

ABORIGINES WELFARE BOARD

Rental Arrears

During 1959 rental arrears in respect of tenants of town houses and of homes on Aboriginal Stations and Reserves had increased by £3,152 from £57,251 to £60,403, compared with an increase of £7,794 over the previous twelve months. Rental receipts for the year totalled £5,324, an increase of £251. The improvement evidenced in the rental position is undoubtedly due to a continued hardening of the Board's policy against those tenants who, while in a position to do so, have evaded their responsibilities in meeting the purely nominal rental fixed for tenancy of the homes occupied.

In twenty-seven cases over the year, the Board directed that recovery proceedings be instituted by the Crown Solicitor against rent defaulters and, in another two, that Notices to Quit be served on the tenants.

Town Houses—Sale to Tenants

During the past year, the Board directed that suitable tenants of town houses be afforded the opportunity of acquiring the homes on a rent/purchase basis, total payments already made, less 2½ per cent. interest, being treated as an offset against the purchase price. Ten occupants of town houses elected to buy the properties.

Education

Wherever possible, children from Aboriginal Stations and Reserves received their education in the ordinary State schools. In these cases where distance from towns precludes the enrolment of children in Public Schools, Aboriginal Schools are located on such Stations and Reserves. These latter schools, however, are staffed by fully qualified teachers of the Department of Education and the curriculum laid down is practically the same as that adopted in the State Schools.

Secondary education is available to every Aboriginal child possessing the required scholastic qualifications and the number enrolled at High Schools is increasing steadily from year to year.

At the conclusion of last year 160 children approximately were attending High Schools, 1,025 Aboriginal Schools and 912 Public Schools.

To encourage selected Aboriginal pupils to pursue and complete a secondary course of education, by assistance in meeting the cost of uniforms and text books, the Board makes annual awards of bursaries. The grant of these scholarships is determined on the results of competitive external examinations set by the Department of Education and held in conjunction with the Senior Primary and Intermediate Examinations. The bursaries are tenable for two and three years and may be extended up to five years, if circumstances so warrant. Each bursary carries a cash grant of £50 per year.

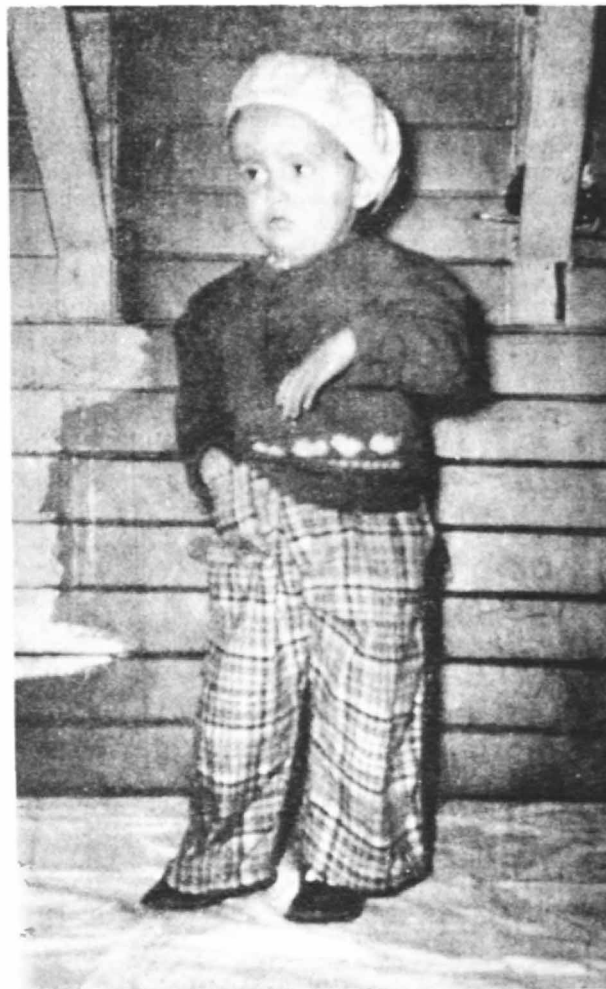
From a list of pupils, submitted by the Department of Education in order of merit, seven were selected by the Board for award of bursaries commencing in the current school year.

FEATURES OF THE ADMINISTRATION

In addition to bursaries made available by the Board, others on similar lines were endowed by Canterbury Soroptimist Club, Kempsey Apex Club and the Save the Children Fund.

Additional assistance was granted by the Board to enable one bursar to be enrolled at Woodlawn College, Lismore, and for another attending Armidale High School to be accommodated at St. John's Church of England Hostel in that town.

At the conclusion of the 1958-59 year, there were twenty-one (21) bursaries current.



Christine Witt, of Michelago, was all dressed up for the cameraman