

Tuvalu Philatelic Bureau

# Newsletter

## The first elected female Member of Parliament in Tuvalu, Lady Sapeta Naama Maheu Laatasi, laid to rest in Funafuti

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After a long battle with illness, Lady Sapeta Naama Maheu Laatasi, the first elected female Member of Parliament in Tuvalu from the Nanumea constituency, was called to rest at the Suva Private Hospital in Fiji on the 16th March 2012.

Her remains were taken to Funafuti, Tuvalu on the 21st March, accompanied by close family members, where she was laid to rest the following day close to their (the Laatasi's) family residence.

Naama, as she is fondly known by all Tuvaluans, served in Tuvalu's Parliament from 1989 to 1993 and from 1993 to 1997. During her first term as Member of Parliament, she was also the Minister for Health, Education, and Community Services.

She was the pillar for the Girl

Guides movement in Tuvalu, and was most influential in setting up the Tuvalu Girl Guides headquarters in Funafuti, following the separation of Tuvalu and Kiribati in 1975. She was a truly dedicated Girl Guide who lived and practised the Girl Guide principles, and it was only fitting that she was appointed the first Tuvalu Girl Guides Commissioner.

She also set up the Olave Kindergarten, named after the founder of the Girl Guides Movement, Lady Olave Baden Powell.

A stately woman with grace, charm, humility, and intelligence, Naama has always been a public figure in Tuvalu long before she was elected to parliament, respected and loved by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

She was the daughter of a prominent statesman from the island of Nanumea, Maheu Naniseni, who was also a Member of Parliament. Her mother was from Kiribati.

Naama was also instrumental in setting up the "Ue nte Itera" organisation comprising of i-Kiribati people, mostly those who are married to Tuvaluans, and those with Kiribati heritage

Naama has always been a champion of women's rights throughout her career. She has always encouraged women to reach new heights in professional, community and national levels. She was also very active in various organisations involving women and community development.

As strong and influential a woman as she was, one would have expected someone with a compelling nature. On the contrary, Naama was a soft-spoken lady with such gentility and a ready warm smile that has made her so dear to all.

Her poise, thoughtfulness and composure during her term in parliament, alone as the only woman in a place dominated by men, won her great respect from her fellow parliament members and Tuvaluans, as well from her colleagues in the region and further abroad.

Naama is survived by her husband, the current Speaker to Parliament in Tuvalu and Member of Parliament for the Funafuti constituency, the Rt Hon Sir Kamuta Laatasi, three sons, two daughters, grandchildren, and a great grandchild. †



## 2012 YEOSU WEXPO (12th May–12th August, 2012)

Tuvalu will be represented by two staff at the forthcoming 2012 Yeosu WEXPO that will be held on 12<sup>th</sup> May - 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2012. The two representatives are Ms Paufi Afelee from the Tourism Department and Ms Merita Homasi from the Tuvalu Philatelic Bureau.

This World Trade Expo allows both

businesses and different cultures to showcase some of their very unique identity.

Around 8—10 performers from Tuvalu will showcase and entertain visitors with the unique and vibrant arts and culture of Tuvalu on the Tuvalu National Day at the expo, the 13 July, 2012.

Philatelic Bureau, Mr Filemoni Panisi will relieve Merita after 6 weeks and he will be assisting Tuvalu's Commissioner General at the Expo in the final preparation for the arrival of Tuvalu's Delegation to the Expo in July.

Filemoni will stay at the expo until it closes on the 12<sup>th</sup> August 2012.



Merita Homasi

The Tuvalu Prime Minister or a Cabinet Minister will attend this very important function.

All expenses for Tuvalu's attendance and participation at this expo will be met by the government of the Republic of South Korea.

Both official and cultural entertainment delegations will be invited by the host country for 1-2 weeks.

The Deputy General Manager and Finance Manager of the Tuvalu



Filemoni Panisi

## Royal Visit



Above: Royal Wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton released in April 2011

Probably the most talked about event that everyone in Tuvalu is greatly anticipating is the royal visit of their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

Although the actual date of the visit is yet to be confirmed, it is believed that the royal newlyweds will be visiting Tuvalu on Tuvalu's Independence Day, the 1st October 2012.

The Tuvalu Philatelic Bureau will be commemorating this very important visit with a special commemorative stamp issue comprising of 3 miniature sheets that is expected to be launched on the 1st October 2012.

