

1929-30.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.  
NEW SOUTH WALES.

30 SEP 1963

1894

ABORIGINES.

(ANNUAL REPORT OF BOARD FOR PROTECTION OF, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1929.)

*Printed under No. 14 Report from Printing Committee, 20 February, 1930.*

Report of Board for Protection of Aborigines for the year ended  
30th June, 1929.

Office of Board for Protection of Aborigines,  
No. 5, Richmond Terrace, Domain,  
Sydney, 5th December, 1929.

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the established practice, we, the undermentioned members of the Board for Protection of Aborigines, duly appointed under the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act, 1909, have the honor to submit for the Chief Secretary's information, the following report of the operations of the Board during the period 1st July, 1928, to the 30th June, 1929, together with the usual particulars of the numbers, location and present condition of the Aborigines throughout the State, and means adopted for their relief as far as the funds at our disposal would permit.

CHANGE IN PERSONAL OF BOARD.

Mr. James Mitchell, C.B.E., having been granted, by the Government, extended leave of absence prior to retirement from his position of Commissioner of Police, which also carries with it the *ex-officio* position of Chairman of the Aborigines' Protection Board, the vacancy thus created was automatically filled by his successor, Mr. W. H. Childs.

In welcoming Mr. Childs to the Chair, the Board placed on record its high appreciation of Mr. Mitchell's long service and great interest in the welfare of the aborigines in New South Wales, and expressed its good wishes toward him during his years of retirement.

The Board also expressed its appreciation of the services of Mr. B. J. Doe, who, having ceased to be a member of the Legislative Assembly, resigned his position on the Board, and was replaced by Mr. H. J. Bate, M.L.A.

INSPECTORSHIP.

The usual regular inspection of Aboriginal Stations and Reserves was carried out during the year and up to the 31st May, when the Board's Inspector, Mr. R. Donaldson, found it necessary to retire on account of physical disability. The Board accepted Mr. Donaldson's resignation with much regret, and placed on record its sincere appreciation of his energy, honesty of purpose, and loyal service, at the same time deciding to recommend that he be granted three months' leave of absence on full pay—which recommendation was approved by the Minister, who endorsed the Board's remarks concerning the Inspector's record of service in the interests of the Aborigines of New South Wales.

GENERAL.

Owing to a very limited amount of money being made available to the Board, little could be attempted in the direction of the provision of better housing accommodation for Aborigines generally, expenditure being restricted to minor items, such as the supply of galvanised iron, paint, small supplies of timber, &c.

A room was added to the school building at Gingie Gingie Reserve, via Walgett, for the accommodation of the Teacher-Matron.

As a result of a report furnished by officers of the Department of Public Health engaged in investigations in connection with the prevalence of Hookworm, certain improvements to the living conditions upon the Aborigines Reserve at Coraki were authorised, at a cost of £64 12s. 6d., while other repairs recommended for Cabbage Tree Island, to cost £19, were also authorised.

A utility motor truck was purchased for the use of the Aboriginal Station, Carowra Tank, which is situated 54 miles from Ivanhoe.

Owing to drought conditions, and the total failure of the water supply upon the Aboriginal Station at Burra Bee Dee, near Coonabarabran, special provision, to the extent of £300, was made by the Colonial Treasurer for the sinking of a bore on the Reserve, and the Board is pleased to state that this was accomplished with satisfactory results.

Representations were made to the Board regarding the control of Aborigines living at Wreck Bay, within Federal Capital Territory. After careful consideration, however, it was decided by the Board to leave this matter entirely in the hands of the Federal Capital Commission, which is the body responsible for the administration of affairs within that Territory.

The usual issues of rations, blankets, and clothing, were made to all deserving cases. Rail passes were issued to men in search of employment, written undertakings being secured that the cost would be refunded within a specified length of time. Free passes were, of course, issued to aged and infirm, hospital patients, and cases of a similar nature.

#### ABORIGINAL STATIONS.

In the western portion of the State the Managers of the various Aboriginal Stations report a good deal of unemployment, as a result of the severe drought experienced in these regions throughout the whole of the year. This has naturally resulted in an influx of Aborigines to the Reserves, and a consequent increase in the ration supply.

The conduct of the residents generally is satisfactory, the presence of a permanent officer being doubtless responsible, as it has been the Board's experience that resident supervision is the most effective means of ensuring improvement in the moral and social tone of Aborigines living upon a Reserve. On the Board's Stations the Manager, who is also Teacher, takes an interest, with his wife, who holds the position of Matron, in the social and domestic life of the people, and their good influence is reflected in the manner indicated.

On certain of the Board's Stations, where the circumstances justify it, Sale Stores have been established, at which Aborigines may purchase, at cost price, such commodities as have a constant demand. This not only gives them the benefit of low prices, but results in their remaining away from neighbouring towns, and the temptation to secure liquor, which, although its supply is precluded under the Aborigines' Protection and Liquor Acts, they in some cases manage to secure, generally through the agency of some low-class white.

