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PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

ABORIGINES WELFARE BOARD

for Year ended 30th June, 1947.

Presented to Parliament in pursuance of the provisions of Section 19B of the
Aborigines Protection Act, 1909, as amended.

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Annual Report of the Aborigines Welfare Board, New South Wales, for the Year ended 30th June, 1947.

THE Aborigines Welfare Board has the honour to present to the Honourable the Chief Secretary the following report on its work during the year ended 30th June, 1947, together with information on the care and general welfare of the Aborigines resident within the State of New South Wales during that period.

The report also refers to other information concerning Aborigines in this State.

ABORIGINES WELFARE BOARD.

During the year nine meetings of the Aborigines Welfare Board were held. There were not any changes in the personnel of the Board. The attendance of members was as follows:—

Dr. J. Grahame Drew	9
Mr. A. W. G. Lipscomb	9
Mr. Michael Sawtell	9
Mr. William Ferguson	9
Mr. S. L. Anderson	8
Professor A. P. Elkin	8
Superintendent B. E. Sadler	8
Mr. Walter Page	7
The Hon. E. G. Wright, M.L.C.	6
Mr. J. P. Glasheen	5
Mr. S. R. Heferen, M.L.A.	5

Mr. S. L. Anderson, by virtue of his position as Under Secretary of the Chief Secretary's Department, and in accordance with the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act, continued to occupy the position of Chairman of the Board throughout the year.

Professor A. P. Elkin was again elected as Vice-Chairman.

Mr. A. W. G. Lipscomb, as Superintendent of Aborigines Welfare, is Executive Member of the Board. During the year Mr. Lipscomb inspected all the Aboriginal Stations and Children's Homes and a number of Reserves.

During June and July, 1946, Professor A. P. Elkin, the Hon. E. G. Wright, M.L.C., and Mr. A. W. G. Lipscomb visited Queensland to study Aboriginal welfare and control in that State. Special attention was given to the organisation and management of certain large native settlements, for the purpose of determining whether community settlements of a similar nature could be established with advantage in New South Wales. A full report, with observations and recommendations, was presented to the Board at the conclusion of the tour.

BOARD'S POLICY.

In the last Annual Report, it was pointed out that one of the principal features of the Board's policy is the assimilation of the better-class aborigines, particularly those of lighter caste, into the general community. Legally the Board is not responsible for the protection and general welfare of those persons of mixed caste who do not possess a preponderance of aboriginal blood.

It should be understood that most of the aborigines of New South Wales are far removed from the primitive tribal way of life followed by their forbears. The full-bloods amongst the aboriginal community in this State number only about five per cent., the balance being of various castes. Most of these so-called aborigines have, for many generations, been in close touch with white society.

The Board's task, then, is to build up a sense of responsibility, and, in place of a previous aimless existence, to establish through education and training a desire to become more desirable members of society.

With this objective in view, the first step is to try to get as many as possible of the more advanced people established privately in their own homes. In the second place, in respect of those aborigines on settlements, the aim is to develop an appreciation of better social conditions and a more purposeful way of life.

The continuance of the acute housing shortage has militated against the furtherance of the Board's policy of assimilation. The difficulty of obtaining suitable allotments of land away from Stations for the erection of homes has been the principal obstacle in the Board's scheme of establishing approved aborigines in their own private homes.

The Aborigines Welfare Board is working for a happier and more stable destiny for the aboriginal people in its care, and, in that connection, hopes, by the exercise of wise and careful administration, to assist them to become industrious, reliable and intelligent citizens.

VITAL STATISTICS.

When the Commonwealth Government took the general census on the 30th June, 1947, provision was made for gathering information relative to the number of aborigines residing in the various States of the Commonwealth. The information gathered has not yet been fully compiled and it is therefore not possible to provide up-to-date information concerning the number of aborigines residing in New South Wales.

As shown in Annual Reports during the past few years, the latest figures relate to the number of aborigines resident in the State on the 30th June, 1941. This information is again set out hereunder:—

Caste.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
Full-blood	478	116	594
Mixed blood.....	5,410	4,612	10,022
Total	5,888	4,728	10,616

As at 30th June, 1947, 2,530 persons resided on the eighteen Stations under the control of the Board. This figure represents an increase of ten persons, as compared with the previous year, notwithstanding the fact that it does not include the population at Brungle, which is now classed as a Reserve.

On Reserves, excluding Stations, the total was 2,048, representing a decrease of twenty persons, despite the inclusion of Brungle with the Reserves.

Detailed figures for the individual Stations and Reserves are set out in Appendix "A" and Appendix "B", respectively, at the end of this report.

Movement of Population.—Lack of financial security, together with the roving tendency which appears to be inherent amongst aboriginal people, have caused an influx of aborigines to certain country towns over the years. In some cases the influx is becoming established more or less permanently, whilst in others the people have displayed a nomadic tendency.

Often, the movement has been made towards centres of employment or towards more congenial surroundings. During the past year a distinct migration towards the following towns was noticeable—Coff's Harbour, Coonabarabran, Griffith, Moree, Nowra and Yass.

In the case of Griffith and Coff's Harbour, there is evidence that semi-permanent communities of aborigines are being set up.

STAFF ORGANISATION.

The staff position in the Homes and Stations under the Board's control improved during the period under review, particularly during the last six months. The Board takes the opportunity of expressing its appreciation of the zeal and devotion to duty of the whole staff—both at Head Office and in the field.

During the year the staff arrangements at Head Office became more stabilised, and the strength is now practically back to normal.

About half of the total number of Managers of Stations are still required to combine their duties with that of teaching. In addition to managerial and administrative duties, Managers should be in a position to devote a substantial proportion of their time and energies to the welfare and personal problems of the aboriginal people under their care. Such matters are obviously of vital importance to a proper implementation of the Board's policy of uplift and eventual assimilation. Managers should, therefore, not be required to teach, and, in fairness to the children, their education should be in the hands of trained full-time teachers appointed by the Education Department.

It is to be regretted that no further separations of the functions of Teacher and Manager on Aboriginal Stations have been made since the last Annual Report. The position as at 30th June, 1947, was that at Kinchela Home and on seven Stations, the School was in charge of officers of the Education Department, whilst on the remaining eleven the Manager (or Matron) held the dual position of Teacher/Manager or Teacher/Matron.

