

Opus

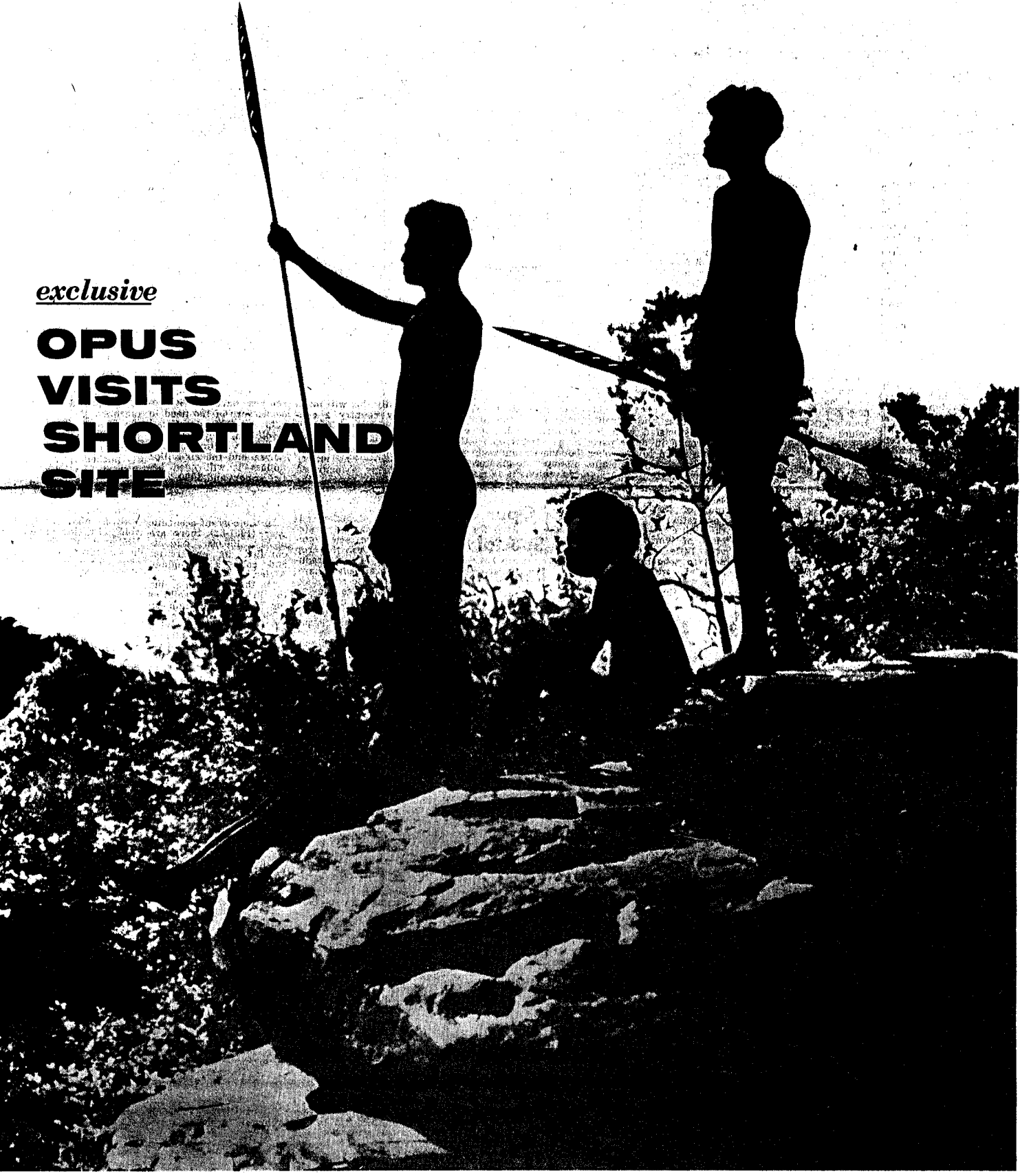
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of the
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exclusive

OPUS VISITS SHORTLAND SITE



MUD, MUSH AND



Once again Opus has brought to you, its readers, the inside story of events of interest to students. It is common knowledge that plans have been made for the establishment of Newcastle University at the Shortland site, but who has seen the Shortland site? Opus felt that the university members were being asked to feel enthusiastic about moving to a site which, as far as they knew, might not really exist. Therefore Opus staff felt it was necessary that Shortland be visited and students be informed about it. Unfortunately the staff visit to Shortland could not be said to be an un-



qualified success; the university sites in Australia. The present access tracks skirt many positions that would be ideally suited for such buildings as the library and the Union Building. However, much of the beauty of the deep ravines which run down to the numerous streams crossing the site will be lost as these will have to be filled in or graded over. It is difficult, however, to view the site properly, as the Teachers' College keeps popping in and out of the university site. Until this is decided it is difficult to look at Shortland with any real foresight.

