

# TRACKS

Newsheet of the Nelen Yubu Institute

DALY RIVER, NT

August, 1979

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*TRACKS* started off quite vigorously last year with a small pilot edition in September and a large (43 pages) first real issue in November. Since then nothing. I spent the first term south teaching at the Yarra Theological Union, and then my return to the Territory was held up for a while by a spot of illhealth. Instead of being back at the Daly River in May, I found I could only manage to return to the Nelen Yubu Institute in July. Hence the big gap between the first issue and the second.

There is no special correspondence to note. One letter did express doubt about the relevance of Christian theology to aboriginal people: I asked the sender of the letter if he would like to spell out his ideas for our fuller consideration, but so far he has not done so. I thank those who wrote, sending contributions, good wishes and especially both.

I should like to make an emphatic invitation to people, especially those actively engaged in the aboriginal apostolate, to write up something for the newsheet. A very pleasing feature of the first issue was the fact that there were several aboriginal contributions. Unfortunately, there are none in this issue, but let us hope that in the future we will hear a wide range of opinion.

Martin J. Wilson MSC  
Director

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## ARANDA LITERACY PROGRAMME: SANTA TERESA

Sr Robyn Reynolds FDNsc

*I think it was the suddenness of it all that hurt us so. We did not have time to adjust to the startling upheaval around us. We seemed to have lost what we had without a replacement for it. We did not have time to take your 20th century progress and eat it little by little and digest it. It was forced feeding from the start and our stomach turned sick and we vomited...*

*Do you know what it is like to feel you are of no value to society and those around you? To know that people come to help you but not to work with you? For you to know that they knew you had nothing to offer...?*

*Do you know what it is like to have your race belittled and to be made aware of the fact that you are only a burden to the country? Maybe we did not have the skills to make a meaningful contribution, but no one would wait for us to catch up...*

-- taken from a speech made by Chief Dan George at the Canadian Association of Indian and Eskimo Education Conference in May 1970, Banff, Alberta.

SEPTEMBER 1978 saw the beginning of an Aranda Literacy Program in the Santa Teresa Community. The following comments are an attempt to reflect on what has happened here in recent years on "the language scene" and what appears to be happening today.

Before 1974 Eastern Aranda could hardly be called a written language. Professor Strehlow's comprehensive analysis of the Aranda dialects was done in 1934. His study of Aranda phonetics pre-dated the development of phonemics as a recognised area within the science of linguistics. Also his research was based mainly on his knowledge of Western Aranda, Eastern Aranda being used as a comparative dialect. (These comments are in no way a denial of the great value of Strehlow's work.)

If one looks at the area of Aboriginal liturgy, scripture translation, the Aranda church, in relation to the field of linguistics, the following can be said. Encouragement and "permission" were usually given from Mission authorities to "work on the language". This support was vague and impractical. Still today there are no properly qualified linguists amongst the NT missionaries, though some Catholic Missions do employ professional linguists. Generally Religious and other staff on missions have to depend on the education department to sponsor their attendance at e.g. SIL courses, and this only in recent years with the advent of bi-lingual education. So there are theoretical reasons why so little has been attempted in Aranda literacy and, in this case, Aranda liturgy. Nothing was written down. No one, anyhow, could read or write Eastern Aranda. And there were social reasons. Not until this year /1978/ had any of the Santa Teresa people expressed freely (i.e. without being asked, encouraged or "persuaded") the strong desire to learn to read and write in their own language.

Up until this year and perhaps as long as missionaries have been present, attempts have been made to "use" local language. An occasional Eastern Aranda hymn has been written down. The *Our Father* has been translated and some parables recorded on tape; the Santa Teresa Passion Play; the third Reconciliation Rite; significant efforts were made too in Alice Springs in church liturgy.

All this was no doubt valuable in showing positive attitudes of non-Aboriginals towards change, valuable too in showing possibilities and raising questions in the minds of Aboriginals. Perhaps these efforts appeared as a quiet challenge. Mostly however, I feel, they were ineffective signs because they were not initiated by the people themselves. They may have had their agreement or support, but there was no motivation from within.

When in 1975 a team of officers from the education department in Darwin arrived at Santa Teresa offering another "gift", another "answer" from their omnipotent minds and hands -- BILINGUAL EDUCATION, the Aboriginal community, much to their astonishment, quietly, but very firmly said "No". Their reasons they gave, though they were not obliged to. "We will look after the language/culture business ourselves. Your job is to teach us English and all we need to know for life in your world."

Their response was disappointing for some of us, I suppose, but not surprising. The reaction to the department's offer was one of suspicion and mistrust. The people had seen what assimilation and integration policies meant. They were so familiar with the constant stream of new projects, schemes, plans. Their response, though firm, was a weary one. "Leave us alone a bit. We will respond to the need if and when we see it."

So for the time being (for however long it might mean) in this area of vernacular literacy it just meant waiting and doing nothing.

1974-1977 was a most important time, all the same, in the history of the language program here. The Santa Teresa people were (and still are) continually urging and encouraging their more permanent visitors to learn their language. They showed great initiative and unselfishness in teaching non-Aboriginals both in informal and formal learning situations. So often the missionaries only come to give. In the language learning experience the outsider is powerless, ignorant. Now he is asking to receive; he is needing help from the Aboriginal, wanting knowledge and understanding from the rich source of the black man. In order to teach more effectively and to enable the student to learn more easily, Margaret Heffernan, the Aboriginal teacher with the assistance of a Santa Teresa staff member, worked at the Institute for Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs producing a series of tapes and worksheets which formed the Eastern Aranda Language Course. Although at this stage the course was an oral one only, for non-Aboriginals, it was necessary to have a written record of the whole program. The revised Western Aranda orthography was used with some modifications. Word lists were drawn up, some stories translated and work began on the Eastern Aranda dictionary.

Early in 1978 the need of an Aranda literacy program in the community was recognised. Jim Kernan, the village council president, stated clearly before the opening of the school year that the community wanted the young people not to lose their language and that before they left school they should know about reading and writing Eastern Aranda. He and others (including Aboriginal teachers) said and still say they want this for the older ones, not for the little children. So language was "in", but again, perhaps disappointingly for some of us that it would not follow the normally accepted bi-lingual education policies and patterns that had been tried and tested in other countries and in the NT itself.

Margaret Heffernan, the only person properly qualified to teach secondary students and adult groups was in Darwin during the first and second terms of this year. She was completing her third year Linguistics course at SAL at Batchelor. (She is now one of the college's first three graduates.) The Aboriginal assistant teacher for the secondary boys, who himself had begun an Aboriginal studies program, assisted in doing some basic introductory work with the Aboriginal teachers. Health workers also showed interest to share in the language project and its implementation. They asked for their own session when the classes would begin in the third term. One of the nurses (an older woman with 15 years experience as a health worker) helped compile a simple medical dictionary and assisted in other smaller projects related to the Aboriginal Health Workers Training Program.