The first royal visit to Tuvalu was back in 1959 by the Duke of Edinburgh, followed by a visit by Prince Charles in 1970. Princess Margaret visited Tuvalu in 1978, on Tuvalu's independence from Great Britain.

Tuvalu was honoured by the royal visit of the reigning monarch, Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip in 1982



Above: Tenth Anniversary of Tuvalu's Independence released in 1988

Now Tuvalu keenly awaits the royal visit of the heir to the throne, Prince William and his beautiful wife, Kate. ■



## Staff Profile: Ms Foti Mami



One of the longest serving staff member of the Tuvalu Philatelic Bureau is Ms Foti Mami.

- Foti joined TPB in the late 1970's where she started her as a casual employee of the bureau.
- She is now a permanent staff at the bureau working both as Cashier and also in the Packing Department. She is the most experienced in this department and would often train new employees in this department.
- After joining the bureau in the late 1970's and working for years on a temporary/casual basis, Foti was finally made a permanent staff in 1982.
- Following the difficulty the bureau faced as a result of the Leaders of the World Stamp series, many of the Tuvalu Philatelic Bureau staff were made redundant in 1995 ... Foti was one of them.
- In 1997, Foti rejoined the bureau and was once again absorbed as

a permanent staff member, and she has remained with the bureau to this day.

Foti was born on the 12 October 1961 in Betio, Tarawa, Kiribati where she spent her childhood and received her education. Apart from Tuvaluan and English, Foti also speaks fluent i-Kiribati language.

As with most Tuvaluans, she and her family returned to Tuvalu following the separation of Tuvalu from Kiribati in 1975.

Foti has always been the friendly face of the bureau, always greeting customers with a ready cheerful smile.

She enjoys meeting people and is always quick to strike a lively conversation with all customers and visitors who walk through the bureau's doors.

She always delights in doing her work, and never ceases to be excited over every single new stamp issue the bureau releases.

She knows possibly every single stamp issue the bureau has released since the establishment of the bureau and is

always quick to promote and recommend stamps to customers.

Foti enjoys taking part in women's and the church community activities and also loves to bake and do embroidery and hand-made decorative painted designs.

Although she has never actively participated in sporting tournaments, Foti has always enjoyed watching football and volleyball tournaments, always an ardent fan ready to cheer on her favourite teams.

Foti has one daughter and has just recently become a grandmother as well. ■

## Tuvalu 2012 Stamp Issues

The following stamp issues have been approved by management of the Tuvalu Philatelic Bureau:

### 1. *Marine Life*

Release Date: 01 January, 2012

### 2. *75 Anniversary of the Disappearance of Amelia Earhart*

RD: 16 February, 2012

### 3. *100th Anniversary Titanic*

RD: 15 April, 2012

### 4. *2012 Yeosu World Expo (RSKorea)*

RD: 12 May, 2012

[Theme: Climate Change]

### 5. *Elvis Presley*

RD: 14 May, 2012

### 6. *2012 London Olympic Games*

RD : 27 July, 2012

### 7. *Royal Visit( Prince William & Kate)*

RD: 01 October, 2012

The bureau will advise customers of any additional stamp issues that may be released later in the year. ■

# Interested in Collecting Tuvalu Stamps?

## *Standing Order Accounts*

There is no better way of making sure you obtain all New Issues of Tuvalu than by becoming a Standing Order Account Customer.

A Standing Order Account will ensure that you, as a customer will:

- ➤ be sure of receiving all New Issues
- ➤ not have to make separate payments for each new issue
- ➤ receive a free Newsletter (published from time to time) keeping you in touch with the Bureau activities and giving you advance information on projected New Issues.



All we ask is that you keep your account in credit at all times. A small quantity of most issues are overprinted "specimen" for circulation to the editors of philatelic publications etc. Any surplus "specimen" stamps are distributed to Standing Order customers only.

## *Ordinary Account Customers*

Ordinary Account Customers will also receive free Newsletters and may order the particular stamps desired at each issue. If insufficient funds are held in the customer's account, orders may be cut. Overpayments will be credited to the customer's account.

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For further information, please contact the Tuvalu Philatelic Bureau, open from Monday to Thursday (0800-1200hrs and 1300-1600hrs) and Friday (0800-1300hrs).

***Fakafetai lasilasi!!***