

## III. Relevant Organisations

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### 1. Governmental organisations

#### A. RMI Historic Preservation Officer

##### Mission Statement

The mission of the Historic preservation Office is to identify, protect, preserve and promote the cultural, historic and pre-historic resources of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The Historic Preservation Office informs, educates, and assists public agencies, private organizations, and citizens on the conservation and protection of the cultural resources of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

##### Goals and Objectives

1. To educate the public and public officials about the RMI cultural, historic and pre-historic resources and the preservation program by producing, documenting, and publishing educational materials in the newspapers, pamphlets, videos, and radio programs.
2. To maintain an ongoing survey and inventory program by documenting and recording of all archaeological, historical, and traditional sites on all atolls of the RMI. Properties identified in the survey will be entered into the inventory list and will be evaluated according to their level of significance.
3. To continue to register all archaeological and historic sites on all atolls of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.
4. To identify and evaluate the cultural resources of the RMI, including archaeological, historical, and traditional cultural properties.

5. To ensure that all excavation projects (archaeological or others) undertaken by private citizens, USAKA, local businesses, and government agencies are reviewed and supervised, if necessary, before granting permits.
6. To develop a new 5-year plan on historic preservation in the RMI.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands' Historic Preservation Office is located within the Cultural Affairs Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Historic Preservation Office (HPO) was created by the Historic Preservation Act of 1991, amended in 1992, with the primary responsibility of protecting and preserving the tangible and intangible cultural properties of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). The HPO operates on the advice and assistance of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, a seven-member board that includes government officials and members of the general public. The Chairman of the Council is the Minister of Internal Affairs, who is responsible, among other things, for promoting cultural affairs, and is confirmed by the Cabinet.

In addition to its administrative function, the HPO also conducts other preservation activities; including Archaeological Survey and Inventory, Oral History and Ethnography, and maintaining the RMI Register of Historic Places. In Archaeological Survey and Inventory, the HPO is responsible for conducting nationwide surveys and inventories of historic and cultural properties. This involves the identification, evaluation, and recording of information about historic and cultural properties that are made accessible for development planning and educational purposes. In Oral History and Ethnography, the HPO documents oral history, culture, and traditions of the RMI for both present and future generations. The RMI Register of Historic Places is the official depository or custodian of all registered historic and cultural properties of the Marshall Islands. The Register is also responsible for ensuring the protection of registered properties by conducting close monitoring of registered properties to limit disturbance or damage by development projects.

The HPO receives funding from both the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the U.S. government. Since 1985, the HPO has been the recipient of a Historic Preservation Fund Grant administered by the US National Park Service, Department of the Interior. This grant is provided to the HPO on an annual basis, and is earmarked for program areas including program administration, public education, site nomination and registration, site development, archaeological survey and inventory, and oral history and ethnography. Once every four years, the grantor conducts a program

review to ensure that the aimed goals and objectives have been met satisfactory during previous years, and then provides recommendations for future improvement.

In 1990, the HPO, in cooperation with the Micronesian Endowment for Historic Preservation (MEHP), successfully completed the RMI's portion of the Micronesian Resource Study (MRS) in archaeology and ethnography. The Micronesian Resource Study Project was a pilot project that focused on two primary areas. These were 1) Archaeology, aimed to assist the Micronesian Historic Preservation Programs in conducting archaeological surveys and to provide guidance in the preservation and management of identified highly significant properties; and 2) Ethnography, aimed to develop recommendations for the protection and use of historic and cultural resources. The MRS was completed on time and executive survey reports were submitted. Printing of individual reports from all MEHP respective members was delayed due to lack of funds. Recently funds became available for printing with the help of the National Park Service, Western Regional Office.

#### ***Historic Preservation Office***

The HPO wishes to welcome our newest team member, Joulia Brodovikova. Joulia will be working with us for a few months organizing, cataloging, and curating artifacts from previous archaeological excavations. We all wish her a warm "i\$kwē" and good luck on the new job. Speaking of old jobs, Chief Archaeologist Richard Williamson has signed on for one more year.

#### ***National Conference for State Historic Preservation Officers***

Historic Preservation Officer, Frederick deBrum, and Assistant Archaeologist, Hemley Benjamin, recently returned from Washington DC for the annual meeting of U.S. State Historic Preservation Officers. While on the trip they met with U.S. senators and congressman, as well as various ambassadors and other dignitaries. One of the accomplishments of the trip was the establishment of a Micronesian Conference set to take place in March 2001 at the prestigious Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC.

#### ***Database Project***

The HPO is re-organizing the office, and the first thing we are doing is entering all of our reports, books, and articles into a computer database. HPO computer whiz, Morean Watak, has been in charge of this project from its inception in January- and she is way ahead of schedule. It is now

possible to access the HPO library of information directly from one of our computers. If anyone has any questions concerning Marshallese history or historic preservation, stop by the office and ask Morean for assistance.