Towards the end of the second term a workshop in Arandic orthography was held in Alice Springs at the Institute for Aboriginal Development. Those present included Dr George Hutter, Director SIL Darwin, and Dr Jim Wafer, head of Aboriginal Language Program. Margaret Heffernan and Eugene Turner (Aboriginal secondary school teacher) made significant changes and decisions affecting vowel representation. Linguists working on other Arandic dialects were also present at the workshop. Agreement was reached on the Eastern Aranda orthography and the program was ready to start for the third term.

So now each week there are Eastern Aranda literacy lessons, conducted by Margaret Heffernan and Eugene Turner, for various groups in the community:- 1) Aboriginal teachers; 2) secondary girls; 3) secondary boys; 4) Health team; 5) workers class. The oral program also continues for staff.

Many 'interested bodies' ask why the Santa Teresa program is "an upside down one". They look on it as something novel and exciting -- a new development. The education department and others are showing support, and learned people are looking at it "in depth". Jim Kernan states quite simply why the program is an "upside down one". There is nothing subtle or extremely *avant garde* about it at all. He and others are saying it is the adult's right and duty to learn Aranda literacy first. They will pass it on to the children, but only to the older students.

We can interpret this as we wish. Stephen Hiller says: "If the vernacular is used only in the early levels of the school, we can be justly accused of supporting transfer bilingual programs where the Aboriginal language is merely used as a more efficient way of making students literate in English..."

I feel the Aranda adults in the community here have chosen this type of program, not from a position of fear or from any negative angle, but from a very positive desire and belief to bring about what they feel is best for their youth.

Our business must be to listen and serve and not to get too anxious about analysing the decisions made by Aboriginals. We must simply keep in touch, observe and be present; to be ready to assist if and when required.

Too often things are done for or about or to or because of Aboriginals, but not *by* Aboriginals. Sometimes a project begun by Aboriginals can be taken out of their hands by those who think they can 'improve' it, set it up properly, fund it, etc. Before long then, any real sense of involvement or proprietorship is taken from the original initiators.

Already I can sense small signs of fear amongst some Aboriginals involved in the program. They see it could become "someone's baby", another project directed, subsidised, developed, financed, staffed, "fathered" by the Department, the Mission. If it becomes too top heavy, especially now in its initial stages,

it will be another artificial, dead project having nothing to do whatever with the aspirations and needs of the Eastern Aranda people.

I hear them saying:

*Move along beside us  
Not in front of us  
Urging us to catch up, pointing the way  
Give us our right to stumble and fall  
and to rise again  
Move along with us  
Not behind us  
Pushing us on impatiently  
covering up for us --  
Move along beside us  
or leave and walk your own way.*

## FATHER RICHARD DOCHERTY MSC

Martin J. Wilson MSC

FEW MEN could see the good effect of their lives in such tangible form as Father Richard Docherty MSC. About 140 miles away from where he lived out his last years in retirement at Daly River NT there is a community of some 1000 Aboriginal people that owes its existence to his courageous labour over that quarter of a century that constituted the central portion of his working life. He died on Sunday 1 May 1979.

### EARLY YEARS 1899-1919

At the end of 1920 when he was applying for admission to vows within the MSC Society, Richard Docherty summed up his first 21 years thus:

*I was born on the 15th of May 1899 in a farming district at Unwin, Western Australia. From that time onwards I resided with my parents. I began my schooling at the age of six, continuing without interruption until the age of fourteen when I was forced by circumstances to go to work. I worked at various places for a period of four years. The principal work in which I was engaged was that of an assistant in a saw mill. The remainder of my life has been spent as a student.*

In their context the simple sentences hint at a story of high hopes, straightened means and the endurance that comes from the conviction of being called to a close following of Christ. After he left school during seventh grade he joined his father and older brothers in the work of clearing timber and at a sawmill. As he wrote in 1917 when asking to be admitted to the minor seminary at Douglas Park NSW, he had the "desire to serve God with my whole heart and soul, and with my whole strength and mind" and "a desire to do good among my fellow creatures". The priesthood had been his aim "almost from the time that I came to the use of reason". He himself saw the main difficulty to his following out his vocation in his lack of education. His parish priest, Fr B. Fagan, looked rather at the economic angle. In 1917 Fr Fagan wrote to Fr Nouyoux, then provincial superior of the MSC Society in Australia:

*...There is another boy in W.A., Richard Doherty /sic/ who wishes to be a religious priest, but because his parents who are Saints are poor, this is quite impossible. This boy is eighteen years old and it will be a great sacrifice on the part of his parents to let him go into religion but because they are good, they are willing, if only the money side of the business could be fixed up.*

Richard Docherty was lucky in his parish priest. From his own correspondence Fr B. Fagan appears as one of those apostolic, unworldly men who are an honour to their priesthood. In 1971 he wrote that he had no spare money to help Richard Docherty with: every year he was already sending to another student "the little I can afford". Nevertheless, it appears that he paid Richard's fees for the 1918 school year at St Ildephonsus' College, New Norcia, where Richard was asked to bring his studies up to a standard that would enable him to enter the minor seminary or "Apostolic School", as it was called, at Douglas Park in NSW. After Richard had been accepted into the Apostolic School (towards the end of the first semester of 1919) Fr Fagan switched his patronage to yet another potential vocation.

#### SEMINARY 1919-1927

By private intensive study at St Ildephonsus' Richard got his Latin and English to a sufficient standard to allow him to enter Third Year at the Apostolic School. His superiors found him a very serious sort of person, willing to work hard, to have a try at anything -- his novice master, Fr Cochard, described him as a "jack of all trades"; he was a good student, "of dead earnestness for his studies" as one of his directors, a Swiss, quaintly put it; "of true piety" and pleasant manner. Some found his seriousness a bit heavy and did not like the confidence he had in his own opinions at times -- but generally, when such a criticism was made, the report-writer hastened to add that he was also very responsive to advice. In short, the sort of boy who grew into the man we younger members of the MSC Society came to know and admire: strong in mind and body, determined, persevering, without fear, serious and pleasant, direct and simple.

In view of his age and application he was allowed to skip the last year in the Apostolic School. He entered the novitiate at Douglas Park early in 1921 and made his first profession of vows on 26 February 1922.

From 1922 till 1927 he followed at Kensington, Sydney, the normal major seminary course of studies in preparation for the priesthood, which was conferred on him on 30 November 1927. During his seminary course his director noted that he wanted to go to the "foreign missions", and in a letter he himself wrote to his provincial superior on his 28th birthday, the year of his ordination, he stated that, though willing to go wherever appointed, "it is my desire to devote myself to work in the island Missions after my ordination".

