

ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT ABO- PRO-

Aborigines

Protection

Board



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Annual Report



Year Ended 30th June, 1954

South Australia

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

REPORT

OF THE

ABORIGINES PROTECTION
BOARD

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE, 1954

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1955

Report of the Aborigines Protection Board for the Year ended 30th June, 1954

Aborigines Protection Board, Adelaide,
30th September, 1954.

To His Excellency Air Vice-Marshal SIR ROBERT ALLINGHAM GEORGE, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, and upon whom has been conferred the decoration of the Military Cross, Governor in and over the State of South Australia and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

May it please Your Excellency:

We do ourselves the honour to submit the annual report of the Aborigines Protection Board for the year ended 30th June, 1954.

The personnel of the Board at the commencement of the year was as follows:—

The Honourable M. McIntosh, Minister of Works, Chairman.
Dr. J. B. Cleland, Deputy Chairman.
Rev. G. O. B. Rowe.
Mr. Len J. Cook.
Mrs. Constance M. Cooke.
Mrs. A. M. Johnston.
Mr. W. R. Penhall, Secretary.

After a very long period of service first as an officer of the department, then as Secretary and Protector of Aborigines, and later as a member of the Board, Mr. W. R. Penhall, having reached the age of retirement, resigned from the Board and relinquished his duties as Secretary and Protector. Members of the Board wish to express their great appreciation of the very fine services rendered by Mr. Penhall in his various capacities. He has done a great deal to advance the interests of the aborigines.

On the retirement of Mr. Penhall, Mr. C. E. Bartlett was appointed Secretary to the Board and Protector of Aborigines and later a Board member.

The Board met on 14 occasions, and the regular attendance of members indicated their desire to promote the welfare of aborigines, to protect their interests, and to assist wherever possible part-aborigines, particularly in the settled areas, in order that they may lead decent and useful lives as citizens of this State. During the year members of the Board visited Point Pearce and Point McLeay Reserves for Aborigines, Gerard Mission Station, and Colebrook Home. On each occasion an inspection of the institution was made, and as many natives as possible interviewed, thus giving the Board members an opportunity to view the conditions under which the reserves are conducted and the natives housed. Professor J. B. Cleland, Deputy Chairman, and the Secretary also made visits of inspection to many country towns where there are aborigines residing and to Yalata Reserve, Nepabunna and Finnis Springs Mission Stations.

ABORIGINAL POPULATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Attempts have been made on several occasions to obtain an accurate count of the numbers of aborigines in South Australia, but it has been found extremely difficult to do so mainly on account of the nomadic habits of the natives. As near as can be ascertained it is believed that there are a little more than 5,000 aborigines in this State, and that there are approximately equal proportions of full-bloods and part-aborigines. Most of the full-bloods are residing on or near reserves, in the Far North or on Eyre Peninsula, whereas the greater part of the mixed-bloods are situated in the more southern portion of the State. There appears little doubt that part-aborigines are increasing in numbers, and there is reason to believe that during the last few years full-bloods are also increasing. The natural increase of part-aborigines is accounted for by the inter-marriage of part-aborigines either with full-bloods, mixed-bloods, or on odd occasion with persons other than aborigines. Several native women were this year married to New Australians. It may well be assumed that with the present-day improved living conditions, closer supervision by the departmental officers, missionaries, and police officers, in addition to more readily available medical attention the aboriginal population, both full and mixed-bloods, will naturally increase. The Board is aware of this fact, and are anxious to improve the lot of all aborigines, particularly by means of education, vocational training, and better housing, in order that these people can be better fitted to eventually take their place in the community independent of Government assistance.

EXEMPTIONS FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE ABORIGINES ACT.

A greater number of applications for exemption than usual was considered by the Board during the year under review. There is little doubt that many applications are made for the sole purpose of permitting the native to obtain intoxicating liquor; in fact, some applications are worded to that effect. However, the Board has given every application serious consideration, and where the applicant has the required character and standard of intelligence and development declarations have been granted. During the year, 21 adults and 17 children were granted limited declarations of exemption. The Board rejected or deferred 33 applications, mainly on the grounds that the natives concerned had not the required character, were living in the poorest of conditions, and habitually associating with aborigines or had not attained the standard of development where the applicant could be absorbed into a white community. It was found necessary to revoke limited declarations of exemptions in respect of 12 adults and 10 of their children. Four of these exempted persons requested the revocation of their exemptions, and the balance had proved that they were not living and conducting themselves at the standard required in a white community.