### ***Outer Islands Surveys***

This category has become a regular in this newsletter. That is because one of the primary duties of the HPO is to survey these islands of ours and record all the sites and stories that are so important to the continuation of the Marshallese way of life. We are always just returning from or getting ready to go on another outer island survey. We are now always in the process of going. The next two trips scheduled are to Aur and Namu Atolls. Besides the regulars who always make the trip, Alele's Assistant Curator Terry Mote will also be accompanying the team. Terry is in the middle of a long-term project studying the jowi's of the Marshall Islands. So everyone in Aur and Namu, brush up on family history so you can answer all of Terry's questions. The trips are scheduled for the middle of July and then August. If anyone has any comment please call the HPO at (692)625-4HPO(4476).

### ***Underwater Surveys***

Majuro local, Matt Holly, has been awarded the HPO contract to survey the lagoon of Wotje Atoll. Matt will begin survey in early July and will spend about ten days diving throughout Wotje. If you have any questions or comments on this project, please call the Deputy Historic Preservation Officer, Clary Makroro.

## Historic Preservation Program Overview

Pursuant to Historic Preservation Act 1991 (P.L. 1991-111), the RMI Historic Preservation Office (HPO) is charged with the responsibility to educate, inventory, register, document, deny or issue permits, and protect and preserve the cultural heritage of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. FY 2009 will continue its efforts on educating the public about the importance of historic preservation and document outer island surveys.

### a. Administration

HPO is responsible for the implementation of approved programs and plans by HPF Grant Program. It is also the responsibility of HPO to ensure that all preservation programs and HPF funded projects are carried out satisfactorily and in accordance with special conditions certification presented under each HPF Grant. HPO has staff and officers composed of the following: Historic Preservation Officer, Deputy Historic Preservation Officer, Anthropologist, Grants Manager, Assistant Archaeologist, and Office Administrative Assistant. Staff Archaeologist position is still vacant.

### Proposed Plans

1. To work more closely with the newly established ACHP, relevant government agencies, and local governments, and the cultural resource officers from each outer island.
2. To maintain close contact and working relation with HPOs in Micronesia, Palau, and American Samoa, and National Park Service.
3. To keep track that projects approved for the fiscal year are done according to plan and are with the budget; and,
4. To keep financial and project progress reports updated, and work within Performance based-budget set up within the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

### b. Review Board

The Review Board (ACHP) has eight members that are appointed by the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The appointed members are considered to be well informed on historical and cultural matters of the Marshall Islands. The responsibilities of the Board are as follows:

- To give advice to HPO in all matters related to its functions and responsibilities;
- To approve or deny historical and/or cultural properties for inclusion in the RMI National Register;
- To review and approve cultural and historic preservation plans, and,

- To review requests for permit and proposed land use, monitor earthmoving activities and review funding for HPO.

#### Proposed Plan

- To continue involving the Review Board in all proposed activities and undertakings, for their review and approval.
- As the by-laws have been approved, there is a need to amend some of the articles in the HPO Legislation.

#### c . Survey and Inventory

- Archaeology

Survey and inventory program is to perform the conducting and identifying archaeological, cultural and historic properties throughout the islands. This program is also in charge with the task of conducting investigation in advance of development projects.

#### Proposed Plan

- Conduction reconnaissance surveys of Nadikdik (Knox) Island, Ujae and Lae Atolls.
- Restoration of WWII sites
- Cataloguing of artifacts found on Kwajalein Atoll, and elsewhere in the Marshall Islands.

- Ethnography

The ethnographical component of the program is for identification, documentation and preservation of Marshallese traditional culture and heritage.

#### Proposed Plan

- Anthropological surveys of Ebon, Nadikdik (Knox ) Island, Ujae, and Ebon.
- Restoration and site developments of traditional sites on Majuro.
- Documentation of old practices of the Marshallese people.

#### d. Registration

This program has three functions: (1) document historical sites and properties that are important to the Marshall Islands, (2) maintain and monitor of historic properties, and (3) supervise restoration of cultural and historical sites.

#### Proposed Plan

- Nominate historical and traditional sites to be in the RMI National Register, and US Register of Historical Sites.

e. Project Review

In this program, HPO is in charge of reviewing and evaluating earthmoving activities, provides advice, approves or denies development projects that might have adverse effect on historic or cultural properties.

Proposed Plan

- Develop plans for educational program, and to continue monitoring undertakings that are potential threats to significant sites.

f. Comprehensive Historic Preservation Planning

Under this program, HPO assumes the lead role for developing or formulating national plans for cultural and historic preservation as well as update of these plans. The plans do not only set policies and objectives, but also proposes actions to be implemented. No new cultural plans have been formulated for the past 14 years.

Proposed Plan

- Review existing plans: Kwajalein Historical Preservation Plan, USAKA Environmental Standards and Procedures (UES), MRS Landscape Proposal, Nomination of sites to the National Register.

g. Development (Site Restoration)

Proposed Plan

- Continue Work on the deBrum House in Likiep Atoll.
- Restoration of the first Christian Church in Ebon.
- Restoring and setting up landmarks on traditional sites in Majuro.

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