

Policemen Bitten By Native Women

TWO policemen had to receive medical treatment yesterday after they had been bitten by native women as they attempted to arrest them.

BEDLAM AT BASSENDEAN

NATIVE domestic violence caused a constable to be broken bottles.

THIS MUST STOP

THERE can be no excuse for some of the recent outbreaks of brawling and law defiance of the Bassendean camp. The cuttings pictured above appeared in the "Daily News" on the same day—December 2—the same month as the Aborigines Welfare Bill went before Parliament.

The law-breakers in the State's aboriginal community are low—this is shown by statistical facts.

But these few law-breakers are making conditions difficult for the rest of the aboriginal community.

Such outbreaks were probably the reason for many of the hard remarks passed in Parliament during the course of the unsuccessful Aborigines' Welfare Bill.

Great public outcry has been aroused over the appalling suppression of liberties of aborigines in this State in recent months, but defiance of the law by a few has helped to create a barrier to assimilation and good will.

Public Spotlight

There is no doubt that some of these incidents have clouded the minds of the majority of our legislators and helped bring about the failure of the Aborigines' Welfare Bill.

White men break the law too—far more often than aborigines—but the public spotlight is not so hard on them. They do not have to struggle and fight for citizenship rights.

Whether the law-breakers are coloured or white there is no excuse.

It is the duty of every aborigine to do his utmost in the fight for full citizenship rights—by obeying the laws of the State at least.

If the actions of a policeman seem unnecessarily harsh or unjustified, these matters should be reported to their superior officers, for police powers are not unlimited.

Minor Charges

The majority of charges against aborigines—apart from liquor breaches—are for resisting arrest or refusing names and addresses. They are minor charges but they bring a stigma to the rest of the aboriginal community.

The few law-breakers in the aboriginal community do less damage to themselves than they do to their own brothers. Their actions are selfish to the fullest degree.

An Ambition Realised

AMID a thunder of applause and cheers May Miller (21), of Mt. Margaret Mission was recently presented with her teacher's certificate by Education Minister Tonkin.

The presentation moment was the realisation of one of May's greatest wishes.

It has always been her ambition to be able to teach and do missionary work among her own aboriginal people.

Among the first to congratulate her on her achievement was Native Affairs Commissioner S. G. Middleton.

Born at Laverton, May began her education at the Mt. Margaret Mission at the age of six. At 15 she became a monitor there teaching some of the smaller children.

She studied a correspondence course in her spare time and was one of the first girls to go to Alvan House in Mt. Lawley before going on to Claremont Teachers' Training College.

She has now received an appointment to Mt. Margaret Mission, where she will teach infant and first standard aboriginal pupils at the Government School.

Sportswoman

A keen sportswoman, May's favourite sports are badminton and tennis. She has been playing tennis since she was eight.

She is also a talented musician and in 1945 played the banjo in a Mt. Margaret Mission concert party which toured W.A. and the Eastern States, including Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra.

A brownie leader cadet in the Girl Guides' she will accompany brownies from Mt. Margaret Mission to Kalgoorlie in March to see the Queen.

Full of praise for missions, May said the work missions were doing was highly valuable.

ATTRACTIVE MAY MILLER (21) achieved a lifelong ambition when she received her teacher's certificate from Education Minister Tonkin recently. It took grit and determination on her part, but she considers the effort well worthwhile. She will now be able to teach and assist in mission work among her own people.



Mission Builds Homes For Native Employees

The Lord Abbot of New Norcia has had five new cottages built at a total cost of £15,000 for families of native employees at the mission. It is planned to build a further 12 cottages on the hill overlooking the mission at a cost of £24,000.

The new houses are on either side of the main road about half a mile north of the main Benedictine Community buildings on rising, well-drained land.

Built to the same pattern, the houses have a small front verandah, a big lounge room with bricked-in fireplace, two bedrooms, a large airy kitchen with modern wood stove, stainless steel sink and built-in cupboards.

Showers, Electric Light

The bathroom has a plunge bath and shower and the laundry a copper and two troughs. Water and electric light are laid on.