#### COOTAMUNDRA HOME.

At Cootamundra the Board has a fine home for the care and training of Aboriginal girls. Here they receive instruction in domestic duties, while those of school age attend the school attached to the institution. The home is one of the features of interest in the district, and is visited by large numbers of people, who are favourably impressed by the high standard of work, and the general surroundings. During the year the visitors included Dr. Arthur, The Hon. the Minister for Public Health, The Hon. D. H. Drummond, Minister for Education, Major Reid, and Messrs. Ken Hoad, and B. Walmsley, Members of the Legislative Assembly.

There was an average of forty-three inmates for the twelve months. Thirteen were admitted, and nine transferred to situations, which are found for them by a special officer appointed for the purpose, and under whose supervision these girls remain during the whole period of their service.

The children attend most of the public functions in the town, and are always invited to Sunday School picnics and entertainments of a similar nature.

With the exception of two cases of pneumonia, one of bronchitis, and another child suffering from a poisoned hand, the health of the inmates was generally satisfactory.

#### KINCHELA HOME.

Complementary to the Girls' Home at Cootamundra, the Board also has a Home for Aboriginal boys at Kinchela, where between thirty and thirty-five boys are accommodated, attend school, and receive training in manual work and out-door occupations. Upon attaining a suitable age they are also placed at service in a similar manner to the girls, being apprenticed to farmers and station owners under the usual Apprenticeship Conditions, which provide for the major portion of their earnings being collected and held in trust for them by the Board, the employer being also responsible for the payment to the apprentice of pocket money, and the supply of necessary clothing, medical and dental attention, &c.

Each year the boys are taken to the seaside for a month's camp under canvas.

#### CHILDREN'S HOME, BOMADERRY.

At Bomaderry there is a home conducted by the United Aborigines Mission, where there are accommodated certain younger children and babies. This home is the property of the Mission and is staffed by their workers, but is partially maintained by the Board, which supplies rations, meat, clothing, and medical attention, &c. It is also largely supported by private donations.

#### EDUCATION.

At suitable centres schools have been established for the education of Aboriginal children, who receive instruction in accordance with a special Syllabus adopted by the Department of Education, who appoint the teachers upon the Board's nomination.

In many cases the teacher is also appointed Matron of the Reserve by the Board, and paid a small allowance, thus being given a control and supervision of the residents, and the right to instruct the women in their domestic duties, and maintain a general supervision over the manner in which they look after their own homes.

New schools were established at Nowendoc and Pooncarie, to cater for numbers of children who had previously not had the benefit of education.

#### HEALTH.

The care of the health of the Aborigines is provided for by the appointment of Medical Officers, whose salaries and fees are paid by the Director General of Public Health. At centres where there are Government Subsidised Hospitals, treatment is, of course, arranged for them through these Institutions.

Generally speaking it may be said that the health of the Aborigines is satisfactory, but it has been found, as a result of investigation along the North Coast, that Hookworm is very prevalent amongst them in this region, and as a result mass treatment has been arranged, the Board working in conjunction with the Director General of Public Health, who has a Hookworm Unit engaged for the purpose.

#### REMODELLING OF ABORIGINES RESERVE AT LA PEROUSE.

Being of opinion that something should be done in the direction of improving the general appearance and conditions prevailing on the Aborigines Reserve at La Perouse, an inspection of the locality was made by the Members of the Board on the 19th July, and as a result a subsequent conference took place on the ground between the Board and certain Members of the Randwick Municipal Council, when it was decided that preliminary arrangements should be made for the exchange of the present frontage to the Reserve, which has presented a difficulty to the Board for some considerable time, owing to shifting sand, for a larger area of higher land adjacent to the balance of the Reserve. Action in this direction has been initiated, and the Board is hopeful that the Government will see its way clear to furnish it with adequate funds to completely remodel the existing housing conditions, and make the place in keeping with the improved beach frontage which the Randwick Municipal Council proposes to construct.

#### NUMBERS AND EXPENDITURE.

On 1st June a census of Aborigines throughout the State was taken, and the figures made available to the State and Federal Statisticians.

These disclosed that in New South Wales there remain 1,229 full-bloods, and 7,026 half-castes, in the care and protection of which an amount of £40,568 was expended, including items within the votes of the Departments of Public Health, Education, Government Stores, and Resumed Properties, in addition to the Board's own funds.

#### CHRISTMAS CHEER.

Every Christmas special rations are issued to the Aborigines, together with the ingredients of a pudding, while toys are distributed to children at the various centres. On the Stations, and in the Board's Homes, special festivities are arranged by the Board's officers, and the Aborigines, who concentrate on the Reserves at this time of the year, generally have an enjoyable time.

#### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion the Board reports that the condition of the Aborigines of New South Wales is generally satisfactory. Those in need are supplied with rations, blankets, clothing, and other assistance. In most cases they are housed under reasonably comfortable conditions, but at a number of centres this is not so, and the Board once more expresses the hope that it will be possible for sufficient funds to be provided to enable suitable dwellings to be erected where they are now non-existent, or in such a condition as warrants the expenditure of funds for their improvement.

The Board could not successfully carry out its work without the closest co-operation and help of the Police, to which body it desires to express its appreciation.

Yours faithfully,

W. H. CHILDS, Chairman.	
E. B. HARKNESS, Vice Chairman.	
ROBERT DICK,	} Members.
A. W. GREEN,	
H. J. BATE.	
R. S. VINCENT,	
S. LASKER,	

The Under-Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department.