

Ailuk team shines at ROC fest

ISAAC MARTY

Ailuk Atoll's team of five canoe builders and sailors that represented the RMI for the ROC 12th Taitung Austronesian Cultural Arts Festival in Taiwan came back with smiles on their faces late last month. Jommy Bunglick, Rine Snight, Aimbi Ainri, Tijen Jillon and Johnny Janer left RMI July 24. The trip was fully funded by the ROC government.

On August 1, the RMI crew, along with builders from Nauru, Solomon Islands, and a local Taiwanese aboriginal tribe known as Amis, were busy building canoes. It took two weeks for the RMI team to complete a traditional Marshallese 'Tipno' (a 28-foot canoe). The materials used were mostly gathered from Taiwan while some were brought along from the Marshall Islands. Bunglick said he was amazed with the different kinds of canoes built, such as battle canoes, and others that were made from bamboo.

According to Ailuk Senator Maynard Alfred, he arrived September 7 for the press conference where he had the opportunity to explain Marshallese culture alongside the Taitung Governor Huang Jian-ting. The following day the official festival ceremony commenced with a parade. Alfred joined with Huang in hoisting a canoe sail on the front float during the parade. The events were broadcast live in Taiwan.

A series of events and performances took place during the one-week of festivities. Visitors were given the opportunity to live among local tribes and experience their culture. "The aboriginal people look just like Marshallese," said Alfred. "Displayed in their museum was an Austronesian family tree which included us from the Marshall Islands." "Their culture and way they love and care for others feels just the same way we are in the Marshall Islands," said Janer.

An open sea paddling by a group of 26 local tribesmen paddled the



The Ailuk team, above on arrival in Taipei, was flown to Taiwan to participate in a cultural arts festival and built this canoe in a matter of days. Ailuk is one of a few outer islands in the RMI still known for its canoe building and sailing prowess. The Ailuk group — Jommy Bunglick, Rine Snight, Aimbi Ainri, Tijen Jillon and Johnny Janer — had never been outside of Marshall Islands before. The government of Taiwan funded their participation.

Photos: Courtesy of the ROC Embassy.

coastal area of Kaohsiung to Taitung. Four days later they arrived during the evening of the opening day at Taitung. "Local tribes people were so full of excitement that they picked up the canoe with the men on board and tossed them in the air five times before marching to land," said Alfred. "The Austronesian culture is strong. They keep their traditional ways of making local food and many other things. I would encourage the Marshallese to keep our culture strong and lively." Once completed the RMI canoe was busy giving rides to people at the Flowing Lake. "Many people wanted to know more about Marshallese canoes and traditions during the event," said Alfred. "The governor also requested a smaller Marshallese canoe to be built and put into their museum." Aside from the festivities, Alfred was happy to



see exercise opportunities at a local gymnasium, which the Taiwan government opened to the public for use. "The old people there can run faster than me," said Alfred.

The five men from RMI were chosen through recommendations from the 'Waan Aelon in Majel' program. Not one of them had once gone outside the Marshall Islands and they knew little English. "It was hard for us. The trip was not easy,"

said Janer. "When we were there the people did not know about the Marshall Islands." They enjoyed their first bullet train experience and the popular cuisine. "We enjoyed our trip to Taiwan and were also happy to have brought over our culture to the event," said Bunglick.

ROC Embassy Secretary Richard Li mentioned that they arranged for RMI students studying in Taiwan, Melissa Lussier and Eseta Gama,

to help with interpretation for the RMI delegation. The two students are into their third year of study in Taiwan. He also stated that the festival was a combination of a 'fireworks festival', a 'hot air balloon festival', and a 'canoe festival.' The theme of the festival was 'Brave Navigators.' "It was a people to people exchange," said Li. The next festival will be in 2014 and RMI will participate again.

