

two full-time doctors. Dr Ross McLeod began full-time service with the AMS in October and Dr John Mackay will join him next month. This will ease the burden on the voluntary doctors who hold surgery each evening and will allow greater coverage of the country areas.

► BACK FROM NEW ZEALAND—

The accompanying picture is that of Paul Laurie, fullback for the Coffs Harbour Junior Rugby League team which toured New Zealand recently. Aged 15, Paul has been playing League for 7 years. He has received seven pennants since he started playing, including one as a member of the Wallaroos team in 1965 and another for the Kangaroos team of 1966. He has represented the Coffs club against visiting teams from Glen Innes, New Zealand and Sydney, and his school at several schoolboy carnivals. Last season he won the best and fairest award.

► HEALTH CENTRE FOR WILCANNIA—

A baby health and home training centre for Aborigines is due to be completed at Wilcannia shortly. The centre has been designed to provide prenatal and postnatal care for Aboriginal mothers and babies, and to teach the women the basics of cooking, hygiene, ironing and other household duties. The building, a 1,500 square feet timber-framed bungalow situated next to Wilcannia's hospital, will have a projection room and a welfare advice centre. Wilcannia's Welfare Officer, Mr Mick Rodden, and Aboriginal community health nurse, Mrs B. Crisp, will set up their headquarters in the building.

▼ PROTECTION FOR SACRED SITES—

Over the next 5 years the Commonwealth Government will encourage and support financially the identification and preservation of an estimated 15,000 Aboriginal sacred sites. The proposal is to permanently set aside areas of sacred and spiritual significance to Aborigines. It is hoped that such a policy will prevent further deterioration and abuse of such areas. Although legislation already exists in all States for the preservation of sacred sites, the proposed Commonwealth Act will ensure uniformity. It will take up to 5 years to complete registers of sacred sites for each State and then the Northern Territory.

► PADDLING FOR FUNDS—

The Aboriginal Children's Advancement Society plans to conduct a 75-mile padlathon down the Hawkesbury River next month in order to raise funds for its hostels. The padlathon is expected

to start on Tuesday, 2nd January. It will follow the river course from Windsor to Berowra Waters and will take 3 or 4 days to complete. Anyone with a suitable canoe and camping equipment can participate. Sponsors will contribute for each mile the canoeists paddle. The event has been organized each year for the past 4 years, but was cancelled last year due to floods. Anyone interested in entering the padlathon should contact Mr Eric Frater, by telephoning Sydney 522 6241, or writing to P.O. Box 277, Sutherland, N.S.W. 2232.

► PRESCHOOLS FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA—

South Australia has begun the largest programme of preschool education for Aboriginal children of any State outside the Northern Territory. Ten preschools, some in farflung parts of the State, will be opened next year, and the Department of Education is looking for eleven teachers to staff them.

Paul Laurie

