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(SECOND SESSION.)

30 SEP 1963

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

1892

ABORIGINES.

(ANNUAL REPORT OF BOARD FOR PROTECTION OF, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1926.)

(Printed under No. 6 Report from Printing Committee, 18 November, 1926.)

Subject—Report of Board for Protection of Aborigines for the year ended
30th June, 1926.

Office of Board for Protection of Aborigines,
No. 5, Richmond-terrace, Domain,

Dear Sir,

Sydney, 1st October, 1926.

In accordance with the established practice, we, the undersigned 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, 1925, to the 30th June, 1926, together with the usual particulars of the numbers, location and present condition of the Aborigines throughout the State and the means adopted for their relief as far as the funds at our disposal would permit.

GENERAL.

All reserves and stations throughout the State were regularly visited by the Board's Inspector during the year, and as a result of his recommendations the following improvements were effected:—

- Angledool: Deepening and enlarging ground tank.
- Bassendean: Improvements to housing accommodation, and erection of larger school premises.
- Brungle: Installation of windmill and water service.
- Bulgandramine: Erection of six huts and re-erection of boundary fencing.
- Carowra Tank: Purchase of one-ton truck, improvement to Manager's residence, and erection of quantity of fencing.
- Cootamundra Home: Erection of new lavatories, extension of kitchen and installation of up-to-date cooking range, and also of pumping plant to augment the home's tank supply, renewal of fencing, and improvements to school building.
- Coraki: Renewal of boundary fencing.
- Dubbo: Repairs and renovations to huts.
- Dunoon: Repairs to eight huts.
- Karuah: Alteration and renovation to school premises.
- Kinchela: Enlargement of Manager's residence.
- Pilliga: Installation of telephone.
- Woodenbong: Supply of material for erection of huts and sanitary conveniences.

A close check was also exercised over the issue of rations, blankets and clothing to Aborigines throughout the State, not only to ensure that strict economy was observed, but that people who were deemed to be capable of maintaining themselves were not encouraged to live in idleness, the Board's policy being to help the Aborigines to help themselves.

Rail and steamer passes were issued in many instances to enable Aborigines to proceed to employment, to enter hospital and for other legitimate reasons. In cases where the person concerned was able-bodied he was called upon to sign an agreement to repay the cost, and these refunds were collected by the police. In the case of illness all arrangements in connection with the admission of the Aboriginal concerned to suitable hospital were, of course, made for him by the Board.

The annual census of Aborigines throughout the State was taken by the police on the 1st June, 1926, and the figures were furnished to the Government Statistician and the Commonwealth authorities. A summary will be found at the conclusion of this report.

Works in progress at the conclusion of the year included the closure of the Aboriginal station at Euraba and the removal of all buildings to a new site known as Toomelah, about 13 miles distant; the erection of school and huts at Gingie near Walgett.

ABORIGINAL STATIONS.

As mentioned in previous reports, Aboriginal stations have been established at various centres, and these are under the care of managers and matrons, who preside over the village life of the people. Sale stores are maintained from which the Aborigines are able to purchase their requirements of groceries and other articles of a non-perishable nature at cost price. A butcher shop, dispensary, church, recreation hall and school are also provided, while in most places the Board has provided a first-class water supply, which enables the Aborigines to maintain attractive gardens around their dwellings.

After the termination of the war the Board decided to recondition the whole of the buildings at Cumeroounga, which is the largest Aboriginal station in the State, but owing to the cost involved this work had to be done gradually. It was completed during the year now under review, and Cumeroounga as a result, is now in first-class order.

The transfer of the Aboriginal station at Euraba to a new site at Toomelah was also a big undertaking, which has practically been completed. It involved the clearing of the site, the erection of boundary fencing, the construction of a road, the building of a telephone line, the installation of a water supply and the establishment generally of a complete station in the virgin scrub. The work was one which had been recommended for years by the Board's Inspectors and by individual members of the Board who had visited Euraba and had been impressed by its unsuitableness and wretched surroundings; lack of water in dry times and floods in the rainy seasons being its principal defects.

