



NEW DAWN

NOVEMBER 1972

A MAGAZINE FOR THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE OF N.S.W.

This month's edition of *New Dawn* contains a variety of material from numerous sources. There is a story from Queensland on Senator Bonner's wedding; material on Arnhem Land; a piece from the history of the Territory on Attawomba Joe; plus things closer to home, including news of the new management at the Foundation of Aboriginal Affairs and an important item on a programme arranged for students finishing their Higher School Certificate this year. Much of the material in *Smoke Signals* came from information submitted by readers, so please keep up the correspondence.

NEW DAWN A magazine for the Aboriginal people of New South Wales.

November, 1972 Vol. 3 No. 6

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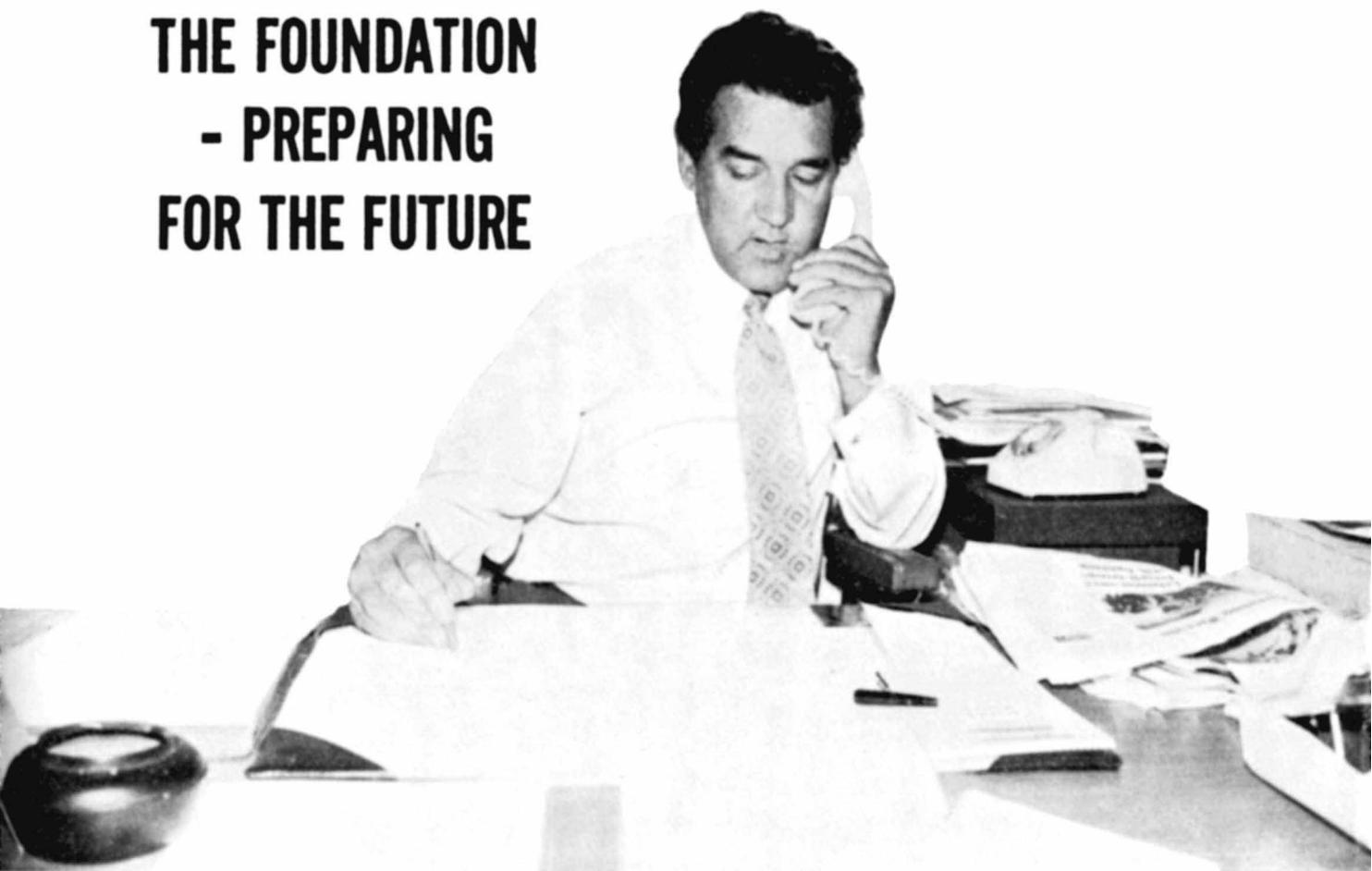
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FRONT COVER: *Scene from the semi-final in the knockout competition between N.S.W. teams held at Henson Park in September.*

BACK COVER: *Picture of people attending function at Paddington Town Hall, held in support of Sister Marjorie Baldwin's entry in the Miss Australia Quest.*

EDITOR: Peter Vaughan, Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare, Box K718, Post Office, Haymarket, N.S.W. 2000.

THE FOUNDATION - PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE



Charles Perkins at work as acting manager of the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs

“Aside from finance, the major problem facing the foundation is its reorganization in terms of how it should operate in the future. If we have the answer to that question, then a lot of other things will fall into place.”

This is how Charles Perkins, the newly appointed acting-manager of the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs in Sydney, sees his role.

Charles, now 36 years-old, has returned to the post he left in 1969 to work with Canberra's Office of Aboriginal Affairs. He had managed the foundation for 4 years before leaving. He returned to the post in September following the departure of his predecessor, Mr Noel Appoo, who has returned to Queensland.

To revitalize the organization, it is essential, according to Charles, to “rethink the basic

philosophy of the foundation”. In other words, the ways in which the organization can best meet the needs of the Aboriginal community will have to be carefully examined. This process can only be carried out through “intense consultation with *all* groups throughout the State”.

Part of this reappraisal, says Charles, will be to move the foundation into areas not previously considered. Aside from its traditional welfare role the organization needs to become active in other Aboriginal problems. Among these, he says, are restrictions on the participation of blacks in the community, especially on their legal and social rights.

Linked with this is the need for the foundation to be dominated even more by Aboriginal opinion than it has been in the past. “But,” says Charles, “those people involved in its work and decisions

must be more than just talkers. I have no time for publicity-seekers or talkers. The involvement of office-holders must be constructive and they must accept the responsibilities which go with their titles."

Charles believes the executive should be fully Aboriginal and that its members "should reflect the desires of the Aboriginal community. After all," he points out, "the foundation was set up to help Aboriginal people help themselves."

