

# \* Aboriginal Concert Tops \*

\* \* \* \*

## NON-STOP VARIETY

\*

The first all-Aborigine concert held recently in Kempsey made such an impact on the audience that it is now the intention of the Rev. Father Hoade (who organised the entertainment) to engage Aborigine artists from Sydney to the Queens—Kempsey's main theatre.

The uninhibited enthusiasm of the capacity audience of whites and Aborigines was a handsome tribute to the musical ability of the performers.

At the end of the concert, Father Hoade promised that the next show would be in a larger hall, "and we should have an exceptional night. It has been a great night tonight, and I hope it will do a lot to help our dark people on the great road of life."

Later, Father Hoade said that Father Dunlea, who founded Engadine Boys' Home, had phoned to say that as a result of this success, the artists would be taken to Sydney for a concert there in the near future, and transport arrangements will shortly be finalised.

The concert, held in the Catholic Hall, netted £48.

Champion artist was Alan Saunders, of Taree, who won the cash prize for the best performance. A baritone, with a fine quality voice, he was recalled time and again, as, self-accompanied on a guitar, he sang and yodelled his way through "pop" hits.

Authenticity and colour came from a quartet calling themselves "The Torres Strait Islanders" whose battle song and corroboree provided an original touch of entertainment. The Islanders have been holidaying in Kempsey and came down from Bellbrook for the concert.

One of the group, Les Webster, also featured in an hilarious fortune-telling act with Mr. A. Norton and Mr. Bob Dunning.

Two gum-leaf players, Mr. Fred Mumbler, of Greenhill, and Mr. Ivan Ballangary, of Bowraville, produced instrumental quality from their leaves and an incredible brilliance of tone, while electric guitarist, Reuben Pacey, of Burnt Bridge, who has appeared on the amateur hour, made several emphatic appearances both as soloist and accompanist. Playing with skill and technical ability, he handled his borrowed instrument professionally.

Mr. Pacey, a self-taught guitarist, makes his own plectrums and practices on a dummy instrument he made himself.

With his brothers, Andrew, Henry, William, Lyle and Harold, he also featured in a bracket of western-type songs, which produced some very tight harmony.

The blend of voices of the Burnt Bridge choirs, conducted by Mrs. F. Nolan and accompanied by Mrs. Brogden, make it imperative that this choir should be heard more frequently in public. The children display an inherited love of music and, with encouragement and increased appearances, could develop into a very fine group of singers.

### **From Bowraville.**

Bowraville sent a vocal trio, Lily Ballangary, Veronica Brown and Frances Chapman, who were audience-pleasers with a group of songs in harmony, accompanied by Ivan Ballangary (mouth organ) and Mick Donovan (piano). Mick, who received his musical education at the Bowraville Convent, also appeared as a soloist with several brackets of dance music.

The Islanders, with guitar accompaniment, supported Ruth Tidy, of Burnt Bridge, in a selection of island songs, with one of the Islanders, Rusty Aran, introducing some fluid hula movements, to the delight of the audience.

Best comedy act of the night was Chris. Dotti's impersonation of the three Marx Brothers. The audience, rocking with laughter, did not want him to leave the stage.

There were also some very good performances from Edna Dotti and Mrs. Fred Cochrane, Mavis Lang and Cyril Davis, in addition to a spirited Elvis Presley impersonation from Garry Saunders, of Taree.

Pam Morris and Janice Cochrane, both ten years of age, dead-panned their own version of "Marianne" and provided some unexpected comedy.

The full cast assembled on stage for the final number, "The Maoris' Farewell", to conclude one of the brightest and most entertaining concerts held in Kempsey for many years.

Comper for the night was Mr. A. Norton, Aborigine Welfare Officer in Kempsey.