Local Resident Speaks

While at the Shortland site Opus interviewed one of the oldest and most respected members of the community, asking his views on the establishment of the university in his neighbourhood. He seemed delighted to be asked, in fact it was some time before we managed to finish the interview, parts of which are shown below.

For all my 97 years' pee! At last some young residence in Shortland I blood to help beat on have been waiting for the doors after hours. the arrival of an insti- I suppose I'll even tution of education. At have some opposition last we have somewhere pinching golf balls to handy to send our five pay for my beer. Leaving Certificate holders.

I really didn't think that lantana-covered patch between the garbage dump and the swamps. But I suppose they just had to build a Uni there. It was such a waste to have Newcastle's best pub stuck way out here with no-one to keep it open all night. Whoop-

not every Uni that has a pipeline across the swamps for the kids to climb over to the bar on hot days. Maybe on your rag day you could arrange to have something a little more sustaining than water pumped through the pipeline.

I just hope you don't send over any more women to look over the site though, cause I remember back in '29 when the first women came over for the local two-up meeting, and nobody ever saw them again. That is, unless you count the bloke who found his dog chewing a thigh bone, or the feller who's still got a skull on his mantel-piece he found when he was digging up some witchetty grubs.



MOSQUITOES

Shortland Visit

ABSCOL FOR UNI?

The Shortland site is one of the few remaining stretches of natural bushland left in the Newcastle district. At this time of the year the wildflowers are in full bloom, and spring growth is everywhere. Bellbirds live in the gum trees. A creek wanders through the site. It is the perfect place to hold a barbecue or picnic.

With all this natural beauty I hesitate to add that the overall picture of the site is incomplete without mention of its swamp, but as it was one of the main objectives of our little operation, I did it I must.

The male section of the aff were keen and content bushmen (due, no doubt, to extensive training as Little Boy Scouts), and did their utmost to impress we poor dotting females. Indeed, it was through their gallant action of leaving us be-

hind, helplessly stranded with the snakes and goannas, that we obtained our scoop interview with the first inhabitants of the future University site.

"Constructed" upon a slight rise, within about a quarter mile of the Shortland Research Labs., their settlement, arranged in circular formation, consisted of slapped-up tin shanties and tents of dubious shape and nature.

A baby cried in an odd pram. From somewhere voices were raised, arguing it seemed. From somewhere else came the sound of raucous laughter. We saw no-one.

The rain became more than a slight drizzle and we moved in the direction of the creek.

Then we saw them — a white man and an aboriginal woman — coming toward us with an empty tin. We smiled, they smiled. The man said he was going to collect rain water. We smiled; they smiled; and both parties proceeded on their separate ways. That was all.



Who are they? OPUS staff has since made enquiries, but no-one seems to know. Typical answers to our queries have been "I've lived in Shortland for years and I haven't seen an aborigine yet" . . . "People on the Uni site! — Don't be stupid, I've never seen anyone and I live next to it."

Were they a figment of two peoples' imagination? We thought not, so armed with a camera we returned to Shortland to authenticate our story. It rained again, but we took our pictures, and the camera doesn't lie. Therefore, Phillistines, remember, OPUS may indeed be

free but seldom is it inaccurate.

Pausing in retrospect, I wonder what will happen to the bellbirds, wildflowers, and the natural beauty once the pile driver sets to work. Perhaps we should act first and start a society for the prevention of cruelty to the Shortland site (SPCSS).

We didn't find the swamp, home of the Union Building, but one day we intend to return and try again. Who knows, we may find hot entot living on our natural "lake."

ANN.

WEST OF THE WALL

The Dividing Line?

Perhaps a more appropriate sub-title would be the invisible bread. After all the gap between sanity and insanity; between love and hate; between bliss and the sublime is very narrow one.

On which side do we stand? Is it possible to know when it has been crossed, or are we humans always in the dark abyss between about to be swallowed up in chaos? Through the mist of time humans have always been the cog in the wheel driving forces unknown, turning the pages of history to reveal, here and there a bright symbol of decency and heroism, but mostly a festering sore disguised only by the ethics and morals of the period.