The walls are monocrete with steel frame sash or louvred windows. The floors of the lounge and bedroom are of wood and other rooms are floored with concrete.

A representative of the mission said the new homes would give the occupants every incentive to keep them neat and tidy. They contrasted strongly with old tumble-down cottages near the cathedral.

The old cottages would be demolished soon. The 12 proposed new homes would cost £2000 each to build.

BEAUTY COMPETITION

A bathing beauty competition will be the feature attraction of the W.A. Coolbaroo League's second anniversary party at the Braille Hall, Perth, on February 12.

A large anniversary cake with two candles will mark the league's progress within the past two years.

League president, W. Bodney said a big crowd was expected to attend the party. Many girls were anxious to enter the bathing beauty competition.

Entries for the competition would close with secretary, Miss N. Shea on January 30. Entrance fee would be 2/-.

Among the league's many activities in the past year had been:

- A monthly social evening, held in Perth, to encourage social activities and education.
- The presentation of a corroboree at the Government House Ballroom.
- A popular girl competition in aid of the Hostels for Original Australians Fund.
- Strong organisation to support the Aborigines' Welfare Bill.
- The 1953 Coolbaroo Ball—the biggest function of its kind held in Australia.

DANCE AT NARROGIN

THE first of the W.A. Coolbaroo League's 1954 dances at Narrogin will be held in the Lesser Town Hall on January 30.

A bright programme of games and novelties has been organised in addition to the dancing. Cool drinks will be available.

A good three-piece orchestra will be used for the occasion.

No alcoholic liquor or intoxicated persons will be allowed on the premises.

Admission price will be 3/6 for adults and 1/- for children.

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BRING ACT INTO LINE, SAYS LEAGUE

THE W.A. Coolbaroo League has written to Native Welfare Minister W. Hegney urging him to bring legislation governing aborigines in this State into line with that of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

In the letter League secretary Miss N. Shea said there were more than 11,000 people who were aborigines or of aboriginal descent living in N.S.W.

Most of them were living in settlements or on special reserves under similar conditions to those of West Australian aborigines.

Their living conditions however, did not affect their civic status. Therefore there was no good reason why living conditions should make any difference to the civic rights of W.A. aborigines.

Miss Shea quoted a section of an article which recently appeared in the magazine "Dawn," published by the N.S.W. Aborigines' Welfare Board.

This said: "So far as the State is concerned, adult aborigines are entitled to vote in exactly the same way as other citizens."

"There is no clause or section of the Parliamentary Act which makes reference in any way to entitlement or otherwise of an aboriginal person to vote, and an investigation made indicates that this has been the position for, at least, as far back as 1902."

Compulsory Voting

"In 1929 when compulsory enrolment and voting came law aborigines, as ordinary citizens became liable in the event of their non-compliance with the provisions of the amended Act."

The Electoral Act was amended in 1949 to give aborigines, who previously may have been disfranchised under Commonwealth law, similar electoral rights, as they enjoyed under State legislation.

"As a result of this legislation, aborigines in N.S.W. who were full-bloods or had a preponderance of aboriginal blood, and who previously did not enjoy the Federal franchise were brought into line with other aborigines."

Legal Requirements

"The position, therefore, is that all N.S.W. aborigines, irrespective of caste or place of residence, are entitled both to enrol and vote. Legally they are compulsorily required to do so."

The magazine also pointed out that in general the N.S.W. Aborigines' Protection Act provided for special welfare services to aborigines.

● The W.A. Aborigines' Welfare Bill introduced late last year was rejected by the Legislative Council.

MINISTER REPLIES

Aborigine citizenship rights and relative matters would be given consideration when the Government's legislative programme for the next Session of Parliament was drawn up.

Native Welfare Minister, W. Hegney, said this in a brief reply to the letter from W.A. Coolbaroo League secretary, Miss N. Shea.



SPORTSMAN AND STUDENT Irwin Lewis (14), of Mullewa, is pictured resting after a strenuous batting round in a recent cricket match at Christ Church Grammar School where he is being educated. Irwin is the only aboriginal boy attending the school.

