

BLIND ABORIGINE IS WELL KNOWN NOW

Percy Bamblett, of Gilgandra, the blind Aborigine with a "seeing eye dog", Ivy, is becoming a familiar sight to Gilgandra people.

Prior to receiving Ivy he was practically unknown to most people, but this has changed since he and his dog returned from Melbourne and his family moved into a new weatherboard home.

He has now another claim to fame. At the last Gilgandra Show he entered five samples of his cane work in the handicraft section and he received the following awards:—

Cane shopping basket, 1 and 2; best tray, 1; basket with woven base, 1; thermos or bottle-holder, 1.

He has been encouraged in this work by two local citizens, Mesdames Enid Macdonald and Marie Franke.

Future intentions are for a small workshop to be built for Percy to enable him to expand his activities, for orders are now coming in for his work. An exercise yard is also needed for Ivy. This work will be carried out by local service groups, following assistance of Gilgandra townfolk.

Says Mr. H. S. Kitching, area welfare officer for the Aborigines Welfare Board: "This is an example of the co-operation and assistance that is always available if the recipient is willing to try and overcome disabilities. Too many are content to bemoan their fate and carry the proverbial "chip on the shoulder", yet here is a young man who, when given the opportunity, has accepted it and is proving that he too can become a useful member of the community."

COTTAGE FOR WIDOW

The Tumut R.S.L. has handed over a new, fully furnished cottage to Mrs. Minnie Freeman, widow of an Aboriginal ex-serviceman.

Through the co-operation of R.S.L. members, tradesmen, mills and business houses, the cottage on the Brungle Aboriginal Reserve cost only about £200, although it is valued at £1,500.

Members of the Tumut sub-branch held working bees for nearly eight months to help the family.

In addition, there were many donations.

Mrs. Freeman's husband, Ernest Joseph Freeman, enlisted in the A.I.F. in 1941. He was discharged three years later on medical grounds and died in 1963.

Mrs. Freeman has a 16 year-old daughter and an 11 year-old son.

"The sub-branch has undertaken to keep an eye on the boy, who has been showing promise at school," an R.S.L. official said.

PLASTIC BAGS ARE NOT PLAYTHINGS

"... some three million plastic bags enter Australian homes each day, or more than 1,000,000,000 plastic bags every year. But remember to keep them out of the reach of children".

Above is an extract from a safety brochure released by the Plastics Institute of Australia, and the N.S.W. Department of Public Health requests parents to take particular notice of those last ten words;

BUT REMEMBER TO KEEP THEM OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN.

Fatal accidents, due to smothering by plastic materials, can be caused in a number of ways warns the Department.

- a piece of plastic, such as a plastic bib, being placed over or in the mouth;
- a plastic bag being pulled over the head;
- the turning of a baby's head downwards on a soft plastic pillow.

The thin plastic coming into contact with the face often clings to the lips, which are moist, and so leads to suffocation. Plastic bags keep food fresh for children, clothes clean in the cupboard, and keep hygienic many of the things you buy—from food to mattresses and pillows. They provide protection against germs and dirt in the kitchen, bathroom, wardrobes, medicine and linen cupboards—BUT they must not be left where children play, and particularly not in young children's bedrooms. Older children should also be warned not to use plastic bags as playthings, particularly when there are younger brothers and sisters in the home.

Precautions:

- Never let children play with plastic bags.
- Never leave plastic bags on pillows or mattresses.
- Keep plastic bags out of reach of children—or destroy them by promptly tearing or knotting.

(Contributed by the N.S.W. Department of Public Health)