

Chapter Connect: ECWG  
July 2020

# Carrying the Flag from Alabama to Vanuatu

Lew Toulmin, PhD, FRGS, FN '04  
The Explorers Club



# Topics:



**Lew: Who's That?**



**Flag & Other Expeditions**

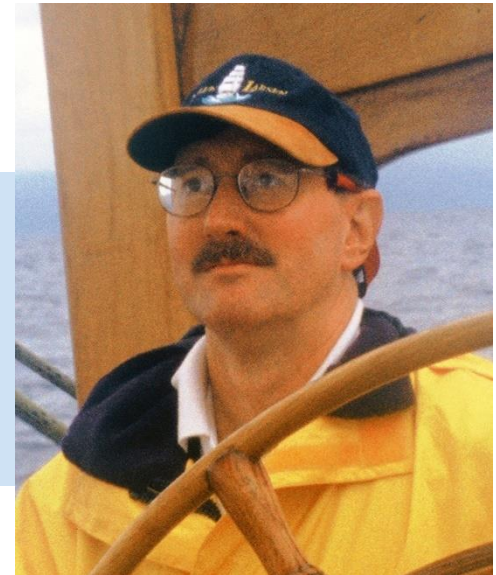


**The Bali Hai Expeditions**



---

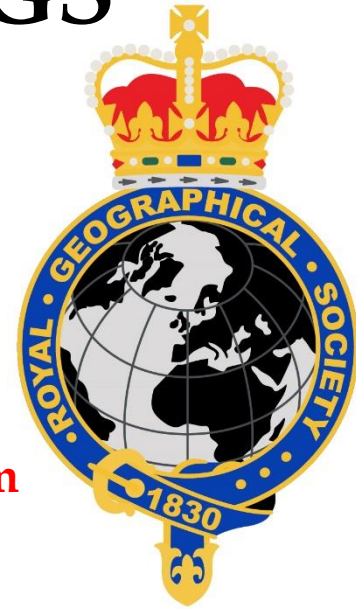
## Lew - Who's That?



---

# Llewellyn “Lew” Toulmin, PhD, FRGS

- PhD & MPA in public admin & economics, BA in anthro & poli sci
- Senior Advisor, **Prime Minister’s Office, Republic of Vanuatu**, 2012-16
- Management and telecoms policy consultant to the World Bank, USAID, other donors, & 12 US government agencies
- Principal at consultancy of **Booz-Allen-Hamilton**, 15 years
- Expertise in **emergency mgmt, telecoms & ICTs, & public admin reform**
- Author, *The Most Traveled Man on Earth*
- Author of 200+ articles on exploration, adventure & travel
- Travel/exploration columnist, *The Montgomery Sentinel*, 17 years
- Traveled to **147 of the 196 countries on Earth**
- Research Director: **Missing Aircraft Search Team (MAST)**
- 40+ aviation SAR/archaeology projects undertaken
- Expert in genealogical research



---

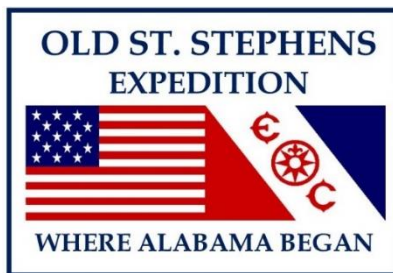
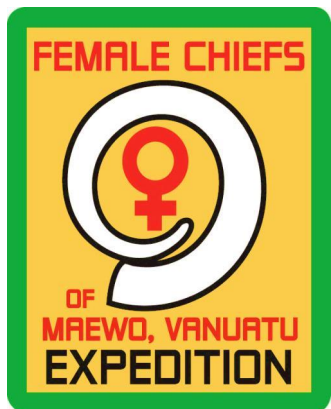
# Flag & Non-Flag Expeditions



