

THE "BUNGALOW" AT ALICE SPRINGS, N.T.

by Mrs. E. McIntyre, of Bronte, N. S. W., who recently returned from a trip to the "Centre"

Alice Springs lies in Central Australia, not more than 135 miles from Central Mount Stuart, the geographical centre of our continent. It has a population of some 4,000 people, including over 1,000 children, and from March to September hundreds of tourists go through each week to visit the famous Ayers Rocks and other beauty spots in the vicinity.

It is named for Alice, wife of Sir Charles Todd, Director of Public Telegraphs (South Australia), and the Springs themselves are in what is now the Aborigine Welfare Reserve. Here also are the original telegraph station, post office, postmaster's residence, and barracks. The post office foundation stone was laid by F. J. Gillen, on 6th May, 1876, and the foundation stone of the residence reads:—

"Foundation Stone laid by John McKay S.S.H. Joseph Stead Builder, 10-1-1888."

All the material for these old buildings was brought across the desert by camel trains, and the stone walls in them are 2-feet thick.

Here by the post office is the Spring from which the town takes its name—still flowing as it was 100 years ago in what was then a vast desert unknown to any but the Aborigines (Arandas) who lived there. This country has very little permanent surface water.

This Reserve (known as The Bungalow) is used as a holding camp for Aborigines. Some have been in hospital, some have voluntarily taken employment in the town for the sake of their children's education, and some work on the station as storemen, maintenance men, etc. Cement blocks are made here for building the Aborigines' own homes.

There are three schools for Aboriginal children in the Reserve, a pre-school kindergarten, a junior school, and a senior. We had the privilege of visiting the senior school, for children 9-14. The children were having their afternoon free period, reading, writing, drawing, etc., as they felt inclined. Some of the children here do very fine work in drawing, particularly showing an appreciation of colour, as might perhaps be expected with the example of Albert Namatjira ever before them. Before we left they sang to us, first "Daisy", and then their school song, "We are Children of the Bungalow". They like school, and their first task in the morning is to write a diary of the day before. Each week they have a special subject to discuss and write about. That week it was about Albert Namatjira, whose death had occurred the previous week-end.

Albert Namatjira was the first of the Aborigines to realise the potentialities in the European style of painting and open up this sphere of work. With the guidance of Mr. Rex Batterbee, of Alice Springs, he watched and learned how to paint as the European does, and his work has become popular all over Australia, thus paving the way to others of his family, and relatives, seven of whom are now painting, more in the traditional Aboriginal style.

Also on the Reserve is a small cemetery, where members of the first Overland Telegraph line and Post Office staff are buried. One marked grave is 1887.



Dennis Ridgeway, of Karuah

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The historical past of my people and their emergence from the bonds of slavery are on the records of history as one of the great miracles of this age. We are equipped to understand the meaning of slavery. We know what is the real meaning of victory through persecution.

I implore you in this hour of great urgency in the free world to accept this ideology of Moral Re-Armament and use it to cure the sickness of our nation. Division can only reproduce the same conditions of slavery, but this time it will be on a global scale. Before we Americans are free to speak to the world we must be free to speak to our neighbours.

Why do we, through the unhealed hurts of the past, permit ourselves to be used to create again the same human dilemma when there is an answer? The issue is not colour, it is character. The choice is Communism or Moral Re-Armament.

When we re-arm ourselves morally, we are free to fight to change human nature. It gives us that new character, that extra dimension of thought and action. It replaces the petty preoccupation of self with the dedicated purpose of living for a great idea.

The struggle of my people has been for full participation in the affairs of our nation. This is the time to take the offensive with the ideology of Moral Re-Armament which alone can achieve that goal. We have been prepared by history for the supreme part in this our nation's task in setting the whole world free.