At Cootamundra Girls' Home the children attend the local Public and High Schools, thus releasing the Principal from teaching duties.

No further appointments of Welfare Officers were made during the year. The present Officer, who is stationed at Casino, has continued to operate in the North Coast area and his duties have been extended to provide for periodical visits, in his capacity of Welfare Officer, to the Aboriginal Stations in this area. The appointment of additional Welfare Officers is again urged, and has been the subject of periodical representations to the Treasury, but, so far, without success. Two Cadet Welfare Officers were appointed during the year and these young men commenced their studies at Sydney University early in 1947.

The Board holds strongly to the opinion that Welfare Officers should be stationed in various parts of the State in a similar capacity to the Officer on the North Coast. These officers would attend to the welfare of the aborigines and generally advise and assist them in every possible way to become acceptable citizens.

A "Maintenance Officer", whose duty it will be to move from Station to Station and carry out building repairs, renovations and painting, with the assistance of casual labour, mainly aboriginal, was appointed during May, 1947. It is hoped that the employment of this Officer will assist materially in enabling the Board's buildings to be brought to a reasonably satisfactory standard of repair.

The improved employment position has rendered it difficult to retain competent aboriginal employees for the positions of handymen, etc. During the year it was found expedient to alter the system of payment of wages to aboriginal employees by discontinuing, at the employees' election, the issue of rations and clothing as part of the emolument, and increasing the cash remuneration. Handymen now receive £4 per week, plus housing.

ASSISTANCE TO ABORIGINES TO ACQUIRE THEIR OWN HOMES.

The Board is empowered, by legislation passed in 1943, to acquire land, erect buildings thereon, and sell or lease such land and buildings on terms to the aborigines, to enable them to establish homes for themselves. The Board's intention is to assist approved families to acquire their homes under a scheme somewhat similar to that obtaining with building societies. A sum of £3,000 was voted by the Government on the year's Estimates, but great difficulty has been experienced in endeavouring to secure suitable allotments of land for the erection of the homes. It is hoped during the current year that some progress will be made in this regard.

Aborigines who desire to be assisted in the above manner are required to have demonstrated that they are reliable persons who will honour their commitments.

EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES FOR ABORIGINES.

The 1943 Amendment to the Aborigines Protection Act authorises the Aborigines Welfare Board to issue to any aborigine, or person apparently having an admixture of aboriginal blood, a Certificate exempting such aborigine or person from the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act and Regulations, and was framed to enable the more advanced types of aborigines to free themselves from the restrictive sections of the Act and thus secure full status as citizens of the State.

Ordinarily, Invalid, Old Age and Widows' Pensions, also Maternity Allowances are not payable to persons with a preponderance of aboriginal blood; further, any person of aboriginal blood who resides on an Aborigines Reserve is not eligible to receive the Old Age, Invalid or Widows' Pensions. If, however, aborigines falling within the above categories are granted a Certificate of Exemption by the Board, and remove themselves from the care of the Board, such aborigines may become eligible to receive the above social benefits from the Commonwealth Government.

During the year ended 30th June, 1947, fifty-six applications were dealt with by the Board, as under:—

Exemption Certificates granted	43
Exemption Certificates declined	6
Exemption Certificates deferred	7

During the year, three certificates were cancelled.

It may be added that children of parents who have been granted a Certificate of Exemption are now allowed to attend ordinary State Public Schools without any restriction.

BOARDING-OUT OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN.

The amendment of the Aborigines Protection Act in 1943, in relation to the above matter, was necessary in order that the Aborigines Welfare Board might be empowered to arrange for the boarding-out of aboriginal wards with approved foster parents as an alternative to placing such children in one of the Children's Homes controlled by the Board. Certain children are necessarily temperamentally unsuited for institutional life and it is these children whom the Board prefers to place in suitable private homes under the care of a motherly person.

During the year, nine children were committed by the Court and admitted to the control of the Aborigines Welfare Board. These children were placed as follows:—

Boarded-out privately with families on Aboriginal Stations	6
Admitted to Cootamundra Home	1
Placed in employment	2

In addition, the Board assumed control of five children under Section 11D (a) of the Aborigines Protection Act. One of these was boarded-out to a family residing on an Aboriginal Station. Of the others, two were inmates of Cootamundra Home, one of Kinchela Home and one of Bomaderry Home at the time of admission to control.

Nine children were released from the Board's control as follows:—

Released to care of parents, guardian or relatives	6
Female wards married	2
Legally adopted by guardian	1

LABOUR CONDITIONS—EMPLOYMENT.

The Board has continued its policy of urging and assisting all able-bodied aborigines resident on Stations and Reserves to seek and remain in steady employment. Taken generally throughout the State, the employment position, as affecting aborigines, is very satisfactory. On most Stations and Reserves the majority of able-bodied men are in seasonal or permanent employment at good wages. The effects of the drought were again felt in the Far West.

There is, of course, the ever present problem of the attitude of the different types of aborigines towards work. Some men have displayed consistent reliability and these are regularly employed and highly-regarded by their employers. Others have shown little interest in their work and no fixity of purpose. The problem of continuity of effort is accentuated at the present time, when wages are relatively high. The solution is a gradual process, by way of education and training, accompanied by patience and forbearance on the part of the white employer.

The type of employment engaged in by aborigines depends mainly on the class of work available in their particular locality. In the Western areas they are employed largely on pastoral properties and undertake such work as shearing, fencing, droving, clearing, crutching, boundary riding and general farm work. In the forest areas in Coastal and Inland districts, many aborigines find profitable employment in the timber industry, particularly as sleeper-cutters. On the North Coast many aborigines have again secured employment with sugar-cane gangs, on banana plantations, or in the dairy-industry.

Aborigines from the Cumeruogunga and Moonahcullah Stations, situated near the Victorian border on the south-western part of the State, have for many years been regularly employed on seasonal work in the fruit-growing districts in Victoria, mainly at Shepparton and Mooropna. They are employed both in the orchards and in the canning factories, where they command good wages and are regarded as very satisfactory workers. Within recent years there has been a tendency for aboriginal families to move away from the two stations referred to and to take up permanent abode in Victoria, near to their work.