# Carried the Flag on these Expeditions:

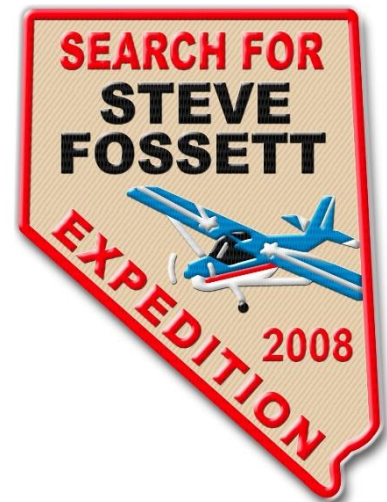


- Finding the **Missing Ghost Town** of Washington Court House, **Alabama**
- Excavation of the Territorial Capital of Alabama: Old St. Stephens
- Search for Missing Revolutionary War Plantation/Battlefield/POW Camp of Brig. Gen. Andrew Williamson, South Carolina
- Search for and Excavation of the **Monastery of King St. Oswald**, NE England
- Documentation of **the "Real Bali Hai" in Vanuatu**
- The Previously **Unknown Female Chiefs of Vanuatu**
- Search for the Missing Banqueting Hall of Queen Elizabeth I (postponed)
- Excavation of King John's Palace in Sherwood Forest (postponed)
  
- Excavating the Real Hero of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (possible, not yet applied for, re Josiah Henson and Matthew Alexander Henson)



# Other Major Expeditions

- Search for **Amelia Earhart** (NatGeo/TIGHAR 2017)
- Search for **Steve Fossett, Explorers Club Medalist**
- Search for the Last Missing WASP of World War II
- Search in Malaysia for **Jim Thompson, the “Silk King of Thailand”**
- Geo-locating Jim Thompson’s 1000-year-old Thai Buddha Cave
- Search for Missing N222TB in Oregon with Portland Police Bureau
- Search for Missing N2700Q with National Park Service
- Documenting the Prince Philip Tribe & John Frum Cult in Vanuatu
- Researching the Disappearance of Band Leader Glenn Miller