In this respect he sees the foundation as a training centre for Aboriginal people. It can be used to give groundwork in office procedure, welfare and liaison work. Providing people with this sort of experience will enable them to obtain work elsewhere.

Such schemes would be part of the organization's wider role which Charles hopes to develop. That is, the need for it to take an interest in the problems of cultural transition and adaptation facing Aboriginal people, particularly those coming from reserves to live and work in the city. "Aboriginal values sometimes conflict with those of the larger community," he says. "Adaptation is necessary in order to minimize this conflict."

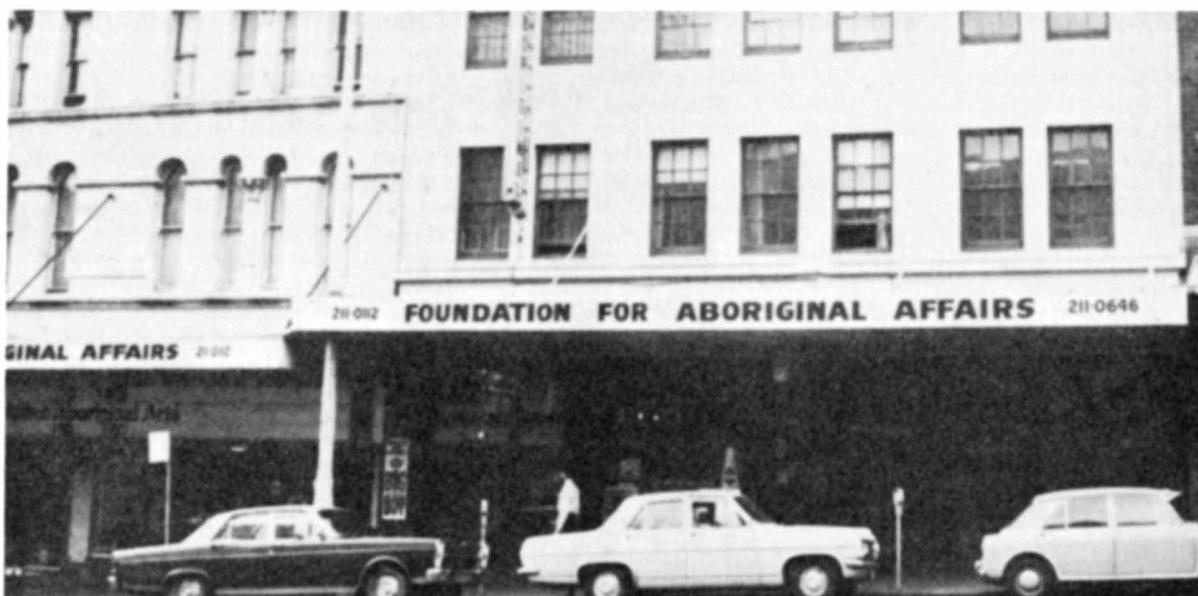
The education process, however, needs to be a two-way one. In the future Charles hopes to see the foundation playing a greater role in the promotion of Aboriginal culture and initiating cultural programmes, possibly through the sponsorship of traditional Aboriginal theatre, art displays,

etc. One suggestion is to bring down groups from the Territory and elsewhere to run classes for whites and Aborigines.

Another significant change in the foundation in the future could be its relocation. This suggestion has been under discussion for some time. The present building in George Street is too small and awkward for the needs it must serve. The downstairs hall is hardly adequate for dances and concerts. Charles Perkins believes that there is need for a building that would accommodate a restaurant, art shop—the present one is leased on adjacent premises—and sizeable hall, as well as other regular facilities. There is, too, the worry lest the foundation appear second-class. "We must retain dignity in welfare work," says Charles, "both for the sake of the people seeking help and the foundation."

Just where the foundation would be relocated is still undecided. Redfern might not necessarily be the best location because of certain disadvantages, notably the fact it would be "too close to the problem", that rising housing prices in the area may soon cause a shift in its population, and also for the sake of Aboriginal groups in other areas of the city, such as Mt Druitt, Newtown, Marrickville, etc. Almost certainly, though, the new location would be in the Redfern vicinity, possibly Chippendale or Surry Hills, as long as such a position is central and accessible to transport.

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The Foundation today



Senator Bonner receiving the marriage documents from the officiating clergyman, Rev. Ballinger. L. to R.: Mrs Bonner, matron of honour, Mrs Alice Stephan, best man Mr Pat Killoran, Senator Bonner and Rev. Ballinger

A UNIQUE AND HISTORIC WEDDING

A wedding of Australiawide interest was solemnized recently on the spacious, grassy lawns of OPAL House at Mt Gravatt, Brisbane. The contracting parties were Mrs Heather Ryan, secretary of the Ipswich Branch of OPAL, and Aboriginal Senator Neville Bonner, Queensland President of OPAL.

Rev. Ballinger officiated and Mr Pat Killoran, Queensland Director of Aboriginal and Islanders Affairs carried out the duties of best man, while

Mrs Alice Stephan was the matron-of-honour for the bride.

A large gathering of more than 200 guests and well-wishers assembled at OPAL House and the traffic was so dense that several policemen were on duty to direct and control it. Among the many people who came to witness this extremely popular wedding were many Aboriginal friends of both the groom and the bride, numerous parliamentary colleagues of Senator Bonner, and a large number



Guests gathering outside OPAL House at Mt Gravatt for the wedding of Senator Neville Bonner and Mrs Heather Ryan



Following the wedding ceremony Senator and Mrs Bonner greet some of their children and grandsons

of European friends of both Senator and Mrs Bonner.

A reception was held at Kenmore where 200 invited guests were treated to a sumptuous five-course meal. Mr Owen Fletcher, also an official of the OPAL organization, carried out the duties of master of ceremonies at the wedding breakfast. When proposing the toast to the bride and groom Mr Fletcher briefly outlined the rapid rise to prominence of the groom whom he said had very little primary school education but has now raised himself to the position of Senator.

"He is the first Aboriginal to be heard in our Federal Parliament and is respected and held in high esteem by his political colleagues of both Houses of Parliament and their parties. It is a tribute to him and his bride that men like Sir Kenneth Anderson, Sir Reginald Swartz and other parliamentarians should be among the honoured guests to come to Brisbane for this historic occasion," concluded Mr Fletcher.

Mr Turner, a personal friend of Mrs Bonner since her school days, spoke in glowing terms of her bright and cheerful disposition and her willingness always to help other people. "This," he said, "has been ample demonstrated over the years by the interest she has always shown in OPAL."