The Board is of the opinion that the granting of exemptions should only be made where the native has proved his ability to maintain himself and his family without assistance from the department, is not addicted to over-indulgence in alcoholic liquor, and has developed to a stage where he and his family are, at least to an extent, accepted in the community in which they reside. Unfortunately, the granting of exemptions has in some cases resulted in the native concerned partaking of excessive amounts of liquor and ruining his family life. Some exempted natives are known to supply aborigines with liquor, causing serious disturbances at reserves and elsewhere. It is realized that an exempted native requires great strength of character to resist the demand of the aborigines for liquor, particularly where the aborigines are close friends or members of his own family.

CITIZENSHIP.

There is considerable public interest in regard to the citizenship rights of aborigines. The public is apparently not aware that many natives have been exempted from the provisions of the Aborigines Act and enjoy all of the rights and privileges of a citizen of this State. Further, many other natives enjoy all of the same rights and privileges without exemption, as where an aborigine is leading a useful life, and is well conducted, there is no interference by any officials. As regards voting, permanent adult residents of reserves are automatically entitled to vote at State and Federal elections in the same manner as other electors. Other aborigines permanently resident elsewhere are likewise entitled to vote.

ERECTION OF HOMES.

It is the policy of the Board to erect homes in country districts to be occupied by selected native families. It is pleasing to report that three such homes have now been erected—one at Victor Harbour and two at Glossop. These homes have been erected by the South Australian Housing Trust and are of the same construction and specification as those occupied by white people. It is hoped that the first families to occupy such homes will be selected in the near future.

Considerable thought was given to the districts in which homes should be built, and it was agreed that areas should be selected where there is an assured continuity of casual employment. The average native does not usually accept and continue in permanent employment. He is far happier and more gainfully employed in such activities as shearing, crutching, labouring, fruit picking, pruning, etc., and for this reason homes will be built in districts where employment of this nature is more readily available.

The Board is of the opinion that more homes should be constructed as early as possible in order that the better type of native can be accommodated under decent conditions in country towns. At present many families of aborigines are living in deplorable conditions on the outskirts of towns, and it is obvious why they and their children are outcasts from the community. Could these people be properly housed, they, and more particularly their children, would more likely be accepted.

GRANTS TO MISSIONS, ETC.

Special provision was made for the undermentioned grants to be made to missions:—

Ernabella Mission—£2,900 towards cost of Hospital and Welfare Clinic.

Umeewarra Mission—£1,000 towards cost of additional accommodation.

Long before the end of the year both of these buildings had been completed. The hospital at Ernabella is constructed of concrete bricks, and is an excellent example of the labour of semi-skilled natives under supervision. There is accommodation for 14 patients, including the Maternity Wing, and the Clinic is well equipped. The building is a credit to the officials at Ernabella.

The Children's Home at Umeewarra, although now enlarged, is still somewhat overcrowded on account of the many extra admissions, and further assistance is contemplated in order that a larger dormitory for the girls can be constructed.

Many smaller grants were made to various missions, including hospital equipment, refrigeration, engine and saw bench, weighing scales, etc.

There are many native families residing at or near country towns or on small reserves who have appealed for assistance to construct small buildings to be used as temporary homes. Fifteen such applications were considered, and roofing iron, timber, and other building materials supplied, usually free of cost to the natives. Many aborigines were also financed in order to procure fishing nets, boats, etc. In these latter cases the natives are expected to repay the advances in small monthly instalments.

RELIEF TO NECESSITOUS ABORIGINES.

The Board has continued its policy of supplying supplementary rations to the many depots throughout the State, and are indebted to police officers, pastoralists, missions, and others who distribute rations to the aged, infirm, sick, or unemployed aborigines. In some cases, supplementary rations are also issued to able-bodied natives where there is insufficient native game for their needs. This particularly applies to semi-detribalized aborigines.

As there are many native families now residing in or near country towns in the settled areas where they are for the most part almost constantly employed, the Board has arranged, with the co-operation of the Commissioner of Police, for the issue of relief by police officers in a similar manner to that supplied by the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department. This action was taken as it was found that many aborigines, usually part-aborigines, could not always find employment. At such times or during periods of sickness they were actually destitute, and there was an inclination for them to return to reserves. Police officers may issue relief to necessitous cases, thus ensuring that aborigines residing in the settled areas need never be in want during periods of unemployment or sickness.

MAINTENANCE OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN IN HOMES.

