all there to catch the plane to Woiwape station in the highlands of Goilala, and then make the arduous trek further north to the Ivane Valley and Kosipe Mission. My first impression of him was that unmissable white beard, but also that he spoke much better Tok Pisin than I did! Since then, I've had the pleasure of rubbing shoulders with him on many occasions during his various trips to the country.

Glenn's body of work and influence on Papua New Guinean archaeology is immense. His knowledge in this area is vast; I recall on one of his many trips to PNG, he stopped by the UPNG archaeology lab. At that time I was looking at Lapita pottery recovered from the mouth of the Liton River in Pomio, West New Britain. All week I had been searching the literature to find possible similarities in motif design from other Lapita sites. One look at the pottery and Glenn immediately fired off a couple of sites—saved me from more of the dreaded literature search! Glenn can also have a dry sense of humour. At Kosipe we used metal buckets during excavation and he used one in particular and its underside to sit on; on one of the first times out at the Vilaquav site, he remarked to all of us newbies (I was with my UPNG colleagues Nidatha Martin and Laura Naidi) that the first lesson of archaeology is to never sit on (Glenn's) bucket. It was only after a few days in I realised it was all tongue-in-cheek, but I still remember the lesson clearly! His ability to build genuine relationships with landowners and locals is very much the secret of his success in undertaking research in the country. There has been many a situation where his people skills have maintained good relations between researchers and locals.

Glenn's support of the archaeology program at UPNG also cannot be understated. Over the years he has freely given his time, from presenting public lectures on campus to meeting extensively with faculty. His photographs, words and slides are still used to teach students in the flagship 'Archaeology of Papua New Guinea', a course for second-year archaeology students. More profoundly, Glenn has been very generous with his funding and has had countless UPNG students accompany him into the field—I can certainly attest to the positive impact these excursions can have on young adults stepping into archaeology for the first time. His legacy will be his large body of work on PNG archaeology. Perhaps in time, the Kosipe section in primary school textbooks will be updated, complete with the new 50,000-year date, courtesy of Glenn's research.



**Figure 3.1: Nidatha and Jason excavating at the Kosipe Mission Station, 2008.**

Source: Jason Kariwiga.



**Figure 3.2: Some of the team excavating a site at the Kosipe Mission Station, 2008.**

Source: Jason Kariwiga.



Finally, and on a more personal level, for a 19-year-old just out of high school and with one year of university under his belt, Glenn left a huge impression on me at Kosipe. His knowledge, warmth and humour was (and is) infectious, and the overall experience left me wanting to do more archaeology. I have two favourite photographs from that fieldwork. The first (Figure 3.1) is a close-up of Nidatha and I smiling up at the camera as we excavate, while immediately behind us the late Herman Mandui is lifting a bucket of sediment. The second photograph (Figure 3.2) is a wide shot of a few of us; Glenn is excavating in the centre, side on to the camera in the foreground. Around him but close, Nidatha, Laura, Xavier (Carrah) and I are observing and working the sieves. I think both photographs highlight the most significant of Glenn's contributions: his role in inspiring and training future PNG archaeologists; support that has enabled Papua New Guineans and students all over the opportunity to participate fully in the archaeological process and discovery. That is a legacy worth emphasising.

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