

THE MAGIC CARPET

Back to Cumeroongunga

Although Cumeroongunga was one of the oldest Reserves in the State, its population has been, in past years, sadly depleted by an exodus of the people to Victoria. There the attraction has been fruit picking and fruit canning, and it has long been very obvious that Cumeroongunga would never again be the place it was in days gone by. No longer will be heard the chants of the descendents of the Moira Tribe, whose Head was King Johnnie, back in the '70s.

Great work was done at Cumeroongunga by the late Daniel Matthews and his good wife, who founded the "mission village," back in 1874. It was then known as Maloga. An interesting photograph hangs on the wall of the Board's Office, depicting the late Mr. Matthews and five of his aboriginal evangelists, all heavily bearded.

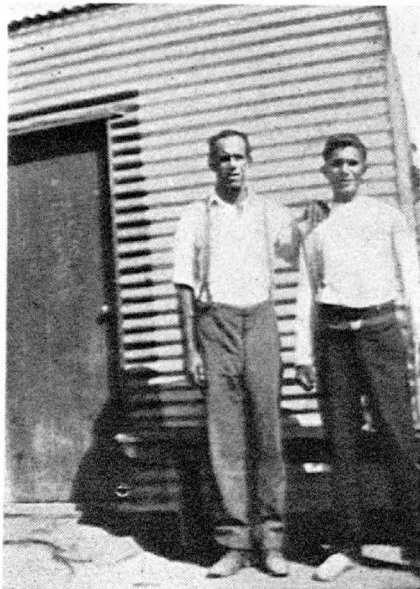
Just before World War II, and before the young people decided that there was more attraction in Victoria in the fruit areas, the Board built half a dozen rather nice cottages. Now that the place is more or less deserted, only about six families being left, it was decided to move these houses into Moama, erect them on individual blocks in the town, renovate them and charge a small nominal rent for them. This has already been done with three of the cottages, and at the last meeting of the Board a letter was read from one of the residents. This is what she said:—

"We, the ex-residents of Cumeroongunga Station, now residing in the renovated cottages at Moama, wish to thank the Board for giving us the opportunity to live in nice homes in a good town amongst nice people.

The people of Moama have already been very nice to us and we feel that already we are accepted as their equal in all ways. We would also like to thank Mr. Lambeth for the interest he takes in my welfare and for him also in choosing us to occupy this home.

Also enclosed, is the monthly payment of thirty shillings as first instalment on my home. Trusting, sir, you will receive it safely."

Thank you, Mrs. Morgan.



Two well known Balranald identities, Pat Kirby and Jim Pearce.



Jim Kirby, of Murrin Bridge and Jack Ingram, of Condobolin, had a yarn about old times while they took the baby for a walk.

HOMES CAN BE BOUGHT

Opportunity for Aborigines

The Board was informed at its last meeting, that the Treasury has approved of the Board's scheme which will permit aborigines, eventually, to own their own homes.

In its endeavour to meet the general housing requirements of aborigines throughout the State, the Board has purchased, and is purchasing, a number of separate building allotments in various country towns and erecting on these blocks, a simple type of dwelling which will be rented to families who are regarded as suitable for assimilation and who have indicated, not only verbally, but by their conduct, that they are willing to accept the responsibilities of citizenship, and this, of course, means payment of rent and other financial obligations.

Of course, the right sort of tenants will want to purchase their homes, and the Board will now make that possible along the same lines as the Housing Commission does for its tenants. When a tenant completes two years satisfactory tenancy, he will be offered the dwelling on a rent/purchase basis, and the money already paid as rent will be taken into consideration; a portion of this amount will help to reduce the total purchase price. It will be possible for tenants to purchase their own home over a period of 15 years, but if so desired, this period can be increased up to 40 years, so long as the purchase price and interest can be liquidated before the tenant is 65 years old.

The Board members have given this matter very deep thought and see in the scheme not only a solution of part of the housing difficulties, but also a means of assisting those who perhaps otherwise would never have the opportunity of owning their own home. The Chairman of the Board, Mr. C. J. Buttsworth, and Mr. Saxby, the Superintendent, are both very enthusiastic about the scheme.