

ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA



REPORT

OF THE

ABORIGINES PROTECTION
BOARD

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE, 1955

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1956

Report of the Aborigines Protection Board for the Year ended 30th June, 1955

Aborigines' Protection Board, Adelaide
26th August, 1955.

To His Excellency Air Vice-Marshal SIR ROBERT ALLINGHAM GEORGE, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, and upon whom has been conferred the decoration of the Military Cross, Governor in and over the State of South Australia and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

May it please Your Excellency :—

We do ourselves the honour to submit the annual report of the Aborigines Protection Board for the year ended 30th June, 1955.

The personnel of the Board at the commencement of the year were as follows —

The Honourable M. McIntosh, Minister of Works, Chairman.

Dr. J. B. Cleland, Deputy Chairman.

Mr. Len J. Cooke.

Mrs. Constance M. Cooke.

Mrs. A. M. Johnston.

Rev. G. O. B. Rowe.

Mr. C. E. Barlett, Secretary.

It has been found necessary for the Board to meet fortnightly instead of monthly owing to the increase of business due largely to certain developmental policies and an increased effort in social and welfare activities. Members have been most regular in their attendance indicating their desire to promote the welfare of the aborigines particularly part-aborigines in the settled districts to enable them to take a full part in the life of the community. In order that the Board could obtain first hand knowledge of many of the problems associated with the natives the following Institutions and Reserves were visited and the opportunity taken to discuss personal problems with the aborigines, Missionaries and officers of the Department :—Point McLeay Reserve ; Point Pearce Reserve ; Yalata Reserve ; Koonibba Mission ; Gerard Mission ; Campbell House ; Colebrook Home ; Tanderra Home ; Salvation Army Girls' Home, Fullarton.

The homes erected at Glossop occupied by native families and "camp" natives in other towns were also visited. The Deputy Chairman Professor J. B. Cleland and the Secretary inspected aborigines and ration depots in the pastoral areas, country towns and Ernabella Mission and carried out an extensive tour through the Reserve situate in the North-West of this State, accompanied by Patrol Officer W. B. McDougall. The Deputy Chairman and Secretary attended the official unveiling of the Memorial erected to the memory of Mrs. Daisy Bates at Ooldea.

ABORIGINAL POPULATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

It is believed that the aboriginal inhabitants of this State number slightly more than 5,000, probably a few more part-aborigines than full-bloods. There are indications that the full-bloods, who mostly reside at or near Reserves and in the pastoral areas in the Far North or on Eyres Peninsula, are increasing in numbers. Although there was a considerable reduction in the aboriginal population during the early history of our State it is to be expected that with better attention from officers of the Department, Missioners and Police Officers, modern transport, improved medical facilities, modern drugs, more rapid hospitalization and the abolition of the practice of infanticide, the full-bloods will increase in numbers. Part-aborigines living in the settled district, many on Reserves, are definitely increasing in numbers. This is largely a natural increase, the outcome of the marriage of part-aborigines with either full bloods, part-aborigines or with people of other races. Several part-aboriginal women have married New Australians. The ability to obtain employment during the present era of prosperity, ensuring much better living conditions for the part-aborigine together with the medical attention and other amenities now available must result in an increase of population among the part-aborigines. In view of this fact the Board are anxious to continue to raise the standard of the aborigines by providing better housing conditions, encouraging and assisting those desiring a higher education and generally promoting the welfare of aborigines in order that they can eventually accept the normal responsibilities of a useful citizen of the State.

EXEMPTIONS FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE ABORIGINES' ACT.

The Board considered a large number of applicants for exemption from the provisions of the Act. Unfortunately many of these applications were received from natives with many recent convictions, particularly for over-indulgence in intoxicants, and there is little doubt that the greater number of applications are made for the purpose of obtaining alcoholic liquor. Very few natives apply for the purpose of improving their status as a responsible citizen. However, after investigation, the Board gives every application consideration keeping in mind the fact that the native concerned must have the required standard of intelligence, character and development whereby he can disassociate himself from the company of other aborigines and lead a decent useful life in the general community. During the year 21 adults and 22 children were granted limited declarations of exemption and four children and four adults were granted unconditional exemption. The Board rejected or deferred 39 applications where it was agreed that the applicants had not attained the standard necessary to take their places in the white community. Limited declarations of exemption were revoked in the case of eight adults and seven children. Seven of these adults had requested the revocation of their exemptions and the other was found to be destitute and had returned to reside in an aboriginal reserve. The Board are of the opinion that exempted persons should not continue to habitually associate with aborigines. Unfortunately often the exempted person is not readily accepted in the community and he naturally associated with natives. In such cases it is difficult for the exempted person to maintain a reasonable standard and to refuse his friends and relatives supplies of intoxicants which are available to him.

Despite unconditional exemption many aborigines, because of old age, infirmity or marriage with aborigines, come back to reserves. The Aborigines' Act 1934-39 provides that an unconditional exemption cannot be revoked. When exempted persons reach old age, or are widowed, it is only natural that they should wish to return to their children and to their old friends and homes. Where an aborigine marries an exempted person they often gravitate to the nearest Reserve. In such cases the regulations governing the Reserve do not apply to the exempted person and officers of the Department and Police Officers are powerless to take any action to control or discipline the exempted person where some misconduct occurs. The Board considers that an exemption should be revocable at any time, particularly where hardship is occasioned to the exempted aborigine.

CITIZENSHIP.

The general public do not seem to be aware of several important matters in connection with the citizenship rights of aborigines. Any aborigine with a fixed address regardless of whether full blood or part-aboriginal, enjoys exactly the same electoral privileges as white people. All who enrol for the State House of Assembly are entitled to vote at elections for the Commonwealth Houses of Parliament. They are also entitled to vote on the same basis as others for the State Legislative Council. In fact not only are they entitled to vote but they must vote or risk prosecution as in the case of any ordinary citizen.