Several religious organizations have for many years cared for aboriginal children in homes or institutions with little cost to the State. During the year finance was provided by the South Australian Government to enable the Board to commence a policy of contributing towards the maintenance of such children. Where any aboriginal child is fully maintained at any mission, institution, home, or by any person the Board has authorized the payment of £1 5s. per week towards the maintenance of the child. At the present time regular payments are being made towards the maintenance of 162 such children. The action of the Government in providing this finance is greatly appreciated by the Board. The various organizations and missions are also most thankful for the assistance which had considerably lightened their burden in providing for the needs of the children in their care. There are many part-aboriginal children who have little opportunity in their present environment, and it is hoped that some private home might accept one of these children now that a reasonable contribution can be made towards the child's support.

YALATA RESERVE FOR ABORIGINES.

The South Australian Government had previously purchased Yalata Station, situated on Eyre Peninsula, primarily for the use and benefit of aborigines. During the year investigations were made as to what portion of the station should be proclaimed an aboriginal reserve. It is most pleasing to report that the Government has seen fit to accept the Board's recommendations, and the whole of the Yalata holding with the exception of two sections not required by the Board have now been dedicated as a reserve for aborigines.

Negotiations were undertaken with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia, South Australian District, Inc., and an agreement acceptable to both the church and the Board has been entered into wherein the church provides for the spiritual welfare and education of the aborigines and conducts the reserve as a pastoral station while the Board provides for the physical needs of the natives. In addition the Board is responsible for medical attention, medicines, and the nursing of sick aborigines. It also contributes towards the cost of all children maintained by the church.

There are at present over 6,000 sheep at Yalata, and it is hoped that with the renovation of certain improvements a greater number of sheep will be carried. Should there at any time be a surplus of receipts over expenditure either to the church or the Board such surplus must be placed in trust for the benefit of aborigines. In this manner all of the proceeds from the reserve must ultimately be expended for the benefit of the native race.

The Board desires to place on record its appreciation of the Government in purchasing this property, and of the generous nature of grants made to the church for the repairs and renovations of existing improvements. Both the church and the Board realize the many difficulties to be met in the future in conducting such a reserve and in gradually preparing the many semi-detribalized natives at Yalata for their eventual contact with the white community. However, it is believed that despite difficulties the generous action of the Government in commencing the working of the reserve together with a sound agreement between the church and the Board, eventual success is assured. The Board are hopeful that a patrol officer will be appointed in this district to assist the church, aborigines, and settlers in establishing a worthy institution.

HEALTH OF THE ABORIGINES.

For many years the Board has adopted the policy of providing medical services and hospital accommodation for necessitous sick aborigines. During the year this policy has been somewhat broadened by the appointment of additional medical officers, and arrangements have been made with other hospitals for the treatment of natives. In addition agreements have been made with dentists for the dental treatment of aborigines including the filling of teeth, extractions, and the supply of dentures. The Board is, however, of the opinion that wherever practicable the aborigines—where they are in constant employment—should at least contribute towards their medical treatment or hospital fees. It is essential that the aborigine, particularly the part-aborigine, should accept the normal responsibilities of the ordinary citizen, and although no native in distress will ever be deprived of medical treatment or hospital care and attention, he must be encouraged to accept some responsibility.

The Board is indebted to the many medical officers, hospitals (Government, district, and private) throughout the State for the care and attention given to aborigines. It is most pleasing to report that with very few exceptions natives are accepted and treated in hospitals in the same manner as paying white patients. The Flying Doctor Services have also co-operated in every possible manner, often transporting sick aborigines to hospitals over great distances whereas otherwise the native would have had a much less chance of recovery.

As many aborigines as possible have been tested, and where necessary X-rayed for tuberculosis. There have been very few such cases requiring treatment in hospital.

During the year the Board considered the question of natives confined to hospitals, usually without means. Because the native patient has no cash or financial reserve he is not able to purchase the necessities and delicacies which his fellow patients enjoy. It was agreed that many native patients leave hospital before their treatment is completed for this reason. The Board has therefore authorized the supply of all necessary clothing to patients in any hospital, and necessities and delicacies such as fruit, tobacco, shaving materials, etc., up to the value of £1 per week. In this manner many native patients previously destitute are now able to participate in the privileges enjoyed by other patients. In practice this move has been found to be of great importance to patients confined to hospitals for long periods, such as mental hospitals, tuberculosis wards, etc.

Financial provision has also been requested to provide long-term patients with a cash weekly payment which should further encourage the patient to continue treatment and provide for the purchase of newspapers, cool drinks, and where convalescent, tram fares, lunches, etc.

ROYAL VISIT.

Royal Tour officials were most co-operative, and every endeavour was made by departmental officers to ensure that aborigines who so desired could join, somewhere in the State, in the Royal Tour festivities.