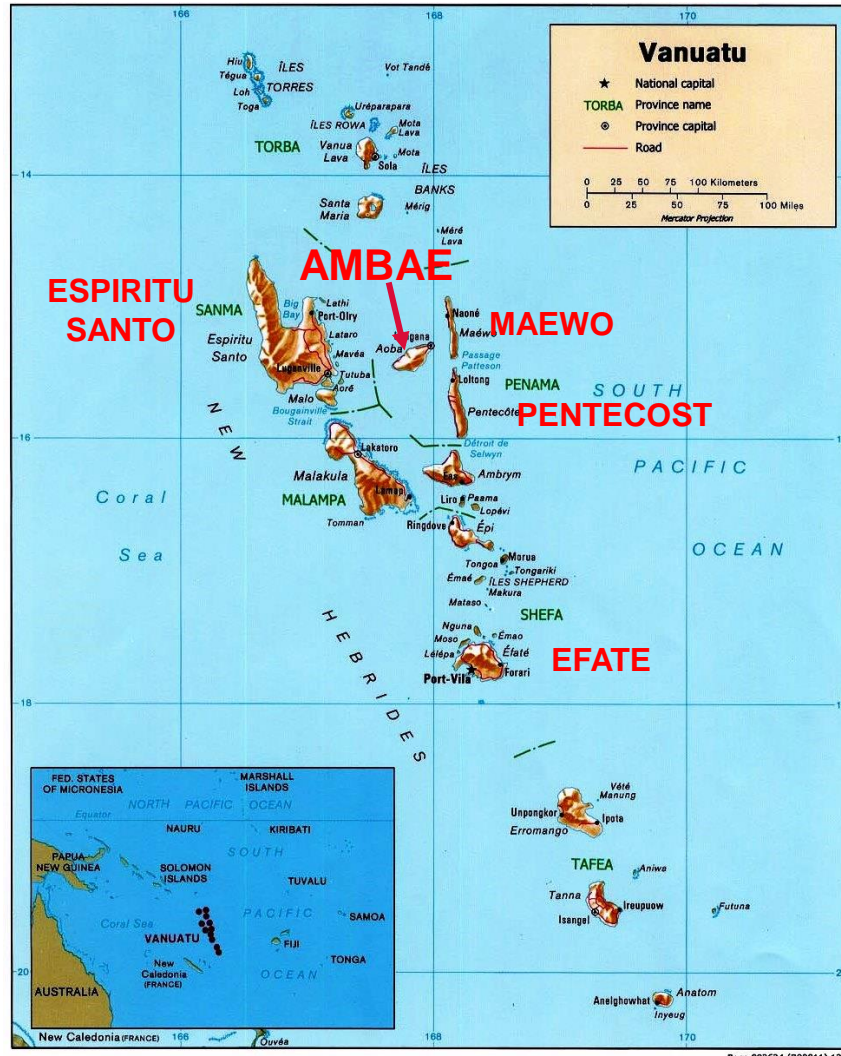
---

# The Bali Hai Expeditions

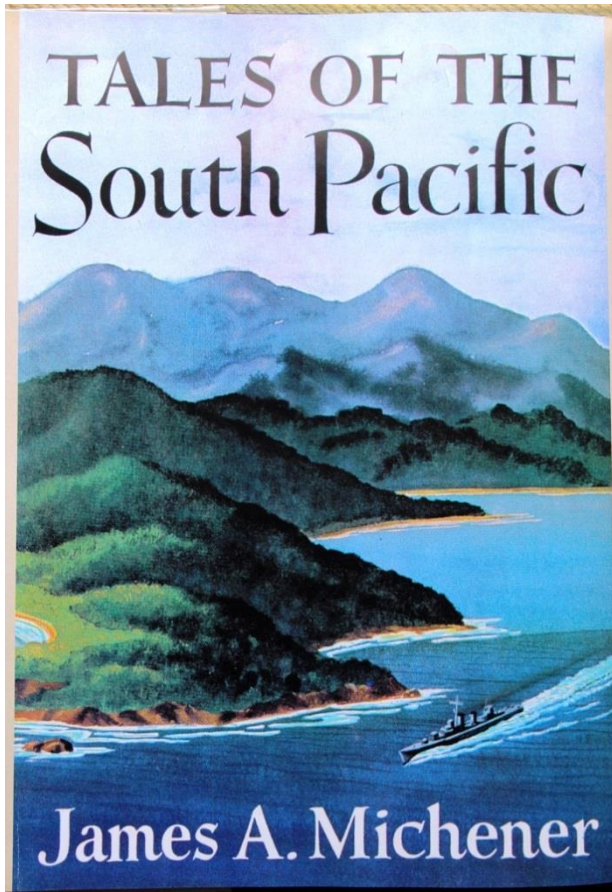




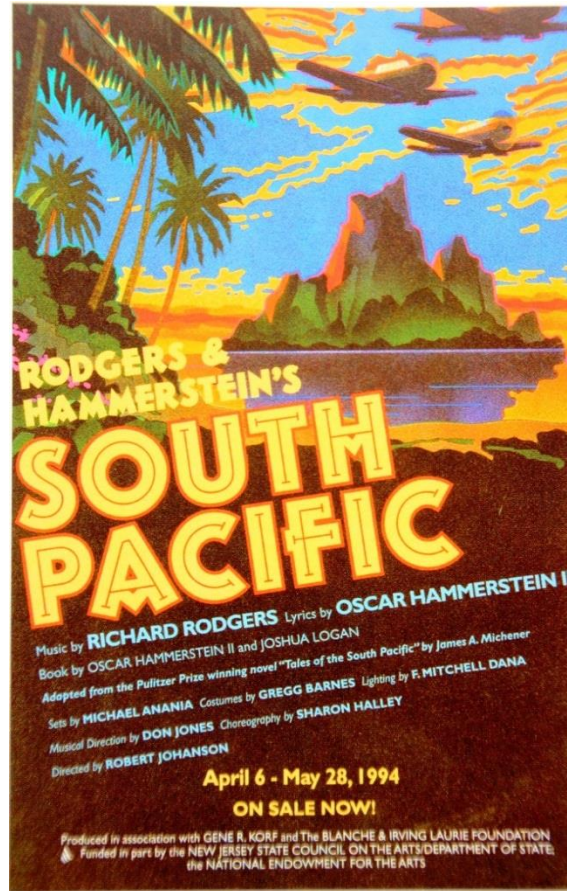
# Vanuatu is a country in the SW Pacific, with 83 volcanic islands and 250,000 friendly people



Previously the New Hebrides, Vanuatu was the setting for *South Pacific*, and got independence in 1980 from Britain and France