Popular Irwin Makes Three Big Strides

FOURTEEN-year-old aboriginal boy Irwin Lewis, of Mullewa, has made three huge strides since he started at Christ Church Grammar School 12 months ago.

Irwin has become one of the most popular boys at the school, gained fourth position in his form and achieved the honour of being under 15 champion athlete.

A keen cricketer and all-round sportsman, Irwin did well in the junior country week cricket competition in Perth recently.

Bowling Figures

Playing for Morawa-Mullewa against Narrogin-Katanning-Williams, he took five wickets for nine runs and then went out to score 34.

In another country week match against Bridgetown he hit up 51 runs and took 6/38.

Enthusiastic about his work, Irwin is the only aboriginal boy at the school.

Miss Doreen Blackwood has started working as a clerical assistant in the Native Affairs Department Office at Geraldton.

They're Ready Now —And Waiting

Every time the question of citizen rights for aborigines cropped up someone was almost certain to say: "They're not ready yet."

This was said by author John K. Ewers in a recent ABC radio talk.

Mr. Ewers said such a statement directed the attention to the person who made it, and brought the comment: "Here is someone—a white man—withholding a privilege from someone else—a coloured man. The white man has this privilege as a right. On what grounds does he withhold it from another human being?"

In a country like South Africa the right was withheld through fear of the consequences. Ten million coloured people could easily outvote two or three million whites.

No such situation existed here. The coloured population of Australia was in such a marked minority that no physical danger could accompany the granting of citizenship rights.

But citizenship rights could be withheld until such a time as the mixed blood population was much larger than it was at present. A growing resentment could alienate these people. It could create a real social problem and would unless white men had the courage to face it now.

Until whites invaded and settled in Australia the aborigines had no steady contact with other culture groups. The white men were the culture group upon whom that responsibility rested. And what did they do?

It was this: They taught them where it was to the white man's advantage they should be taught a few things. Beyond that they were left to their own resources. In a general way white men thought of them as untaught and unteachable.

Mr. Ewers said the detribalised native was the one for whom citizenship rights had meaning. He was a human being with an unknown potential for development.

Another part of the problem was mixed blood and in this case there was no question whether they were ready for citizenship rights.

Said Mr. Ewers: "They've proved it over and over again in outstanding figures like Captain Saunders of the A.I.F., singer Harold Blair, Dave Sands the boxer and many others."

"In many districts mixed bloods are a matter of course, making a valuable contribution to our economy, in labour and services. Many are living in sub-standard homes. Many whites are too, but they aren't denied the right to vote on that account."

Cosmo Newberry Now a Mission

Cosmo Newberry is no longer a Government Station. It has been officially handed over by Native Affairs Commissioner S. G. Middleton to the United Aborigines Mission.

It is now known as Cosmo Newberry Mission.

The management of the mission has been temporarily taken over by Mr. and Mrs. Kupton arrive in February to take up their duties.

Experienced in mission managements, Mr. and Mrs. Schenk pioneered the Mt. Margaret Mission.

Native Affairs Department representative Jack Braeside is also assisting at the mission until the new manager arrives. He is an old boy of the Roelands mission and has been on the Government staff at Cosmo for the past year.

Hector O'Loughlin and Alice Trott will board at Kurrawang Mission while they are attending school in Kalgoorlie this year. Both have been attending Laver-ton school.

FESTIVE FUNCTIONS

Recent, gay Christmas and New Year functions conducted by the W.A. Coolbaroo League in Perth were among the highlights of the festive season.

On Christmas Eve women from the Coolbaroo League organised a tree for about 50 children and laid on a big spread of food.

The children thoroughly enjoyed themselves with the whistles, crackers, fancy hats and novelties that were supplied.

A dance on New Year's Eve was packed with friends from the metropolitan area and country districts.

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The Pilbarra district, behind Port Hedland, 1,000 miles north of Perth, is gripped by mineral fever.

At the weekends the busy wool port quiets down as almost everyone who is able climbs aboard a truck to head into the harsh, dry spinifex country in search of precious minerals.

