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MANINGRIDA

MIRAGE

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Christmas at Maningrida

About 550 people attended Christmas Dinner this year, perhaps not quite so many as were expected. The cooks, and helpers, are all due for thanks for their efforts.

The Christmas Eve carol singing was as noisy, and joyous, as ever and the singers managed to convey their message right around Maningrida.

After the Service, and play, on Christmas morning, Father Christmas made his appearance (the sunglasses weren't meant as a disguise but rather as a concession to the brilliant day). After distribution of the gifts to the children, he and everybody else headed back to their own country to enjoy the rest of the day in peace.

The footballers were super-active, playing on Friday, Saturday, Monday and Tuesday.

On Saturday and Sunday there were excursions for children to Nawalada, where they were given the opportunity to consume extravagant quantities of frankfurts, fruit, drinks, etc.

Other events were the movies, spear throwing (reported elsewhere) and of course the Happy Club (except Saturday night.)

OTHER CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

It is no show without Punch. The Punch in this case comprised the liquor content of the Forestry Single Quarters, and the players, and stayers, as the case may be, seemed to be fairly representative of the "new house" section of the village.

At about midnight on Christmas night a young man broke into the quarters and lifted the entire stock of liquor. He then carried out a hasty distribution and the party was on, and on, and on. Festivities were still in progress as the stealthy fingers of dawn crept over the cook-house; accompanied of course by the inevitable fights and arguments. The highlight of the show was a spear-fight in the Gunardba and Jinang camps which fizzled out about 10.00 a.m. Action then lapsed. It is expected to resume with the arrival of the Law, who will be coming shortly to investigate.

Sports Day

T.M.

The spear-throwing contest was held again this year, on Boxing Day holiday. There were four targets, of varying sizes, each attracting a points allocation for a strike. There were 48 contestants, about the same as last year.

The general standard of throwing was probably a little better than last year; there were a great number of near-misses and quite a few spears were shattered when they struck the target support. It would probably be better next year to modify the target support so as to minimise damage, and thus keep more contestants in the competition.

The points winners were not numerous as it is a case of

either "hit" or "miss" with the target. The results were as follows:-

John Godowa	10	points
George Mulumbuk	10	"
Jimmy Morrduk	8	"
George Gawarra	6	"
Kevin Mawula	6	"
Leo Wujal	6	"
Terry Wilson	6	"
Joseph Mangguja	6	"
George Neiambala	6	"
David Irindilli	4	"
Allan Malinga	4	"
Dick Smith Snr.	4	"
Tom Galbaranga	4	"

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AN INTERESTING VISITOR:

On Tuesday Mr. Ken Benton of Esso Petroleum visited Maningrida to talk generally about the prospects of mineral exploration in the area. He explained that his company, whilst essentially involved in petroleum (Bass Strait, principally in Australia), had decided to enter the "hard rock" field and for this purpose had formed study groups dealing with various minerals (uranium, etc). A market outlet for uranium had already been developed and the company was now setting about exploration for this valuable mineral. The problem is that most of the country is already held under Prospecting Authority. His company is therefore seeking "farm-out" agreements whereby Esso negotiates with prospect holders for the right to explore, and later, develop if anything is discovered. This is not an unusual arrangement. The uranium at Nabarlek and the Bass Strait oil fields were both explored and are being developed as a result of "farm-out" agreements.

Mr. Benton will be returning to Maningrida in a few weeks to talk some more.

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THE CALL OF NATURE:

Northern Australia was a happy hunting ground for the original inhabitants of our country.

Over a many hundreds of different species of reptiles are found here, including many types of lizards, snakes, water goannas, frogs, fresh water turtles, salt water turtles and also the fresh water crocodiles and salt water crocodiles as well as the Man Eating crocodiles.

The native animals include wallabies, rock kangaroos, emus, possums and wild dingoes.

Bird life is plentiful. Cranes, ducks, wild geese, broilgas, turkey, ibis abound around near the swamps, flats, billahongs and open country.

While inland, the Mound builders, hawks, eagles, crows, parrots, gaily coloured finches and white cockatoos have their nests in trees or some times in the ground.