#### DARWIN 1927-1935

His first appointment was to the Northern Territory, where he remained for most of 51 years of priesthood. Apart from some half a dozen years on Hammond Island (1959-1965) he did not attain his goal of work "in the island Missions", but at Port Keats he had more experience of a pioneering sort of mission work than he would have found on most mission stations in Papua New Guinea.

As is normally the case with a young priest, his first job was that of assistant pastor. From 1928 till 1924 he helped Fr Bill Henschke, parish priest of Darwin. Though based in Darwin, Fr Dick Docherty's pastoral care extended over a large section of the Top End. At first he had to use the railway for transport. In *Province 77* (32:8) Andy Howley describes well how Fr Docherty solved his transport problems in typical fashion:

*He felt the need of a vehicle and went to a bank manager for a loan but was told by that gentleman that in his opinion Father didn't need a vehicle. Father Docherty told that worthy gentleman that he needed money, not opinions. He set to work mending pianos, typewriters etc. to earn the money for his needs. Eventually he bought a used taxi, a T-ford from a friend. He taught himself mechanics from books and this came in handy after for his convert taxi which cost \$100 and a block of land.*

The T-model was dismantled and carried on the mission lugger "St Francis" to Port Keats in 1935, where it was reassembled to provide transport in the task of building up a mission community from zero.

#### PORT KEATS 1935-1958

When Father Richard Docherty set out with two lay missionaries in 1935 to found the Port Keats mission, he was accompanied also by W.E.H. Stanner, who had been doing an anthropological study of the Daly River tribes, and who later became professor of anthropology at the ANU. In an ANZAAS paper of 1954 Stanner recalled something of the condition of the Port Keats people, the Murinbata, and some neighbouring tribes at the time of the mission's founding.

In Stanner's opinion, as in that of the government officials, the Murinbata were "a dying tribe". He estimated their number at 150. The tribe was very unsettled psychologically. Their condition had a four-fold base. 1) There was a high mortality rate from disease: leprosy, malaria and (Stanner suspected) tuberculosis. 2) There was a large amount of inter-tribal fighting, especially with tribal groups living in the hinterland on the plains and paperbark swamps separating Port Keats from the Daly River area. 3) The people were already undergoing massive social change in the religious and structural spheres. 4) The remote effects of white settlement. It wasn't that the whites were attacking the Port Keats people or taking their land. It was simply that the Murinbata were "seeping away" to the north and south in a search for white goods like tea, tobacco, sugar, clothes and iron tools. The demand was easily generated, but the ring of traditional enemies in the hinterland blocked the Murinbata from the local means of satisfying their desires. Stanner wrote (1954): "I would attribute to this unsatisfied demand both the repeated attacks on coastal fishing vessels and wandering Europeans for which a number of them went to gaol, and the seepage of Murinbata south and north." (Cf. also Bro. John Pye MSC, *The Port Keats Story*, n.d. p.6-20.)

In an endeavour both to save the people from extinction and to pacify the region the government asked the Catholic Church in the Northern Territory to found a mission in the area. Fr Docherty recalled that he was chosen for the job because he just happened to be around. Nevertheless, it was his self-confidence and that willingness of his "to have a try at everything" that his novice master had complained about in 1921 which enabled him to perform his task. It was a task requiring a high degree of courage, the stubbornness of a man who refuses to recognise defeat and a directness of purpose that creates ways when none can be found at hand. People who have lived with Fr Dick Docherty on Port Keats give many illustrations. Sudden violent spear fights have been a feature of life at Port Keats. Richard Docherty was not perturbed at spears thrown very close to him because, as he said, "They obviously didn't mean to harm me: they wouldn't have missed if they did." Stanner wrote (1954) about the founding trip in 1935:

*At the time our visit was thought very adventurous, if not foolhardy. It was freely predicted that we would be murdered. The Port Keats blacks had a bad name throughout the Territory. Several Europeans and Japanese had recently been killed in the neighbourhood, and police parties had been attacked. However, when we arrived in two weather-beaten old luggers, the St Francis and Ariadne, we were greeted very peaceably. The greatest*



*danger was past: it arose from Fr Docherty's seamanship which, like everything he did, was muscular and direct. He thought it effeminate to pay overmuch regard to rocks and sand-bars. During my visit, which lasted two months, there were no incidents although in later years, until the tribe stabilized, violence was threatened once or twice.*

The success of Port Keats as a mission and as a piece of community building belongs to other men and women beside Fr Dick Docherty -- priests, brothers, sisters, lay missionaries, and the people themselves. Nevertheless, it is his firm faith, tireless work, prayer, ministry and pastoral instruction that stands as a central pivot in the whole enterprise.

The mission arrived amongst the Port Keats tribes at a critical time in their history: possibly it could not have arrived at a better time. It provided a centre towards which the people could gravitate. The seepage was stopped. Disease was controlled. New interest in life was created. In twenty years the population had doubled; it increased by three times again in the next twenty years. What turned the trend of the infant mortality rate was the pioneer priest who studied up a medical book, made up baby's formula and personally fed sick babies back to health. There is a "Professor Higgins" flavour about the Port Keats story, but it is inescapable, because that's how things really were.

Moreover, at the time the mission arrived amongst them the Port Keats and neighbouring tribes were in the middle of a social and religious revolution that was purely Aboriginal in character (and that is still in process). From some time earlier in the century new rites and mythologies had been coming up from the areas to the south. They were displacing older rites and myths. At the same time and from the same direction a new and complicated system of social structuring was being introduced. The Murinbata were struggling to fit the 8-subsection "skin group" system onto their traditional social framework. They were in a state of ideological confusion. A Christian missionary could be happy at finding a people thus prepared for hearing the other sort of "good news" that he had to bring.

When one looks back from the vantage point of the present time, one can feel disappointed, like Stanner, that the Catholic Mission should not have shown more awareness of social structures and various traditional values. One might wonder, for instance, that more work was not done in and through local language -- but then one is faced immediately with two simple facts. One is that one of Fr Docherty's early helpers, Fr Bill Flynn MSC, did gain quite an extensive knowledge of Murinbata, but then was sent off by his superiors to exercise his proven missionary expertise in Japan. The other is Fr Dick Docherty's simple, blunt assessment of his own abilities. Fr Cochard was mistaken in thinking back in 1921 that Dick Docherty would have a try at everything. As Fr Docherty used to put it, "I am no linguist: the Murinbata can learn to speak English much better than I'll ever learn to speak their language." So he patiently gave his instructions in simple English and was content to wait for the message to get across.