Mr Pat Killoran, Queensland Director of Aboriginal and Islanders Affairs, supported the

Senator as his groomsman. He paid special tribute to Senator Bonner's "sincerity of purpose". He had watched with keen interest the friendship between Heather and Neville grow into a romance which culminated in matrimony. He found great pleasure, on behalf of his Department and staff, to extend best wishes to Senator and Mrs Bonner in the new sphere of life they are undertaking together, and hoped life for them would be extremely long and happy.

Last, but by no means least of the speakers, was Mrs Archer, herself an Aboriginal married to an Englishman. She had every confidence Neville and Heather's marriage would be a lasting and a very happy one, as was her own. She proposed a most unusual toast, which was to "The sons and daughters and grandchildren of Senator and Mrs Bonner", most of whom were present at the wedding. It was Mrs Bonner's son Rory who gave his mother away in marriage to Senator Bonner.

The bride and groom left after the reception for a short honeymoon on Bribie Island before Senator Bonner returned to Canberra to attend to his many parliamentary duties.

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(Contributed by Fred A. Krause of Margate, Queensland.)

COMMONWEALTH CAPITAL FUND FOR ABORIGINAL ENTERPRISES

How the fund was established

In 1968 the Commonwealth Government set up its Fund for Aboriginal Enterprises to make available money to lend for Aboriginal business enterprises.

Why the fund was set up

The fund was established for the benefit of those Aborigines wishing to go into business to improve their standard of living. It was decided therefore to put an amount of money into the fund to lend to Aborigines who can satisfy the Government they can make a success of whatever business they have in mind.

Who can ask for a loan

Any person of Aboriginal descent may apply for a loan.

For what businesses are loans made

Among the businesses for which loans have been requested are: planting crops and grasses; buying cattle and sheep; share farming; buying machinery; clearing land; building fences; fishing and prawning; mining; shops; tourist businesses; and transport businesses.

Providing the loan is not too large the Government may also lend money to buy farming and grazing properties. A large amount makes it difficult for the borrower to pay back the loan and the interest on it and at the same time earn enough money to support himself and his family.

Sometimes loans are made to groups who want to start a business together, such as those on a settlement or mission.

The Government sometimes provides guidance and advice to enable people to learn about their business and thereby run it successfully by themselves.

The Capital Fund does not make loans for the purchase of houses or personal belongings. The loans are only for businesses of some kind.

What the Government will want to know

Before the loan is granted the Government will want to be sure that the business will be successful.

Thus it will want to know:

1. Does the borrower know exactly what he wants to do? Has he a proper plan to carry out the enterprise?
2. Will the business earn enough money to do the following:
 - (a) Pay all its running expenses.
 - (b) Repay the loan and interest.
 - (c) Provide a reasonable living for the proprietor and his family.
3. Will there be a market for the goods produced by the business?
4. Does the borrower understand the business he plans to engage in and can he run it properly? If not, is there someone who will advise him?
5. Has he any money himself to put into the business?
6. Is he willing to work to build the business and make it successful?

Before any money is lent these questions will be looked at thoroughly.

How the Government lends the money

The Government will make loans either by paying money direct to the borrower usually through his bank, or to someone who will sell him the goods required for the business. Sometimes the loan will be made a little at a time as it is required.

All loans have to be repaid in as short a time as practical. When the loan is made it will be explained how much of the loan is to be paid back each time and when those repayments have to be made, perhaps every month or every few months.

When a person borrows money, whoever he is and whatever the purpose, he has to pay back more than he borrowed. The extra money he must repay is known as interest and Aborigines who borrow from the Capital Fund will also have to pay interest. The interest is about \$5 per year for every \$100 borrowed. Sometimes the interest might be slightly higher.

When the loan is granted the borrower has to sign an agreement setting out the terms of the loan and promising to repay it. It is important that the repayments be made each time they are due.

How to ask for a Capital Fund Loan

Enquiries about a loan can be made through any bank. It is preferable to first discuss the matter with the local welfare officer or to write direct to the N.S.W. Directorate of Aboriginal Welfare, Box K718 P.O., Haymarket, N.S.W. 2000. Enquiries can also be directed to the Director, Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Box 477 P.O., Canberra City, A.C.T. 2601.

Repayments

The amounts a person would have to repay each year on a Capital Fund Loan with interest at 5 per cent included, are as follows:

Loan \$	Yearly instalment over		
	5 years	10 years	20 years
500	114	64	40
1,000	230	130	80
5,000	1,144	642	400
10,000	2,286	1,284	798

Continued from page 2

Asked about the effects of political squabbles and faction fights within the foundation, Charles replied: "This has been a benefit to the foundation. Conflicting ideas over its role are good. It helps sort out and crystallise issues. It is only to be welcomed. After all, Aboriginal affairs is a tremendously dynamic area, all the time changing. Nothing could be worse for any institution than the complete absence of criticism, discussion and controversy. Differing ideas are important for a developing organization, providing criticism is not too personal or libellous. "And," he adds, "providing the foundation is serving the needs of the Aboriginal people it is doing its job."

In handling the present problems of the foundation, Charles Perkins will be able to draw on an impressively diverse range of personal experience. Born into a family of 14, he was educated initially among the Arunta people on a reserve near Alice Springs. He completed his schooling at a church boys school in Adelaide. He then studied and qualified as a fitter and turner while playing first grade soccer. It was soccer that led him to England and Europe where he spent some time. Charles returned to Australia where he married and completed his matriculation, still playing soccer, this time for Pan Hellenic. After matriculating he spent 3 years studying sociology and anthropology at Sydney University



COMMONWEALTH ABORIGINAL SECONDARY and STUDY GRANTS SCHEMES

Applications are invited for 1973 Aboriginal Secondary and Study Grants which the Commonwealth Government offers each year to assist Aboriginal students to continue their education beyond the statutory school leaving age and to undertake further study after leaving school.

The grants include assistance with living costs, school fees, clothing and textbooks and other expenses associated with attending school and other educational institutions.

ELIGIBILITY

Aboriginal Secondary Grants

The grants are open to students of Aboriginal or Torres St. Island descent who:—

- will be 14 years of age but under 21 years on 1 January, 1973;
- will be attending in 1973 an approved primary or secondary school in any Australian State or Internal Territory;
- are likely to benefit from remaining at school.

Aboriginal Study Grants

The grants are open with no age restriction, to students of Aboriginal or Torres St. Island descent, who, having already left school, wish to undertake further studies or training in an approved course.