J. MIRITJI

The stingray
swims through the water
carrying his spear.
Around the rocks
Looking for a little fish.
Like a hunter
In the bush.

Darryl Djanaynga.

The Scouts

On Monday morning, a large crowd of people gathered at the air strip to see the Scouts board the RAAF DC-3 bound for the Jamboree in Sydney. The Preparations did not proceed without one or two memorable moments.

Two boys were to come from Milingimbi to join the contingent, and on Saturday morning they alighted from the plane and enthusiastically greeted their scouting brothers. But where were their suit cases? Alas! There had been some hitch in the efficiency of the airline! The two cases had been off-loaded at Elcho!!

Skip was ready to remove the hairs of his head, hair by hair. What could be done? Two boys here, - and clothing, uniforms and money, all at Elcho!

Could any excuse be found to bring Sheppy down this way? Radio contact was duly made and by great good misfortune, Elcho were out of flour, and so a trip had to be made to Milingimbi early on Monday, and by a further stroke of good luck, some residents in the Crocodile Islands were eagerly awaiting a chance to come to Maningrida. 30 minutes before Australia's frontline of aerial defence was circling the area, the red and white Cosana was running down the strip with two blue suit cases on board. All was well now. The Scouts boarded the plane to many calls of good wishes and much clicking of cameras.

They will take part in the Jamboree until Saturday, January 9th, when they will fly to Melbourne and then travel by bus to Traralgon. They expect to be in the dairying country for ten days and make their way to Adelaide on January, 21st, laying their heads to rest in the Patawakunga Sea-Scouts' Hall (near Glenelg) for one night. Because of difficulties in booking seats, they will then bid farewell to the south and travel Darwin-wards on January, 22nd, which will bring them back into the sphere of Connair.



In the Christmas Mail.

Miss Edna Galliver in England has been busy studying for exams and will be writing to friends presently.

Sister Carli has spent quite a time helping her father on his cattle property in Queensland. She hopes to go back nursing soon, and maybe to a big hospital in Melbourne.

Dennis Strand has received a letter from teacher David Shorea, saying that they will be attending the same school for the teaching of deaf children in Melbourne next year (this year, really).

Peter Croker is now living in Henry Higgins suburb in Canberra. - (Higgins).

Dan Gillespie has sent up for long trousers. His knees are turning blue in the chilly air of Sydney.

People.

Mr. and Mrs. Trevor Pollard are stationed at Pickertaramoor with Forestry and have spent Christmas with their parents. Dan is due to go to Darwin for a medical examination next week and may be going to a new job soon.

Mr. Bungaway and family have come from Milingimbi to live on the banks of the Liverpool River for four or five months.

Mr. Paul Stephen, a plumber with the mobile works force, expects to be here for some weeks. He is a big game fisherman and is looking forward to trying his luck out in the open sea.

Mr. Ken Harvey is reported to have inherited \$14,000. It is rumoured, however, that it is now too late to apply for loans.



Young man in the making.

Albert, the son of Tommy Wadaminya and Molly is now sitting at the home of his ritual guardian, Jimmy Ngalakun, wearing traditional ritual harness and armbands, waiting for the initiation day, which will probably come this weekend. Jack Jabihaki has been leading the singing in the evenings.

Why are our small children eating less?

Many small children at Maningrida are not growing and getting as heavy as they should be - and this means that their brains and bodies are not building as well as they should.

Almost all fathers have a job! So people have money. The shop is full of good food. Baby tucker is served every day. The bush is full of many kinds of food, too. Then why are the mothers not feeding their children properly?

Things are not always what they seem.

Recently, the librarian of the National Library in Canberra wrote and said that someone had shown him a copy of the *Mirage*, and that he would like to receive one each week.

This seemed to be an invitation from a good, honest, reliable subscriber - so on the strength of that, all the back issues were sent, along with an account. Patiently we waited for the cheque. This week the librarian wrote again and gradually broke the news that, if a publication has copy right material in it, one copy must be sent to the National Library "gratis" (free). An attached copy of the law said that the penalty for failing to do so is \$100. What tricks there are for new players!

