
REFLECTIONS of a former Station manager

by D. G. YATES

Area Welfare Officer, Armidale

The Editor,

Dear Sir,

Amid the hurly-burly of establishing a new Area Welfare Office at Armidale and taking up a new position in same, not without some difficulties, I finally caught up with my issue of *Dawn* and noticed a par re my family's departure from Jervis Bay, sometimes known as Wreck Bay, Aboriginal Station, of which I and my wife had had the good fortune to be manager and matron for over two years.

The reading of same caused me to sit, gaze out of the office window and entice a horde of memories contained in those two years. (Without covering approval from Head Office I might add.) They were good years for me and my family with many pleasant thoughts, attachments, friendships and comradeships.

I liked to think of the Station as a happy, healthy community of which I was a part, not so much as the Manager but as a resident. It is felt that this aspect is sometimes forgotten, that the manager of a Station is also a resident of same and endures the atmosphere, sometimes of his own making, along with the residents.

As a resident I like to remember the comradeship of the fishermen, the fishing parties with George, Stan, Charlie and Turk the happy banter with the housewives the common joy of a good catch of fish on the beach by the fishing crews the trips away with the children the glorious beaches the quiet consultations with the older and wiser inhabitants the lies about fish caught and the stories told the wives as to why we got home at midnight. The friendship of the men who never took advantage of such trips to interfere with the duties they knew I must perform as manager. This I found the most refreshing of all memories. Such friendships come with respect and not with handouts.

I cannot say that all was love and joy. At times it was necessary to perform most unpleasant tasks and in these it was attempted to apply utmost fairness. I like to think, that in all such situations the best course was taken in the interests of the Station as a whole which, understandably, is sometimes hard for the individual to appreciate. I like to remember the long arguments with my wife, who acted as my conscience in these matters, as to whether or not the fairest course had been adopted or I had succumbed to hasty decision. I like to feel now that if the latter was the case then I was not ashamed or

too proud to reverse it next day. It is indeed a pleasing memory to think that while it was necessary to undertake some unpleasant duties the wrongdoer accepted his penalty without recrimination, paid same and we would journey home together.

Enough of reflections, but before the attack is resumed I would send my best wishes to the people of Wreck Bay Station, my thoughts are often with you all, it was a happy time for me and my family and the years were good to me, for this I thank you.

One last observation, trout will never replace snapper.



Geoffrey Doolan, George Mungendi and Victor Shaw, of Bourke