APPLICATIONS

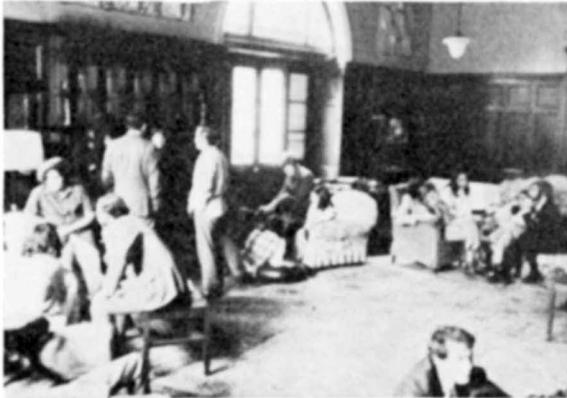
Application forms and further details may be obtained from the Department of Education and Science at the address below, from offices of the Commonwealth Employment Service, the Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare or some school principals.

APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO:

The Regional Director
Sydney Office
Department of Education and Science
La Salle Building
70 Castlereagh Street
SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000
(G.P.O. Box 3987, SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2001)
Telephone 2 0323

before graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Between 1965 and 1969 he managed the foundation until joining the Office of Aboriginal Affairs.

Charles Perkins' most obvious ambition in regard to the foundation seems to be to ensure that it adjusts and adapts to the rapidly changing environment of Aboriginal affairs. "It must be able to give leadership to other organizations," he insists. "It must understand the developing situation and cater to its needs and interests. But it must not just adapt to changes—it must predict and prepare for them. It must create the situation that enables us to handle problems before they foist themselves upon us."



Students and advisers at Women's College

SEMINAR FOR H.S.C STUDENTS

Seven girls and eight boys, all of whom are in 6th form in 1972 and hold Commonwealth Aboriginal Secondary Grants, arrived in Sydney on 27th and 28th August, to take part in a programme of visits and discussions to help them to make decisions about their future careers after leaving school.

They came from High Schools at Ingleburn, Green Valley, Greystanes, Punchbowl, Maitland, Cowra, Wellington, Dubbo, Nyngan, Walgett, Milton, Armidale, Tumut, and Griffith.

The fifteen students lived in at two of the residential colleges on the campus of the University of Sydney, Women's College and St John's College.

During the programme, the students met people concerned with the Aboriginal Study Grants Scheme and with placement in employment so that they were able to learn about financial assistance for further study, and also about the types of employment available to them.

The students visited the University of Sydney and the University of New South Wales and gained some impressions of what a university is like.

An important and interesting visit was made to the Careers Reference Centre, near Central



Neil and Barry Thorne (Walgett) and Bob Smith who works at The Commonwealth Employment Office, Burwood



Sue Bulger (Tumut) and Hyllus Mathews (Lethbridge Park)

Railway. Here each student was able to find written information about jobs he or she was interested in, as well as being able to listen to taped information or watch a film about the career preferred.

Smaller groups visited places around Sydney to learn more about their particular preferences. Visits were made to Sydney Teachers College, the N.S.W. Institute of Technology, East Sydney Technical College, the Conservatorium of Music, the Combined Services Recruiting Centre, Prince Henry Hospital, the Speech Therapy Clinic at the Children's Hospital, the CSIRO Division of Biological Control, South Sydney Community Aid Centre, district offices of Commonwealth Employment Service and State Child and Social Welfare, and the University of N.S.W.

The students were also interested to meet and talk to Aborigines already studying or working in Sydney. People who gave of their time to talk to the grant-holders included Paul Coe and John Austin (both law students at the University of New South Wales), Margaret Stewart (studying Social Work at the University of New South Wales), Neville Perkins (studying Arts/Law at the University of Sydney), Bob Smith (employment officer), and Hyllus Matthews (taking a day secretarial course).

On the last night of the programme, a social get-together was held at the Women's College, and the grant-holders were able to meet and talk to many well-known members of the Aboriginal community in Sydney, including Shirley Smith, Chicka Dixon, Candy Williams, Lyn Thompson, Billy Craigie, and Mrs Stewart of the Advisory Council.

Other well-known people at the function were Alan Duncan of the Aboriginal Education Council and Eric Frater, General Secretary of the Aboriginal Children's Advancement Society.

Before they left Sydney for home, eleven of the students sat for the Commonwealth Service Selection Test.

A number of the grant-holders said that they had benefited from their programme in Sydney. Many are looking to futures in medical fields, town and country planning, social work, teaching, engineering trades, office work, etc. All those concerned with the programme wish them every success in their coming examinations, and hope that they will be able to embark on the careers they have set their sights on.

OUTWARD BOUND



Communication is an important part of the Outward Bound course. Here a group practices speaking and debating

A group goes through one of the exercises in "Initiative"—Phyllis can be seen with face to camera on the right



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“Endeavour” and “Discovery” are the two ideas that express the essence of a physical and personal testing course conducted over 3 weeks at the Outward Bound School at Fisherman’s Point on the Hawkesbury River, near Sydney.

Recently two girls, Phyllis Harrison and Lorraine Richards, were sponsored to do the course by the Directorate of Aboriginal Welfare. Phyllis is an 18 year-old typist working with the Directorate and Lorraine a 6th form student at Sydney Technical College.

The purpose of the Outward Bound scheme is to assist young people breaking from adolescence and entering adulthood. This is suggested by the motto, “Outward bound on life’s journey”. The organization’s emblem is the Blue Peter, the flag flown by ships leaving port on voyage.

The method is that of a testing, adventurous period allowing the individual to grow in self-awareness, discipline and expression. Group activity and interaction help develop an understanding of other people. They also give the individual an idea of his or her’s own weaknesses and strengths. Such an awareness facilitates the person’s future participation in the community and makes easier the problems of adjustment.

Among the challenges and experiences presented on the course are kayaking, camping, rock-climbing, bushwalking, first-aid, ropes, group discussion, public speaking, group projects, community service, musical and artistic appreciation, personal discussion with instructors, etc.

For Phyllis and Lorraine the group discussions sometimes provided an excellent opportunity to exchange views with their fellows about the problems of adjustment, self-realization and recognition faced by Aborigines and whites when they come into contact with one another.

The emphasis is on excitement and stimulus throughout a 3-week period of constant adventure. The programme is intended to provide in miniature a wide sample of life’s experiences. It doesn’t mould the individual but tries to provide the opportunity for self-expression and realization—through challenge, communication, appreciation and the development of initiative. It provides the participant with an idea of what’s involved and necessary in assuming adulthood.

Phyllis and Lorraine both agree that the course was a worthwhile one for themselves. Following on their experience it is hoped to sponsor other young people on Outward Bound courses in the future.

Young people who take on the course are expected: (a) to participate in the course to the best of their ability; and (b) to do their utmost to consider others as much as themselves.