Aborigines from the Central Western districts of the State, principally centres such as Cowra, Condobolin, Narrandera and Darlington Point still obtain seasonal work on the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area during the fruit-picking season. Many of these people are re-employed by orchardists year by year and render satisfactory service.

At Jervis Bay employment is confined almost entirely to fishing. The men are organised into fishing teams and have the exclusive fishing rights of the two bays immediately adjacent to Jervis Bay.

Employment figures for the year under review show an increase over those for the previous year, amounting to 4.7%. So far as the aboriginal Stations are concerned, employment figures are available, and a comparative table hereunder shows the number of men in employment during the last quarter of the years 1945, 1946 and 1947:—

Period.	Able-bodied Men on Stations.		
	Number in Residence.	Number in Employment.	Percentage in Employment.
April-June 1945 ...	543	510	93.3%
April-June 1946 ...	578	515	89.1%
April-June 1947 ...	538	505	93.8%

JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT.

The oversight and general welfare of aboriginal wards in employment has continued to receive the careful attention of the Board's administration. The wards have been regularly visited by the Board's Welfare Officers and Inspectors of the Child Welfare Department. In some cases, due to the inaccessibility of the place of employment, the visits of inspection were carried out by the local Police Officers, acting as Agents of the Aborigines Welfare Board.

So far, it has not been found possible greatly to develop facilities for the teaching of trades to young aborigines, but the Board hopes to do so as soon as circumstances permit.

Children who have been committed to the care of the Board as wards of the State are maintained at the Board's institutions until they reach school-leaving age. The boys are then instructed in rural work and the girls in domestic work, and, after they attain a reasonable standard, they are placed in employment with approved employers under apprenticeship conditions.

As at 30th June, 1947, ten boys and eleven girls between the ages of fifteen and eighteen years, who were under the Board's control as wards, were in employment throughout the State, on conditions and wages established by Regulation.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE.

From a survey of the health conditions amongst the aboriginal communities throughout the State, during the year under review, it can be said that, generally speaking, the position has been quite satisfactory. Very few cases of serious illness have been reported. At Caroon Station (Quirindi), and also at Kincheia Boys' Home, epidemics of chicken-pox occurred, which were successfully combated.

At Cumerogunga Station a minor epidemic of measles also occurred. There were skin ailments, such as scabies and impetigo. On the whole the residents of stations have maintained themselves in a comparatively clean condition.

The closest attention is given by Managers of Stations, together with the Matrons, and the Police in charge of Reserves, to the health of the aboriginal residents. Constant efforts are maintained on Stations to teach the value of a wholesome diet and personal hygiene. Where possible on Stations a community vegetable garden and dairy herd have continued to be maintained. Residents are encouraged to include vegetables and milk in their diet.

As in former years, all aborigines requiring medical attention and hospital treatment have been given the same facilities as those received by members of the white community. Aborigines as citizens of the State are entitled to attend at local Public Hospitals, and, if necessary, may be admitted for treatment.

As in the past, excellent co-operation and assistance were rendered to the Board last year by the Department of Public Health, the Baby Health Centre Nurses and the Bush Nursing Association.

In connection with dental treatment for aborigines, the policy of the Board is to arrange for aborigines who can pay their way to receive attention on the most economical terms. The aged, infirm or indigent are afforded free dental attention, the cost being borne by the Board. When dental treatment is necessary for aborigines, it is usually possible for arrangements to be made with one of the local dentists to visit the Station for the purpose.

During the year, certain publicity was given in the Press to

living conditions of aboriginal families who have migrated to Coff's Harbour during the past four or five years. Many of these families set up inferior humpies for themselves and did not conform to proper standards of living or hygiene. Some were alleged to be suffering from social diseases.

After investigation by officers of the Department of Public Health and the Aborigines Welfare Board, it was ascertained that the conditions were not so serious as was alleged, and arrangements were made to improve their conditions and for affected persons to receive proper treatment. A special area has been acquired and the Board intends to erect a number of small houses during the forthcoming year.

HOUSING.

The Board's aim is to provide all aboriginal families under its care with proper homes. Pride and self-respect amongst any class of people can only come when living standards are satisfactory. Whilst aborigines continue to exist under sub-standard unhygienic conditions, they generally show very little desire to change their mode of life and to progress to a stage where they will be received into the general community and be able to take their place there with success and satisfaction.

The Board's housing programme for this year was once again handicapped by the general economic difficulties, mainly involving shortage of labour and materials, but it is pleasing to record that contracts were arranged for the reconstruction of one Aboriginal Station and the establishment of two new settlements.

Taree.—At Taree Aboriginal Station the homes of the aboriginal residents, which were built mainly by the aborigines themselves, during the depression years of the thirties, are distinctly inferior and quite inadequate to meet the demands of those desiring accommodation. The Board has, therefore, undertaken to rebuild practically the whole Station and, apart from a few cottages of recent construction, which will be altered and improved, the remaining cottages will be demolished and replaced by homes possessing ample accommodation and the usual necessary facilities and conveniences.

The reconstruction work will embrace the erection of twenty-four new cottages, a recreation hall, a medical treatment unit, a ration store and the provision of ample water storage from roof catchment to each new dwelling. When completed, Taree will be a modern community settlement.

Moree.—At Moree the size of the Aborigines Reserve was increased by the acquisition of additional land. Upon this area a modern settlement will be established in order to overcome the unsatisfactory housing conditions which, at present, prevail on the Reserve, due to the ever-increasing influx of aborigines into the district. The Board has now undertaken to establish an Aboriginal Station on the Reserve and to provide resident management. It has let a contract for the erection, in addition to staff residences, of twenty-four cottages, single men's quarters, a church and a recreation hall, as well as other administrative buildings. Nine existing cottages will be re-designed and re-established on more suitable sites.

A bore for water supply has been developed on the site of the new Station and sufficient water will be available from the sub-artesian flow to meet all requirements. The conditions at Moree in the past have been the subject of representations by the local Council and other bodies, and it is considered that, with the establishment of the new Station, cause for complaint will be removed, for, with modern housing and resident management, there will be developed a desirable community settlement.

