

Dec

22 January 2007.

Thank you for your letter of 11 January with birthday greetings and enclosing a photo of Gerald Gallagher. I believe that I have already mentioned to you in earlier correspondence that I got to know him over a period of about four days, when he was staying in Government House, Suva, as a guest of Sir Harry Luke. I was, of course, living there too. He had brought down "the bones" from Nikumaroro.

I was much impressed to read in your letter that you and your colleagues had graciously performed an act of remembrance at his grave, when you were on the island in 2001. It is good that you and I are still writing about him. He deserves to be remembered. I wonder whether Adam Tamia, his servant, is still alive. His letter to Gallagher's mother - at p. 122 in Sir Harry Luke's "South Seas Diary" is, indeed, both poignant and respectful.

Also in Sir Harry's book is a photo of Gallagher's home on Nikumaroro - ~~press~~ photo page 81 g. I do not have a visual memory of the Rest House, but I do remember the house in Sir Harry's photo, and it might well be where the photo of G.G. was taken.

Your enquiry about District Officers' diaries is easily answered. I cannot testify as regards those District Officers based in WPHC territories, but certainly up until the early 1950s we in Fij. were required to compile a monthly diary and to despatch it ~~via~~ the Divisional Commissioner to the Colonial Secretary in Suva. I remember being scolded on one occasion by the Colonial Secretary, because I had reported that I was making a practice of visiting local lawyers, business people, shopkeepers, etc. in their offices & places of work. I was instructed that that had to cease. "Don't go to their offices - make them come to yours!" I regret to say that some of our political leaders still have that attitude to-day. I know that it was the contacts that I made with "troublesome" types in their environment that diffused tense situations and gave me an insight into their standpoints. In so far as the diaries of Fij. District Officers are concerned, these would now be stored in the Fij. Archives in the former WPHC office outside Govt. House in Suva. The WPHC offices moved from there to Honiara, Guadalcanal, at the end of the 1940s when the conjoint post of Governor and High Commissioner was split. I would suggest that you might write to the Fij. Archives and ask them to advise you as to where the WPHC District Officers' diaries might be.

My best wishes to you & your colleagues.