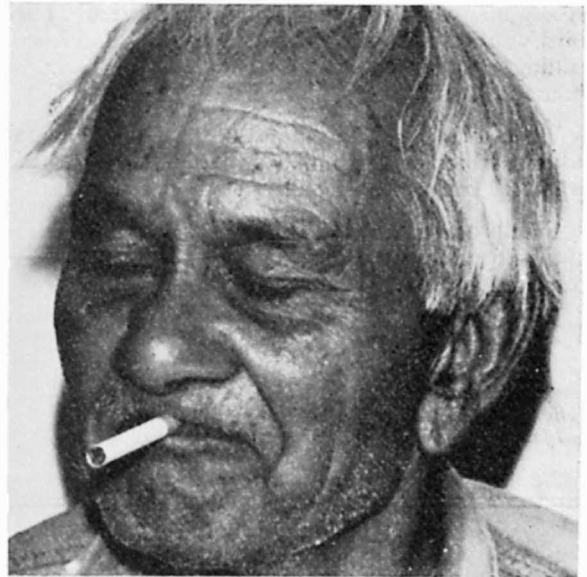


THE LANGUAGE MAN OF BREWARRINA



Jim Barker

Jim Barker, a well-known identity of the Brewarrina district for many years is a man who has always held a vivid interest in his Aboriginal background. He speaks the Muruwari language, the language of a tribe that once inhabited the area on the western side of the Calgoa. I was told that Jack O'Lantern of Weilmoringle is the only fullblood of that tribe left now.

Jim Barker is busy doing a language study for the Institute for Aboriginal Studies in Canberra. He has contributed all that he knows of the Muruwari language and moves around the district getting more information about it from the people who still know a little about the old ways.

Jim tells how the early whites noticed the way Aborigines made water-bags out of possum skins. From this idea came the water-bag, except that it was made out of canvas.

The Aborigines also used animal skins to make boots which allowed them to travel over rocky or thorny country. The boots were called MUNDAHWE.



Jim's son, Jack Barker and wife Donna at Brewarrina