BOOK

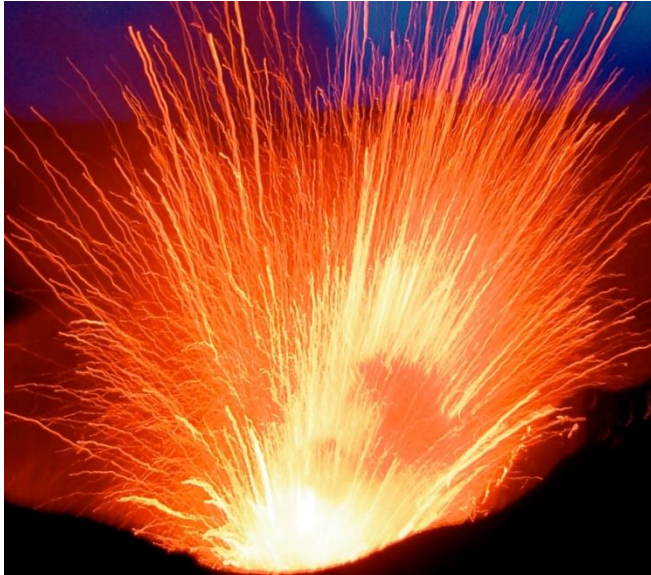


PLAY



MOVIE

**Vanuatu is famous for volcanos, beaches,  
and land-diving into the dirt below...**



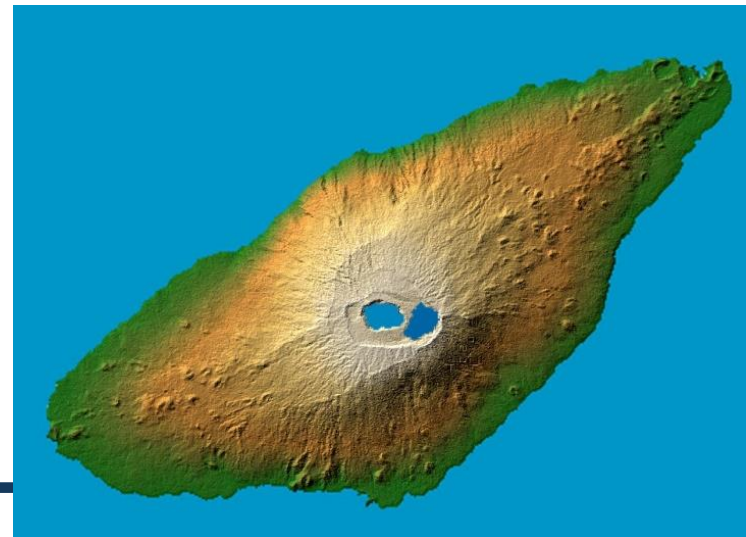
**...which  
inspired  
bungee  
jumping!**



Vanuatu is dominated by male chiefs, who rise in rank by killing sacred pigs with circular tusks



# First Bali Hai/Ambae expedition in 2001 found WW II plane and interviewed chiefs and villagers



---

# Explorers Club Flag expedition in 2013 solved aviation archaeology mystery....



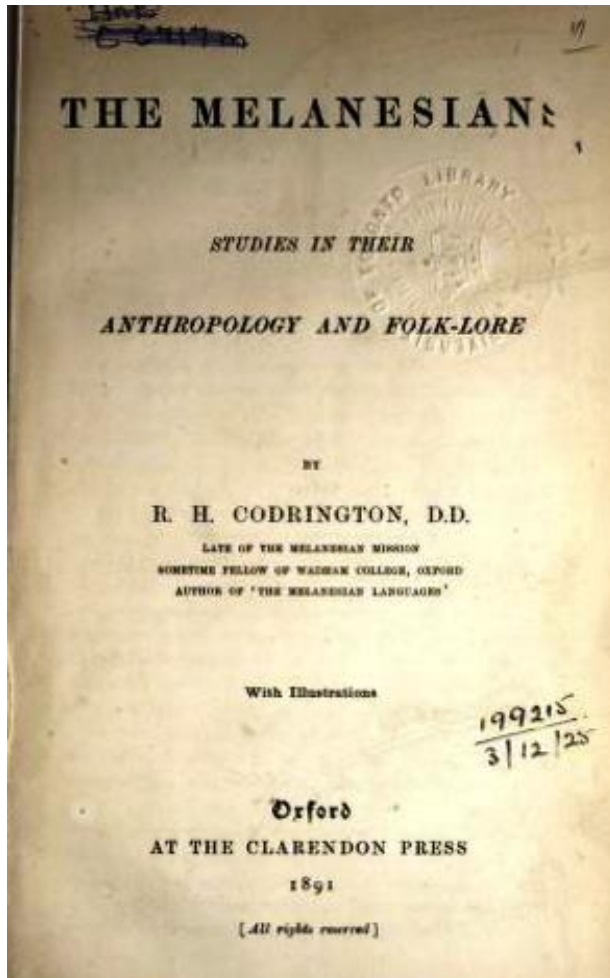
...evaluated Ambae's emergency management plan...



