

NATIONAL ABORIGINES' DAY

CEREMONY IN SYDNEY

National Aborigines' Day was celebrated throughout the Commonwealth on Friday, 14th July.

In New South Wales the N.A.D.O.C. were very busy to see that the day was suitably observed. In Sydney celebrations commenced with a ceremony held in Martin Place, which was attended by his Excellency, the Governor of New South Wales and chaired by Archdeacon G. Delbridge. The Premier of N.S.W. was represented by the Honourable C. A. Kelly, Chief Secretary. The ceremony was opened by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney, Alderman F. J. Dixon who recalled, in his opening address, the many aborigines to have achieved recognition in various fields in past years. Addresses were also given by two Aborigines, Mrs. Margaret Morris of Kempsey, who spoke on behalf of the aboriginal women of New South Wales and Mr. Reg Saunders.

The N.A.D.O.C. committee had also arranged a Talent Quest amongst aborigines in N.S.W. and the finalists were present at Martin Place and several of these aborigines contributed to the musical interludes. They were ably assisted by the choir of the Singleton Bible Training College, which is run by the Aborigines' Inland Mission.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon the Deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney held a civic reception for visiting aborigines and representatives of interested bodies.

The N.A.D.O.C. also organised two other competitions in Writing and Art. The winners of the writing competition appear elsewhere in this issue. The Art Exhibition was opened by Mr. Eric Langker.

The Talent Quest was won by Mr. Charles Edwards of Purfleet. Other singers were Alf Sampson, Moree, Colin Hardy, Walgett, Robert Parton, Walgett, Jean Flanders, Bowraville and Mrs. McLeod and Miss Margaret Williams who sang duets. Instrumentalists were Max Cutmore, Arch Walford, Steve Duke and Clive Cutmore all of Moree and Peter Doolan of Walgett. Mr. Jimmy Little, father of the famous radio artist and Mr. McLeod played together on gum leaves.

Peter Doolan subsequently appeared on television and, in addition to playing his instrument, which was made from an oil drum, broom handle and two strings, was interviewed and made quite an impression on all who saw him. The boys from Moree also appeared on a Television show for teenagers. All of the finalists in the Talent Quest were also present at the Lyceum Theatre on the pleasant Sunday afternoon organised by the Rev. A. Walker.

In addition to the visiting aborigines, a special radio service was broadcast over Station 2GB on the Sunday morning and George Ellis, Joe Goolagong, former Kinchela boys, took part and also Jean Flanders from Bowraville, who was visiting Sydney, and Muriel Briggs, who is at present working in Sydney, but whose home is in Armidale. The address at this Service was given by Pastor Frank Roberts, Jnr. of Lismore.

Undoubtedly, National Aborigines' Day this year was the best organised since the Day was first celebrated six (6) years ago, and the National Aborigines' Day Observance Committee are to be congratulated on the excellent work they have done. Special mention must be made to Mrs. Cocks of Bexley, who had the unenviable task of collecting tape recordings of entrants for the Talent Quest and to organise their T.V. appearances whilst in Sydney. The adjudicator of the Talent Quest, a Mr. J. Q. Antill, famous composer and musician, was most impressed.

Mrs. Cocks is so keen on her work that she immediately left following the celebrations to travel throughout the Northern part of New South Wales looking for further talent amongst the aboriginal people. This is Mrs. Cocks' way of spending her annual holiday.

There must be an Incentive

Stirring Address on Aborigines

In a stirring address given in the Lyceum Theatre on National Aborigines Sunday, the Rev. T. D. Noffs, "aborigines must be given an incentive to live."

"In discussing Australia's aborigine problem it should be noted at the outset that there is not one problem, but two," he said.

"In the minds of many Australians the two problems are often confused and as a result we are guilty of making misleading statements that have an unfavourable impact in other countries.

"Let us therefore note that there is in the first place the problem of the Australian aborigine of full-blood. The full-blood aborigine population of Australia stands at about 50,000. This problem of the assimilation of these people is now restricted almost to the West and to the Northern Territory. The full-blood population in the Eastern states is now very small.

"These people (the full-bloods) are the last real links with the hardy tribes who, with their colourful rituals and primitive beliefs, occupied this great land, Australia,