The sparsely-populated Pilbarra district—about the size of Victoria—has many valuable minerals including gold, lead, wolfram, tin, scheelite and some uranium, though not in commercial quantities as far as is known.

But the lure for Port Hedland's weekend prospectors and others is tantalite-columbite, two associated minerals of strategic value and used in the manufacture of the world's jet aircraft engines, surgical instruments, radio and television equipment.

Many of the roads and tracks are murderous for the heaviest vehicles and there are not enough roads. Governments and local authorities can't find the money people would like them to spend on road development.

But one "road board" in the Pilbarra district doesn't worry about money shortages: When a road is needed its aborigine workers just go ahead and build it. In a few years they have built about 400 miles of road.

The unique "road board" is part of a group of about 700 people—half a dozen white men, a few half-castes and the remainder full-blood aborigine men, women and children.

The group are known throughout the North-West as "McLeod's people." The group's history dates back to 1945. Its pioneer was bearded, 44-year-old Donald William McLeod.

In Perth recently McLeod told his story of the Pilbarra group.

Meeting At Port Hedland

In 1945 six natives came to see him in Port Hedland. They asked him to give advice and state their case for a better deal from the Native Affairs Department.

For many years the natives in the North-West had been struggling to better their conditions. Exploited, half-starved, neglected when sick, they existed with little hope. Few employers bothered to provide living quarters of any sort.

McLeod agreed to co-operate with the natives, but warned them they would have to work to solve their own problems. At a native camp outside the town later he talked with a group of native station workers. A

McLeod then started lengthy but unsuccessful negotiations with the Native Affairs Department for his recognition as spokesman for the natives.

While McLeod was negotiating, the natives became more dissatisfied with their unhappy lot. During the war they had been dissuaded from taking action because wool was needed for the war effort.

In 1946 with the war over, it was time for improvements, they felt. On May 1—Labour Day—about 800 natives stopped work. The time was strategic. Native labour was most needed then for mustering ready for shearing in May.

Three demands were made: A minimum cash wage of £1/10/- a week; the right of natives to appoint their own representative, to be recognised by the Government; and their right to organise their own defence.

From most station owners came a flat refusal.

McLeod and several others were arrested. Some of the natives returned to the stations, but to improved conditions. McLeod was fined £50, the others were gaoled.

Later McLeod was sentenced to three months' goal for having been within five chains of a group of natives. But his appeal to the High Court of Australia was successful and he was released after serving only one day of the sentence in Port Hedland gaol.

He spent a total of 25 days in gaol during remands.

The day after McLeod's release, following the High Court decision, about 200 natives gathered in Port Hedland with the avowed intention of pulling down the gaol.

He met them in the street and sent them away quietly. The natives who did not return to the stations after the strike became self-supporting—many of them working as prospectors like McLeod.

In 1949 McLeod and a few natives started a co-operative mining venture at Pilgarnoor. They left this area, but returned next year to mine wolfram when the price rose.

Company Formed In 1951

More natives joined, many from about 500 miles inland and the McLeod group grew larger and became more successful. A company—Northern Development and Mining—was formed in November 1951.

In 1952 the company produced minerals worth £70,000, mainly wolfram and scheelite. It hoped to make £150,000 from tantalite-columbite ore in 1953.

Profits from the mining have been ploughed back into the North-West. The natives are not paid wages, but it costs £6000 a month to feed and clothe them.

The group has acquired four pastoral stations totalling about 1,700,000 acres.

Headquarters of the group are at Yandeyarra station, about 100 miles west-south-west of Port Hedland. Here about 50 native children are attending the group's school.

McLeod believes the days of open range grazing are passing, that selected areas must be irrigated. On the four stations research is being undertaken with lucernes, subterranean clovers, sudan grass, sorghum and elephant grass. New techniques to stop the decline in the productivity of land are being tried.

Of the natives he says: "Nobody is keener to develop the country and make it blossom. Each is intensely proud of his district.

"Stories that they are lazy, thrifty and hopeless are false. They are vigorous, hard-working and prepared to make sacrifices for their future."

McLeod scorns suggestions by some people that he is teaching the natives to be Communists. Few speak English, can read or write, let alone absorb the teaching of Marxism.

