

Scientific Information about Micronesia

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The Pacific Scientific Information Center was founded in April 1960. Its purpose is to serve as a clearinghouse for scientific information, chiefly on the natural and social sciences, one might say, "Man in his total environment," in the oceanic Pacific (Polynesia, Micronesia, Melanesia and New Guinea) and closely related areas. Its work has been sponsored by Bernice P. Bishop Museum, and supported by grants from the National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C., and aid from other cooperating organizations and agencies.

Because of the large extent of the area and the ramification of subject matter, we have supplemented our own information by attempting to learn "who knows what" about the Pacific. Through personal contact and correspondence we have assembled records of the names and addresses of experts on definite subjects in various Pacific areas. Some of these lists have been printed: Pacific Anthropologists (1962 and 1964), Pacific Botanists (1963) and a revised edition of Pacific Entomologists, now being compiled. These have been carefully indexed by subject and area of interest, as well as place of residence of the expert throughout the world. Plans for lists of Ornithologists, experts on Marine Zoology, and persons working on geophysical sciences are contemplated.

Other publications of the Center include a newsletter, "Man in the Pacific," printed two or three times a year, reporting current research of Pacific anthropologists; various bibliographical compilations; and a series entitled "Pacific Scientific Information." This last was begun in 1961 with three reports on scientific facilities and information services of (1) the Republic of Indonesia (136 pages), (2) the Federation of Malaya and State of Singapore (43 pages), and (3) the Republic of Vietnam (36 pages) with a 12-page supplement in 1964. These were prepared for the Pacific Science Board (NAS-NRC) by John O. Sutter, and published through the cooperation of Dr. Harold J. Coolidge, with financial support from the National Science Foundation. The manuscript of a companion volume concerning Polynesia and Micronesia is nearing completion, and will be publication 4 of the series. Material is being collected for No. 5 on Melanesia and New Guinea, to be printed during 1967.

Bishop Museum is a logical place for the Center because of its long association with scientific research in the Pacific and its outstanding Pacific library. It also houses the secretariat of the Pacific Science Association, an international organization which promotes scientific research in the Pacific between the Science Congresses, the eleventh of which was held in Japan in August 1966.

The Center has a very special interest in Micronesia because of the manner in which many of the files were obtained. The writer, who is Manager of the Center, had charge of maps and other "objective data" in a large Military headquarters during World War II, and salvaged much of the material for post war

scientific use. Following that he was in the research section of the U.S. Commercial Company's Economic Survey of Micronesia, and also the Honolulu Office of the Pacific Science Board during the CIMA (Coordinated Investigation of Micronesian Anthropology) and SIM (Scientific Investigation of Micronesia) projects. Following that, close association with the South Pacific Commission extended his interests into the southwest Pacific and New Guinea. Extensive bibliographic files from each of these periods have been preserved and enlarged, together with voluminous notes, files, collections of maps and air photographs.

What specific materials concerning Micronesia do we have? A dozen metal map file drawers contain an extensive series of the Micronesian area (the entire collection numbers about 10,000 maps.) There are about 27,000 air photographs of Micronesian islands (the total number for the Pacific is 65,000 prints). The files of Micronesian information fill a dozen legal size drawers, classified under such general headings as place names, environment, plants, animals, man in Micronesia, and island areas. More than one drawer is filled with material on Guam alone.

An extensive card file of bibliography, much of it annotated, begun for the U.S. Commercial Company's economic survey of Micronesia, has been continued intermittently since. A similar record of publications has been compiled at the University of Hawaii. These, and the card catalog files of Bishop Museum, give ready reference by subject as well as author, to publications in the extensive library facilities in Honolulu. In an adjoining research building of Bishop Museum are the huge collections and notes being described in the twenty volumes of "Insects of Micronesia."

Ready access to all this wealth of information can be had by the qualified visitor; and it even can be made available to the researcher at a distance through photographic, microfilm, and Xerox reproduction at comparatively small cost.