In Adelaide, Royal Tour officials made available a reservation for 400 aborigines. Situated on North Terrace in an excellent position, aborigines from many parts of the State were able to view the Royal Progress. It might be added that the illuminated and flag-bedecked streets and buildings were an added attraction. Several special reservations were also provided for mission natives and aboriginal children from homes and institutions. Transport was provided by the Board to enable the children from the schools at Point Pearce and Point McLeay Reserves to attend the School Demonstration.

At Whyalla, a corroboree was performed by 64 natives from Yalata in the presence of Her Majesty and His Royal Highness. Every endeavour was made to ensure that the corroboree presented was a natural one performed by near-primitive natives, without interference by the white officers. In this manner it was intended that Her Majesty should view a corroboree as really given by the aborigines and not staged in any way. Except for the wearing of a short pair of tight-fitting briefs for the sake of decency, the natives were naked and ochred and painted with their own ceremonial designs.

One of the corroborees given was a sacred corroboree and never before seen by any woman. The story of this corroboree, which to the natives is intensely secret and sacred, was handed to Her Majesty on condition that no other woman should see it. Her Majesty graciously consented to this condition. This action on the part of the aborigines was probably the greatest unsolicited honour that could possibly be tendered by these people.

The Secretary was honoured in being presented to Her Majesty and His Royal Highness, and it was most gratifying to see the interest displayed by the Royal Visitors in the corroboree and the natives.

Her Majesty also consented to receive a copy of Mr. C. P. Mountford's publication, *Brown Men and Red Sands*, made available by Professor J. B. Cleland, who kindly offered his own copy presented to him by the author as the work was out of print and could not be purchased.

GENERAL.

During the year the Board also dealt with many matters not previously mentioned. Some disciplinary action was found necessary, and several natives were expelled from reserves. One woman was confined to a reserve for her own good. Unfortunately, 11 natives appeared at the Supreme Court, Adelaide, charged with serious offences. In each case their interests were protected by a solicitor supplied by the Law Society, and the Secretary to the Board was present to assist the Court, particularly in regard to the penalty imposed.

Mr. C. J. Millar has been appointed Superintendent of Reserves to replace Mr. A. H. Bray, who is soon to retire after a very long period of faithful service with the Department.

The Board have requested the erection of a building to replace the present Aboriginal Women's Home at North Adelaide which is in poor repair, and it is hoped that the new building will be constructed during the ensuing year. Financial provision has also been requested for the erection of a new school building at Point Pearce Reserve for Aborigines.

REPORTS FROM POLICE OFFICERS, MISSIONERS, AND STATION MANAGERS.

Reports from police officers throughout the State indicate that most of the natives, other than those in the pastoral areas, are employed, and that there is a great demand for their labour. Unfortunately, the native is not inclined to remain in one position for any lengthy period, and is constantly changing employers. There is little need in most settled districts for any relief other than to the old and infirm. Although living in poor conditions the police officers' reports indicate that most of the natives and their children are reasonably clean and tidy and in good health. As is usual, there have been many convictions for over-indulgence of alcoholic liquors. In fact, it would appear that almost all of the offences committed resulted from the drinking of liquor. This practice also causes absenteeism by aborigines from employment and serious family disturbances.

In the pastoral areas, particularly on cattle stations, many natives are employed as stockmen, in well sinking, and in some cases as unskilled mechanics. In some of these districts native labour is almost indispensable. Unfortunately, for every native employed or who is acceptable for employment there are usually many others who live on the earnings of those employed or on the generosity of the pastoralist. In necessitous cases supplementary rations are issued to these "camp" aborigines. There appears to be a sufficiency of native game in these areas which the aborigines still hunt with their natural weapons, but some other foodstuffs such as flour, tea, sugar, etc., are required by this type of aborigine. Many aborigines are also employed in the northern areas with the Commonwealth Railways, and as drovers, labourers, etc., where generally they give satisfactory service.

The Board are conscious of the demand for stockmen and station mechanics in the pastoral areas, and are hopeful of commencing the training of aboriginal youths for these purposes. It is believed that with a normal education and sufficient training in agricultural and pastoral methods many native children who are at present somewhat neglected by their parents and without hope for the future, can eventually be gainfully employed in industries of national importance.

The Board is desirous of thanking all members of the police force for their interest in the natives and for the many kindnesses to destitute and sick natives. It is certain that the department could not satisfactorily function without the assistance and co-operation of police officers throughout the State. Officers stationed near the larger reserves have been of the greatest assistance to the Aborigines Department staff on the reserves, and their services are most appreciated.

UNITED ABORIGINES MISSION, INC.

The United Aborigines Mission has continued its work among the aborigines at various mission stations and children's homes.

