



*Back: (left to right) Bill Campbell, Elizabeth Campbell, Micky Williams, and Bernice Campbell
Front: Jack Little and "A chap from Melbourne—I forget his name", said Mrs Morris*

Down Memory Lane

Do some of our readers remember an Aboriginal vaudeville show entitled the "Leaf Band" which toured N.S.W. in the early 1930s? The players used leaves, jews-harps, harmonicas and violins to make their music and a fair razz-a-ma-tazz it was, too.

Recently I was given some old photos of the "Leaf Band" by one of the players, now Mrs Bernice Morris of Milsons Point. In those days she was called Bernice Campbell, and was the daughter of Thomas Campbell. They hailed from the Moruya area.

Jimmy Little's father, also called Jimmy and his uncle, Jackie Little, also travelled with the show to do the corroborees. The hula dances were done by May and Marjy Butler who were daughters of the proprietor of the show, Tom Butler of Ulladulla.

During the performances, May would do a hula dance and Bernice would sing. Bernice also designed the troupe's costumes and operated the curtains. Jackie Little sang. One of the poems composed by a member of the troupe during some leisure moments was:

Give me a hut in my own native land
Or a tent in the bush,
Where the gum-trees may stand.
I don't care how far in the bush it may be
If a girl like Kate Kelly would share it with me.

"Leaf Band" performances were typical of the entertainment of the day. The audience would be whipped up to excitement pitch during the show. Then the sessions would close with the song "The Battlefields of Europe". The chorus line "Tell mother not to wait for me, for I'm not coming home" would always make the audience crumble.