Exempted aborigines whether limited or unconditional enjoy all the rights and privileges of a citizen of the State.

Most importantly an aborigine living a decent useful life in any community actually enjoys the usual privileges of citizenship simply because there is no official interference other than in the partaking of intoxicants. This type of native, and there are many of them are not interested in the partaking of alcohol nor do they wish to be exempted as they realize how little there is to gain in the declaration of an exemption in their favour.

As the Certificates of Exemption previously issued soon became soiled and damaged the Board are now issuing Certificates in the form of a pocket sized folder with a photograph of the exempted person affixed which cannot easily be damaged.

ERECTION OF HOMES.

The Board has continued the policy of erecting homes for natives in country districts. The homes erected last year have been occupied as follows :—Victor Harbour—Ephrian Tripp, wife and family ; Glossop—Douglas A. Milera, wife and family ; Glossop—Charles G. Agius, wife and family.

It is pleasing to report that these families have kept their homes in excellent order and have at least to some extent, been accepted in the districts. Their children attending the Education Department School are well spoken of by the Head Teachers and one youth is a student at the Glossop High School. Rents are promptly paid and gardens established and cleanliness of the yards and surrounding areas are a credit to the natives occupying the home.

Five more homes are nearing completion and will be occupied in a short time. These homes erected by the Housing Trust to the same specifications as those built for white people are situated as follows :—Waikerie, 1 ; Barmera, 1 ; Cobdogla, 1 ; Swan Reach, 2.

Additional finance has been requested for the ensuing year to erect a greater number of homes, as the board are of the opinion that until the natives are properly housed there is little hope of raising the standards of the native generally. Too often one cannot help but notice the aborigines living in deplorable shacks and humpies, often near the local rubbish dump. Is it likely that these people or their children can maintain a reasonable standard of cleanliness and decent living? It is at least easy to understand why they are not always accepted in the local community.

The Board are most desirous that the natives occupying homes should be considered as normal citizens, not to be sympathized with, pitied or pampered, nor to be ostracized, embarrassed ridiculed because of their native ancestry. A helping hand, and perhaps some guidance will be required as it often is any neighbour.

GRANTS TO MISSIONS, ETC.

Financial provision was made for the undermentioned grants to Missions :—

Umeewarra Mission—£1,000 towards additional accommodation for Children's Home.

United Aborigines' Mission—£700 towards the cost of erecting Children's Home at Oodnadatta.

The additions to the Umeewarra Children's Home when completed will provide far better accommodation for the children, a dining room, kitchen and laundry. This Home is not connected with electric power and the Board are endeavouring to make provision to provide same during the ensuing year.

The Children's Home at Oodnadatta is now occupied, although not quite completed. This building is of timber frame type and will make the task of the Missioners in caring for the children somewhat easier. Unfortunately soon after erection a very severe storm damaged the roof of this building but satisfactory repairs have been carried out.

The Children's Home at Gerard Mission towards which a grant was made last year has now been completed and is occupied. This solidly constructed building provides for dormitories for both boys and girls, kitchen, dining room and staff quarters.

Many similar grants were made to various Missions and Institutions, such as a sterilizer for the Koonibba Hospital, piano, engine and pump, school and gymnastic equipment, books for school libraries etc.

A number of native families residing at or near country towns was assisted by a grant of timber, galvanized iron, cement bricks and other building materials to help them improve their homes.

In six cases advances were made to native fishermen towards the cost of boats, nets, etc. which is to be repaid in instalments.

RELIEF TO NECESSITOUS ABORIGINES.

Throughout the pastoral areas supplementary rations have been supplied to aborigines at established depots. In such cases the aborigines are expected to hunt for native game to supply a large portion of their diet. Similar rations have on occasions been issued where natives have temporarily gathered. The Board are appreciative of the issuing of such rations by pastoralists, police officers, missioners and others, and for their interest in the aborigines. Blankets are regularly issued and an occasional issue of clothing is made where necessary.

In the settled districts relief is issued to genuinely unemployed, sick, infirm, widowed or aged aborigines, (more often part-aborigines), comparable to that available to any person in similar circumstances. This type of native can obtain relief from Police officers in country districts. In the settled areas native game cannot be obtained, and meat, vegetables, milk, etc. are made available.

Large quantities of supplementary rations are supplied to Mission Stations together with blankets, clothing, etc. Missions in the more settled areas and Government Reserves issue relief (meat, vegetables, etc.) as mentioned above, the cost being charged to this Department.

The Board are appreciative of the conscientious manner in which police officers issue relief to the necessitous native and are indebted to the Commissioner of Police in allowing this and other services to be performed.

MAINTENANCE OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN IN HOMES.

Various religious organizations control a number of Aboriginal Children's Homes where every endeavour is made to provide satisfactory accommodation and care for the inmates. The Board contribute £1 5s. per week towards the maintenance of any such child which, together with Endowment payments, provides considerable financial assistance to the Homes in question. Similar contributions are made to any Home or Institution or person who undertakes to provide accommodation. The Board are anxious to contact any who may be interested in caring for native children and are most appreciative of those who are already assisting in this endeavour to give the children an opportunity not always available under "camp" conditions.

