

13. Auki, Malaita Province

Auki (more properly `Aoke) is named after a small island in nearby Langlanga Lagoon. Auki town is on the east coast of Malaita at the top of the lagoon. In 1909, it became the site of the first government headquarters for the island. Like Gizo, initially Auki consisted only of a few government buildings. During the Second World War, the Protectorate administration was evacuated onwards from Tulagi to Auki, and then to the hills behind. After Massina Rule, a nationalist movement (1944–52), Malaita was the first district to have an increasingly autonomous District Council from 1952–53. The first government school was begun at Auki in 1948, and the headquarters for Malaita District Council was established close to Auki. The town began to develop in the 1950s and 1960s, with a recreation club and nine-hole golf course added in 1961, and a football club in 1966. Auki Lodge, the first accommodation, opened in 1972. By the time of independence in 1978, Auki was a bustling port town for Malaita, the most populous province in the nation.

Auki developed as an educational centre. Auki Experimental School, also known as Aligegeo School, and later as King George VI School, dates back to 1947. The main buildings were constructed in 1949. In 1952, the school became the first government senior primary school and was renamed after King George VI, who had died that year. The school was moved to Honiara at the end of 1965. The site later became a senior primary school for Malaitan students, and the BSIP's first Local Government Training School. In 1960, a Boatbuilding School, sponsored by the South Pacific Commission, began at Auki.

Auki has a population of around 5,000 to 6,000 and is the third biggest urban centre in Solomon Islands.



13.1. Auki Harbour, 2008, showing the nearby villages, the wharf and town centre. (Clive Moore Collection)



13.2. Auki's first Resident Magistrate's (District Officer's) home and office, 1909. (British Museum, Thomas Edge-Partington Collection)



13.3. Auki tennis court and police barracks, 1910s. (British Museum, Thomas Edge-Partington Collection)



13.4. The view of Auki from the end of the wharf, late 1950s, showing the only Chinese store. (Alan Lindley Collection, in Clive Moore Collection)

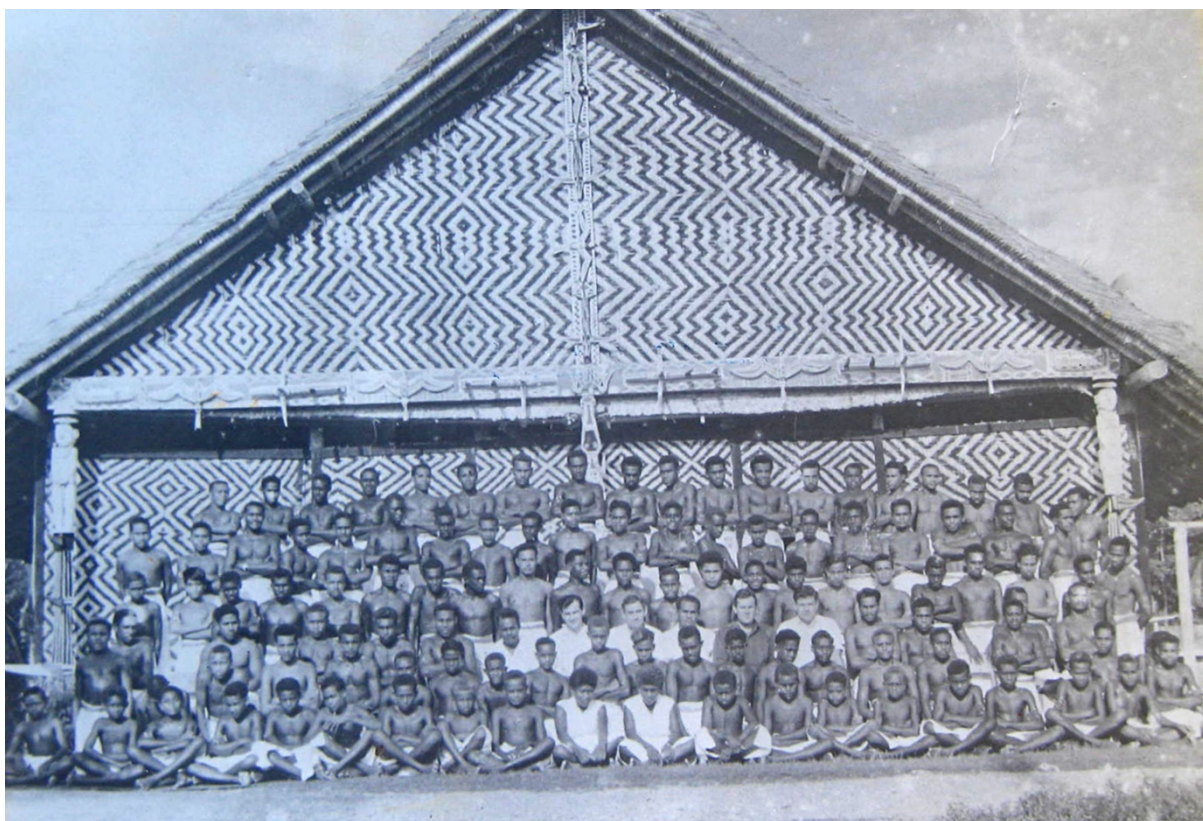


13.5. Auki wharf, early 1960s. (Solomon Islands Government)

13.6. Auki town in the 1960s. (Solomon Islands Government)



13.7. The District Commissioner's house at Auki, 1950s. (John Hearth Collection)



13.8. King George VI School students and teachers, Aligegeo, north of Auki, 1962. (Clive Moore Collection)



13.9. King George VI School Assembly Hall. (Mike Lee Collection)



13.10. Quan Hong Pty. Ltd., Auki, early 1960s. (British Museum, John Tod Collection)



13.11. The first Malaita Council buildings, Aligeo, north of Auki, 1950s. (Mike Lee Collection)



13.12. Malaita District headquarters, Auki, early 1960s. (British Museum, Robertson Wright photograph in John Tod Collection)



13.13. The beginnings of urban settlement, Auki, early 1960s. (British Museum, Robertson Wright photograph in John Tod Collection)



13.14. Auki from the docks, 2007. (Clive Moore Collection)



13.15. The new Auki wharf, 2013. (Annie McCoy Collection)



13.16. In 2005, Auki gained its first multi-story building, known as the 'glass house'. (Clive Moore Collection)



13.17. The main street of Auki, leading down to the harbour, 2014. (Geoffrey and Stephanie Hobbis Collection)