The President, Mr. W. L. Scarborough, in the annual report of the mission, states that although there has been some discouragement, there has been much to encourage, many triumphs, and looks back with great thankfulness for the progress made throughout the State.

The General Secretary, Pastor L. J. Samuels, reports of the loyal services of their many workers, and is grateful for the practical assistance provided by the Board.

At Colebrook Home, the children continue to attend school outside the mission home. Sitting side by side with white children they soon become friendly playmates, and white children are permitted to visit the home and play with their less fortunate friends. It is good for the children to attend outside schools, and undoubtedly is their rightful place. There seems little doubt that wherever possible it should be compulsory for native children to attend "white" schools.

The children at Colebrook Home continued in good health, but some epidemics must be expected, and virus influenza, mumps, and whooping cough have added to the work and anxiety of the staff.

Peter Taylor, who attends the Goodwood Technical School, was this year elected a house captain, and was last year captain of the Technical School cricket team. This is a credit to the lad and to the headmaster's influence among the boys of the school, as Peter is obviously treated as a real Australian.

At present there are 33 children being maintained at this home, and it is pleasing to know that so many children grow in bodily health under Christian supervision.

At Finnis Springs, most of the natives who are able-bodied have no difficulty in obtaining employment, and the small cottages recently erected are kept as clean and tidy as possible. Unfortunately, a serious epidemic of meningitis occurred during the year, 13 cases being reported. Owing to the sympathetic and willing help of Dr. Russell-Jones and staff of the Flying Doctor Service, nursing sisters, and the helpers at Finnis Springs, the epidemic was controlled with all patients recovering. The situation at Finnis Springs is not altogether satisfactory. The close proximity of other natives not under the control of the mission and the lack of water makes the task of the missioners even more difficult.

Improvements have been effected at Gerard Mission during the year. The shearing shed and sheep yards have been repaired and enlarged and a sheep dip installed. The irrigation scheme, which is so necessary with portion of the orchard already established, is nearing completion. The Children's Home has been advanced to a stage where the children can be accommodated. This is of considerable help to the staff, and must result in improved conditions for the children. Many of the native families do not maintain their cottages in a satisfactory manner, and it is doubtful whether the type of cottage erected is the most suitable for natives who have so recently been removed from camp life. There appears to be a sufficiency of employment in the districts surrounding this mission, and little relief is required other than to the aged or infirm aborigines.

At the Oodnadatta Children's Home 13 children are cared for by the mission staff. It is disappointing to report that these children are not attending the local school nor has any degree of success been achieved in their association with local religious or social activities. This is not usual in this State. A new dormitory has almost been completed, and it is hoped that this will be occupied in the near future.

It is not altogether satisfactory for these children to be trained to a certain standard and then returned to the camp life. However, it would be difficult to place the girls in employment in the northern areas, and it is very doubtful whether any success would attend their employment in city areas. The boys are more easily found employment in the cattle industry. This mission also takes an active interest in the adult native population, who are mostly nomads, and every possible assistance, both spiritual and physical, is afforded to the nomads and their children.

Many natives with their families have gradually drifted away from Nepabunna Mission, mainly to Copley, Beltana, and Hawker. Employment at Leigh Creek, and the demand for labour generally in these districts, is apparently the cause of this movement. Although of advantage to the native in some ways several problems are arising. Mostly they are camping adjacent to towns in the poorest type of shacks or shelters without any consideration of hygiene. Intoxicating liquor is supplied to them by degenerate white men. This results in the usual family unrest, and in some cases serious family dissension. Very few of those employed spend their earnings wisely, nor is there any attempt, with few exceptions, to provide for the future by saving any portion of their income. At Nepabunna, the barytes mine provides employment for some of the natives, while others live at the mission and proceed to employment as and when required. Lack of sufficient water in dry times is still a great anxiety, as the boring operations, although continued to 350ft. at considerable cost, failed to provide water.

The roof has now been erected on the new church, and it is hoped that this building era will be completed during the ensuing year. Most of the natives have continued in good health, and there have been no serious epidemics.

UMEEWARRA MISSION, PORT AUGUSTA.

At the end of the year there were 45 children resident in the home, and a considerable number of natives occupying the cottages on the reserves. Camp discipline has been satisfactory, and thanks are due to the Port Augusta police officers for their co-operation and control of the reserves. The health of the adults and children has been satisfactory, mainly through the efforts of the doctors and staff of the Port Augusta Hospital and the resident nursing sister. It is very pleasing to report that two of the Umeewarra girls have graduated from the Native Workers' Training College, Singleton, N.S.W., and one, Lena Lang, is now serving among the native people in a children's home at Darwin. The other girl, Thelma Wingfield, is attending the Wellington Road School, Payneham, where she is undertaking a course in kindergarten training.