Storm and Fury

On Sunday night between 9.30 and 11 p.m. all the artillery of heaven opened up around us. The houses were shaken by loud claps of thunder, and lightning made the night as bright as day.

Four men were sitting "quietly" in the Forestry single men's quarters, pleasantly enjoying themselves. Suddenly there was a loud bang. The house was plunged into darkness. Every fuse had blown. Fortunately, no-one was hurt.

Earlier in the evening, at Elcho Island, lightning struck a transformer and put half the town into darkness.

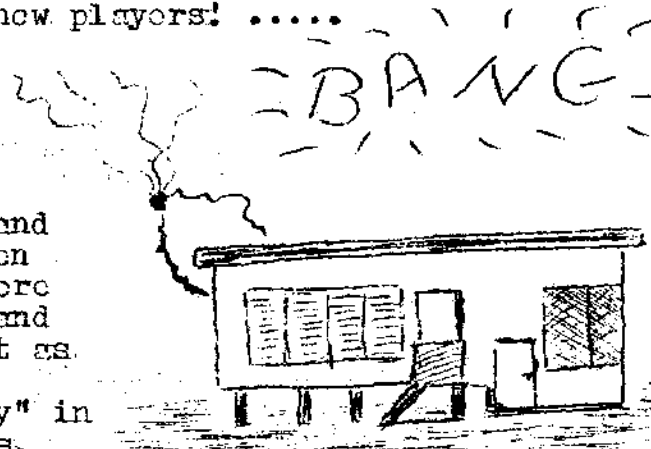
On Monday morning someone noticed that the tallest hollow log coffin, standing up on the "Open-Day" dancing ground, had lost its top. A lightning strike? Close inspection showed that it had blown down. White ants, and not the lightning had been to blame.

As the *Mirage* goes to print.

Alan Brady and John Symes are travelling on the high seas in a dingy - sailing from Burganella to Maningrida. Eric Quick is keeping a radio watch on the Forestry wireless.

Another, who will be moving amid a lot of Fins, but not exactly sailing or swimming, is Sister Kaija in Sydney. She was expecting to meet a number of her countrymen at a conference there.

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Duty Officer: Mr. Bill Beckett.
Duty Sister: Sister Ena Pickersgill.
Duty Watchman ; Mr. Peter Gangalara.

Star Theatre. Fri. "Dont go near the Water"
 A picture about some sailors and a funny one too. Starring Glenn Ford and (you'd never guess Fred Clark.
Sat. "Come blow your horn" probably about little Boy Blue.
Church Notes. Sunday 9.30a.m. Sunday School
 7 p.m. Evening Service.
Thursday 7.30p.m. Fellowship.



In the old times, the Roman people had a god called Janus. He was the spirit of all beginnings- the beginning of the day, the beginning of the seasons and the beginning of the year. The word January comes from 'Janu '. It stands at the beginning of the year.

At this time, we do well to look back . We think of many good things in our own lives and in the settlement - the growing strength of the Council, success in sport, the new shop, Bulman and many other things. We can thank God for these things.

We look to the future. It is hidden from us. But we do not have to walk in it by ourselves. Our Lord walks it too. We can walk with Him .

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Birth. A Christmas Baby.

Mildred - a daughter for Margaret Garaynjidja and Nym Manalpu on Dec. 25th.

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Houses for Pensioners.

Mr.Silas Roberts brings the following information to our notice.

'It would be good if people could pay in some money to help build homes for pensioners. For every \$1 that we can raise the Government will give \$2 extra.

This money can then be given to the Housing Association and we will ask them to use it and build a suitable kind of house for old people. A plan has been drawn (at "aningrida) which seems quite suitable. '

Silas expects to speak about these matters at the next meeting of the Village Council and the Progress Assoc.

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Learning to speak Pitjantjara.

Ten Balanda people in Alice Springs have been learning this language for three weeks. Doctors, nurses and Welfare officers attended the Course. Later on there will be a course to help Aboriginal people speak better English.

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Maningrida Mirage NT Maningrida Community

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