He denies that he is "boss, dictator or leader" of the Pilbarra natives. He is their adviser, but his suggestions are not carried out unless they are endorsed by native committees and groups or mass meetings.

Several types of companies, including a co-operative were considered but found unsuitable. Native Affairs Commissioner Middleton was asked to become the trustee for a company, but declined.

McLeod thinks he has found the solution. It provided for the formation of two companies, each with about 12 shareholders, four of whom would come from the natives' controlling committee at Pilbarra. One company would handle the mining interests, the other pastoral interests.

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DEAF and dumb aborigine boys Lindsay Tucker (11), of Onslow and Wickie Narcle (15), of Brookton are pictured at the W.A. Deaf and Dumb School "talking" in finger language about models they have made in the school's carpentry class.



FOR THEM ALL THE WORLD IS SILENT

THOUGH the world is silent for five aboriginal boys living at Mosman Park an education at the W.A. Deaf and Dumb School has helped them to overcome all the disabilities of deaf muteness.

In the time they have been at the school the boys—Wickie Narcle (15), of Brookton, Geoffrey Yappo (14), of Watheroo, Haden Wally (12), of Goomalling, Reynold Inditch (12), of New Norcia and Lindsay Tucker (11), of Onslow—have quickly learnt to speak in finger language.

And more important to them, they are learning how to become useful citizens in the trade world.

When they first started at the school they hardly knew

the name of an object. They began by learning the names of various actions.

Names were written on a blackboard and the actions demonstrated to them by the teacher. They then copied the movements and learnt to spell the words on their fingers.

To build up their vocabularies they next learnt the names of objects and were taught how to construct simple sentences.

Normal Subjects

After this they were introduced to normal school subjects such as arithmetic, geography, history, social studies, handiwork, carpentry and metal work.

As carefree as any other boys in their age group, they usually spend their leisure time in summer at the beach or playing cricket. In winter they take part in indoor games.

Their education at the school has assured them of a bright future. When they turn 16 they will either work in a slipper factory or sugar refinery or become boot-makers.

Twelve aboriginal children from many parts of the State are now in Princess Margaret Hospital, Subiaco. Another two are in Royal Perth Hospital.

Deeply impressed by the intelligence and character of outback aborigines during a recent expedition, Swan M.H.R. W. Grayden tells in this story how his party was faultlessly led by its native guide Mittawillinna.

Through Spinifex, Mulga and Sand

A RECENT expedition to the Rawlinson Ranges brought home to members of our party just how much Australia owes to native peoples for their assistance in the exploration and opening up of this country.

The Rawlinson Ranges lie about 40 miles west of the border between Western Australia and the Northern Territory in one of the most arid areas of Australia. It is the home of many bush natives. Mittawillinna, our guide, was a Rawlinson Range native. He met us at the Warburton Range Mission and for weeks guided us unerringly through hundreds of miles of spinifex, mulga thickets and sand dunes from water hole to water hole.

At no stage of the journey to Rawlinson Ranges was it necessary for us to use a compass. Mittawillinna always knew exactly which way to go. In mulga thickets visibility was restricted to a few yards. But even if it had been possible to see over the mulga there were still no land marks—only miles of mulga scrub.

Mittawillinna would lead us to a small gnamma hole containing perhaps a few gallons of water, which he had been seeking. He knew the country north of the Warburton Ranges as well as members of our party know Hay-st.

He even knew the best route for vehicles. Without mishap he took us first to the eastern end of the Rawlinson Ranges, then around them to the north and finally from the eastern end of the ranges back to the Warburton Mission.

From the time we left the mission until our return we were entirely in his hands.

Just as Mittawillinna made our journey possible, the journeys of early explorers who first traversed and charted our country were only brought to reality by the aborigines.

Untouched by Civilisation

In the Rawlinson Ranges we saw bush natives—virtually untouched by civilisation—living as they had always lived through the ages. Their country was almost devoid of the where-with-all necessary to support human life, but they were friendly, gracious, dignified and always smiling.