...and documented a sacred boar-killing ceremony

---

For 129 years anthropologists have stated or assumed that there are no female chiefs in Vanuatu

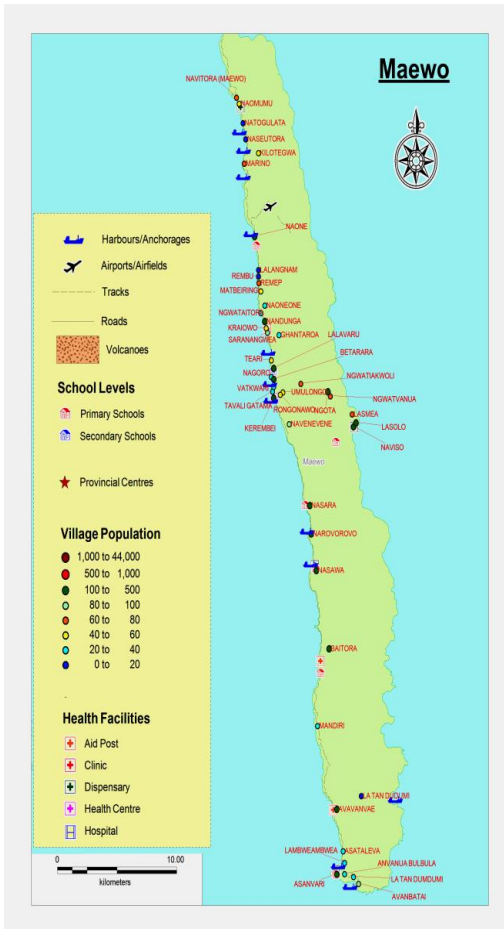


**Codrington  
in 1891:**

**“Women are  
completely  
excluded from  
the *Suge* of the  
men...”**