Apart from the regular Native Children's Homes, the Salvation Army Boys' Home at Eden Park, Wistow, has accepted a number of children, two boys are being cared for at the Church of England's Boys' Home, Walkerville and the Commonwealth authorities have accepted one crippled boy at St. Francis Home, Semaphore. A few private homes also accommodate native children. At the present time 165 children are being maintained by the Board as follows:—

Koonibba Lutheran Children's Home	35
Umeewarra Children's Home	45
Colebrook Home, United Aborigines' Mission	34
Oodnadatta Home, United Aborigines' Mission	16
Gerard Mission Home, United Aborigines' Mission.	8
Mt. Barker Salvation Army Home.	11
Various Homes and Institutions.	16
	165

YALATA RESERVE FOR ABORIGINES.

With the proclamation of the Yalata Reserve 1,451½ square miles of country have been added to the area reserved for aborigines in this State. Only one year has passed since this Reserve was taken over by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia, South Australian District Inc. under agreement with the Board. This agreement stipulates that the Church conducts the Reserve as a pastoral station and provides for the spiritual and educational needs of the natives whereas the Board is responsible for the physical welfare of the aborigines, rations, clothing, medical attention, nursing, drugs, etc. In addition the Board are responsible for the payment of all rates etc. and the maintenance of all children accommodated in the Children's Home.

A flock of about 6,000 sheep are depastured at Yalata, and with the renovation of certain water improvements a larger flock will be carried and it is hoped that the proceeds of the sale of wool will then maintain Yalata with little or no cost to either the Church or the Government.

The Board has supplied a large timber-framed building to the Church at Yalata to be used as a school, dormitory, etc. and three large steel-framed sheds together with three 20,000gall. tanks have been forwarded to Yalata by the Board to assure sufficient water for human consumption. As there were a number of valuable frame buildings at the Ooldea Reserve which had not been in use for some years the Board purchased them from the United Aborigines' Mission Inc. and had them dismantled and removed to Yalata. This material will prove of great value to the Church when essential buildings for officers and natives are erected. Recently the Government has made available certain unoccupied Crown Lands adjacent to Yalata. This area, an additional 277 square miles has now also been proclaimed an aboriginal reserve. Many of the improvements at Yalata which were in very poor order have been repaired and renovated by the Church, and although there is a great deal of work yet to be carried out, the Church is to be congratulated on its efforts towards improving the pastoral activities at Yalata.

The aborigines on this Reserve are still living a nomadic life although cared for by a Missioner who resides with them a considerable distance from the Headquarters. Many of the children are cared for in the Children's Home at Koonibba. It is intended that a Home and school be completed at Yalata as early as possible so that the parents can have more contact with their children.

HEALTH OF THE ABORIGINES.

The Board wherever possible continues to provide medical service and hospital accommodation to necessitous sick aborigines. Medical officers to the aborigines are appointed throughout the State and two additional Doctors were appointed during the year. Further agreements were made with country hospitals whereby the Board contributes towards the cost of aboriginal patients. The board desires to record its appreciation to the many medical officers, missions and hospitals, (both Government and private) for the care and attention given to aborigines. The Flying Doctor Services have rendered valuable service in the outback areas and many private persons have assisted and cared for sick aborigines.

Unfortunately the native does not always realize the privilege of the medical services supplied. He considers it rather as an obligation and is inclined to demand it. The Board is of opinion that able-bodied natives, in cases where they are employed, should contribute towards treatment and hospitalization in order to encourage a sense of responsibility.

A large number of aborigines have been tested and X-rayed for tuberculosis. Very few active T.B. cases have been found, only two during the year requiring treatment in hospital. A large percentage of the natives in this State has up to date been tested or X-rayed and it is believed that the percentage of aborigines suffering from tuberculosis is no greater than that in the general community.

Further arrangements have been made with dentists for the supply of dentures, filling of teeth and extractions, particularly in the settled areas.

Natives confined to hospital, usually without means, may now receive necessities and other things such as fruit, tobacco etc. up to the value of £1 per week. Patients remaining in hospital for any lengthy period may receive in addition a cash payment of £1 per week. Previously there have been cases where aboriginal patients have left hospitals before their treatment was complete because of their inability to purchase the necessities which their fellow-patients enjoyed. The Board is indebted to the Government for providing the necessary finance for this measure of relief.

Reports throughout the State indicate that the natives' health has been particularly good. Mild outbreaks of gastro-enteritis have occurred in children, and whooping cough has occurred in epidemic form in certain northern districts, but without serious losses. Many natives suffer from infectious sores which could be corrected if their living conditions were improved.

CAMPBELL HOUSE.

Campbell House situated near the shore of Lake Albert together with 2,517 acres of land was this year purchased by the South Australian Government for use as a Home for Aboriginal Boys. Members of the Board wish to express their appreciation of the initiative shown by their Chairman, The Honourable the Minister of Works, in introducing this very important progressive action. It is intended that this Home will accommodate 20-25 aboriginal boys and youths who after receiving normal education will be trained in agricultural, grazing and pastoral activities thus fitting them for occupations to which they appear to best suited.

The Home has been completely renovated and painted but certain additions have yet to be made together with a sufficient supply of water, electricity, etc. It is hoped that this will be carried out in the near future and the Home furnished and occupied next year. Most of the land is arable, and this season 485 acres have been cropped with oats as a cover crop and sown down with pasture. Much of the area sown was cleared of yacka, shrubs, boxthorn, etc. and the paddocks concerned are now almost all rabbit-proof fenced. A considerable area which had previously eroded was levelled and sown with cereal rye. The services of a Contractor were obtained for the seeding operations but the manual work in connection with farming operations and renovations, painting etc. to the homestead has been carried out with the aid of native labour.

The Board is indeed grateful for the opportunity of establishing a home of this nature, enabling native youths to be equipped with sufficient knowledge and practical experience whereby they can obtain gainful employment and it is hoped become absorbed to some extent in the general community.