There appears to be employment available for all in or near the district and little relief is required.

All of the children and some adults were able to join in the Royal Tour festivities at Whyalla. The children took their place with other schools at the Whyalla Oval, and were able to give a satisfactory account of themselves and see their Queen.

Extensions to the home are planned for the ensuing year as there is even a greater demand on the missionaries to accept more children. Umeewarra authorities are making a very valuable contribution, particularly with the children, towards the advancement of the aborigines.

LUTHERAN CHURCH, KOONIBBA.

A favourable season was experienced for farming activities and maintaining livestock. Returns of both wool and grain were satisfactory. Additional work was undertaken by the staff in caring for the natives at Yalata. This involved considerable travelling to and from Yalata transporting rations and sick aborigines. Pastor H. Rosenblatt remains in charge of the mission, and is an enthusiastic worker amongst the natives. Pastor Strehlan is to be commended in residing with the Yalata natives at Monburu Tank, living in a caravan without the companionship of his own people. Pastor Strehlan has for some years cared for both the spiritual and physical welfare of these natives.

Mr. H. Gaden, Farm Superintendent, after a very long period of service, intends leaving Koonibba in the near future. There are few who have served so long in the cause of the aborigines or who have such an intimate knowledge of the peculiar characteristics of the natives. The Board is most thankful to Mr. Gaden for his services.

Many of the children of Yalata natives are now cared for in the Children's Home at Koonibba. Altogether there are 53 children resident in the home, which is a credit to the Matron and staff. Although the Board has no wish to remove children from their parents where they are reasonably well care for, there is little doubt that native children receive a much better upbringing in a home of this nature than when left with their parents in poor circumstances, and often in an immoral environment. The supply of sufficient water for domestic purposes at Koonibba is still a major problem, and there is little hope of this reserve ever being served by the Tod Water Scheme. Eventually a comprehensive water conservation scheme will have to be planned and constructed to serve this institution.

Many original Koonibba natives are now scattered throughout Upper Eyre Peninsula, mostly employed in the agricultural areas or with the South Australian Railways. Most of these natives maintain themselves at no cost to the State, and are in the main reasonably well conducted, which is undoubtedly largely due to their training at Koonibba.

PRESBYTERIAN MISSION, ERNABELLA.

Ernabella Mission is established adjacent to the North-west Reserve, and acts as an efficient buffer between the near primitive natives and white civilization. The Presbyterian authorities in control of this mission have adopted the policy of very gradually preparing the aborigines for their eventual contact with civilization. Tribal customs and ceremonies are permitted, in fact encouraged, and every opportunity is taken to encourage the natives to retain their self-respect and natural dignity. As little relief as possible is issued and the menfolk, where not employed, must hunt for their natural food. Although the children are taught to speak some English, they are also instructed in their own dialect, and few of the natives converse in other than their own language.

Nearly 5,000 sheep are depastured at Ernabella, and on portion of the reserve, producing wool of good quality and providing employment as shepherds for many families. The natives have been instructed in shearing, crutching, etc., and some have proved to be competent well-sinkers and station mechanics. An industrial school building is being erected and is near completion. It is intended that some of the younger men can then be instructed in activities associated with employment in the northern areas, such as blacksmithing and station mechanics. A saw bench will be installed in order that local timber can be sawn and used in necessary constructional work at the mission. Many of the native women are engaged in spinning and weaving. In this manner employment can be offered to the women-folk thus preventing the ill-effects of issuing relief to able-bodied persons.

The hospital building has been completed, and is well constructed and capable of accommodating 14 patients. Additional wells have been sunk, resulting in reasonable supplies of water for stock purposes. It is proposed that the water required for domestic purposes at the mission will be pumped from a source situated some distance from the village. In this manner a more hygienic supply will be obtainable. This work is being proceeded with and much of the materials required are on hand.

It is expected that gradually the aborigines will use the reserve less for hunting purposes and that greater use can then be made of this area for grazing of livestock. The Board are of the opinion that water supplies should be tested and if possible established first for the use of the aborigines and eventually for use by livestock. It is proposed that finance be requested for this purpose during the next financial year.

All the natives at Ernabella or on the adjacent reserve are in excellent condition and good health. Except for epidemics the health of these aborigines is particularly good and, as near as can be ascertained, the native population is increasing.

POINT McLEAY STATION.

The population at Point McLeay on the 30th June, 1954, was 361. This is considerably less than at the end of the previous financial year, and is accounted for by several families and young men having settled away from the reserve. The continued demand for labour throughout the State should accentuate this movement. A total of 33 births and 12 deaths resulted in a natural increase of 21.