At the end of the course a report is prepared by the school Director and instructors and sent to the person’s sponsor. The report comments on what has been achieved by the group and on each student’s performance. The report provides a useful aid in planning the person’s future development.

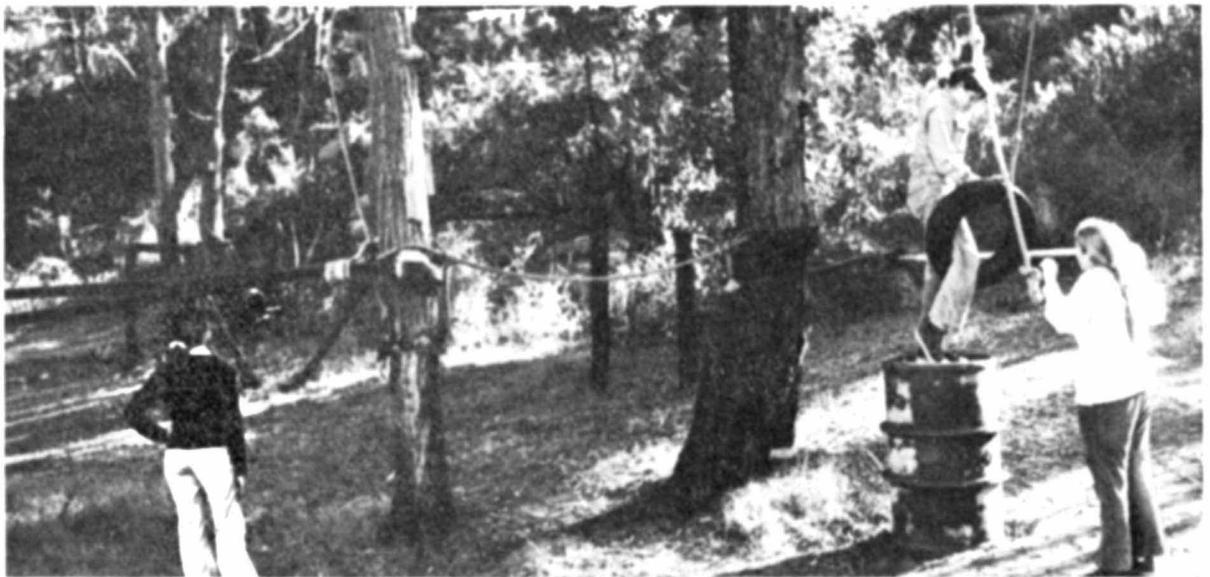


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Testing oneself on the ropes: Lorraine struggles with a tyre



The End of a Legend

A living legend ended recently with the death in the Northern Territory of Joe Attawomba. A student of the old school, Joe was the best-known Aboriginal tracker in the Territory. His death followed 5 years of illness due to tuberculosis.

Little is known about Joe's early life. He was a stockman on Dorisvale station when only a lad. Just before the war he was tried for a tribal killing and committed to a life sentence.

In February, 1942, when the Japanese bombing of Darwin began, Mr Justice Wells released all prisoners. Joe was sent as a tracker to Daly River Police Station under Constable Tasman Fitzter, the famous bush policeman.

In those days there were only horse patrols to cover hundreds of miles. Joe became famous for his work in searching for downed pilots. According to Constable Fitzter, Joe was an utterly reliable tracker and a valued camp sergeant.

A street was named after Attawomba in the Bagot subdivision near Fitzter Drive, which commemorates the work of his former boss.

In 1946, during one of the worst floods in the history of the Territory, Fitzter's wife fell desperately ill. Joe was responsible for saving her life.

The pedal wireless had broken down and Attawomba set off in search of a doctor. In the following 48 hours he swam across half a dozen swollen creeks and ran 90 miles to get assistance at Adelaide River. He was in his 40s at that time.

Mrs Fitzter later described Joe as "a real nomad, but completely trustworthy . . . a lovely man. He had a fine physique and a fine character".

After the Fitzters left the Daly, Joe went to stay with Mrs Fitzter's sister, Myrtle Fawcett, at Adelaide River. While there he discovered he had contracted tuberculosis.

He retired on an invalid pension and was in and out of hospital during his last few years. Mrs Fawcett cared for him, getting his ration and his many comforts.

Married several times, Joe spent his last years with his tribal wife, Ruby, who still lives at Adelaide River.

Commenting after his death, Mrs Fitzter said: "He had a stepdaughter at the Daly River Mission who wanted him to go back there so she could look after him. But Attawomba loved his freedom too much to leave the bush".

What follows is Father Frank Flynn's account of the rescue mission which set out to reach Mrs Fitzter after Joe had brought the news of her illness. This account was forwarded to *New Dawn* by Mrs Fawcett:

"I shall always remember a dramatic rescue voyage that I once made to Daly River in a boom-defence vessel, H.M.A.S. *Kangaroo*. It was in the middle of the wet season of 1946, a year of record rains, when the swollen river rose to a height of over 40 feet, broke its banks and flooded for miles over the surrounding plains.

On 14th February, Constable Tasman Fitzter, in charge of the Daly River Police Station at the time, wrote a letter to the Superintendent of Police in Darwin, marked it "Most Urgent" and sent it with a black tracker named Joe Attawomba to Adelaide River. This was his only chance of getting a message through because his radio transceiver was out of order, the airstrip under water and the road to the Stuart Highway was impassable for any type of vehicle.

On the night of 16th February, Joe walked into Adelaide River Police Station, having covered 90 miles of water and bog on foot in 2 days, and handed the letter marked "Most Urgent" to Constable Ron Hughes. The message stated that Constable Fitzter's wife needed medical help urgently, as she had endured severe abdominal pain for several days without relief and had become critically ill. Constable Hughes telephoned the message through to the Superintendent in Darwin. The naval officer-in-charge there agreed to make H.M.A.S. *Kangaroo* available to take the relief party that was already being assembled to Anson Bay, which forms the mouth of the Daly River. As it was out of the question for a vessel of this size to navigate the river itself a crash launch with two powerful

engines was carried on deck to negotiate the critical part of the journey.

No civilian medical staff had returned to Darwin at this stage, immediately after the war, and army personnel had for the most part been evacuated, so great difficulty was experienced in obtaining a doctor to accompany the rescue party. Eventually the police contacted me and I agreed to go. Leo Hickey of Darwin, who knows our northern waters perhaps better than anyone and who knew the Daly River particularly well, came along as guide to help the small vessel over sunken rocks and shoals and especially to give advice in navigating against the Bore, which is a notorious hazard on the Daly. Arrangements were soon finalized and with all the rescue party on board the *Kangaroo* steamed out of Darwin Harbour late on Wednesday evening. In the wardroom we yarned late into the night.