Murrin Bridge (Lake Cargelligo).—The need for the provision of better housing and general living conditions for the aboriginal people of the Far West, including Menindee Aboriginal Station, has been apparent for some considerable time, but, due to circumstances outside its control, it has not until recently been possible for the Board to bring its plans to fruition. During the year under review, however, a contract was let and work was commenced on a site at Murrin Bridge, near Lake Cargelligo. A new model Station will be established, which will comprise cottages, staff residences, recreation hall, church, single men's quarters, administrative buildings, water supply and all other facilities necessary in a community settlement. When this settlement has been completed, it is proposed to transfer the people from Menindee to Murrin Bridge. In addition, it is considered that other aborigines from the Central Western Plains will take up residence at the new Station. When all these people are rehoused, it will then be possible to continue their education for citizenship, and under these better conditions, they should, in due course, show marked progress in their way of life.

Tabulam.—The aboriginal people in the Tabulam district have, for some years, been living under unsatisfactory conditions and a new site has recently been purchased on which to erect proper housing and other amenities to give them an opportunity to improve their standards of living. Plans and specifications are at present in course of preparation.

All the above allocations represent some progress with the Board's comprehensive housing programme, but it is regretted that, due to the continued shortage of labour and materials, it has been necessary to defer action in regard to other projects until a later date. Repairs and renovations to existing Station dwellings were continued during the year, mainly by the management, with the assistance of local aborigines.

A long-range plan has been developed by the Board to provide for the erection of new dwellings and repairs and renovations and improvements to existing homes, in order to ensure that all aboriginal families under the Board's care are satisfactorily housed. Funds are being made available by the Government to enable this plan to become fully operative and it is hoped that, in the ensuing year, the difficulties regarding labour and materials will improve and that it will be possible at the completion of the year to report greater progress.

AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY.

On every Aboriginal Station throughout the State where soil and climatic conditions are favourable, the Board's aim is to foster and develop agricultural activity to the fullest extent. Wherever possible, Stations maintain a community vegetable garden worked by the aboriginal employees and any unemployed able-bodied residents. A dairy herd is also maintained wherever practicable. One of the difficulties experienced this year on many Stations has been lack of labour. In some cases it has been difficult even to retain one or two aboriginal handymen, because of the fact that employment of aborigines is in popular demand and men are able to earn high wages in outside employment. Despite the fact that the condition of the Stations must suffer in consequence, the Board prefers men to seek outside employment and make every endeavour to maintain themselves and their families without assistance from the Board.

Throughout 1946 and part of 1947, most districts in New South Wales passed through a continuous drought and many Stations were unable to maintain satisfactory agricultural and garden productivity, owing to lack of water. Another factor that has retarded agricultural production has been the extreme difficulty in acquiring farm implements.

Despite unfavourable conditions and circumstances, some of the Stations have maintained their community vegetable gardens at a high standard and have been able to supply vegetable requirements for all families on such Stations. The most outstanding Stations this year in respect of vegetable production were: Boggabilla, Brewarrina, Kinchela Home, Quirindi, Walgett and Woodenbong.

Dairy herds at Boggabilla, Bellbrook, Quirindi, Roseby Park, Wallaga Lake and Woodenbong and Brungle Reserve, maintained a milk production sufficient to meet the needs of all families. Kinchela Boys' Home is building up a good grade dairy herd, which averaged twenty gallons of milk daily. Throughout the year this yield provided for all domestic milk requirements, as well as meeting the needs of the Home in respect of butter.

EDUCATION.

In dealing with the question of education of aboriginal children, it is very necessary to remember that scientists maintain that there are no basic inequalities among the different races of the world. All are considered as capable of contributing to human welfare if given equal opportunities with more privileged groups. This is no less true of the aborigines if they were more generally accepted as ordinary men and women with the same right to responsibilities and privileges as others.

The arrangement with the Education Department whereby children of any aborigine securing a Certificate of Exemption from the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act and Regulations may be admitted to the ordinary public school, notwithstanding the existence of any Special School for Aborigines in the district, or any decision by the Education Department for the general exclusion of aborigines from the public school concerned, has continued.

In connection with the requirement of a medical certificate prior to the enrolment of aboriginal children in public schools, it is the Board's opinion that when the admission has been approved, the headmaster of the school concerned should have the responsibility conferred upon him of admitting or declining such child for enrolment, basing his decision on his judgment of the child's health and personal cleanliness, as in the case of white children.

It is encouraging to note that the earlier antagonistic attitude of many white people towards aboriginal children attending the same school as white children is being modified. At Lismore, to which centre reference was made in the last report, the headmaster of the North Lismore Public School has reported that his aboriginal pupils are always clean and neat in their dress. At Casino a number of aboriginal children attend the public and high schools. At the high school a number of the mixed bloods have made very satisfactory progress in their studies. Beatrice Hogan, the holder of the Board's Scholarship for 1946-47, to whom reference was made in last year's report, has continued to prove an outstanding scholar and personality. Beatrice will sit for her Leaving Certificate in November, 1947. At many of the public schools throughout the State—including Casino—there is no trace of racial prejudice and aboriginal and white children mingle freely both inside and outside the schools. This is indicative of what may be achieved in a community sympathetic to the Board's objectives.

The two aboriginal lads from the Kinchela Boys' Training Home, Andrew McKenzie and William Dixon, who showed such promise in their studies at Kempsey High School during 1946, have continued to make very satisfactory progress. It is hoped to arrange for these lads, one of whom is now almost sixteen years of age and the other well over sixteen years, to be accommodated in the near future away from the Home. They will continue with their studies at another high school.

The Board desires again to emphasise the necessity for fully-trained teachers to be made available to teach in those aboriginal schools where such action has not yet been taken. Most of the schools on the larger aboriginal stations are now staffed by trained teachers, but the hope is expressed that the schools on the smaller Stations will also benefit in a similar manner as soon as the Education Department has trained teachers available.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES ON STATIONS AND RESERVES.

Accredited religious bodies and missionary organisations are encouraged to carry on their work amongst the aborigines and to conduct services or religious instruction on Aboriginal Stations and Reserves.

Whilst appreciating the practical difficulties experienced by country clergy in respect of available time and transport, it is still felt that greater interest could be displayed by some in the matter of the spiritual welfare amongst the aborigines. Furthermore, the process of preparation for full citizenship and assimilation could be more generally encouraged by white congregations showing a greater personal interest in and sympathy for the aborigines. The Church could form the basis of an excellent social background as well as being a spiritual force, and aborigines breaking away from their old traditions to a new way of life would have something on which to cling.

