

INTERESTING BROADCAST

Aboriginal Folklore and People

Aboriginal history was made recently in the form of a number of interesting broadcasts from Station 2LM, Lismore.

These broadcasts, sponsored by the Richmond River Historical Society, were prepared and arranged by Miss Mildred Norledge and based on information given to her by Mr. James Morgan of Coraki.

Mr. Morgan became the first aboriginal citizen to make a broadcast for the Richmond River Historical Society and made an especially good job of it. Here is the script from one of these broadcasts . . .

A Legend from the Dyraaba People.

Speaker Mr. James Morgan, interviewed by Miss Mildred Norledge.

Script compiled by Mildred Norledge.

Introduction. "Good evening, listeners. This is Mildred Norledge speaking. First I am going to read to you a legend from the Dyraaba tribe of aboriginal people :—

'JOONGURRANAHREEAN.'

a legend which tells you about the Pelicans and their Corroboree ground. After which Mr. Morgan who is in the studio with me, will sing for you a Corroboree song."

In the *DREAMTIME*, which is BOOTHARRUM—there was a plateau where the Pelican played. And the name of the plateau is JOONGURRANAHREEAN. For it was on the plateau of Joongurranahreean that the Corroboree ring of the Pelicans was.

Now in the *Dreamtime*, all birds were coloured alike. And when they wished to look different in colour, as they did one day, they painted themselves different colours. And the colours of the birds that are to be seen on them to this day, are the colours that they painted themselves with on the plateau of *Joongurranahreean*.

The crow painted himself black, with the paint that is made from the bark of the Bloodwood tree. Now to do this, the bark of the tree must first be burnt, and this the crow did. Then the magpie painted himself black, then he used the white clay paint that is *Dullong*, so the magpie became a bird that has black and white feathers. The Pelicans painted themselves black and white. And the parrots painted themselves with bright paints of many colours. And so all the birds painted themselves the colours that are to be seen on them now.

Now it was on the plateau of Joongurranahreean that the birds gathered together for their Corroboree. And one day when the Old Man Pelican—and he was very fat—was walking away from the Corroboree ring,

he heard someone laughing. So the Old Man Pelican turned around to see who was laughing, and he saw that it was the crow laughing at him, laughing at the way he walked, because he was so fat, for the crow found much merriment in seeing the Old Man Pelican walk.

So because the crow has laughed at the Old Man Pelican—the Old Man Pelican picked up a piece of the white clay paint, and straightway threw it at the crow, and the piece of white clay paint that the Old Man Pelican threw at the crow, hit the crow in the eye. And to this day can be seen the white in the eye of the crow, where the white clay paint had hit him.

(At the conclusion of the legend Mr. Morgan sang the Corroboree song.)

"Thank you very much for singing the Corroboree song, Mr. Morgan. I'm sure our listeners have enjoyed it as much as I have."

Question : Mr. Morgan—have you ever seen a Corroboree ?

Answer : Yes—and once when I was a very young child I was allowed to take part in one, much to my enjoyment.

Question : Would you like to tell me about a Corroboree you have seen ?

Answer : I will only be too pleased to do so. Corroborees to us—were more or less what your theatre is to the white man. The most exciting part of a Corroboree to me—was the lovely big fires we had—the fires acted as "stage lights" as well as for warmth in the winter or cold nights—this and the entry of the dancers into the Corroboree ring. The dancers would come from all directions for entry into the ring.

The dancers were painted, made up you would call it. Their dressing room—was some selected place in the bush. It was impossible to identify who a dancer was when painted. The dancer's costume was a kind of a loin cloth.

The Corroboree that I remember fascinated me, though I saw it through a child's eyes. The story of which centred around two men lying in the ring—about 15 feet apart, both were wrapped in possum rugs, and were still as though either unconscious or passed away from this world or life.

When the dancers had entered the ring, they would appear as if they were very nervous when they beheld and gathered around one of the two men lying in the ring. So they would dance close to the man in an apprehensive and nervous manner using pantomimic movements all the time. Gradually they would get closer to the man they had first gathered around, and pick him up. The dancers would then carry him