NORTH WEST RESERVE.

For many years the Board has refused permission to any person who desired to enter this Reserve, particularly for prospecting purposes. However, officers of the Mines Department were permitted to make a geological survey in view of the importance of uranium. Although no known deposit of uranium was found, a lode of nickel-bearing rock was discovered and the Board granted permission for this area to be thoroughly prospected by Geosurveys of Australia Limited. Certain conditions were agreed to by the Company to protect the aborigines and their water supplies, etc. These conditions have been faithfully honoured by employees of this Company. Later the Southwestern Mining Limited leased the area from the Mines Department and it was found necessary for employees of the Mines Department, e.g. drivers and labourers, to enter the Reserve. A further set of conditions were agreed to by this Company and the Mines Department in regard to their employees which has again proved very satisfactory. The Board has agreed to the construction of a graded road as a necessity in an area least likely to affect aborigines on the Reserve and agreed to boring in a certain area where natives seldom congregate. Before any person is permitted to enter the Reserve a medical certificate must be supplied to the Board to the effect that the person is in good general health and not suffering from any contagious disease. Character references must also be supplied. No person entering the Reserve may trade with the natives for any ethnological specimens, nor distribute any goods by way of barter or exchange. Roads and watering places may only be constructed in such places as determined by the Board. Aborigines cannot be employed without authority, and aboriginal watering places cannot be used or in any way interfered with except in case of dire necessity.

The Deputy Chairman and Secretary inspected the northern portion of this Reserve during the year and found the aborigines to be in good health and condition. There appeared to be an abundance of native game and a large quantity of store goods was exchanged for dingo scalps. The known rock holes and soaks had sufficient water for the natives' needs.

GENERAL.

In addition to the proclamation of the Yalata Reserve and land adjacent to it, a reserve situate about three miles from Oodnadatta consisting of section 372 North out of Hundreds was proclaimed. The Board is grateful to the Government for its generous attitude and interest in the aborigines.

Section 263 North out of Hundreds out of Counties known as the Ooldea Reserve was abolished as it was no longer required for the use of aborigines. Every endeavour is being made to prevent aborigines congregating at Ooldea where they are inclined to beg and cause some trouble on the East-West Railway Line and it is hoped that with the abolition of this Reserve at Ooldea the natives will remain at Yalata.

In order that aborigines occupying homes in the general community might not be embarrassed through not possessing sufficient furniture etc. the Board has adopted the policy of providing necessary furniture and equipment allowing the natives to repay the cost in instalments. Eleven families were assisted in this manner to the extent of nearly £700. The Board are encouraged by the fact that the natives concerned are making regular repayments of their advances.

Mr. A. H. Bray, Superintendent of Reserves retired during the year. Mr. Bray has been an officer of the Department for very many years, first as Farm Overseer, then Manager of Point Pearce Reserve for Aborigines. He occupied the position of Superintendent of Reserves for 12 years with great credit to the Department and the Board have expressed their appreciation of his valuable services as an officer of the Department and in his long and successful work on behalf of the aborigines.

During the year Miss Du Fourq, French Overseas Territories, was attached to the Department under a United Nations Fellowship. Arrangements were made for Miss Du Fourq to inspect Government Reserves and Mission Stations and given an understanding of Board policies in this State.

During the year a Building Foreman, Mr. R. W. Pocock was appointed to the Department with encouraging results. This officer visits Reserves or Missions and takes charge of a number of natives in building renovations, painting, etc. and the amount of work already carried out is proof of the necessity for this appointment. The natives employed are at the same time trained, at least to a semi-skilled standard, in the trade in which they are employed. Many native cottages and officers' homes have been completely renovated, in some cases additional rooms or sleep-outs added. Farm buildings have been repaired on Reserves but it is realized that much remains to be done to place all buildings on Reserves in good order. The Building Foreman was responsible for the dismantling and removal of all buildings and materials at Ooldea and the success of the natives in renovating and painting Campbell House.

Much more attention is being given to the social and welfare work of the Department and the Board are of the opinion that far greater efforts must be made in welfare work, particularly amongst the part aborigines residing in the settled districts who have developed to a certain standard. The Board are grateful to the Government in causing an additional welfare officer to be appointed, Miss J. M. Gillam.

A conference was held of Board Members and Senior Officers of the Department including Managers of Reserves. Many important matters of policy and its practical application were discussed and officers of the Department are thankful for the opportunity given them to meet the Board in conference.

The Board are concerned at the condition of the Aboriginal Women's Home, Sussex Street, North Adelaide, and are desirous of financial provision being made to construct a new building in the near future.

The lack of sufficient homes and in certain cases their deplorable condition, on Mission Stations, together with the condition and staffing of some of the Children's Homes is causing the Board considerable anxiety. It is realized that the Missions often have great difficulty in raising sufficient funds for their needs but the Board are of the opinion that poor housing conditions and lack of supervision cannot raise the standard of the natives. At the same time the Board do appreciate the services of the many Missioners and helpers who so willingly devote their lives to the care and welfare of the aborigines.

Many matters not previously mentioned were dealt with by the Board. Some disciplinary action was necessary and eighteen natives were expelled from Reserves. Before this action was taken every effort was made to encourage the native concerned to behave in a reasonable manner and in most cases the Board warned the offender of impending expulsion if he continued to misbehave. The expulsion orders against four natives previously expelled were revoked.

One adult woman and one child were confined to Institutions. The adult woman was an alcoholic and the child's mother could not care for her as she was somewhat subnormal.