Ien kalojoj im wia kake Jaki-ed ko ilo Majuro

CAROLINE YACOE

Mekarta wot mejiljil, ak ejorean baluun, men kein raar jab maron kaban ien kalojoj im wia kake eo kein kajiljino an Jaki-ed ko, - ekoba bobrae lotok eo an juon kumi in lotok jen Hawaii, im raar bed iumin tel im wonake eo an Marquis Marzan, ilo aer kar boktok ruo jaki in ebeben eo kein ka19, jen Bishop Museum eo – im wawein kein raar jab bobrae aer kar kanne lok kobban Marshall Islands Resort Melele Room eo, kin ri armij, ilo raan in Thursday eo lok.

Ilo raan eo, 818 ri jikuul raar monono in lolok ien kalojoj eo. Raar monono kin men ko Tamara Greenstone jen USP, im kab Mar-

zan, juon fiber artist, ak ri aj, jen Bishop Museum en ilo Honolulu raar kwaloki, im raar kanuij in bulon im utiej buruweer kin aer loe Jaki-ed ko jen Bishop Museum en, ko im ro jibier im jimaer raar aji, elon iio ko remotlok.

Dr. Irene Taafaki, ear kebeloke ien kalojoj eo, ilo an kar kwalok juon naan in kile eo emanantata nan Bill Weza, eo im ear juon eo elukkun in lap an rie im jiban brojaak eo, ekoba kar juon ri bok eddo in brokraam eo bareinwot.

Ilo mantin Majol, "dijo im ukoj", Alson Kelen ear wonmanlok wot im ri kenono ilo ien eo, ilo an kar etal rie im jiban ko jen ippen ri tel eo ilo manit, Maria Kabua Fowler, ekoba rie

ko rejouij wot jen ippen MIVA, im kab jen ippen jujuk in bed eo an ri Majol, innem jotenin eo ear lukkun in emman im lap tobrak nan ri aj ro im kab ri alwoj im ri lolok ro jimor.

Iloan iio eo ej kab jemlok lok, Dr. Taafaki, im kab Tamara Greenstone, raar lorlorjake an komman ien kaminene im ekatok ko, ion Majuro im kab Ailinglaplap, ippen mokade aj ro, Patsy Herman im kab Ashken Binet, ilo aerro kar katakin ri katak ro iumin emen lok nan jiljino allon ko.

Jaki kein raar kalojoj kaki ej kab juon katten ilo ien kalojoj eo an Jaki-ed 2012, im rej lukkun in lap aer kwalok kin "kora im an kol," kapeel eo ejenolok, im ej bed

ippen kora in Majol ilo ien eo rej lotak tok, bwe tomak in ej mour wot nan rainin.

Ippen ri katak ro, eo ear bok nomba juon ear Betty Lobwoj jen Majuro. Nomba ruo ear etal nan ippen Anetty Clement jen Ailinglaplap, im juon kile ejenolok ear etal nan ippen Rosana Langinbelik, bareinwot jen Ailinglaplap.

Patsy im kab Ashken, relukkun in jela kajjerro ibwiljin mokade aj ro. Patsy, eo im ej jebar jen Namdrik, ear bok nomba juon, im elkin Ashken, jen Arno, ear bok nomba ruo im jilu.

Jaki ko im mokade rein jimor raar aji, ekoba ri katak ro, armij rekar wiaiki aolepaer, im jen wonen kawinin eo im tobrak ko, ri

aj ro raar rool kin jonan in \$11,025 (\$7,750 tobrak jen wia kake jaki im \$3,250 tobrak in kawinin). Ibwiljin jaki ko im raar ellap tata wonaer, ruo jaki raar aj jen Ashken: juon ear lukkun in emman an aje im kainoknoke kin atat, im eo juon ear juon jaki kileplep, ilo an lon elon kain pija im jekjek ko ie ilo mantin majol.

Jonan emman eo an jermal ko an iio in, rej kamol kin jonan kapeel im kijeje to eo an ri aj ro im kab ri katak ro jimor.

Ilo tore ko lok, armij in Aelon Kein ear kanuij lap jela kake er, ke rej mokade tata aj ilo Pacific in – juon kadkad eo einwot ej alikkar an jaki kein kwaloke, ke ejjanin bojrak jen an walok.