

# PRINCESS LILARDIA as Guest of Queen Salote of Tonga

*A Special Dawn feature*

*by Sylvia Cust*

This year has been an eventful one for Mrs. Margaret Tucker. She is the only Aborigine woman on the Welfare Board in Victoria, and is also known to many as Lilardia, a descendant of the ancient Ulupna tribe of the Murray River District, and daughter of Queen Yarmuk. Now Mrs. Tucker has gained the further distinction of being the first of her race to be invited by Queen Salote of Tonga to visit her kingdom as one of a party of 12 from New Zealand and Australia.

Everyone remembers Queen Salote at the time of our Queen's Coronation, when in the procession in London, she drove in an open carriage in the rain and gave to the crowds so wholeheartedly that it won her world renown.

Now, Queen Salote is being remembered with affection for as wholeheartedly giving her people the opportunity of seeing a film called "The Crowning Experience" which she herself saw in New Zealand a year ago. This film, produced by Moral Re-Armament, had impressed her so much that she requested that it be brought to Tonga for all her people to see.

"We didn't think anything could make us love Her Majesty more," said a member of the Palace staff after seeing this film, "but 'The Crowning Experience' has made the Tongans see her, not only as their Beloved Queen, but also as the beloved Mother of her country with the moral welfare of her people ever foremost in her thoughts."

Describing the interest of her people in the film, this Tongan woman said, "The 'coconut wireless' in Tonga has been humming with the news that Queen Salote had invited a party of 12 people to come to Nuku'alofa as her guests, and to bring with them this film, 'The Crowning Experience'. They were particularly interested when they heard there were Maoris and Pakehas in this party and a white and dark Australian.

On the 16th April, on the usually quiet street known as Halapaini, the Kotone Theatre presented an unusual sight. The white wooden structure was strung with coloured lights and there were crowds such as Kotone had never seen drifting in from all over Nuku'alofa.



Mrs. Margaret Tucker on her return from Tonga was delighted to find a picture of her birthplace The Old Nialoga Village (now Cumerooogunga) hanging in the Malaga Sydney office of the Aborigines' Welfare Board

Queen Salote arriving at the opening performance of "The Crowning Experience" at the Kotone Theatre, Tonga. At right is Mrs. Coode, wife of the British Consul