It is with regret that we report that six natives appeared at the Supreme Court, Adelaide, charged with serious offences. In each case their interests were protected by a solicitor supplied by the Law Society and the secretary or an officer of the Department was present to assist the Court, particularly in regard to the penalty imposed. In each case the offender was released on a bond to be of good behaviour and to engage in employment under the supervision of the Secretary.

Some development was commenced at the Baroota Reserve by the planting of 2,000 tomato plants and a few acres of peas on a share agreement with a native who resides on the Reserve. A prefabricated hut was erected as a storeroom, toolroom, etc. The Board are desirous of developing this Reserve by the employment of an officer and natives engaged in market gardening for which the land is most suitable.

REPORTS FROM POLICE OFFICERS, MISSIONERS AND STATION MANAGERS.

In almost all of the settled districts Police reports indicate that most aborigines are employed and that there is a demand for their labour. In the pastoral areas groups of natives residing on stations cannot all be employed although there is a reasonable demand for aboriginal stockmen on the cattle stations.

Generally, aborigines or part-aborigines do not appear to desire permanent employment. Their natural characteristics urge them to move from place to place, and when employed too long on the same type of work they are inclined to neglect their duties and absent themselves from their employment.

Police reports indicate that the natives' conduct generally is quite good except for over-indulgence in intoxicants. Few serious crimes are committed by natives except when they are intoxicated. Often the natives' family life is ruined and the standard of living reduced to the poorest conditions from the effects of over-indulgence. Natives are not at all thrifty and it matters little how much is expended in strong drink. Here again it is felt that the natives must, over a period of time be prepared to accept responsibility, be better housed and their standard of living raised so that they can be accepted in the community. Perhaps then excessive drinking would not be so common.

Regardless of the living conditions of the natives, reports indicate that their health is good and the children are usually neat and tidy. Except in the pastoral areas the children attend Education Department's schools where they are accepted. However, many of the children are not regular in their attendance and it is difficult to make the parents understand the necessity of a good education.

Very little relief is required to be issued except to the old and infirm, although supplementary rations are issued to "camp" natives in the pastoral areas where employment is not available.

The Board is grateful to the Commissioner of Police, Senior Officers and Police Officers throughout the State for their co-operation and interest in the natives and for the many kindnesses, often outside of their duties, to the sick or unemployed aborigines, officers stationed nearer the larger Reserves and Missions have been of the greatest assistance to the staff concerned and their services and co-operation are most appreciated.

UNITED ABORIGINES MISSION INC.

The United Aborigines' Mission continues its work amongst the aborigines at various Mission Stations and Children's Homes.

The President, Mr. W. L. Scarborough and the Secretary, Pastor L. J. Samuels, in the 30th Annual Report of the Mission, express thanks to their Missionaries and workers throughout the State and to all those who have assisted in the many tasks amongst the native people. Many changes have occurred, particularly in the staff of the various Missions, but the President points out that there is no great change in the ever-difficult problems continually presenting themselves in this work.

During the year Mr. and Mrs. F. Eaton retired after 25 years of faithful service in the Mission, first at Oodnadatta, then in commencing and continuing the work at the Nepabunna Mission which is situated east of Copley. On his retirement Mr. Eaton handed over as a gift to the Mission a barytes mine which is being worked by natives and providing them with a good living. The Rev. L. Reece and Mrs. Reece have been granted extended leave of absence after many years of valuable service at Oodnadatta and Finnis Springs.

At Nepabunna a record rain has been registered and the surrounding country is in good heart. Unfortunately, many natives with their families have drifted away and are camping under substandard conditions at Copley where they seek employment at the Leigh Creek Coal Mine. Little trouble is caused by these natives with the exception of over-indulgence in alcoholic liquors. A native school provides education for about 20 children which is conducted in one of the large rooms of the unused dormitory. The health of the natives has been satisfactory.

The new Children's Home at Oodnadatta was almost completed when a severe storm unroofed the building, but repairs have been carried out and 17 children are now accommodated. All of the inmates were brought to Adelaide last Christmas and camped at the Grange for several weeks. During this time, the opportunity was taken for medical and dental examination of the children. Two young women from this Home were recently transferred, one to Finnis Springs and the other to Nepabunna, to assist the Missionaries at these institutions.

The health of the children has been excellent and they receive education at the native school at the Mission. It is regretted that these children are not accepted at the public school at Oodnadatta. This Mission also takes an interest in the "camp" natives that periodically visit Oodnadatta, caring for them physically when necessary and conducting religious services at least weekly.

At Colebrook Home, about 40 native children are cared for, but some difficulties have occurred, mainly because of lack of sufficient staff. Mr. Hill, the Superintendent, and his wife have found the many tasks far too much for them and will soon retire on account of health reasons.

Children from this Home have been attending the Public schools at Eden Hills and Blackwood, and most of them are advancing satisfactorily. Two of the elder children commenced training at the Goodwood Boys' Technical and the Unley Girls Technical Schools, and both are making good progress. Many organizations and private persons have given very valuable help to this Home, which is appreciated by the Mission. It is pleasing to note that the children from this Home attend at regular public schools under the control of the Education Department, where they early learn to associate with "white" children.

At Finnis Springs, most of the able-bodied natives are able to obtain employment in the pastoral areas. Small cottages erected at this Mission accommodate the natives and a Store has proved of great value, particularly in the supply of fresh fruit. Cool drinks were added to the stocks for sale as an extra amenity and to lessen the desire of the natives to travel to nearby towns to procure strong drink.

Lack of sufficient water has again been a great problem, and as the bank of the dam was washed away and the pipeline fractured, a serious shortage of water occurred. The conservation of water appears to be an urgent necessity at this Mission Station. The health of the natives has been good, despite one epidemic, although two deaths have occurred during the year.