A first-class launch was handed over to the Board by the Fisheries Department for transfer to the Aboriginal station at Urunga, while a smaller launch was transferred from that place to Roseby Park station on the South Coast. Most of the Board's coastal stations are now provided with launches.

On the whole it might be stated that the condition of Aboriginal stations throughout the State is most satisfactory.

COOTAMUNDRA HOME.

The Board's training home at Cootamundra continued to render satisfactory service. This institution, which is most up-to-date, provides for the maintenance and training of 45 to 50 girls, 30 of whom also attend the school attached to the home. These girls are given a thorough training in domestic duties, and upon reaching a suitable age are drafted to selected situations in good private homes, where they are kept under constant supervision by the Board's inspecting officer.

The home is situated about a mile out of the town of Cootamundra and is one of the features of the district, the girls being invited to participate in practically all the social gatherings of the town. The Board wish to avail themselves of this opportunity to thank the townspeople of Cootamundra for the interest they have always taken in the welfare of the children and for the numerous gifts which were readily given for their benefit and for the entertainments which were arranged for them.

The Board's officers have for some time past organised a concert and bazaar which is held annually in the town, and which on every occasion has proved an unqualified success. As a result of these efforts the home has been provided with a fine piano, cabinet gramophone and records, a tennis court and other things of a total value of over £200. In addition, the officers have handed over to the Board an amount of £100 in part payment of a car which the Board purchased for the home on the understanding that the total cost would be repaid. It is anticipated that this will be done within three years. The car is used not only on official business but also provides recreation for the inmates, who are taken for regular outings.

Improvements to the institution during the year included the enlargement of the kitchen and installation of a cooking range, the painting of the dormitories and bathrooms, enlarging and cleaning of dam, and installation of windmill, renewal of fencing, and construction of new front entrance gate, and erection of new lavatories.

A fine vegetable garden which is watered by the windmill above referred to provides the home with an abundance of vegetables and also lucerne for the milking cows. A quarter of a ton of jam was made from the melons grown in the garden, and it might here be stated that the whole of the gardening was done by the inmates of the home under the supervision and with the assistance of the officers. There was an abundance of milk, and butter to the extent of over 300 lb. was made.

The Board was glad to learn that an application by the Cootamundra Municipal Council for 10 acres of the land surrounding the home, on which it was proposed to establish sale yards, has been refused by the Minister for Lands, as had the proposal materialised, the privacy and seclusion so necessary for the training and welfare of the young girls in the home would have been completely destroyed.

KINCHELA HOME.

A home for the care and training of neglected Aboriginal boys is maintained at Kinchela, on the Macleay River, and this institution is under the supervision of a Teacher-Manager, who is responsible for the care of a number of adult Aborigines living on the reserve attached to the home.

An excellent school is situated within a short distance of the dormitories, and here the boys receive, in addition to their ordinary education, a sound training in cultivation and gardening. The school funds are augmented by the cultivation of maize, 34 bags being grown on an area of about 1½ acres. It is intended to devote the proceeds to the painting of the school building, the school funds having been established for the purpose of improving the school, purchasing tools, seeds, &c. This home, although smaller than the institution at Cootamundra is well equipped and maintained, and is doing excellent work.

EDUCATION.

The Board continued to receive satisfactory reports from the Department of Education regarding the operations of Aboriginal schools at various centres throughout the State, manual training being noted as a particularly satisfactory feature. Practically, with very few exceptions, every Aboriginal child receives an elementary education. The schools are also visited by the Education Department's medical officers, whose reports regarding the physical condition of the children are referred to the Board and receive immediate attention. Dental attention is also arranged when required, and a midday meal is provided at places where satisfactory arrangements can be made.

EMPLOYMENT.