By noon the next day we were standing off the mouth of the river, close to Perron Island. While the crash launch was lowered over the side the captain, Commander Horsborough, showed me the *Mariner's Guide*, which informed us that the Daly River in the wet season was a "treacherous torrent and quite unnavigable". With this not very reassuring piece of information four of us, the captain, navigator, engineer and myself, climbed into the launch. It took us some little time to cross Anson Bay from where the *Kangaroo* was safely anchored. Night enveloped us almost immediately after we had entered the river proper. A spotlight on the bow was our only guide to distinguish the course of the river from the broad stretch of flooded plains that surrounded us on every side. It also picked out pairs of crocodiles in the gleaming darkness, as no commercial shooting had been done for some past years. Our craft with its two engines had a maximum speed of 14 knots, but the river was doing about 8 knots against us, so our effective speed was only about 6 knots.

In the early hours of the morning before the faintest streaks of dawn brought even a glimmer of light to the sky, one of our engines cracked up. Now we were going forward at 7 knots and slipping back with the river at 8 knots. We dropped anchor with one engine running and yet we were losing ground. Eventually after much tinkering the engineer had the two engines going and we began making up leeway.

Dawn brought a glimmer of light to the sky and presented really an amazing sight. Birds of all description, geese, ducks, jabirus, cockatoos, rose from the tops of submerged trees in their thousands as we rounded bend after bend in the river. I have never seen anything like it before or since. In

the early afternoon we sighted a few men on the north bank. They shouted that they were on the sight of the old copper mine landing, so I knew from this that the police station was only another 10 miles upstream. Eventually the station hove in sight and we were all relieved to reach our journey's end, with 70 miles of winding flooded river between us and the *Kangaroo*. We were able to moor the launch almost at the front gate which normally stands 50 feet above the dry season water level.

Mrs Fitzer was severely jaundiced and in a frightening state. While sterilizing needles for morphia injections, droves of lavender bugs, escorted by a variety of other insects, bombarded the primus flame and went plunging into the saucepan of boiling water. Eventually the patient was made reasonably comfortable and we decided the wisest plan was not to start out on the return journey immediately, but to be ready to start at first light next morning. It was not until we had our patient on a stretcher to the launch just before dawn that we realized we would have to enlarge the door of the cabin to fit Mrs Fitzer in. A few minutes work with a saw provided a wider entrance and we were under way.

Our speed was frighteningly fast, the river giving us 8 knots and the two engines 14 knots. At this speed it was more difficult than ever to recognize the course of the river in the wide expanse of water. Wherever the river had broken its banks and its course turned sharply we were inclined to follow the body of water that surged straight ahead over the submerged bank, rather than the main stream that swung to the right or left. At one stage Commander Horsborough expressed doubts as to whether we would ever rejoin the *Kangaroo*. He feared we would be carried away over the plains and become fouled by the submerged trees, either capsizing or becoming firmly anchored there. However by sundown we had reached the mouth of the river again. As soon as we drew alongside the *Kangaroo* the launch with the patient and crew was hauled on deck and our course set for Darwin.

Under the headline "Navy joins in race in far north to save woman's life" reports in southern papers were describing our expedition as "One of the most thrilling chapters in the annals of the Northern Territory . . . a dramatic attempt to save a woman's life at the Daly River near Anson Bay". We were of course quite unaware of the publicity surrounding our expedition when we berthed at Darwin wharf at 4 a.m. on Sunday. At all events our patient was soon comfortably settled in the Darwin Hospital and later flown to Melbourne, where an operation was performed with excellent results".

Article and photographs by courtesy of The Sydney Morning Herald, 15th July, 1972. This is an edited version of the original article.

DJANGGAWUL

By Gavin Souter



The invasion of Arnhem Land is now well under way. Although proclaimed an "inviolable" Aboriginal reserve in 1931, this last Australian frontier has been exploited increasingly during the last few years. Manganese on Groote Eylandt, bauxite in the Gove Peninsula, uranium near the western escarpment; wherever minerals have been found in the reserve, they are being or will soon be mined. Nhulunbuy in the Gove Peninsula has a white population of 5,000, and by the late 1970s the new uranium field at the other end of Arnhem Land will have a regional centre of 2,000 people. Arnhem Land also supports a population of 6,890 Aborigines. Most of them live at missions and Government settlements on the edge of the reserve, but a few small groups still prefer a life of hunting and gathering on remote tribal land, far from the invaders. This article, describes a visit to one such isolated group.

The Arafura Sea was peacock blue; the Arnhem Land Reserve an olive green. Soon the green became brighter, almost like lettuce. "Swamp," said Sheppy. "There are salt water crocodiles down there. The natives used to sell the skins, but now they are not allowed to. It is all right for mining companies to come in here though! We should have kept this reserve closed for another 20

years. Then perhaps we could have done something with the people."

We had been flying for 32 minutes. Sheppy pointed to some tiny rooftops beside one of the few mountains in sight, and meticulously prepared to land. I saw a plain spiked with termite towers. The spikes became taller and sharper, then mercifully gave way to a narrow strip of cleared ground.

Mearoloma (Wanamaru's wife) and her daughter, Karrmandowi.



Djigawurrdi.



Our Stall Warning Indicator buzzed angrily, and a second later we were back to earth on two sorely tried but sturdy rubber wheels.

"I'd boil the water before you drink it," said Sheppy as we unloaded my gear. "And don't sleep near buffalo tracks." Ten minutes later he took off, leaving me with a feeling of loneliness I had not really expected.

Introductions

Here I am in the middle of Arnhem Land with four Aboriginal men, three women, three children and seven starved-looking dogs. One of the men clears his nose onto the ground, and a dog darts forward with intentions that I prefer not to think about. I look at my notebook. The two younger men, in their forties I should think, are Djigawurrdi and his brother Wanamaru. There is a middle-aged man, Biriwun, and a bearded old-age pensioner named Maynyunyu. I practice the names.

Another pensioner is living two miles away in one of the huts we saw from the air. She has Hansen's Disease, which is the new name for leprosy. The women and children who are with us have walked across from those huts, and are now busy making a new camp beside the landing ground. I suspect this may be to save me a two-mile walk.

Djigawurrdi is the leader. He and his brother both speak some English, but an English that I can scarcely understand. They pronounce fish as bish, and string as dring. Would I like to see some blowers? We walk between pandanus palms and termite hills to a billabong that is covered with white and yellow water-lilies.