Gerard Mission, situated on a frontage to the River Murray, provides for 80 men, women and children, with nine children accommodated in the Children's Home. A flock of sheep is depastured on 5,000 acres of land, and several acres have been planted with fruit trees. It is hoped that an increased water supply will soon be available enabling a vegetable garden to be irrigated and further fruit trees established.

The new Children's Home opened in 1954 is of solid construction, and although not yet completed, is serving a valuable purpose.

A native school is conducted, the teacher also assisting by controlling the boys in the Children's Home. The health and conduct of the natives has been reasonably good.

UMEEWARRA MISSION, PORT AUGUSTA.

The conduct of the "camp" natives has been more satisfactory, due probably to the co-operation and close supervision by Officers of the Police Department at Port Augusta. Religious meetings have been better attended and some encouraging results obtained. There are 44 children accommodated in the Children's Home which is being extended by the addition of dining room, kitchen and laundry. It is hoped that electricity will be installed this coming year, both for power and lighting purposes. The health of the children has been excellent, excepting for an epidemic of whooping cough which spread to the "camp" causing considerable anxiety. Quite a number of sick aborigines from the northern districts have been cared for following their discharge from the Port Augusta Hospital. The children from the Home have enjoyed quite a number of outings and "treats" and the visit of their Excellencies the Governor-General and Lady Slim afforded an opportunity for the children to show their loyalty by joining in the Schools' Welcome. One young woman graduated from Singleton Bible Class and was enabled to take six months' instruction at the Wellington Road Public School as a trainee teacher. The adult natives are able to obtain employment, some in the pastoral industry, others with the Commonwealth Railways and little relief is found necessary.

LUTHERAN CHURCH, KOONIBBA.

Although the season was not entirely satisfactory, reasonable returns were received from agricultural and grazing activities. Excellent rains have fallen since seeding operations and there is an abundance of feed for the livestock. On account of the rather dry year, considerable trouble was experienced in obtaining sufficient water for both human consumption and livestock. A satisfactory water supply is a necessity at this institution. Pastor H. Rosenblatt continues as Superintendent and despite many disappointments, a satisfactory year has been experienced. During the year, Mr. H. Gaden resigned as Farm Superintendent, a position he has occupied for many years, giving valuable service to the aborigines and the Mission. There appears to be a sufficiency of employment, many natives being engaged in the farming districts, others with the South Australian Railways or as wharf labourers at Ceduna. Some of the staff have been transferred from Koonibba and special mention is made of Pastor Strehlan who has resigned after caring for the natives at Monburu Tank for some years. A building has been constructed near Ceduna to accommodate the natives employed as wharf labourers at that town, these men returning to their homes at weekends. At the Children's Home 35 children are accommodated under the supervision of Miss Hartwig, while approximately 100 children attend the local native school with Mr. Rathjen as Head Teacher. The school building has proved to be far too small to accommodate the children requiring education and it is hoped that some additions will be made to this building in the near future. With the increase of native population some overcrowding is occurring in the cottages erected at this institution. A well-stocked store caters for almost all of the wants of the people and a well equipped hospital provides for the native patients from Koonibba and Yalata. The health of the natives has been very satisfactory with little evidence of serious sickness. Some of the natives have misconducted themselves, particularly by over-indulgence in alcohol, but the general conduct of the natives has been good.

PRESBYTERIAN MISSION, ERNABELLA.

Ernabella, situated adjacent to the North West Reserve, continues to care for some hundreds of natives and to act as a buffer between the near primitive natives and white settlement. The Mission authorities adopt the policy of gradually preparing the aborigines for their eventual contact with civilization. Every endeavor is made to encourage the natives to retain their natural dignity and self-respect and with this end in view the natives are permitted to continue with certain tribal customs. No aborigines are housed, and able-bodied natives must hunt under natural conditions for game, in order to satisfy their needs when not employed. Approximately 5,000 sheep are depastured at Ernabella and on portion of the North-West Reserve providing employment for several families as shepherds and for others in shearing, crutching, etc. Further wells have been sunk (some of the aborigines prove to be competent well sinkers) in order to provide a sufficiency of water for livestock.

An Industrial School building has been erected where elementary mechanics are being taught and native timber will soon be felled and sawn for use at Ernabella. Many of the native women are employed at spinning and weaving. Such activity lessens the number of idle natives and the subsequent necessity of issuing relief. A new watering scheme for the village has been completed, the water being pumped from a well some distance from the settlement into a large tank, from where it is reticulated to the gardens, public baths, officers' homes, etc. This is much more satisfactory than the old water supply which being situated down stream from the settlement, was considered to be unhygienic. It is realized that the natives will gradually make less use of the Reserve for hunting purposes and the establishment of a cattle industry is being considered. A geological survey is being made for underground water supplies and some boring will be undertaken this year. The health of the natives has been consistently good, no serious epidemics occurring. There is little doubt that the native population is increasing in this area due to pre-natal and post-natal treatment, better medical facilities and the general care and attention of the aborigines. This Mission in caring for so many

aborigines and protecting them from contact with civilization is carrying on a valuable service to this State. The Mission provides the staff and most of the improvements, while this Board supplies sufficient rations and clothing for all pregnant women, mothers of infants, school children, indigents, widows, aged and infirm together with all necessary school requisites, materials, furniture and hospital supplies, including drugs, bandages, instruments, disinfectants etc. The conduct of the natives was generally satisfactory, although an alleged attempted spearing of an officer took place and the behaviour of several of the natives caused concern.

POINT MCLEAY STATION.