The bush natives of the central areas of W.A. suffer severely from cold and lack of food, water and medical attention. These are the four main problems confronting them. They are the problems to which the Australian people can no longer remain apathetic. In W.A. the Government policy on bush natives is one of non-interference. But we must not overlook the fact that local conditions should be accounted for in determining our attitude towards any particular native tribe.

Food and Water Abundant

In the North-West of this State food and water are abundant and climatic conditions are conducive to the well-being of natives living under natural conditions in the area. But the same favourable conditions do not apply to the inland areas.

We left the Rawlinson Ranges with a new respect for a very fine people and with the firm conviction that our native peoples have a real contribution to make to the Australian nation.

Their fine characters, their kindness and readiness to help and their adaptation to the arid central Australian areas mark them as a people to be respected and admired.

These qualities should ensure for them a privileged place in Australia's future.

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Address all letters and suggestions concerning "Westralian Aborigine" to the Editor, "Westralian Aborigine," care of Coolbaroo League.



OUTSTANDING aboriginal guide Mittawillinna (right) who led the Grayden expedition through no-man's land to the Rawlinson Ranges is pictured at a native well with other members of the party. From left to right: Stan Bridgeman and Stuart Campbell.

ABORIGINAL PATRIOTS

By MARY DURACK MILLER

IN the historical records of the Swan River settlement are to be found the names of many fine people of the South-Western or Bibbulman tribe. Among these was Yalgonga, a gentle tribal elder who believing Captain Stirling—the first Governor—to be his own son, returned from the Island of the Dead to present him with the river frontages where Perth was to arise.

Yalgonga was always a man of peace and tried hard to foster understanding between his own people and the newcomers. At first all went well and happy relations were established. But full understanding was not possible.

The Bibbulman people in their nomadic, communal life, although recognising tribal boundaries, could not accept the idea of personal property or ownership of land by individuals. The whitemen's fences, breaking their country into many sections, puzzled them. Before they could be brought to understand that the whiteman's stock must not be speared for food in the same way as the kangaroo, nor his vegetables pulled up and eaten like wild roots and berries, much ill-feeling developed causing bloodshed on both sides.

Yalgonga's influence with his people became secondary to another elder named Midgegeroo, a bolder spirit—but one who also had the respect of the white settlers. Midgegeroo was the father of Yagan, who was to become the best-known, the most respected and feared of all the Swan River tribes' people. Both Midgegeroo and Yagan believed in exacting a life for a life. They made known their point of view clearly to the settlers.

They struck bargains and kept to them but would stand no insult, injustice or indignity to their people. They counted many good friends among the white settlers and were loved by the white children to whom they brought presents and curios from the bush. They taught some of the children to hunt and track.

They exacted vengeance for deeds committed against countrymen and did not always establish the guilt of their victim. Innocent men were sometimes speared for the wrong deeds of others. These actions aroused the settlers who declared that no man might now go safely into the bush.

A warrant was issued for the arrest of Midgegeroo and his son whom the authorities wished to keep in custody until they learnt more of whitemen's laws.

(To be continued in the next issue).

GOLDFIELDS JOTTINGS

PRESIDENT Phillip Bartle, of the Kalgoorlie Rotary Club made a pre-Christmas broadcast plea for tolerance and goodwill over station 6KG. Mr. Bartle made special reference to all coloured people in the community and the need for accepting them at all levels.

Hear there's been an addition to Albert Bonney's family. Son or daughter? The child was born at Kalgoorlie District Hospital on November 29 last. Both mother and child were well.

Miss Joyce Brookman is now working in Kalgoorlie.

Gladys Vincent and Sadie Corner passed through Kalgoorlie and after spending a few days with Mr. and Mrs. Jones, of Bulong, continued on to Mt. Margaret for their Christmas holidays.

Mr. and Mrs. Schenk are now firmly established at Cosmo Newberry.

Mt. Margaret scouts, girl guides, and brownies will be the guests of the Kalgoorlie District scouts and girl guides on the day of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Kalgoorlie in March.

Printed for the Coolbaroo League by Paterson Brokensha Pty. Ltd., 65 Murray Street, Perth, W.A.