For many years the United Aborigines Mission and the Aborigines Inland Mission have operated on certain Stations and Reserves and their missionaries are endeavouring to implant a simple faith amongst the people.

The children at the Board's Homes have continued to receive religious instruction, the girls at Cootamundra attending their own Churches in the town of Cootamundra, as well as Sunday School classes at the Home, and the boys at Kinchela attend Divine Service at the Home, conducted by an approved chaplain.

Grateful acknowledgement is recorded in this report to the splendid work done by a group of young ladies from Cootamundra, who, throughout the whole year, have visited the Girls' Home regularly every Sunday afternoon to conduct Sunday School classes amongst the girls. These ladies have carried on this work with enthusiasm and sincerity of purpose, and the Board desires to express its thanks to them for their practical interest.

"NEWS SHEET" FOR ABORIGINES.

The Board has, for some time past, given serious consideration to the possibility of establishing a "News Service" for the aborigines throughout the State, so that these people might have a more personal contact with the Board and its Head Office, thus enabling them to keep fully abreast with new policies or changes of existing policy. The scheme envisaged the issue of a Monthly Newspaper, which would be edited and published at Head Office. The circulation would extend to every family of aborigines on Stations and Reserves throughout the State. It was considered that this medium would provide the aboriginal people with a better knowledge of their fellow-aborigines in other parts of the State, and at the same time enable a more personal and friendly spirit with the Board to be fostered. Owing to certain difficulties in putting the scheme

into operation, the Board has been forced to defer the inauguration of the newspaper for the present, but it is hoped to make a beginning as soon as those difficulties have been overcome.

In the meantime, the Board is endeavouring to arrange for as many Stations as possible to establish their own periodical news-letter for circulation amongst the families resident on the Station. This idea has already been put into practice on one Station, namely Brungle, where the teacher-manager, on his own initiative, is editing a "News Sheet" of at least one page every three or four weeks. The sheets are "ronced" from stencils on a duplicating machine and the issues are eagerly awaited by the residents.

RELIEF AND BENEFITS TO ABORIGINES FROM THE BOARD.

It has been pointed out in previous reports that one of the Board's important duties is the care and relief of all aged, infirm, indigent and incapable aborigines. Every aborigine who is unable to care for himself or herself is provided with housing, sustenance and medical care, free of cost. Able-bodied families, however, are expected to provide for themselves from the proceeds of their employment.

It is of interest to note that the number of persons resident on Stations who are dependent on the Board for sustenance decreased throughout the year, although the total number of aborigines in residence increased slightly.

A brief summary of the benefits issued to aborigines requiring sustenance is set out hereunder:—

Housing.—So far as housing conditions permit, every family living on a Station or Reserve, is provided with a small home, free of rent. Every effort is made by the Board, not only to maintain existing dwellings in a suitable condition for habitation, but also to extend its programme of new housing, year by year.

The difficulty in obtaining material and labour has prevented the Board from giving full effect to its policy in this direction.

Rations.—Every aged, infirm and indigent aborigine receives a full-scale ration, the food items in which are planned in accordance with recommendations by the Department of Public Health. In addition to the standard issue, aborigines on a number of Stations are also provided with milk and a variety of fresh vegetables produced on the Station.

The under-mentioned scale of food rations issued weekly includes the following items:—

Item.	Adults.	Children. Years 9 to 15.	Children. Years 1 to 9.
Flour	10 lbs.	5 lbs.	5 lbs.
Sugar	1 lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.
*Tea	2 oz.	2 oz.	...
Coffee or Cocoa	2 oz.	...	2 oz.
Jam, Syrup or Honey	12 oz.	6 oz.	6 oz.
Dripping... ..	1 lb.	8 oz.	8 oz.
Potatoes, "A" Grade	2 lbs.	1 lb.	1 lb.
Onions or other Vegetables	8 oz.	4 oz.	4 oz.
Baking Powder	4 oz.	2 oz.	2 oz.
Rice	1 lb.	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Oatmeal	8 oz.	4 oz.	4 oz.
Powdered Milk	12 oz.	12 oz.	12 oz.
or			
Fresh Milk	7 pints	7 pints	7 pints
Soap	4 oz.	2 oz.	2 oz.
*Meat	4 lbs.	4 lbs.	2 lbs.

* In accordance with ration limitations.

The number of rations issued on the various Stations at the beginning and at the end of the year is shown in Appendix "A." Fourteen per cent. of the total population on Stations received rations during the year 1946-47, as compared with sixteen per cent. in the year 1945-46.

A return of the rations issued to aborigines residing on Reserves at the beginning and end of the year is set out in Appendix "B".

This return reveals that there was a slight decrease in the number of recipients over the twelve months in question, but a small decrease in the number of residents will also be observed.

Clothing.—In accordance with the usual procedure, aged, indigent and other dependent aborigines benefited by clothes issues, on the basis of two outfits per annum—one for summer and one for winter.

The following table shows the number of recipients during 1946-47, compared with the previous two years:—

Issue.	Male.			Female.			Total.		
	1944-45	45-46	46-47	1944-45	45-46	46-47	1944-45	45-46	46-47
Summer	231	147	168	209	191	230	530	338	398
Winter ...	239	135	135	279	174	202	518	309	337
Total ...	470	282	303	578	365	432	1,048	647	735

The figures for 1944-45 are not useful for purposes of comparison as they included extra issues to overcome deficiencies in supply during the war years.

Blankets.—It has been the practice for many years to supply blankets to all aborigines in need. During the period under review free issues to aboriginal people on Stations have been maintained on practically the same basis as during 1945-46; whilst on Reserves, although the number issued dropped, all requirements were met. The following are the comparative figures:—

Place.	1944-45.	1945-46.	1946-47.
Stations	450	465	460
Reserves	149	153	117
Total	599	618	577

Medical Attention.—It has already been indicated, under the heading of Health and Hygiene, that free medical attention, together with free medicine and drugs, is given to all needy aborigines throughout the State. There is a Treatment Room and Dispensary at every Aboriginal Station, whilst a member of the staff is either a trained nurse or has had some experience in medical care. All cases of illness which are considered to be of a more serious nature are conveyed to the nearest Public Hospital for attention on the same basis as white people.