There have been no serious epidemics, and the health of the natives has been satisfactory. Improved health will result when the aborigines better understand the real meaning of hygienic living conditions and spend their earnings more wisely in order that a better and more balanced diet is available for themselves and their children. A medical officer and a dentist regularly visit the station, while the resident nurse continues her duties in the hospital and dispensary.

During the year the stationing of a resident police officer at Narrung near Point McLeay has resulted in a marked improvement in conduct on the reserve. The Officer-in-Charge has been most conscientious and has co-operated closely with the departmental staff. Some trouble has been experienced with natives acting under the influence of liquor, but these are in the minority only. The resident Salvation Army officers conduct many clubs and social events which have undoubtedly contributed towards better conduct on the reserve.

Additional rooms have been added to cottages and many repairs carried out. One four-roomed cottage, which was very old, has been practically rebuilt, and is now a fine building. A "Nissen" hut has been partly erected with a 3ft. high wall as a foundation. Foundations for a similar building have also been completed. One will be used as a garage and workshop while the other will house the farm implements.

The head teacher and staff continue doing excellent work at the school, and over a period of years the children have become much cleaner, brighter, and better dressed. They appear to have gained more confidence and are quite well-mannered. The Board again assisted with the purchase of books for the library, which is a credit to all concerned. During the year, finance was provided by the Board to re-equip the Domestic Arts section with modern utensils in order that the girls should better understand the standard of living required in the general community.

There has recently been a marked improvement both in production and in the management of the dairy. Free milk is issued both morning and afternoon, and the balance of the milk separated and sold as cream to butter factories. The paddocks irrigated and sown with lucerne have been reploughed and replanted, and are at present in very good order.

Despite a somewhat dry season and a shortage of stored fodder all livestock are in good condition; 2,431 sheep were shorn resulting in 63 bales of wool being sold at an excellent price for the type of wool produced at this reserve. There was a successful lambing (80 per cent), although some of the lambs were lost after marking. Some grain was harvested, but insufficient hay was stacked as a fire destroyed portion of the crop while being harvested. The greater part of the area cropped this season has been sown to pasture—mainly lucerne, Veldt grass, and Bacchus Marsh clover. Endeavours are being made to establish improved pastures as early as possible, both at the main station and at Primrose Farm.

The garden and orchard has been maintained, and provides cheap and necessary supplies for the natives.

Fred Dodd, who has consistently worked and resided at this reserve for many years and who was a valued workman and conscientious native, passed away during the year.

Church attendance has been much higher since the appointment of Lieutenant Leggett and his wife, of the Salvation Army, and this couple do not spare themselves in spiritual and welfare activities at Point McLeay.

The Manager reports that the natives are gradually becoming more self-dependent. Many homes are better furnished and they appear to be, at least in some cases, making some provision for the future.

Natives are employed with the South Australian Railways and Highways Departments, and continue in their employment for longer periods than previously.

POINT PEARCE STATION.

At the 30th June, 1954, there were 398 natives resident at Point Pearce. As was the case with Point McLeay, this total is considerably less than that for the previous year, and was brought about by the absence of several families who are still engaged in the fruit industry in the River Murray Districts. A natural increase of 17 resulted from the 25 births and 8 deaths recorded.

The health of the natives has been reasonably good and there were no serious epidemics which could not be controlled by the use of modern drugs. Medical officers visit the reserve as required or patients are transported to Maitland for examination. Twenty-two such visits were made to Maitland, and there were 20 X-rays taken for fractures as well as 26 chest X-rays. It was necessary for the ambulance to make seven trips to Adelaide and 62 trips to Wallaroo with sick natives or confinement cases. Generally, native drivers have been entrusted with transporting patients to Wallaroo Hospital and these men are to be commended on carrying out their duties loyally and satisfactorily.

Various religious organizations and helpers conduct religious services at the reserve. Unfortunately, such services are seldom well attended; however, a Christian Endeavour class conducted by Mr. R. C. Davey, of Port Victoria, has been most successful. The Board is appreciative of the efforts of Mr. Davey who has proved over a number of years his ability to lead these young people.

There have been some alterations in the staff at the school, and the new headmaster and staff appear to have settled in well. Average attendance at the school was 97.7 which is somewhat lower than the previous year. Owing to the difficulty of obtaining accommodation for the assistant teachers, a furnished flat is being prepared at the reserve where these young women will be accommodated.

As the present school building is inadequate to accommodate the pupils the Board has requested that finance be provided to erect a new building. It is likely that the new school will be completed during the ensuing year. The old building will then be used for the teaching of woodwork, domestic arts, etc.