Are all men creatures of phantasy? Does unreality penetrate our waking hours as well as those few blissful periods of time when we indulge in the habit known as sleep? Some "scientific" men speak of the waste of our sleeping hours and long for the day when all will be wakefulness and men can rush more rapidly into the yawning gulf of their ultimate destruction.

What is this human "progress" we are all contributing to? Isn't it a fabric of our own making, a creature of the mind, born of a mass hysteria and man's selfish cravings for betterment?

Is the Darwinian principle of evolution and "survival of the fittest", the picture of nature "red in tooth and claw", applicable to men after all? Have we been struggling

for centuries merely to become social syncephants, parasites of society? Could we survive on our own or are we all leeches sucking on the "strength" of a collective?

If this is so, then perhaps the much-abhorred collectives-system of the USSR is the answer to our problems? With mass-produced and standardised men there would be no hands in the dark clutching for the supreme unknown. Our happiness — a search usually ending only in disillusionment. What use if liberty in the end belies the cause?

And all these barbed affronts — what use? Man will continue as the black ant of the universe, ceaselessly striving. He will not give up the struggle as long as his ideas, imbibed in his own peculiar and fantastic world, drive him on with the crowd in the headlong rush of the self-made hell of our everyday working world.

— S.M.

JOIN THE CROWD!

Nominations will be called on the first day of third term for the following positions:

Opus Editor; Revue Director, Orientation Director, Health Officer, Employment Officer.

STUDENTS ASKED TO TELL ALL

In the near future students at the Newcastle College are going to be asked to reveal all sorts of deep, dark, secrets regarding their murky pasts.

Maybe an explanation is necessary if only to prevent a great number of presumably respectable students hastily packing their bags and jumping the midnight rattle to remote parts of the continent. Guilty consciences and shattered nerves may rest in peace for as far as can be determined the Royal Commission into S.P. betting is not going to move to Newcastle and it is highly improbable that Dr. Kinsey will fly in on the next plane.

The whole thing is to be a simple questionnaire seeking sociological information about the background of University students in N.S.W. and complete anonymity will be maintained. Actually students will be requested to keep their names right off the paper.

The survey, which is being sponsored by the

Newcastle College Students' Association, is being made by Brian Rogers of the Department of Geography, University of New England. The aim is to determine as accurately as possible where each university draws its students and to discover any regional patterns or differences in student's backgrounds.

Some of the questions that will be asked concerns the type of school attended for matriculation, the occupation of the family breadwinner, the manner in which student's studies are financed and the type of town or city students come from. Other questions will seek information on why Newcastle College was chosen for tertiary education and the attitude of student's home-town friends to higher education.

Since students will not have to dig for their birth certificates (just

to prove they have 'em) and since no one will be asked to explain what happened on that moonlight night last autumn when he or she didn't arrive home until dawn, it is hoped that all students will be able to spare the two minutes necessary to accurately answer the questions that will be asked.

A more precise picture can be formed if a high percentage of completed forms are handed in and this is most important in a college such as Newcastle which has a relatively small number of students.

It is appreciated that Newcastle students will co-operate in this matter as have students from other universities and in any case most people will agree that filling in questionnaires such as these give simply marvellous practice for the full page personality quizzes frequently run in *Pic, Post, and People*.

News Ed. Wanted

A "News Editor" for Opus is required.

Anyone interested in this unpaid position is asked to contact anyone at the Opus office

The latest news editor gave his reasons for leaving Opus as "personal". He said that he had enjoyed his year with Opus and regretted leaving but other duties were demanding his time.

"I would recommend the job to anyone with an interest in that field, but in the end I just got sick of news," he said.

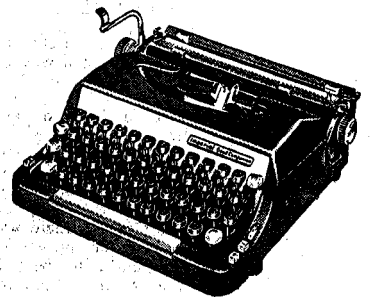
VIVIAN BACK

Well known maths lecturer, Mr. I. Vivian, is once more Warden's Representative on the NUSCA Council.

We don't really know what he is meant to do, or how he is appointed, but he is doing a good job and were glad to see him back.

Opus congratulates this popular Council member on his welcome return to office.

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