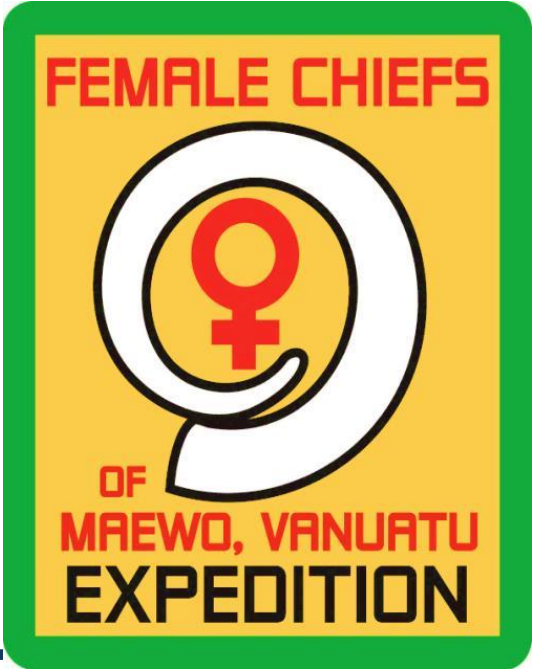


# Our 2016 Flag Expedition team arrived on Maewo to interview female chiefs

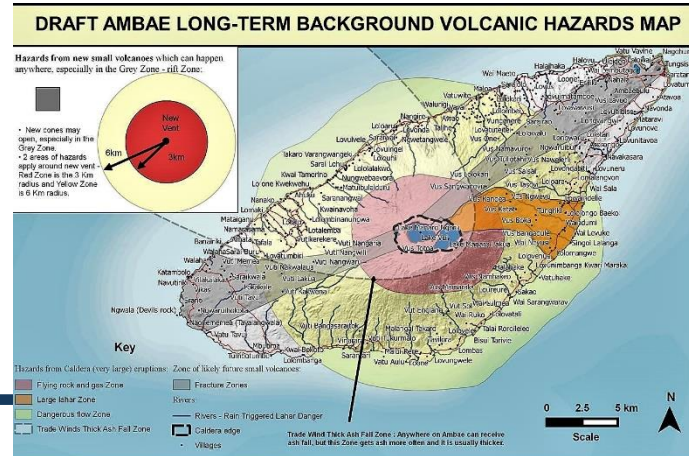
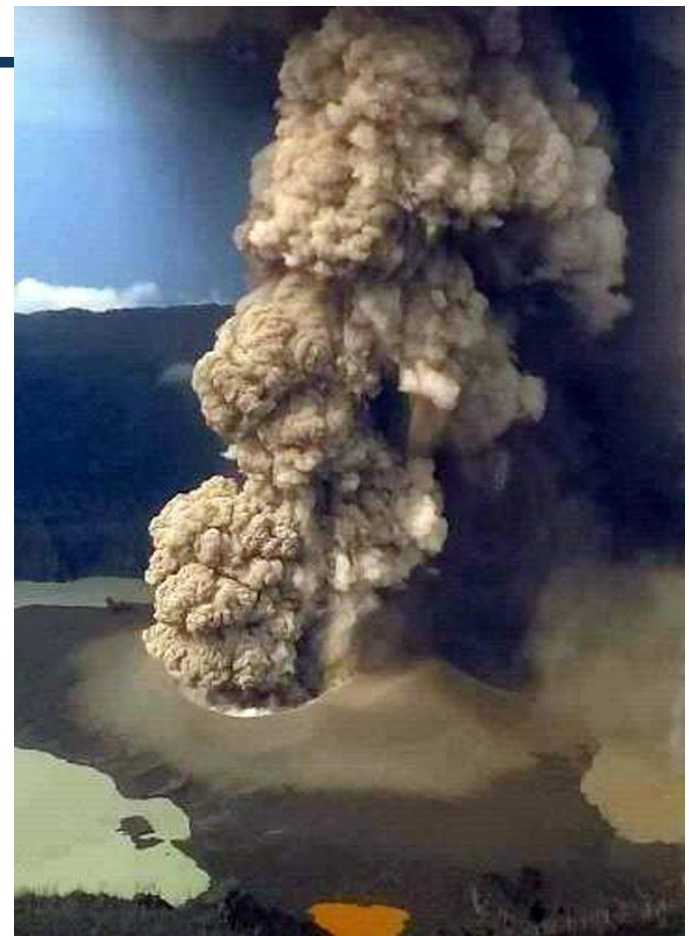




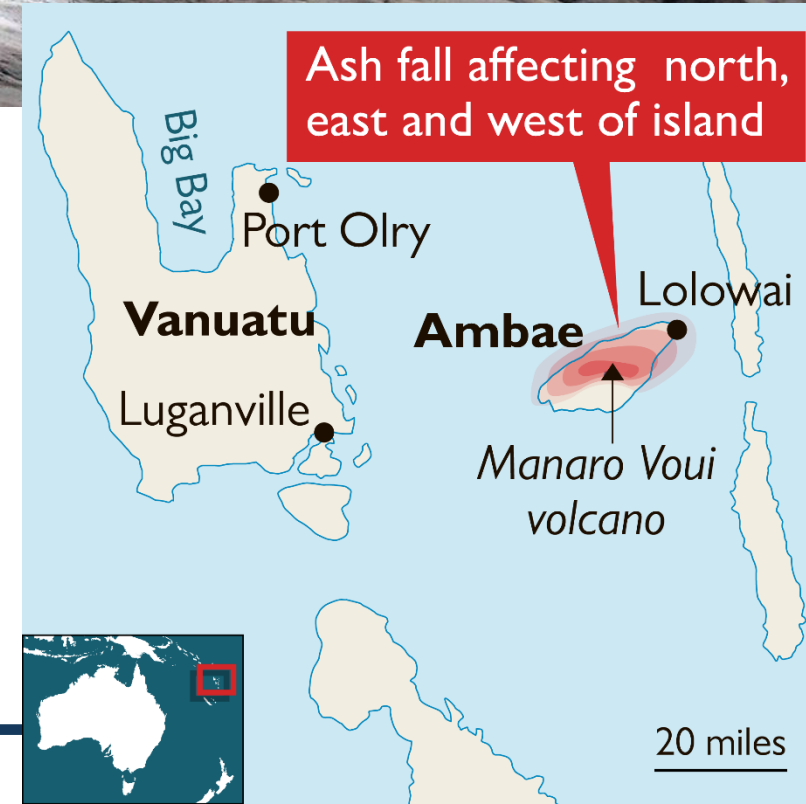
# We finally found some female chiefs on Ambae & Efate islands



