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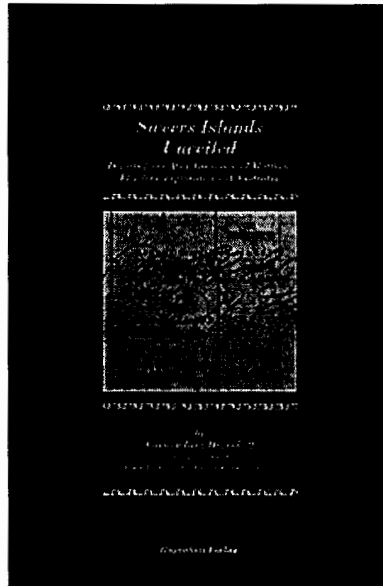
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## REVIEWS

**Carsten Berg Høgenhoff in cooperation with Lyn & Tex Battle, Bob Forsyth & Annette Sweerts, *Sweers Islands Unveiled: Details from Abel Tasman and Matthew Flinders' explorations of Australia***

Høgenhoff Forlag, Oslo, 2006. 45 pages. \$19.95.



**T**his booklet is a highly polished gem that should give much pleasure to those interested in the exploration of the northern coast of Australia and especially the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Salomon Sweerts, a member of the Council of India, together with other eminent councillors, signed the orders for Abel Tasman to explore New Holland on 13 August 1642. On 24 November Tasman named some groups of islands off Tasmania and named one group Swers Eylanden. In February 1643 after discovering the Fiji Islands Tasman sailed for the east coast of New Guinea. Some have identified the northernmost point of Lavongai Island as Salomon Suwers Hoeck, but it might apply to part of the island's north coast. In February 1644 Tasman completed his northern survey and he sailed as far south as he could into the Gulf of Carpentaria. When the west coast of Cape York turned westwards several coastal features were named including Sweers Revier.

In 1726 Swift published *Gulliver's Travels* and on a map there is a group of islands called Sweer's Islands. In 1802 Matthew Flinders named Sweers Island, the most south-easterly of the Wellesley Island Group and it is the only Sweers Island to survive. It is a linear island, 8 km long and 3 km wide, 2 km from the eastern tip of the larger Bentinck Island.

The Aboriginal community on Bentinck Island named Kaiadilt sailed to Sweers Island on hunting and gathering expeditions. Some years ago, with Stephen Davis, I had the pleasure of staying at the Sweers Island Fishing Resort while communicating with Aboriginal communities on adjacent islands. We were shown extensive fish-traps constructed of stone walls, probably originally a metre high. Fish could enter at high-tide and then some would be trapped when they missed the falling tide.

The text of the booklet is compact but easily read. On every page, except 11, there is at least one map, diagram or photograph. A magnifying glass will be needed for some of them, but that is no hardship. The authors must be congratulated for tracing all the Dutch and English sailing instructions, identifying the navigation and sailing problems faced by the Dutch and British, and unravelling the final naming of Sweers Island by Flinders.

Purchasers of this booklet will have the added benefit of knowing that part of the purchase price is donated to the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

**Victor Prescott**  
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