Adult Aborigines appear to experience only ordinary difficulty in securing employment, the majority of them being engaged in rural industries, timber work, and on sheep and cattle stations, and fishing along the coastal areas.

The girls and boys after completing their training at the home are placed in selected situations, where they are kept under constant supervision. In accordance with their apprenticeship agreements they are paid a certain amount of pocket money, while the greater portion of their earnings is remitted to the Board's office for payment into a trust fund where compound interest is added. In addition, clothing, medical and dental attention is provided by the employer. Many hundreds of girls and boys have passed through the Board's hands in this manner, and as time went on the problem of their future engaged the attention of the Board, who fully recognised that these young people should not be deprived of the opportunity to marry and settle down. It was, therefore, arranged that upon the expiration of their term of apprenticeship they should be returned to their own districts for a holiday, after which they are given the opportunity of securing another approved situation in the district or returning to their former employment. Thus they had the opportunity of meeting young people of their own colour, and during the past twelve months over thirty suitable marriages have resulted. In cases where the girls did not possess relatives of good character with whom they could stay, arrangements were made for the Board's Managers to take charge of them and to take an interest in their welfare while under their supervision, and it is largely due to the readiness with which the Managers have co-operated that the Board has been able to carry its policy so successfully into effect.

HEALTH.

The health of the Aborigines generally has been most satisfactory, there being no epidemics during the year.

The welfare of the Aborigines in this respect is cared for by the appointment of medical officers at centres where numbers are sufficiently large, and the Board's stations are furnished with a liberal supply of simple drugs and remedies for the treatment of minor ailments. Little difficulty is experienced in arranging the admission of serious cases to district hospitals, while in special cases, transfers to the larger metropolitan hospitals are effected. The Board has made the provision of proper sanitary conveniences and an adequate water supply a matter for special consideration, and much has been done in this direction during the past few years, and it is hoped that Parliament will continue to provide a sufficiency of funds to enable a policy of steady improvement in the living conditions of the Aborigines throughout the State to be prosecuted.

CONCLUSION.

The condition of Aborigines in New South Wales may be regarded as satisfactory. The aged and infirm, the children and those whose circumstances do not permit them to earn their own living receive sympathetic treatment and are provided, among other things, with a regular supply of rations, blankets and clothing. At the same time every effort is made to assist the able-bodied to secure suitable employment at a fair rate of wages, care being taken that the Board's generosity is not imposed upon on the one hand while the Aboriginal is not exploited by outside employers on the other.

The Board again wishes to express its appreciation of the assistance it has always received from the members of the New South Wales Police Force, without whose aid the Board would find it impossible to carry on its work.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES MITCHELL,	Chairman.
E. B. HARKNESS,	} Members.
ROBERT DICK,	
B. J. DOE,	
THEO. H. HILL,	
A. W. GREEN.	

The Under-Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department.

RETURN OF ABORIGINES IN THE POLICE PATROL DISTRICT OF NEW SOUTH WALES AS AT 1st JUNE, 1926.

	Full Bloods.					Half-castes.				Grand Total.
	Adults. (21 and over)..		Minors. (Under 21.)		Grand Total.	Adults. (21 and over.)		Minors. (Under 21.)		
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.		Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	
Receiving aid	126	130	72	64	392	223	251	394	399	1,267
Not receiving aid	325	157	70	87	639	1,491	1,020	1,141	1,145	1,787
Totals	451	287	142	151	1,031	1,704	1,271	1,535	1,544	6,054

Distribution of above.

Living on reserves	157	124	78	68	427	506	400	548	504	1,558
Not living on reserves	294	163	64	83	604	1,198	871	987	1,040	4,096
Totals	451	287	142	151	1,031	1,704	1,271	1,535	1,544	6,054

	Quadroons.	Octoroons.
	Total Number.	Total Number.
Living on reserves	166	88
Not living on reserves.....	28	9
Receiving aid	92	30
Not receiving aid.....	20	37

166
28
194

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NSW Aborigines Protection Board

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