As this is a brief account of Fr Dick Docherty rather than of Port Keats mission, I do well to abstain both from further description of the growth of the Port Keats community and of the Church in its midst and from any attempt at describing present social and religious trends. Suffice it to point out that the population has grown to the 1000 mark, most of them baptised, and that the Port Keats community has the right to boast of one married Aboriginal deacon and three Aboriginal Sisters, members of the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

*HAMMOND ISLAND 1959-1965*

In June 1958 Fr Docherty left Port Keats for a long holiday down south. On returning to the Darwin diocese he was sent to its then easterly extremity, Hammond Island in Torres Strait. To his work as parish priest he added that of school-master when the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart withdrew from Hammond Island at the end of 1964. With four local teaching aides (one of them being Sr Thecla Durrante presently stationed at Alice Springs) he took on the task of teaching some 50 children. Halfway through the year he became ill and had to go south.

*DARWIN AND DALY RIVER 1968-1979*

After a period of illness and an operation on his hip he returned to Darwin in 1968, where he did catechetical work in the public schools until the work became too heavy for him in his handicapped condition. He then began his period of active retirement: indexing the parish registers, writing up census cards, and recording history and Aboriginal stories on tape.

In 1972 he went to the Catholic Mission, Daly River, where he continued his priestly ministry of celebrating Mass, administering the sacraments and giving catechetical instruction. And even while resting on his bed he continued to work at cleverly plaiting place-mats out of used milk cartons. His ingenuity and industriousness just couldn't slip out of gear.

On 2 November 1978 he was invested as a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia. His health had begun to fail, so the Northern Territory Administrator, Mr J.A. English, who performed the investiture in the name of the Governor General, kindly consented to travel down to Daly River for the ceremony. Earlier Fr Docherty had been awarded the papal medal *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* and also the Queen's Medal.

Fr Docherty spent some weeks in hospital after a fall during 1978. He returned to Darwin hospital early in 1979. His final weeks he was able to spend back at Perth under the care of his two surviving sisters and his brother.

Fr Docherty died at Perth on Tuesday 1 May. It was an event he had been looking forward to. His body was flown back to Darwin for Requiem Mass celebrated by the bishop of Darwin, Most Rev. J.P. O'Loughlin MSC, assisted by the Australian MSC provincial superior, D.J. Murphy MSC, and the priests of the Darwin diocese. After the Mass the body was flown to Port Keats, the main scene of his labours, for its final resting place.

*REQUIESCAT IN PACE....*

## HOMELAND MOVEMENTS

### REPORT OF CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP TRAVEL AND STUDY

J.A. Howley MSC

*(The following is the report by Bro. Andy Howley MSC of his Fellowship travel and study in New Zealand, Southern California, Arizona and New Mexico during 1978.)*

#### AIM OF THE FELLOWSHIP

When applying for the Churchill Fellowship in 1976 I wrote:

*Probably the most significant movement among the Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory at this time is the Homeland Movement. We have seen over the last hundred years the unnatural gathering of Aborigines in large groups all over the continent of Australia. Now we are witnessing a reversal of the process, in some areas.*

The foregoing statement I think is better than the official precis, which reads as follows: *To study the problems and solutions of indigenous people moving away from "developed" areas back to their homeland: with particular emphasis on land ownership. (And I would like to add here, land use and tenure.)*

#### THE GATHERING

The Aboriginal peoples who are returning to their tribal lands are going back a changed people. It would seem to those of us who have been with them for many years that it is impossible for them to resume their former life style. It may be that it is not intended that this is a permanent move, but a temporary measure, a breathing space, a time for assessment, a relief from the pressure of culture clash.

Over hundreds of years the Aboriginal people have been confronted with the invasion of their tribal lands by various peoples. In the Northern Territory it has been mainly by British peoples, but also for centuries by their northern neighbours. The latter had some effect on their life style, but left them relatively undisturbed. The coming of the white man (and of some Asians) has had a very serious effect on their whole existence. I am referring here mainly to the north of Australia and the Northern Territory in particular.

The gathering together of the Aborigines around the various white style communities (mining, farms, missions, settlements, cattle stations, towns etc.) either by their own choice or by force of circumstances has seriously disrupted their existence. This uncharacteristic gathering together in heterogeneous and large communities has far reaching effects on their whole life style. There was no aspect of their life which was not in some way affected.

#### ATTITUDE TO LAND

It may be well here to see how the Aborigines and other indigenous people whom I visited regard their land.

The Maori people of New Zealand have a great reverence for the land, *earth* is perhaps a better word. They have a very fine expression to indicate the importance of the earth to them: *A man must have a place to stand*. I am sure that this expression will be meaningful to every land-dispossessed Aborigine in great areas of Australia. The Maoris believe that no matter how small the land area may be, if a man has enough to stand on, he has the right to be heard, he may speak.

A few quotes from the book *Bury My Heart on Wounded Knee* would still be echoed by the American native people, commonly called Indians. "I never want to leave this country, all my relatives are lying here in the ground and when I fall to pieces, I want to fall to pieces here..."

#### *A MAN MUST HAVE A PLACE TO STAND*

In many areas of both New Zealand and America the native peoples do have a place to stand. I think that New Zealand however is far more enlightened in this area than either America or Australia. If one looks at the maps of Indian reservations in the USA, with the exception of Arizona, and maybe New Mexico, there is very little in the way of land for the native peoples. Outside the Northern Territory, and with some exceptions in South Australia, the Australian Aborigine is not assured of any land...no land, no "soul".

The Northern Territory Aborigine is probably the best looked after, in regard to land, as the present reserves are guaranteed by both major political parties. The vast majority of the Australian Aborigines *have no place to stand*.

#### *CREATION BELIEF*

As I understand it, the traditional belief of the majority of the Australian Aborigines, with regard to their creation, was the result of a spirit entering a woman, from which meeting a child was born. The earth itself, and all that was associated with it, the animals, the trees, the birds, the fruits, the reptiles, the berries, the nuts, the yams, everything, all nature was part of the "homeland".

Creation was expressed in legend. All creatures were accounted for. It is a very fine point where humans and other creatures part company, and I am not sure that either Aborigine or non-Aborigine can really mark the parting.

Their spirit centres, in my opinion, are much more sacred to the Aborigine than anything I could find in either of the cultures I visited.

The very instruments of the ceremonies of the Aborigine were so important that death could be the penalty for a woman or an uninitiated person for so much as seeing them. Some of this background I feel is necessary for one to have some understanding of their attitude to land.

#### *LAND TROUBLES IN AMERICA AND NEW ZEALAND*

In both these countries visited there are real problems concerning land ownership, usage, tenure, inheritance, and other aspects. In each country there are continuing law cases. One must conclude that land is a very important issue. In spite of this statement, it is my opinion that the Australian Aborigine, at this stage, has a stronger feeling for the "sacredness" of their land than any of the peoples I visited. I also believe that this could be changed drastically, as I believe it has been among some native Americans over the years.

Since my visit was brief and superficial, I am sure the foregoing statement may well be challenged. One does not expect indigenous people to confide readily in strangers. I could not find anywhere that the land was so sacred that it would be excluded from outsiders' visits or, in most areas, that it could not be used for commercial ventures. I was told that the Blue Lake areas of the Taos Pueblo would not be allowed to be developed, but I understand that it would be open to people as a nature area.