The population at Point McLeay on 30th June 1955 was 390, representing an increase of 29 over last year. There were 30 births and eight deaths, a natural increase of 22. The health of the natives has been satisfactory, but despite greater emphasis on hygiene, gastro-enteritis has again been prevalent. Medical officers and a dentist regularly visit the Station while the resident nurse continues her duties in the hospital and dispensary. Unfortunately, the natives do not always spend their earnings wisely and a better standard of health will be obtained when the correct foods are purchased to provide a more balanced diet. This particularly applies to the children. Many natives attend at the surgery of the Medical Officer at Tailem Bend, often with little reason, causing some embarrassment.

There is some improvement in the behaviour of the natives and the average resident of the Reserve gives little trouble. However, there are those who periodically come to the Reserve, often with supplies of intoxicants, and cause worry and anxiety to officers and natives alike. This type of aborigine can ruin any progress being made with these people. The Narrung Police have rendered every assistance in a kindly and tolerant manner and generally the native is gradually obtaining a better out-look on life and greater stability. It is noteworthy that natives employed away from the Reserve have been much better behaved, continuing for much longer periods in their employment. One effect of this is the purchasing of household furniture such as bedroom and lounge suites, chrome kitchen furniture, refrigerators, and in fact many of the homes are a credit to the natives.

A large Nissen hut has been erected for use as a garage and a pit constructed to facilitate the servicing and repairs of motor vehicles. Extensive renovations have been carried out to native cottages and the school building has been redecorated and painted. The Storekeeper's residence was divided into two maisonettes to accommodate an extra officer. Additions were made to other cottages and public buildings repaired and painted.

Good progress is being made with the school children by the Head Teacher and his staff. Perhaps the most pleasing feature of this station is the continued improvement in the children, particularly as to cleanliness, dress and brighter outlook. They have gained more confidence and are usually quite well mannered. Four children should pass the necessary examination in order to commence secondary education next year. Additions have been made to the school library and the recently purchased domestic arts equipment has improved the general standard of the school.

The Dairy has been well conducted and kept in very clean condition. Milk is supplied free to the natives and issued at the school, while the balance of milk is separated and sold as cream to butter factories. The irrigated lucerne paddocks provide supplementary fodder for the cattle during the summer months.

The sheep have been kept in good condition and 2,552 sheep were shorn, including 700 lambs, producing 68 bales of wool, which sold at very satisfactory prices. Although a 73 per cent lambing was obtained, the rather dry summer caused some losses and young sheep were found in rather poor condition.

A quantity of barley was harvested, mainly for use as pig feed and 90 tons of hay was baled. The programme of pasture improvement was continued at Point McLeay, 200 acres being sown down with lucerne, clover and phalaris. At Primrose Farm 115 acres have been sown with similar pastures.

The established pastures have generally shown improvement, although some small areas were ruined by an increase of rabbits.

Perhaps the greatest improvement at this Reserve has taken place in the vegetable gardens. These have been well-cared for and are full to capacity with various vegetables. Almost all types of vegetable are being sold to the natives at little cost. The apricot and citrus trees yielded very well, the fruit being also sold through the store as cheaply as possible.

At Primrose Farm the greater part of the pastures required for the sheep is obtained. Some further fencing is required to obtain the greatest production. Firewood is cut and carted from this portion of the Reserve. After being sawn it is sold to the natives. Although this has proved uneconomical, it is a step towards training the natives to be less dependant.

Church attendance has been satisfactory and the many services, clubs, groups etc. organized by the Salvation Army on almost every night of the week has undoubtedly resulted, to a large extent, in the better conduct of the natives.

POINT PEARCE STATION.

At 30th June, 1955 there were 411 natives resident at the Reserve, an increase of 13 over last year's population. There were 33 births and nine deaths, a natural increase of 24.

The health of the natives has been reasonably good with no prolonged epidemics. Medical officers and a dentist visit the Station as required and a resident Medical Orderly attends to the sick aborigines. When considered necessary, the sick are transported by ambulance to Maitland and if required, thence to the Wallaroo Hospital. Thirty-four confinements and 41 medical and surgical cases were admitted to Wallaroo Hospital during the year. Two patients were admitted to the Maitland Hospital and 77 examined and treatment prescribed. In addition, 15 natives were X-rayed for suspected fractures. X-rays were made of 217 natives by the Compulsory X-ray unit, revealing two positive cases of tuberculosis who are receiving treatment at the Bedford Park Sanatorium. A large number of fillings and extractions of teeth were made by the Dentist.

Various religious organisations and helpers conduct religious services which are seldom well attended. Once again the Board desires to express its appreciation of the voluntary service of Mr. R. C. Davey of Port Victoria, who continues to conduct a Christian Endeavour Class at the Reserve.

An average of 94.1 pupils attended school although a larger number of children were enrolled. Many parents engage in fruit picking during the season away from the Reserve and their children accompany them, not always enrolling at the nearest school.

A new four-roomed prefabricated school building was erected during the year. The bright, airy, clean atmosphere thus created has been reflected in the better work, conduct and general appearance of the children. The old school building is to be converted into a domestic arts centre and a wood-work room. Four children should qualify for secondary education this year. A flat to accommodate the assistant-teachers has been completed and furnished, thus providing a long-felt need at this Reserve.

The conduct of the natives has somewhat improved, but is still far from satisfactory. A number were convicted of offences, drunken natives comprising the greater numbers of offenders and it was found necessary to expel several natives from the Reserve.

Livestock have been maintained in good condition, despite an abnormally dry summer. Two thousand, nine hundred and eighty adult sheep and 1,346 lambs were shorn, the adult sheep averaging 12.85 lbs. (£3 3s. 6d. per fleece) and the lambs 2.89 lbs. (13s. 1d. per fleece). Total income from sheep amounted to £10,247 6s. 8d. and from sale of sheepskins £922 18s. 10d.