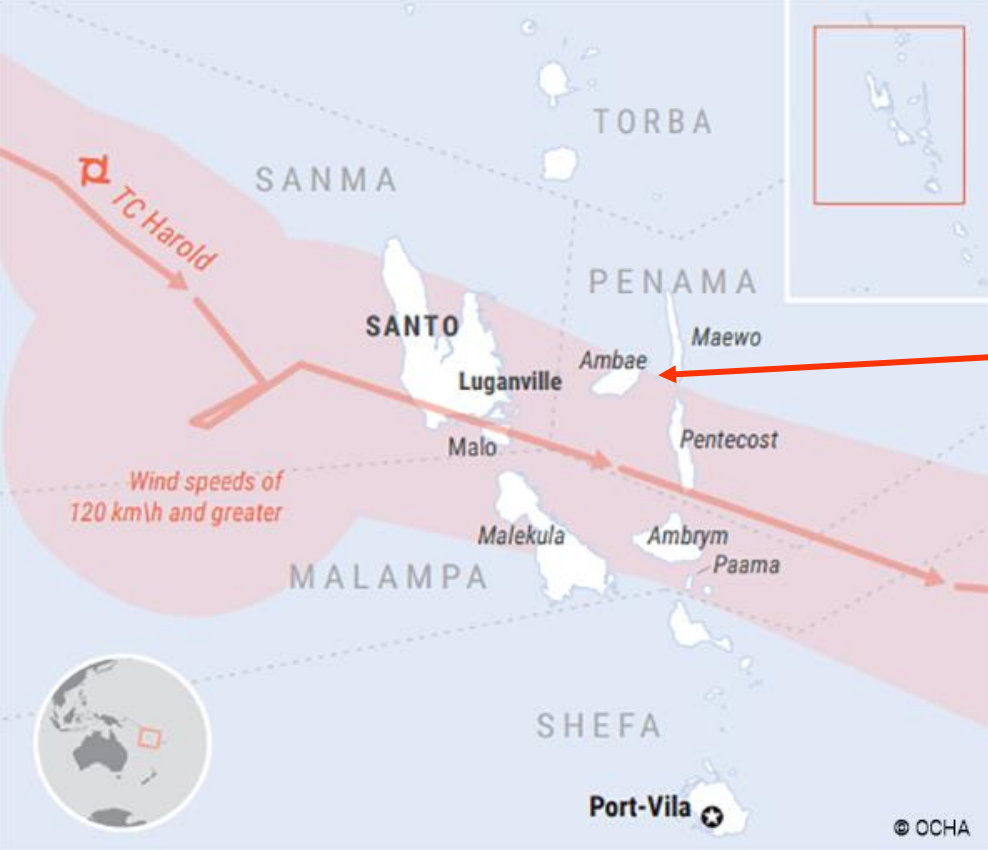
# Mt. Manaro on Ambae/Bali Hai exploded in 2018 - 2019...