It is my opinion that the homeland movement in Arnhem Land of the NT is, among other reasons, a move to protect the land.

#### *HOMELAND MOVEMENTS*

I did not actually see one homeland movement during my time in either NZ or the USA, however I am now acquainted with the fact that there are a great many such movements among the northern Canadian native people, back to their old camping sites.

The move "back" in NZ and the USA, as I see it, is a mental process or a renewing of themselves by learning the traditions of the old peoples.

I spent about five weeks on the Pima and Papago reservations in Arizona. There is no need for them to go home as they have never physically left home. However, there is a very definite intention, it would seem, to remain Indian. Within twenty miles of Phoenix the Maricopa Indians still cremate their dead. The Pima and Papago still live in villages as they have done for many years. Among many of the younger people, both in the US and NZ, there is a definite reacculturation process going on. The Pueblo people of New Mexico are still where they were when the Spanish arrived there centuries ago. I think we can learn from the school situation in the Papago reservation. The children from outlying villages are brought to central schools daily and returned each evening. This would give them the advantage of being in a traditional learning situation with their parents, rather than on central gathering places, where the non-tribal people, the community officers, are then forced into arranging "suitable" entertainment, while maybe the parents are involved in movies, TV, gambling or liquor etc.

The advantages here in the Papago situation should be obvious. The children are under traditional authority, the language is spoken all round. The relatively pressureless life style allows the child to grow as a fully indigenous person.

Housing in these villages has, until now, been very simple, and even now there is a preference for simple type housing. Town planned arrangement of homes is unpopular with two generations with whom I spoke. In Sells a group of Indians are constructing their old style house, as opposed to white style, which is available. The only concession they are making is that they are using cement in the adobe mixture.

#### *AREAS IN WHICH THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE HAVE BEEN AFFECTED*

As the people go back changed, what are these areas of change? It would be hard to find any area of their life style which is not affected. Probably the area which causes the most concern to both Aborigine and authorities is the break-down of the tribal type authority. The Aboriginal community, in common with many peoples throughout the world, was an extended family unit. The elders were the law givers and upholders. The unit would rarely have been more than fifty, and frequently much less.

The breakdown is probably seen most seriously in the inability to control the abuse of alcohol. For the Aborigine, alcohol may truthfully be called an agent of genocide. In Alberta, Canada, one group of native people have gone back to their mountain to be away from the degradation and destruction that alcohol was causing.

#### *LOSS OF AUTHORITY*

The breakdown of law is probably the main reason for the apparent inability or desire to have responsibility among the elders. The elders still have the authority among the peoples, and the "democratic" elections of councils etc. are meaningless. From the lack of daily cultural contacts with song, dance, legends, many of the children and youth on the larger centres of population become more interested in movies, the movie heroes, radio, rock and roll personalities, sport and all the modern trappings of non-Aboriginal society. Old people ceased passing on their knowledge.

Health in many ways has been affected, basically for three main reasons: readily available food causing a very poor diet; the abuse of alcohol; imported disease, such as leprosy, which took a great toll.

The social structure has taken a very great battering particularly with regard to marriage. The Aboriginal marriage laws were well fitted for tribal life. The movies have been a big influence in this by presenting a "free" form of partnership.

The idea of incorporated societies and councils with democratic elections each year are a totally foreign concept. The leaders are already in the tribes, there is no need to go looking for them. Schooling has been another major agent of change. In most cases the children have followed a syllabus hopefully meaningful to non-Aborigines, but in some ways destructive to the social structure.

#### *IS THE HOMELAND MOVEMENT PERMANENT?*

This will be for history to tell. The people need a breathing space. They have been under too much pressure...too much too soon... Change is a generation event, not a twenty-four hour wonder.

It has taken centuries for Aboriginal culture to develop, and they have been expected to make decisions of change too often too quickly. A non-Aboriginal style meeting is the usual way for decisions concerning the life style of the people. If they were given a generation to decide what they want, I think history would approve.

#### *HOW BEST IMPLEMENT RESULTS OF FELLOWSHIP*

I would hope to spend the rest of my life with Aboriginal and Island people. Hopefully being able to assist them to genuine self-determination. To achieve this they need to know what options are available to them in their various locations. I have, at this date (August 1978) been transferred, at least temporally, to Port Keats as adviser to the Aboriginal council. Hopefully some of the report can be put into action, if the people approve.

#### *RECOMMENDATIONS*

1. *That all Aborigines throughout the whole of Australia be given land. Wherever possible, at least part of their tribal land.*
2. *That all land ownership be invested in the tribe, and never to be lost through sale or inheritance.*
3. *Where the homeland people ask for schooling, a rural type education be considered.*
4. *Where employment is required, firms should be encouraged to take projects to the people.*

*(RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FELLOWS IN FUTURE)*

1. Carry good map or maps of Australia.
2. Take also supply of leaflets on subject of study.
3. Be prepared for some contacts not to be interested. Have alternative arrangements in this case.

Visiting cards were very helpful; Qantas in USA most helpful; toll free calls; Vice-consul in San Francisco, Geoffrey J. Becher, most helpful.)

## HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

## AGRICULTURE ON THE DALY 1911 - 1920s

A. Keogh FSC

*(During July Bro. A. Keogh spent some time at Daly River Mission investigating his subject. He accepted our invitation to provide some outline of his topic and to add a bit of personal background.)*

*RESEARCH ON THE DALY RIVER AGRICULTURAL AREA, 1911 TO THE EARLY 1920s*

As outlined in my letter to the *NT Times*, I am a lecturer in Geography at De La Salle College of Higher Education, Middleton, Manchester. Ever since I joined the staff there I have specialised in Australia for regional Geography, and also lectured in Historical Geography, though admittedly at most solely concerned with England. The College is a constituent college of Manchester University and has for several years now been putting on "ordinary" degree courses in most subjects. When the question arose of giving honours degree courses the University authorities sent representatives to the various subject departments to look at facilities and equipment, and perhaps most significantly, to interview the various lecturers to discuss the honours courses they had submitted for approval. In my case they were well satisfied with my academic background and interests, but suggested (even though they were quite prepared to "recognise" me and the syllabus I had submitted) that I undertake some further work on any aspect of Australian geography, and particularly that I get some written research work accepted for publication by any of the academic journals. Universities of course set great store by this matter of getting something into print.

By a fortunate coincidence a Professor Ian Douglas recently joined the University Geography Department after a spell of, I think, twelve years here in Australia. (His speciality is in geomorphology.) He very kindly undertook to contact Dr F.H. Bauer, Director of the North Australia Research Unit, a branch of the Australian National University based on Northern Territory. In his turn Dr Bauer kindly took me on as a short-term student, and proposed that I work on an aspect of the Historical Geography of white settlement in the Northern Territory which for a long time has interested him: the fortunes of the Daly River Agricultural Area in the period of Dr Gilruth's administration of the Northern Territory from 1911 to 1920 or a little after.