Wanamaru wades out to pick a flower, sucks up some water through a stalk, and offers me a lily root to chew. "Good ducker," he says. "Like gabbage." As we walk back through the reeds he grips something between his toes and says what at first I take to be "lizard". It is a leech.

After Supper, the Mosquitoes

Fires are lit, dampers baked in the coals and grass tufts tomahawked out of the way to make smooth sleeping spaces. The women do all of this. I heat a tin of stew and boil some water from the billabong. It looks clear enough. Djigawurrdi sits beside one of his two wives, Wanagairr, drawing thoughtfully on a Macassan pipe that resembles a small didgeridoo.

At six o'clock the sun goes down and the mosquitoes arrive; just a few of them at first, then millions. Maynyunyu says something to Biriwun,

and bursts out laughing. Djigawurrdi leaves his pipe long enough to explain: "Biriwun god no ned". How he will survive the night without one I cannot imagine. The rest of us retreat abruptly under our nets, leaving the unseen horde shrilling like bagpipes outside. I wriggle into my sleeping bag and take a sleeping tablet.

Dawn at Djanggawul. Through my net I see 43 stationary mosquitoes, a distant wall of mist, and pink light in the eastern sky. The moon floats palely overhead, almost outdone by the morning star. A dog shakes its ears and scratches its belly. In the net nearest to mine, Wanamaru's baby daughter, Karrmandowi, starts to cry. Her father goes goo-goo-goo and she stops. One of the old men coughs and hawks. I hear crows, some cockatoos and, in the distance, doves.

Wallaby, Crocodile and Turtle Bones

Weetbix and powdered milk for breakfast. "Go udder billabong?" asks Djigawurrdi. The two of us set off across the plain, through pandanus palms and knee-high grass. Now and then we cross a bare claypan with fresh animal tracks. "Bubbalo," says Djigawurrdi at one of these. At another, "Wallaby".

He walks in front of me, but often slows down to talk. "You know when Nick Bederson come back here?" Unfortunately I don't. "He say come back in one year." I ask Djigawurrdi where he was born, and he points to the ground. Has he always lived here? Always, except when he and Wanamaru went to Mataranka during the war.

We come to an old camp site littered with white bones. Djigawurrdi picks up a jawbone with sockets for 14 teeth and says: "*Bairu*. Grogodie." I put the bone in my hip pocket. At this moment the jaw of a crocodile eaten by Aborigines seems an object of some value. Djigawurrdi points to both his thighs, and I notice a scar on each of them. *Bairu*.

At a second camp site we find turtle bones, the thigh bone of an emu, and various fragments of wallabies and kangaroos. In the middle of this site, two circles have been dug about six inches deep. They are six feet across and five yards apart. "My gorroboree here," says Djigawurrdi.

Sacred Places

Yet another camp site, on a flat shoulder of the hill that is called Djanggawul. Djigawurrdi points down to the billabong we have come to see, and to the huts far away which I have already seen from the air. He lights his pipe and says: "Dis gamp



Wanamaru and family and dogs.

here binish. My granbada and granmudda buried here.”

He strips a long piece of bark from a sapling, splits it several times with his finger-nails, then plait the pieces together by rolling them vigorously on his thigh. “Dring,” he explains. “For bishing.” As well as turtles and crocodiles, there are catfish and barramundi in the billabongs.

On our way to the huts we came to a reddish monolith which, as Djigawurrdi remarks, vaguely resembles a giant turtle. As best I can make out, this is a sacred place connected with turtle-hunting and a ceremony called *Mokarr*. Nearby is the site of another ceremony connected with string. It is called *Rawurr*.

I find that the huts are not built on stilts. The mosquito houses I have heard about are on higher ground several miles away and are used only in the wet season. This is a dry-season camp. Only the old woman with HD is at home. She offers Djigawurrdi a saucepan full of wild honey, and he dips a finger in appreciatively.

Swanee River

Djigawurrdi collects an old shotgun and several cartridges which he wants at the new camp, and before we leave he shows me four spears. One is a steel-pronged fishing spear. He fits it to a woomera and impales a rusty tin can 10 feet away.

The other spears have long wooden points. “What are these for?” “Drangers,” replies Djiga-

wurrdi. He picks up a spear, makes as if to throw it, and says: “Miss him!” Throws again: “Miss him!” And a third time: “Binish!” This is all done seriously enough, but I am not sure that I am meant to believe it.

We leave the old woman and walk back towards the landing ground carrying shotgun, cartridges and wild honey. “What dime Shebby gone?” asks Djigawurrdi. I tell him eleven, and look at my watch. It has stopped at 8.30 a.m.

At the landing ground three branch huts have appeared. Wanamaru sits in the shade with wife and daughter, playing a scratched LP on a battered transistor phonograph. The record is called “Swanee River Boys in Nashville.” As he turns the record over, Wanamaru looks up and says: “Shebby?” I listen, and sure enough it is.

“They haven’t come back yet”

I fixed my watch. According to Sheppy it was 11 o’clock, almost on the dot. Sheppy unloaded a box of stores from Galiwinku (Djanggawul pays its way with the cash income of two age pensions, and a little income from bark painting); and suggested that before leaving we should hold a short service. He and Djigawurrdi each said a few words, and the assembled company sang “What a friend we have in Jesus” — *Diesu limurrungu lundu*. Biriwun and Maynynyu stayed aloof in the shade of their hut.

Sheppy helped Djigawurrdi’s wife on board the *Cessna*. She was sick. No one knew what the

trouble was, he said, so she was going into hospital. I felt vaguely ashamed that I had not been aware of this. I shook hands all around, and got on board, too.

We circled once, then headed north. Sheppy pointed over to where the rest of the Djanggawul people were now living. "BHP were prospecting at Doindji in the dry season last year," he said. "I'm surprised they haven't come back yet. Not that we want them!"

A BUSY YEAR

This month Keith Brandy is sitting for the School Certificate examination. It is the academic end of what for Keith has been a rather exciting sporting year.



Keith Brandy

In the past months Keith has represented his school, Condobolin High, and the Western Area in soccer and cricket as well as Rugby League which led him to play for the New South Wales State side which recently enjoyed a highly successful tour of Papua-New Guinea, winning 6 of its 7 games, including both Test matches.

A friend of Keith's, Geoff Williams, also represented the State on the New Guinea tour and has been selected for a touring team to Great Britain. Keith is first "shadow reserve" for the tour.

He has played for the Western Area under 16 years and Western Area 9 stone Rugby League team and as a result of a trial game at Wollongong in July was selected to represent Southern N.S.W. against Northern N.S.W. later that month.