# Ashfall covered 25% of the island

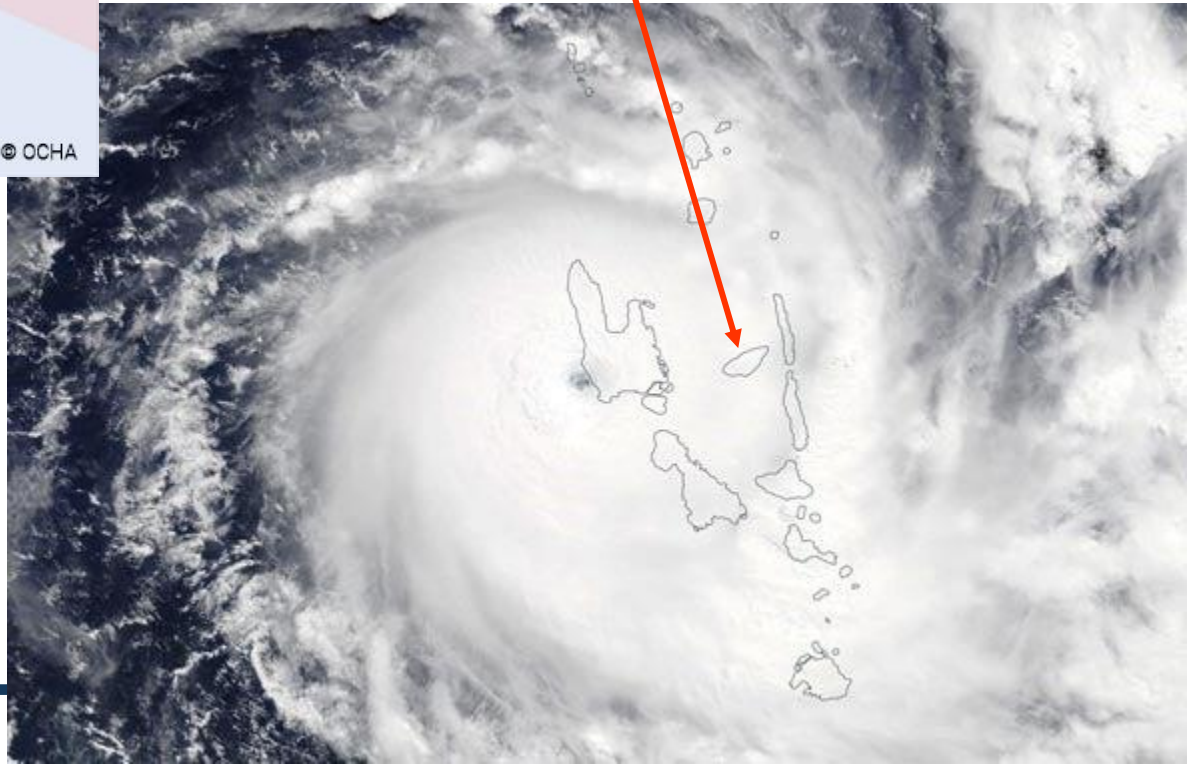






**AMBAE -- BALI HAI**

**IN APRIL 2020 CYCLONE HAROLD HIT VANUATU AND AMBAE**





**OVER 60% OF  
HOUSES &  
STRUCTURES  
DESTROYED**

# 2021(?) Ambae Expedition:



Evaluate disaster response



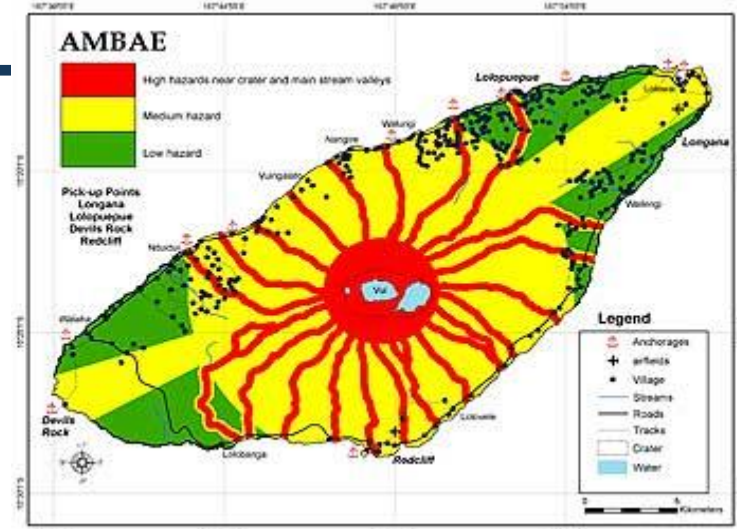
Review emergency plan & island habitability



Aviation archaeology



Find more female chiefs



# Tank Yu Tumas!



LewToulmin@aol.com  
www.themosttraveled.com  
PS: Carry the Flag!!!