Unfortunately this period, though moderately well documented in various archives and records, is just too far back in time for there to be surviving individuals who have had first-hand experience of farming in the region, and it is clear in any case that Daly River farming is not and never has been the successful and profitable form of land-use which the early settlers and authorities envisaged.

## DALY RIVER LEADERSHIP TRAINING CENTRE

### COURSE REPORTS

*Since the last issue of Tracks two more courses have been held, one for a Port Keats group and one for a Tiwi group. Brief reports of each of the courses follow. At the day I am typing this (21 July 1979) another Tiwi group is arriving. It might be noted that on two occasions so far there have been plans for a Santa Teresa group to do a course, but on each occasion Santa Teresa has changed its mind.*

#### PORT KEATS GROUP: 24 MARCH - 7 APRIL 1979

##### PARTICIPANTS

Patrick Parmbuk, Edmund Ngarri, Tobias Nganbe, Peter Chanel Bunduck, Aloysius Kungul, Damien Tunmuck.

##### AIM

The aim of this course was to take a small group of people through three phases of group building, maintaining a balance between study and action. The first phase is individual self-discovery and growth: who am I? my strengths, concerns, fears, hopes, dreams? The second phase is group formation and affirmation: who are you? your strengths, gifts, qualities? The third phase deals with an outreaching to a wider community: their wants, needs etc.

The programmes incorporated these three phases.\* Each session took the following form:- Two leaders were appointed each day, one for each group, by the whole group, taking turn about. The outline of the topic was given to them and then they, in turn, passed it on to their group.

The leader's role was to be prepared before the session began; to make sure that he understood clearly the instructions he must give to his group.

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\* Specific programmes were adaptations of programmes from the Lyman Coleman productions: (1968, 1970, 1972) *Man Alive: a mini course in self-discovery*, (1972) *Rap: a mini course in Christian lifestyle*, (Serendipity House).



Leaders had to encourage an honesty and openness -- the risk of being known -- "This is the way I feel in all honesty...I want you to know me...I want to know you..." Otherwise there would be no real community or group. He must call forth the best in the other person, see the best in him, encourage the best in him.

#### RESULT

As the course progressed, it was evident that each one became more confident in himself, became more at ease with the other members of the group. There appeared a greater appreciation of each other and a feeling of acceptance, as was evident in the session of 'gift-giving'. Here they spoke quite freely of each one's qualities and traits.

Above all there was the growing awareness of their own importance and, by degrees, of their own ability to state more and more their own personal views. This manifested itself very clearly in the sessions on role-play and "Making Jobs". They were conscious of their capabilities to accomplish things, but the atmosphere and environment did not give scope to this.

A questionnaire at the conclusion of the course indicated the following:-

- a) *They had to think, and that was hard work.*
- b) *It made them more understanding of people.*
- c) *The group gave each other friendship and shared their worries.*
- d) *They wanted to work things out for themselves in the future, rather than have others do it for them.*
- e) *They learned a lot more from each other.*
- f) *They would be willing to lead a bigger group from Port Keats in the same kind of course.*

TIWI GROUP; 26 APRIL - 10 MAY 1979

#### PARTICIPANTS

Stanley Munkara, Donald Kantilla, Martin Tipungwuti, Marius Puruntatameri, Neville Wommatakimmi, Charles Tipungwuti.

#### CONTENT:

##### 1. Individual Growth Building

The first part of the course concentrated on individual growth building. Each one was asked to think about such questions as, e.g., what are the important things in my life? what are my fears? what are my hopes and ambitions? what are the times in my life when I feel most worthwhile? what are the times when I feel most needed?

Consequent to this they asked themselves: what are my strengths? what are the strengths in my family? what for me are the most important traditions in Tiwi culture? Looking at the group: in what way or ways does each member of the group help me? One member said he was encouraged by the willingness of the other members to listen to him.

##### 2. Group Building

The second part of the course concerned the group as a whole. The object was to establish strength and coherence in the group by affirming its good points and its strengths. One exercise directed them to see each member's position in

the group, how he related to the group, how he reacted in the group and his contribution to the group.

### 3. *Reaching Out To The Wider Community*

From this point the participants worked as a group concentrating on the wider community back home - how best they as a group might discern the needs, problems, expectations etc. of the people on Nguuu. After preliminary discussions their main concern was with the lack of Tiwi responsibility and the reasons for this.

Many reasons were given and these were summarised under the following headings:

(a) *Alcohol*; (b) *White people*; (c) *Aboriginal culture*.

(a) *Alcohol* often prevented the men keeping regular working hours... because of 'hang-overs', shame, etc. Pressure was often brought on by relatives to drink to excess. The overall obsession with alcohol made normal living impossible.

(b) *White people*. (This will be treated in very broad terms because of its confidentiality). They felt on the whole that the white people did not trust the Tiwi sufficiently to allow him to take over a job for fear of mistakes or breakdowns; that some white people considered him still as a "blackfellow who doesn't know any better"; that white people sometimes come to Nguuu and begin to teach young aborigines the white man's way - "they have white man's ways to offer us and are making the new generation change their minds". There were many queries as to the behaviour of white staff on some issues. They referred to white staff meetings held at different times, but especially those which had been held regularly over the last couple of weeks at which no Tiwis were present nor had they any knowledge of their contents. They felt that perhaps some Tiwi should be present or at least some explanation be given. There was a distinct white-black separation atmosphere. A lot of the white people kept very much to themselves showing their own films, etc.

(c) *Aboriginal culture*. The group felt that their own aboriginal background was often an obstacle when it meant taking over responsibility for a job. For example, often there is a mistrust of other aborigines he has to work with, because they don't belong to the same group. "Because we are still tied up with our land and culture we are slow to understand European ways." Our values often differ about what are the important things. The lack of understanding in English of different terms that are associated with each job e.g. ordering materials, was a big problem. They did feel that often their lack of education prevented a take-over, but felt at the same time that if a white person assisted with the 'book work' they themselves could often take the overall responsibility.

### 4. *Religious Motivation*

To deepen and strengthen their motivation towards working for the good of the total community, a section of the course was devoted to achieving Christian inspiration in this regard. Because of local tribal divisions the Tiwi, it was realized, had to develop a far broader attitude and understanding of those of their community who belonged to other groups. Precisely at this point they realized breakdowns were occurring. People were favouring relations at the expense of justice and common sense and true community development. Consequently, they considered some basic Christian teachings that helped, at the level of motivation, to promote such an attitude. They considered for example, the implications of the story of the "Good Samaritan" where the point was stressed that deliberate effort must be made to overcome local and tribal prejudice in order to promote the common good. They considered the implications of Christian

forgiveness in the face of a system of 'payback' in all its subtle and not so subtle forms.