Baby Outfits.—It is customary to supply every expectant mother with an outfit of baby clothing. Indigent families are supplied gratuitously, but a nominal contribution of 25s. towards the cost is expected when the husband is earning reasonable wages. During the year ninety baby outfits were supplied to aborigines by the Board.

Christmas Cheer.—In accordance with its usual practice the Board provided aboriginal residents on Stations and Reserves with extra food luxuries to enable them to enjoy the festive season. As in former years, special food items at Christmas time included the necessary ingredients for the making of a Christmas pudding. Every dependent family participated and was therefore able to enjoy the Christmas season in an appropriate festive manner. Every child up to school-leaving age received a small toy or gift. On many Stations the Manager and Teacher arranged a Christmas party for the children.

SOCIAL BENEFITS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.

Child Endowment.—At the continued wish of the Commonwealth Government the Board administered for another year the Child Endowment payable to those persons of aboriginal blood, where it is considered that reliance could not be placed on the mother to expend the Endowment wholly in the interests of the children.

The following table gives details of the cases administered by the Board during the year ended 30th June, 1947, and during the two previous years:—

Year ended 30th June.	Amount received from Commonwealth for Administration.	Number of cases administered at beginning of Year.	Subtract.		Add.		Cases administered at end of Year.
			Cases expired.	Cases changed to Direct Pay.	Cases reverted to Board's Control.	New Cases.	
1945 ...	£10,542	268	16	32	9	19	268
1946 ...	£13,952	268	11	41	7	19	242
1947 ...	£11,737	242	20	44	9	13	200

Pensions.—Old Age Pensions, Widows' Pensions and Invalid Pensions are payable by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services to those aborigines who satisfy the requirements of the Commonwealth Act. Aborigines possessing a preponderance of aboriginal blood, however, are ineligible for any of the above grants. In addition, the Commonwealth Authorities do not pay pensions to aborigines of any caste, whilst such aborigines are resident upon the Board's Stations or Reserves. If, however, an otherwise eligible aborigine secures a Certificate of Exemption from the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act and Regulations, and undertakes to live independently of the Board and away from all Stations and Reserves, the Commonwealth will grant a pension.

It is appreciated that it would not be economic to apply social benefits to all aboriginal persons throughout the Commonwealth, and that clauses exist for payment to "preponderants" who are exempted by law from the provisions of State legislation. In New South Wales, however, there are many aboriginal persons who are denied pensions, whose only disqualification is their residence on an Aboriginal Station or Reserve. If otherwise were the case, these people would be living under unsatisfactory conditions, which fact alone would militate against their exemption from the State law. The Board considers that the position could be met by the payment of the pension to the Board, who would administer it on the pensioner's behalf, after deducting a reasonable weekly amount to cover the cost of the pensioner's accommodation and maintenance. Although representations have been made to the Commonwealth Authorities in connection with the above suggestion, the Board's efforts have, so far, proved to be unavailing.

Two War Pensions are administered by the Board, but the two Old Age Pensioners whose pensions were administered both died during the year.

Maternity Allowance.—During the period under review, the Maternity Allowance in respect of mothers of aboriginal blood was paid by the Commonwealth Authorities to the Board for administration in one hundred and fifty-four cases. The Commonwealth do not grant the Maternity Allowance to mothers in whom aboriginal blood predominates, but residence on an Aboriginal Station or Reserve does not disqualify.

CHILDREN'S HOMES.

An important duty of the Board, as laid down in the Aborigines Protection Act, is that it shall provide for the custody and maintenance of the children of aborigines. In practice, the Board assumes control of aboriginal children after they have been committed by the Children's Court as neglected or uncontrollable children. Frequently children are admitted to the control of the Board at the request of the parent or guardian. These applications are considered on their merits, and if the parents are found to be unable to exercise proper care of their children, the Board usually assumes control of their children. The Board at present maintains two Children's Homes for the reception, maintenance, education and training of the aboriginal children admitted to its control. These two Homes, namely, the Kinchela Boys' Training Home and the Cootamundra Girls' Training Home, have continued to function satisfactorily.

The Homes mentioned accommodate children from five to fifteen years of age, but these institutions are not sufficient for the numbers requiring care or for a proper division of the children into age and behaviour groups. The Board is strongly of the opinion that additional Homes should be established to house the children in proper groups. It is obvious that children of tender years need much individual attention and that their segregation from children of adolescent years, particularly those presenting psychological problems, is highly desirable.

Another essential Institution, for which it has been hoped provision would have been possible, is a Cottage Home for young children of pre-school age, capable of accommodating upwards of thirty children. This Home could be located either in the Metropolitan area or in a country area, wherever the placement of the children to the best advantage would be facilitated. It would have the effect of withdrawing children of the pre-school age group from the Board's institutions and from the Bomaderry Home, conducted by the United Aborigines Mission.

An average of five or six children of this age grouping are brought under the Board's care and control year by year, and it is highly probable that this number would be increased if satisfactory facilities were available for their accommodation.

Kinchela Boys' Training Home.—This Institution is the only Home for aboriginal boys controlled by the Board, and is located on the Macleay River, sixteen miles from Kempsey. It has an area of thirty-two acres, twenty-five acres of which

are used for the training of the senior boys in practical farm work, principally dairying and vegetable production.

As at 30th June, 1947, the enrolment was forty-two boys. During the previous twelve months there were five admissions and sixteen discharges. Eight of the latter proceeded to employment under the Board's apprenticeship system and the balance were transferred to Aboriginal Stations. The average age of the boys in the Home was twelve years three months.

The general health of the boys throughout the year was exceptionally good. There was a mild outbreak of chicken-pox. Two boys were admitted to the Sydney Eye Hospital for operations on their eyes and eventually returned to the Home virtually cured. One lad died at the Macleay District Hospital from peritonitis. All inmates were inoculated during the year with anti-tetanus serum. The Board's local dental surgeon paid two visits to the Home and all boys requiring dental attention were attended to. The local Government Medical Officer visited the Home twice, when all boys were examined.