The conduct of some of the natives has not been satisfactory, and a number of convictions have been recorded in the Port Victoria Court. There is little doubt that most of the troubles occur through the drinking of liquor. Several natives were expelled during the year on account of misconduct.

All livestock are in good condition, and there is more than sufficient pastures and stored fodder on hand. The wool shorn from 3,613 sheep netted £10,107 15s. 6d., skins of sheep slaughtered amounted to £982 18s., and £1,201 1s. 5d. was realized from the sale of fat cattle.

The agricultural activities were again carried out with native sharefarmers, and a very satisfactory yield resulted; 4,633 bags of barley and 5,913 bags of wheat were harvested as well as 62 tons sheafed hay, 30 tons of ensilage, and 2,570 bales of hay. The wheat crop harvested averaged 28.4bush. to the acre.

There is still a shortage of water at Point Pearce, particularly for domestic use at the village. It would appear that some of the water supplies are gradually lessening, and more dams will be excavated in the ensuing year.

Some road construction was undertaken during the year, and provision has been made for the main roads on the reserve to be repaired or reconstructed next year. Some of the native cottages and two of the officers' houses were renovated, but many of the cottages are in poor condition, and a great deal of work is necessary to put them in good order.

A statement of departmental receipts and payments for the year ended 30th June, 1954, is appended.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient servants,

M. McINTOSH, Chairman	} Aborigines Protection Board.
J. B. CLELAND, Deputy Chairman	
CONSTANCE M. COOKE	
A. M. JOHNSON	
LEN J. COOKE	
GORDON ROWE	
C. BARTLETT, Secretary	

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1954.

ABORIGINAL WELFARE.

Amounts received and payments made on account of expenses in carrying out the functions of the department are shown hereunder:—

1953.		1954.	
£		£	£
	Payment on account of expenses were:—		
7,482	Administrative officers	8,038	
938	Payroll tax for child endowment	971	
298	Portion of superannuation pensions met by the Government	521	
19,704	Provisions, blankets, clothing, medicines, transport, allowances, and office expenses	23,173	
216	Aborigines Home, North Adelaide	298	
384	Development of reserves for aborigines	233	
134	Assistance to fishermen	91	
300	Training half-caste girls for domestic service	518	
—	Purchase of houses for aborigines	4,800	
1,320	Payments to dependant and officers retiring or resigning—Long service and recreation leave	959	
—	Maintenance of aboriginal children at homes or in institutions	7,427	
—	Purchase of hut and transport to Colona for Yalata Station	1,200	
—	Reimbursement of expenditure for medical care and maintenance of natives and repairs at Yalata Station	11,069	
	<i>Grants—</i>		
—	Ernabella Mission, towards cost of hospital and welfare clinic	2,900	
1,325	Towards cost of Industrial School, Ernabella	—	
110	Lutheran Mission, towards cost of hot water system at Koonibba Hospital	—	
250	Nepabunna Mission, towards cost of bore and tank	—	
—	Umeewarra Mission, towards cost additional accommodation	1,000	
<u>32,461</u>		<u>63,198</u>	
5,854	Dividend on shares, Yalata Ltd.	—	
194	Less Refund rail fares, etc.	196	
<u>6,048</u>			63,002
<u>£26,413</u>			
	POINT PEARCE STATION.		
	<i>Expenditure.</i>		
15,182	Salaries, wages and allowances, etc.	15,227	
11,182	Farm stores, implements and rations, etc.	13,786	
7,821	Trading store—Purchases and expenses	8,041	
924	Purchase of utility	—	
<u>£35,109</u>		<u>37,054</u>	
	<i>Receipts.</i>		
26,934	Sales of produce, etc.	£24,598	
8,324	Store sales	8,335	
<u>35,258</u>		<u>32,933</u>	4,121
<u>£149</u>			
	POINT MCLEAY STATION.		
	<i>Expenditure.</i>		
15,308	Salaries, wages and allowances, etc.	15,539	
10,097	Rations, farm stores, implements, etc.	11,313	
42	Rent, section hundred of Baker	42	
757	Purchase of utility	—	
9,742	Trading store—Purchases and expenses	7,861	
<u>£35,946</u>		<u>34,755</u>	
	<i>Receipts.</i>		
7,692	Sales of produce, etc.	£8,882	
9,932	Store sales	8,181	
<u>17,624</u>		<u>17,063</u>	17,692
<u>£18,322</u>			
<u>£44,586</u>	Cost of aborigines to the South Australian Government for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1954		<u>£84,815</u>