### 5. *Conclusions*

The group appeared to form a very strong bond among themselves and continually referred to the need of supporting each other. They often expressed the words - "We will try to do..." They were encouraged to set some goals to be achieved on their return home. They intended to speak to the men as a group, to the Mothers Club and to the Tiwi youth on matters relating to their customs, namely, those which they felt should be kept. They also intended to fill in and sound out the people on the topics they had discussed.

## RETREAT AT PORT KEATS WITH THE KARDU NUMIDA

C.J. Connolly MSC

During the May holiday break I spent eleven days at Port Keats and one day with John Leary at Daly River. The invitation came from Andy Howley, and that invitation grew from mutual experiences shared over many years and a companionship that goes back to my own schooldays.

Together we dreamed a dream during the February Institute in 1978 at Douglas Park that God's Spirit speaks all languages, and "each man of us hears... in his own language.....about the marvels of God". (Acts 2, 7 and 11). We do not need the experience of miraculous translation. In the projected work at Port Keats all that we would begin with was simple, basic English. But beyond that there was a mutual acceptance that the Spirit would speak in his own way within the group. This group consisted of nine men of the Murinbata tribe, who are the committee of elders of their people, Andy and myself.

With the benefit of hindsight, our dream both acknowledged and at the same time went beyond the cultural levels. Any transformation of the cultural comes ultimately through a transformation of the spiritual affinity. The only presuppositions present were the existence of a common spiritual affinity in each of us; the knowledge that we could communicate through words; and through the validity of signs and symbols which God himself chose. Through these elements he speaks in all men.

In actual fact what happened was a contemplative experience. For the first two days all that was done was instruction. Ultimately what was shared in each daily instruction was a conviction that God desires to be present with us; that he has been present in our lives, and how this happened. He made himself obvious, and this intervention began something which had long-lasting meaning in what we call "our lives". We revered the fact that it is God's constant will to intervene, to show us the light of his face (Numbers 6, 22-27).

We decided to prepare, in a way relevant to the practicalities of daily life, some exercises that would acknowledge God's desire. Time would be set aside for prayer each day; a place would be determined where we could be alone; we would share from him whatever his presence might mean; we would make our way gradually into our experience. The Liturgy would be a central part of each day's prayer. We would also have an evening session in the Mission, where there was electric power, which would consist in showing episodes from slides of Our Lord's life. There would be time for reflection and

meditation with these slides. The following day each man would share with the others what came to him as he was present with the Lord in the scenes of his life.

So there were four sessions each day. That was how the experience grew. The first three days led into the last five where the full four exercises occurred. Initially our place of prayer was in the old mission church with its magnificent aboriginal wall paintings done by Nim and Simon. There we had our first daily period of prayer, then Mass. In the evening we had our contemplations of Jesus' life in the presbytery.

The final five days saw us go to a ceremonial site selected by the men themselves. After necessary mundane, administrative business was attended to in the mission, we travelled out to the site. We "took it easy" for about twenty minutes after the ride out; time for a smoke and a yarn, for the prayer had to be something that grew naturally out of life and being.

Then about 11.00 or 11.15 we began sitting in a circle on the ground, cross-legged. Each day brought its own theme. It seemed to come naturally. We began with the showing of God to Moses on Horeb. At first there was silence as each person fell quiet in his own spirit. We experienced the wind on our faces, its sound in the tamarind tree above, the breaking of the sea on the beach and rocks. Then we felt our own life and breathing - the sign of God's life and Spirit in us. There was plenty of time for pauses, as the sense of peace grew. Then I led a "dreaming" <sup>1</sup> of the scene. The fire appears; it is bright and clear but does not burn. It finds my spirit and I stay there seeing the fire. Then the fire moves. It invites me to follow. In my spirit I move where it leads. I move above the ground, upwards to a mountainside. I am alone and I stay quietly before God's spirit who lives in the fire. Then I ask, "Who are you?" and the voice of the Spirit speaks from the fire: "I am the Spirit of God - your God, you are my child." Then the fire moves to me, and passes into my spirit. I am not burned but am alive with his life.

There the prayer ended. Slowly and with meaning we said: "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, so it is NOW, and so it shall always be." Each man then went away by himself to "dream" his own memory - experience - impressions of the prayer. The first dreaming took about 35-40 minutes. The second, individual dreaming took 45 minutes.

Then we came together for dinner. What we brought was sometimes supplemented by crab, flying-fox, shell-fish that were easily caught while the billy boiled. After eating there was a time for just being together chatting, telling stories, jokes, unwinding. After dinner and the relaxation, there was the recalling of the scenes of Jesus' life that had been shown the night before. The men did this in their own language. They decided this was the best way, they got so much more out of it and expression flowed, sharing became natural.

By this time, around 3.30 p.m. we had to return to the mission, for these men had organisational and administrative affairs to attend to each day, morning and afternoon. After tea we came together for our episodes of Jesus' life.

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1. This word "dreaming" proved to be evocative of the experience. Its overtones, relating to a spiritual union between a man and his deepest origins, was caught by the aboriginal men. It is interesting to note that St Ignatius used the phrase "holy dreaming" to describe quiet contemplation. Eventually that was the phrase we used to describe the prayer experience.

The themes we used on succeeding days were : the water and tree of life in the garden of paradise; the 139th Psalm; the giving of life to the dry bones of a man from Ezekiel; the purification of heart and spirit by the fiery coal from Ezekiel; the being-present; being led into the cave of Jesus' birth; the being led into the way of the cross and Calvary. On the third last and second last day each man came individually to a place apart in the ceremonial grounds and there he was given his own individual "prayer-word" which he should let come to him at the beginning of a period of his personal, quiet prayer. Each word has no intellectual significance for the one praying,<sup>2</sup> but what follows in prayer can be said to be its "meaning". This session was really an individual teaching to each man aimed at helping him to enter into the experience of quiet prayer.

As the last evenings of the retreat approached our slide sessions on Jesus' life came to an end. It was then that the men came quite spontaneously to the presbytery as a group to talk and share from their own life experiences. They also shared their experience of the retreat, and what the experience had led them to. Two stories of a deeply spiritual significance that went back to the time before Fr Docherty's time emerged. One concerned the origin of a song the people still sing; the other related to the personal experience of one of the men making the retreat. He had been cured after being abandoned in the bush to die as a young boy. The cure was instantaneous upon seeing a young lady carrying a child and a man. The lady spoke a language the boy heard but did not understand. She pointed to him, and at that moment he became well, jumped up and caught up with his family. He joined them the following day.<sup>3</sup>

But in looking back, I think the best way in which to sum up what happened is to say they all made a discovery. They found that their own innate and inherited affinity to contemplate the mysterious, was able to find a rich and rewarding expression in their Christian faith. God worked in this; and their own inner, spiritual strength became renewed in a very intimate way.