Every effort is made at the Home to organise recreation for the boys. A swimming pool is nearing completion. During the year a 16 millimetre talkie equipment was installed at the Home and regular weekly feature-programmes are now provided by arrangement with the Metro-Goldwyn Mayer Pty. Ltd.

All boys attend school until they reach the age of fifteen years. Teachers have reported satisfactory progress. As mentioned previously in this report, William Dixon and Andrew McKenzie, who were enrolled at the Kempsey High School, have continued to progress very well in their studies.

Divine Service is conducted every Sunday at the Home by the visiting Chaplain, and the Roman Catholic Priest visits the Home at intervals.

A dairy herd of twenty-one cows enabled the Home to be provided with milk, butter and cream throughout the year. An average of seventeen cows were in milk for the year and production was as follows:—

Total milk produced	5,478 gallons
Milk consumed (by inmates and staff)	3,216 gallons
Milk separated	2,262 gallons
Butter produced	982 pounds

The yield for the year in respect of vegetable and farm products has not been so satisfactory as in previous years, due to poor seasons and the worst drought in the history of the North Coast during the Winter and Spring of 1946. The vegetable production for the year was as follows:—

Potatoes	1½ tons
Cabbages	400
Lettuce	800
Peas and Beans	200 lbs.
Carrots and Parsnips	10 cwt.
Squash, marrows, etc.	6 cwt.
Pumpkins	3 tons
Rhubarb	2,500 lbs.
Beetroot	500 lbs.
Tomatoes	1,200 lbs.
Silver Beet	2,000 lbs.
Onions	200 lbs.

Stock fodder produced and used for Winter stock feed was as follows:—

Lucerne Hay	40 tons
Sacchaline	30 tons
Maize	60 bus.
Cow Peas	10 tons

Cootamundra Girls' Training Home.—The Cootamundra Home is located two miles from the town and has accommodation for fifty inmates. At the beginning of the year forty girls were in residence, and forty-three at the close of the year. Seven girls were admitted to the Home, of whom five were from the Children's Home, Bomaderry. Four girls were discharged, all being placed in employment under apprenticeship conditions.

The health of the girls has, generally, been very satisfactory and any illnesses were only of a minor nature. The Government Medical Officer visited the Home at regular intervals and examined every girl. Necessary dental attention was given by the local dentists.

A dairy herd was maintained at the Home, thus ensuring a constant supply of fresh milk.

The girls continued to attend either the Central Public or High School in Cootamundra. Those attending the High School are progressing very well, whilst the younger girls are maintaining their position in class. The older girls attending High School are displaying commendable interest in their studies.

The children participate in various kinds of sport at the schools, and often travel with teams to other schools in the district. Swimming is popular and tennis is played at the Home and at School.

The girls attend the local Picture Show from time to time, and are admitted free through the courtesy of the Manager.

During the year under review, a new radio set, with gramophone pick-up, was provided for the Home.

The children attend their own churches in the town of Cootamundra. Girls belonging to the Church of England who were of adequate age were confirmed and six are being prepared. Four girls attended their first Communion Service in the Roman Catholic Church. Ladies of the Church of England and Methodist Church journey from the township each Sunday for the purpose of conducting Sunday School Classes at the Home. This was done at considerable personal inconvenience and sacrifice on the part of the ladies concerned and the Board is most appreciative of their efforts.

ABORIGINAL STATIONS.

The Board maintained eighteen Stations during the year. Brungle reverted to the status of a Reserve on 28th August, 1945. The Stations are located throughout the State and may be described as community settlements set aside for the use of aborigines. They are under the resident management of a Board's Officer, assisted in a number of instances by staff, including a Matron. The Station unit consists of a home for each family, school, ration store, medical treatment annexe, recreation hall (also used for Church Services), water supply, and, wherever practicable, a dairy herd and community vegetable garden.

Whilst no effort is spared in endeavouring to maintain a helpful administration, every family is expected to provide for its own needs. Able-bodied men and youths are required to seek, and are assisted in procuring, employment. On the other hand, the sick, aged and infirm are cared for by the Board and receive free food (if required), medical attention, blankets, tobacco and other comforts.

Able-bodied men temporarily out of employment are required to perform a certain amount of work on the Station, in return for which they and their families receive food, clothing and other relief.

Appendix "A" shows the size of the various Stations and the population of each. Distribution of population on Stations as at 30th June, 1947, was as follows:—

Over 200 residents	2 Stations.
Between 100 and 200 residents	12 do.
Under 100 residents	4 do.

It is pleasing to note that, as mentioned earlier in this report, work has been commenced on a site at Murrin Bridge, near Lake Cargelligo, on the erection of a new model Station to provide for aborigines from Menindee Station and other localities in the Far West. Contracts have also been arranged for the construction of a Station at Moree and for the reconstruction of the existing Station at Taree. Plans and specifications are, at present, in course of preparation for the housing of the aboriginal people living in the Tabulam district on a recently-acquired site near that town.

Appendix "A" of this report indicates that the total population on all Stations as at 30th June, 1947, was 2,530, representing an increase of ten for the twelve months. For purposes of comparison, it should be noted that the figure of 2,530 does not include Brungle, which is now classed as a Reserve.

Vital statistics for the Board's Stations for the year are as shown hereunder. The previous year's figures are given in parenthesis:—

Births	112 (108)
Deaths	38 (43)
Marriages	13 (14)

ABORIGINAL RESERVES.

Aboriginal Reserves, like Stations, are areas set aside for the use of aborigines, but not under the control of a resident Manager. Supervision of the Reserves is usually exercised by the local Officers-in-Charge of Police, but in a few instances, the Teacher-in-Charge of the local Aboriginal School acts as the Board's non-resident Manager.

The amenities and improvements with which the Stations are provided are not found on the Reserves. Aborigines living on Reserves are, normally, more independent and prefer to fend for themselves. Unfortunately, however, the standard of living in many such cases is not comparable to that amongst the aborigines who live on Stations.

During the later part of the year under review, the Board acquired a new Reserve of 52 acres at Gulargambone. This area is far more satisfactory than the previous one, and is recognised as being a favourite camping place for the local aborigines. Provision has been made for the establishment of homes and other facilities on this new area in the 1947-48 Loan Estimates.

