



ALONG THE MAIL ROUTE

ARMIDALE CONFERENCE ON ABORIGINES

A Conference on Aborigines was recently held at the New England University, Armidale. It was historic in as much as all States of Australia, apart from the Northern Territory and Queensland, were represented by the heads of departments concerned with the welfare of aborigines. A number of aborigines, mostly residents of Armidale, also attended many of the lectures.

Professor A. P. Elkin, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the University of Sydney, presented a most interesting paper on the historical background of the growth of care and treatment of aborigines since 1788, and traced the causes and changes in policy from one of protection to one of welfare.

The policies and practices adopted in other States were outlined by Mr. S. G. Middleton, Commissioner for Native Welfare in Western Australia, Mr. C. Bartlett, Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Board in South Australia, and Mr. P. E. Felton, Superintendent of Aborigines Welfare in Victoria. The policies in N.S.W. and Queensland were dealt with at the 1959 Conference.

Mr. A. F. Norton, a Welfare Officer with the Aborigines Welfare Board in N.S.W., gave an interesting paper on the work carried out by a Welfare Officer, which showed how versatile these officers are required to be.

Other speakers were Dr. J. Bell from the University of Sydney, and Mr. J. Warburton, President of the Association for the Assimilation of Aborigines at Armidale, who spoke on the work of the voluntary organisation and gave splendid helpful advice for those belonging to other similar groups.

The Conference gave an excellent opportunity for those present to learn the facts of aborigines welfare work. Too often criticism is made by those who have little or no idea of the work or the difficulties experienced. It also gave a far wider view of the work over all Australia and it was interesting to note how in each State the work was running on parallel lines, though the actual methods were in some way different. It was later agreed by the other States that the work in N.S.W. presented more problems than the other States, mainly because they had been able to avoid many of the N.S.W. difficulties through their work commencing later in the history of the Commonwealth and had the experiences in N.S.W. to act as a guide.

The Adult Education Department of the University of New England is to be congratulated on its excellent arrangement of the Conference.

SPORTING NEWS FROM WALGETT

Four boys from Walgett Station were selected to play in the combined Walgett 6 stone 7 lbs. football team at Peel Schools' Rugby League carnival on Saturday, the 23rd July. Out of a team of thirteen chosen to play, nine boys were aborigines, one of whom was Captain, namely, Ken Dennis of Walgett Station. This was a great honour for the boys.

They acquitted themselves well, winning the three matches played, and scoring in all, fifty-nine points to nil. For this effort they were presented with a cup, this trophy being personally presented by Clive Churchill, ex-Australian Captain.

Saturday the 23rd July, was also a "red-letter" day for the school children of the Station. The Station vehicle conveyed them some 86 miles to Goodooga where they had been invited by the Goodooga Parents and Citizens' Association to attend a sports day.

The football team were successful in their match winning by 8 points to 6. Many events on the long programme were won by Walgett school children.

The barbecue at night was also well patronised and later on a boxing tournament where many of the lads revealed that they could "box it out" with anybody their size.

Thank you, Goodooga P. & C. Association, for a wonderful day.



Brian Randall and Thomas Clayton are all dressed up and ready to depart from Cootamundra for the Kinchela Boys' Home