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2. In actual fact the words given to each were Hebrew words that had sound affinity to the men's language. But no attempt was made to give this intellectual explanation.
  3. Each of these stories seems to show remembered stories from the times of the Jesuit mission of the Daly River. The reality of the healing experience, however, is none the less real.

# NELLEN YUBU INSTITUTE

## NEWS

### a) Director

Having taught a course in social anthropology (Australian Aboriginal Society) at the Yarra Theological Union during first term, I have now returned to the Nelen Yubu Institute at Daly River. Unfortunately, a spot of illness held me up for about a month. On the drive back I had the pleasure of the company of Fr Paddy Dodson who helped me in my approach to the parish of Kerang (*cf. infra.*) and spoke on the subject of aboriginals and the church in Australia at a public meeting in conjunction with myself at the parish of Hindmarsh in Adelaide. My plan is to remain here in the north until my term of teaching at Yarra Theological Union next year. However, I have changed my teaching term from the first one to the third, mainly for reasons of economy. Relevant University based meetings are generally held during the August vacation and it makes more sense economically for me, having gone south to participate in the meetings, to remain there for the following term of teaching at the YIU. I plan to remain therefore in the north until August, 1980 except that this year I shall be south for a few weeks for meetings of the AASR (in conjunction with the ANZSTS and ANZATS) and the AAS. The annual meeting of the AASR (Australian Association for the Study of Religions) will be held at Sydney University 20-24 August; that of the AAS (Australian Anthropological Society) likewise at Sydney University 28-31 August.

### b) Kerang

Of recent months the MSC Vocations Director has been using the idea of the Nelen Yubu Institute in advertisements for vocations that he has been running in the *Advocate*. Fr Peter Quinn, parish priest of St Patrick's, Kerang (on the Loddon River in Victoria between Swan Hill and Echuca) wrote to ask what is the Nelen Yubu Institute. His parish had been looking for some aboriginal missionary project to sponsor and they thought that maybe the Nelen Yubu Institute is something that they could give their support to. I arranged to return to Northern Territory via Kerang. Fr Paddy Dodson and myself drove to Kerang on Thursday 21 June. That evening we both spoke to a meeting of the parish and next day, the feast of the Sacred Heart, we concelebrated Mass with the parish priest and the school children. We are now in the process of working out the details of the sort of help that Kerang parish could give to the Institute.

### c) Secretary

By a fortunate set of circumstances, I have secured the help of a secretary-typiste, Mrs. Keren Calvert, a distant cousin of Fr John Fallon. She had finished two years work at Bathurst Island and some months at Kalumburu and was on the point of returning south. When she heard that I was in need of help, she generously offered to help me with my typing and office work. She took up residence here at Daly River Mission on Friday, 27 July. Her expertise should provide a big help to the work of the Institute. The mere typing of the last copy of *Tracks*, for instance, took me several weeks to do.

## PERIODICALS

As I mentioned in a previous issue of *Tracks*, one of the functions of the Nelen Yubu Institute is to subscribe to a number of missiological and anthropological periodicals; to hold copies of them as resource material; and as an aid towards their use, to notify readers of *Tracks* of relevant material that might have appeared recently. While I was absent from Daly

River, teaching down south at the YIU, these periodicals started to arrive. There is too big a backlog to catch up with in this issue. I plan therefore merely to give a list of the periodicals that we are receiving as I had promised previously and future issues of *Tracks* will try to keep up to date with the periodicals as they appear.

The titles being received are as follows:

America:	<i>Missiology</i> <i>Occasional Bulletin</i>
Australia:	<i>Oceania</i> <i>Canberra Anthropology</i>
Belgium:	<i>Pro Mundi Vita Bulletin</i> <i>Pro Mundi Vita Dossiers, viz. Asia-Australasia Dossier, Africa Dossier</i>
France:	<i>Revue Spiritus</i>
Italy:	<i>Mondo e Missione</i> <i>Omnis Terra</i>
Kenya:	<i>Afer</i> <i>Gaba Reprints</i> <i>Spearhead</i>
Philippines:	<i>Teaching all Nations</i>
Papua New Guinea:	<i>Catalyst</i>
Switzerland:	<i>International Review of Missions</i>

We also receive the papers issued by the Strehlow Research Foundation.

It is obviously useless merely to amass titles and copies. We aim at providing service, of notifying people of articles and papers that are of special interest for us who work in the aboriginal apostolate. It could also be helpful to have digests prepared of specially important articles. Here I would like to ask the help of anyone who would be interested in preparing digests of important articles from one or more of the periodicals. Please let me know if you are interested and we can come to some arrangement regarding reception of the copies. If some people would like to have photocopies of articles that seem to be especially important to them, please again let us know.

#### PUBLICATIONS

##### a) *Nelen Yubu Missiological Series*

As editor of this series I might be excused the audacity of promoting a book of which I also happen to be the author. The first issue in the Nelen Yubu Missiological Series has appeared namely, *New, Old and Timeless: pointers towards an Aboriginal theology*. It has been produced by Chevalier Press and is also being distributed by them. Their address is Box 13, Kensington NSW, 2033. The price of the booklet is \$2.00. It is a collection of four seminar papers that were given at Alice Springs last year on the general theme of Aboriginal religions vis-a-vis Christianity.

The second issue of the series is now in the press. It is a collection of three essays by Fr Kevin Barr MSC of Port Moresby. It is entitled *Not To Destroy But To Fulfil*. It is on the general theme of indigenisation with consideration of two practical steps namely Basic Christian Communities and Ministries. The three essays result from Kevin's reflection on experience in Papua New Guinea and Africa and on recent documentation particularly from those two areas and from Asia.

Negotiations are already in process regarding the next two publications in the series. I shall inform you further about them when more definite conclusions have been reached.

#### *SUBSCRIPTIONS TO TRACKS*

When starting this newssheet last year I did not feel capable of determining the cost of subscriptions. Hence I asked people for contributions from which I would deduct the cost of each issue. There are now about 170 addresses on the mailing list but only 25 names on the list of contributors. I might note in passing that only three of these belong to my own MSC Society; I suppose they consider they have a right to the Nelen Yubu services. However, the production and distribution costs have to be met somehow. Determination of a subscription price has become more important now that people outside of the missionary circle are starting to ask to be put on the subscription list. As far as I can see at the moment, the cost of producing and distributing this issue would come to something like fifty cents per copy. I conclude therefore that the rate of subscription for one year (five issues) would be \$2.50. Naturally, there are some places that know I will send them a copy whether they subscribe or not; however, any contributions are welcomed. I suppose to be realistic I will soon have to start crossing off the distribution list those places that I may have thought would like to receive a copy but have not asked for it themselves nor shown any interest in the newssheet.