Appendix "B" gives a list of Reserves inhabited as at 30th June, 1947, together with the population on each at that date as compared with the previous year. The total population figures were 2,048 and 2,068, respectively, representing a decrease of twenty. It should be mentioned, however, that Brungle's population is now included with the Reserves.

ACCOUNTS AND GENERAL EXPENDITURE.

Appendix "C" indicates that a total amount of £63,491 was expended on the welfare and relief of Aborigines during the year ended 30th June, 1947. Of this amount, £57,399 was expended directly by the Board and £6,092 was incurred by other Government Departments on behalf of the Board. The total expenditure for the year ended 30th June, 1947, represents an increase of £11,697 on the expenditure for the previous year.

CONCLUSION.

The Board desires again to place on record the valuable assistance and co-operation rendered by other Government Departments throughout the year. The assistance given by the Police Department, Department of Agriculture, Department of Public Health, Department of Lands, Department of Education, Department of Public Works, Department of the Chief Secretary and Child Welfare Department is gratefully acknowledged.

In conclusion, the Board wishes to express its appreciation and thanks to all those who rendered loyal and willing service throughout the year under review.

Dated this sixteenth day of March, one thousand nine hundred and forty-eight.

S. L. ANDERSON,
Chairman.
J. GRAHAME DREW,
A. P. ELKIN,
W. FERGUSON,
J. GLASHEEN,
ROY HEFEREN,
A. W. G. LIPSCOMB,
WALTER PAGE,
B. E. SADLER,
MICHAEL SAWTELL,
ERNEST G. WRIGHT,

Members
Aborigines
Welfare
Board.

APPENDIX "A."

List of Aboriginal Stations.
Vital Statistics and Ration Recipients.

Station.	Area.	As at 30/6/46.		As at 30/6/47.		Statistics for year ended 30/6/47.		
		Population.	Ration Recipients.	Population.	Ration Recipients.	Births.	Deaths.	Marriages.
	Acres.							
Bellbrook	96	94	18	108	25	2	3	...
Boggabilla	457	199	32	199	23	4	5	...
Brewarrina	4,638	181	41	167	39	7	3	...
Brungle	320	46	15	*	*	*	*	*
Burnt Bridge	613	277	22	284	28	14	3	1
Burra Bee Dee	623	102	7	81	5	3	1	1
Cabbage Tree Island	125	120	18	101	14	8	...	...
Cowra	31	125	38	116	6	5	1	1
Cumeroogunga	2,600	143	18	129	10	6	3	1
Jervis Bay	100	105	16	120	16	5	3	2
Menindee	1,000	187	79	234	105	19	4	...
Moonahcullah	232	53	6	78	7	4	...	1
Pilliga	150	100	11	91	18	5	5	...
Quirindi	220	167	2	169	1	5	3	3
Roseby Park	66	122	17	129	13	7	2	...
Taree	51	144	17	134	10	5	...	2
Walgett	337	153	29	150	32	7	1	...
Wallaga Lake	341	62	9	94	9	1	...	1
Woodenbong	126	140	13	146	12	5	1	1
Total .....	...	2,520	408	2,530	373	112	38	13

* See Appendix "B". Brungle now classed as a Reserve.

APPENDIX "B."

List of Aboriginal Reserves.
Particulars of Ration Recipients.

Reserve.	Area.	As at 30th June, 1946.		As at 30th June, 1947.	
		Population.	Ration Recipients.	Population.	Ration Recipients.
	Acres.				
Balranald	140	34	2	37	...
†Baryulgil (Settlement only)	40	38	...	66	4
Bowraville	90	137	9	132	13
*Brungle	320	*	*	73	17
Collarenebri (Camp only)	50	91	...	82	...
†Condobolin	16	103	19	103	26
Coraki	10	51	9	68	10
Darlington Point	25	48	45	75	26
†Dubbo (Talbragar)	18	34	...	47	...
†Forster	19	93	...	73	...
Goodooga (Dennawan)	80	98	3	80	1
Goolagong	80	...	...	19	...
†Gulargambone	70	118	2	113	2
Hillston	98	15	...	...	...
†Karuah	50	50	3	60	4
†Kyogle	115	22	...	16	...
La Perouse	6	68	...	70	...
Macksville (Eungai)	20	2	...	5	...
Moree	12	359	...	223	2
Mungindi	100	60	...	97	...
Nambucca Heads	70	3	4	4	4
Quambone	43	12	...	10	...
Rye Park	140	12	...	12	...
†Tabulam	100	115	19	115	15
Tibooburra	100	2	2	6	3
†Tuncester	24	60	...	76	...
†Tingha (Long Gully)	15	50	...	39	...
†Ugundahi Island (Maclean)	40	80	5	44	2
Uralla	100	15	...	18	...
†Walcha (Summer Vale)	107	35	5	37	4
†Wellington (Nanima)	100	41	21	42	15
Wilcannia	100	169	1	160	9
†Yass	9	53	...	46	2
Total .....	...	2,068	149	2,048	159

* See Appendix "A". Brungle classed as Station in Annual Report as at 30/6/46.

† Signifies Aboriginal School on Reserve.

‡ Name changed to Cubawee as from 5th August, 1947.

APPENDIX "C."

STATEMENTS OF EXPENDITURE.
for Year ended 30th June, 1947.**ACCOUNTS AND GENERAL EXPENDITURE—**

The total amount expended on the welfare and relief of aborigines during the year ended 30th June, 1947, was £63,491.

Details of Expenditure are as set out hereunder—

Direct Expenditure incurred by Board—

	£	
Buildings and Repairs, etc.	7,533	
Salaries and Wages	21,478	
Maintenance of, and assistance to, Aborigines	17,478	
Freight, Cartage, Travelling Expenses, Purchase of Machinery and Plant, and other expenditure of a miscellaneous nature	10,910	
	£57,399	

Expenditure incurred by other Departments on behalf of the Board—

Government Stores Department, for purchase of clothing, stores, stationery, and other supplies	3,207	
Department of Public Health, for medical fees, etc.	635	
Department of Public Works, for telephone services	745	
Resumed Properties Department, for sanitary services	1,426	
Government Printer, for Printing and Bookbinding	79	
	£6,092	
	Total £63,491	

NOTE: The total does not include an amount of £15,271 expended by the Department of Education for the education of aboriginal children in native schools.