A far higher percentage of undiscovered natural losses occurred during this year. It is difficult to account for such losses other than by theft, but despite every investigation by Station Officers and Police Officers, no evidence has been found to support this theory. Improved water supplies and smaller paddocks will lessen the chances of such losses, as closer attention could then be given the sheep.

Cattle have been kept in good condition and free milk supplied to the natives and issued to school children. Cattle marketed resulted in an income of £1,514 1s. 0d. Pigs sold during the year realized £798 0s. 4d.

Agricultural activities were carried out with the aid of native sharefarmers. Two thousand, five hundred and six bales of hay and 50 tons of sheafed hay were stacked at the Reserve. A very satisfactory harvest yielded 7,382 bags of grain and an average for wheat of 25 bushels, 25.2 lbs. per acre. In addition 1,033 bags of barley were retained for seed and pig feeding purposes and 40 tons of ensilage were cut and stacked.

An attempt is being made to control noxious weeds at Point Pearce by the use of hormones and rotation cropping of paddocks.

The further conservation of water is an urgent necessity at this Reserve as it would appear that over a period of years the water table is consistently becoming lower and reduced in quantity. A recent geological survey has confirmed that no further supplies of water are available. A new dam has been constructed during the year and other dams cleaned out and drains renovated.

A new road has been constructed through the Reserve at a cost of £1,000. This has greatly improved the approach to the village and incidently improved water supplies by acting as a catchment area.

Almost all of the officers' homes have been renovated, repaired and painted as well as a number of native cottages. Additional rooms and sleepouts have been added to some native cottages as well as innumerable repairs to individual cottages and public buildings. The teacher's flat was completed and a dressing shed erected on the Point Pearce oval.

Natives appear to be more readily sought after for employment, particularly in agricultural districts as farm workers and in this respect their experience with mechanised farming equipment at the Reserve has been invaluable. The natives also are engaged in many parts of the State in the shearing and crutching of sheep. Two natives have a small shearing plant of their own and are in constant demand.

A statement of departmental receipts and payments for this year ended 30th June, 1955 is appended.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient servants,

M. McINTOSH, Chairman	} Aborigines' Protection Board
J. B. CLELAND, Deputy Chairman	
CONSTANCE M. COOKE	
A. M. JOHNSTON	
GORDON ROWE	
MR. L. J. COOKE on leave in United Kingdom	
C. BARTLETT, Secretary	

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE, 1955.

Amounts received and payments made on account of expenses in carrying out the functions of the Department are shown hereunder :—

1954		1955	
£		£	£
	Payment on account of expenses were :—		
3,038	Administrative Officers	9,719	
971	Pay Roll Tax for Child Endowment	1,122	
521	Portion of Superannuation pensions met by the Government	619	
23,173	Provisions, Blankets, Clothing, Medicines, Transport, Allowances and Office expenses	27,925	
298	Aborigines Home, North Adelaide	246	
233	Development of Reserves for Aborigines	478	
518	Training half-caste girls for domestic service	419	
91	Assistance to Fishermen and Rabbiters' etc.	120	
7,426	Maintenance of aboriginal children at Institutions and Homes	10,200	
—	Payments to sick aborigines in Hospitals	23	
—	Purchase and erection of sheds and tanks at Yalata Station	2,423	
4,800	Purchase of Houses for Aborigines	9,383	
—	Purchase of land for training home	18,250	
—	Repayment of amount of estate paid to Treasury by Public Trustee account Nellie Yarra	504	
1,200	Purchase of Hut and dismantling and transport to Colona for erection on Yalata Station	—	
959	Payments to dependants and Officers retiring or resigning—Long Service and Recreation leave	—	
11,069	Reimbursement of expenditure for Medical care and maintenance of natives and repairs at Yalata Station	—	
	<i>Grants—</i>		
2,900	Ernabella Mission—Towards cost of Hospital and Welfare clinic	—	
1,000	Umeewarra Mission—Towards cost of additional accommodation	1,000	
—	United Aborigines Mission—Towards cost of erection of Children's Home at Oodnadatta	700	
		83,131	
—	Part proceeds Voluntary liquidation Yalata Ltd.	35,329	
196	Refund rail fares etc.	617	
			47,185
	POINT PEARCE STATION.		
	<i>Expenditure.</i>		
15,227	Salaries, Wages and Allowances etc.	17,104	
13,831	Farm Stores, Implements and Rations etc.	17,453	
—	Purchase of Utility	794	
—	Purchase of Farm Implements	570	
—	Construction of Roads	1,000	
8,041	Trading Stores—Purchases and expenses	9,093	
		46,014	
	<i>Receipts.</i>		
24,464	Sales Produce, etc.	25,464	
24,464	Store Sales	8,810	
		34,274	11,740
	POINT MCLEAY STATION.		
	<i>Expenditure.</i>		
15,539	Salaries, Wages and Allowances, etc.	16,448	
11,269	Farm Stores, Implements and Rations, etc.	11,500	
—	Purchase of Tractor	3,291	
42	Rent of Section, Hundred of Baker	42	
7,976	Trading Store—Purchase and expenses	9,231	
		40,512	
	<i>Receipts.</i>		
8,775	Sales Produce, etc.	9,634	
	Stores Sales	8,984	
		18,618	21,894
	CAMPBELL HOUSE.		
—	Salaries and Wages	842	
—	Implements, Stores, etc.	3,538	
—	Purchase of Motor Truck	1,230	
		5,610	
	YALATA STATION.		
	Salary Nurse		443
	Cost of Aborigines to the South Australian Government for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1955		86,872

C. BARTLETT, Secretary, Aborigines' Protection Board.