Keith was born at Condobolin in 1956. He has one brother Larry, aged 14, and two sisters, Roslyn aged 15 and Carolyn aged 12.

Roslyn is employed in Sydney. Larry attends the Condobolin High School and Carolyn the

ABORIGINAL WRITERS' WORKSHOP

The University of New England at Armidale hopes to organize an Aboriginal writers workshop in the near future. The emphasis is likely to be on drama, but other forms of writing will be included.

The idea is to hold working sessions every month or 6 weeks, each supervised by experienced teachers who, where possible, are successful writers themselves. These sessions will last about 6 hours and will be held on Saturday afternoons, beginning at 12 noon-1.00 p.m.

The organizer of the scheme, Mr Gordon Krippner, is anxious to find out what kind of response there is likely to be to this proposal and accordingly invites comments from interested individuals and organizations.

His address is:

Tablelands Regional Office,
Department of University Extension,
University of New England,
ARMIDALE, N.S.W. 2351.
(Tel. 72 2911, ext. 2266)

At this stage it is too early to say what the final arrangements will be—this will depend to some extent on how many people are prepared to attend. Invitations have been sent to a number of Australian authors to conduct the workshops. A submission has been made to the Commonwealth Literary Fund for financial assistance.



Condobolin Public School. The children lost their mother in a drowning accident about seven years ago and since that time the boys have been cared for by their grandmother, Mrs Kathleen Brandy of Boona Road, Condobolin. The girls have been in the care of their aunt and uncle, Mr and Mrs John Brandy. The boys grandmother has taken a keen interest in her charges progress.

After completing his School Certificate exam this month Keith hopes to gain an apprenticeship in the carpentering trade—preferably in a larger town than Condobolin.

The past 6 months have kept Keith busy training, playing and travelling. He has met with a great deal of support from his fellow students and from his football coach, Mr Michael Craft who has spent many hours of his time to assist Keith and the other boys in developing their skills.

Smoke Signals

► TERRITORY ADMINISTRATION'S FIRST FULLBLOOD APPRENTICES:

Two 19-year-old boys have become the first fullblood Aborigines to be employed as apprentices by the Northern Territory Administration. They are Norman Angagela and Jacob Lanses who, having served for the usual three-month probationary period, have been accepted by the Apprentices Board as trainee motor mechanics. Jacob Lanses is from Roper River and Norman Angagela from Maningrida. Each spent 2 years at Darwin's Kormilda College, then another 2 years at Darwin High School before doing a year's study for their apprenticeship course at the Adult Education Centre. They have now begun their four-year apprenticeship at the Transport Branch of the NTA.

► POPULAR AND TALENTED:

Daniella Phillips of Chester Hill is the 7-year-old adopted daughter of Mr and Mrs George Phillips. She is pictured in the adjacent photograph presenting a bouquet of flowers to Mrs E. G. Whitlam, wife of the Leader of the Opposition, at a recent function at Cabramatta Seventh Day Adventist Church where Mrs Whitlam presented an Australian Flag to the Youth. Daniella attends the church's Western Suburbs Primary School at Auburn and is described as a bright pupil with a desire to learn all she can. She is also reputed to possess a beautiful and promising singing voice. In the photo she is accompanied by a young Italian girl, Christine Gherch.

► ASSISTING THE TRANSITION:

At Moree a special club has been formed to teach personal grooming and deportment to Aboriginal and white children of senior primary school age. The organization is the "Crossroads" Club, named to suggest the transition from about ten to teen. It was formed by teachers at St Philomena's School following a conference on the "Role of the Church and Aboriginal Advancement". The club aims to interest young girls in a programme of health and beauty which would be of benefit to them, especially those approaching teenage.

► A CASE OF A WELL-DRESSED DOG:

The accompanying picture is that of 7-year-old Susan Davis posing with her "very best playmate", her dog "Rusty". The photo was submitted by

Susan's grandmother, Mrs Edna Waddell of Belgrave, Victoria. Susan and her father live with Mrs Waddell.



Susan Davies with playmate



Daniella Phillips, assisted by Christine Gherch, presents Mrs Whitlam with a posy of flowers

► COLLARENEBRI'S EMERGENCY FUND:

The people of Collarenebri seem to be having great success with their emergency fund. At the time of writing it stood at \$2,100. In the last 10 months they have given eight mothers \$50 each to take their sick children to Sydney. They have paid \$90 to Tamworth Hospital and the Royal Far West Home, Manly, for crutches and calipers. Recently two mothers of crippled children were given \$20 each to take their children to Sydney for treatment. The fund is run by Aboriginal people from the reserve and all decisions on how the money is spent are made by them. The fund's secretary is Mrs Tom Ryan and its treasurer, Mr Walter Stallworthy.

► THE THOMPSON FAMILY:

The accompanying photos are those of the family of current welterweight boxing champion, Hector Thompson. Hector's parents, Mr and Mrs Lionel Thompson of Nana Glen, are pensioners and the only family in the district to have bought and paid for their own home—without the assistance

of a loan from the Department. Also pictured are Hector's brothers and sister, as well as his niece, Eileen.



Mr and Mrs Lionel Thompson at the front of their home at Nana Glen Rail, with Mrs Avery of Bellbrook on the left



Alex, Heather and Greg, brothers and sister of Hector Thompson



Eileen Thompson, granddaughter of Lionel Thompson

► **SPEAKING OF WOODENBONG:**

In the August edition it was reported that a memorial plaque commemorating the founder of the Woodenbong community, "Doc" Williams, had been erected on a rock at Bokal-ynee reserve. The "Mrs Williams" described as his wife and who died earlier this year at 97, was in fact his daughter, Miss Williams.

► **NURSING AID COURSES:**

A number of girls have recently graduated from the nursing aid courses available at various hospitals. The Department of Health subsidizes hospitals who train Aboriginal girls wishing to undertake the course. Fay Craig, whose picture appears on this page, recently completed her year's training at Grafton District Hospital. Anyone wishing to pursue the course should contact their local Vocational Officer or Community Health Nurse.



Fay Craig

PENFRIEND

Dear Sir,

I have a German penfriend who would like to correspond with an Aboriginal—male or female—in the age bracket 19–23 years. The address to write to is:

Miss Joan Golder,
Wesley College,
Sydney University,
Sydney, N.S.W. 2006.

I will send the names and addresses on.

Yours sincerely,
JOAN GOLDER.

The Nanima Lions Soccer Team, with coach Bill Riley. The boys played a combined Wellington team in an exhibition at the opening of Pioneer Park. (Picture courtesy of Wellington Star newspaper.)



