

# THE WELFARE OFFICERS

## *A Letter from the Superintendent*

My dear Aboriginal Friends,

For some years past, the Board has been aware of the need for keeping in closer and more continuous touch with our aboriginal people, particularly those who are living away from the stations where the Manager and Matron are always at hand to offer help and advice.

During the course of the daily life of those folk who live in camps on the outskirts of towns or in private homes of their own, there frequently comes the time when they run up against problems and difficulties, and often times they would welcome assistance. Sometimes there may be a domestic trouble; sometimes difficulty in obtaining or holding a job; sometimes legal advice is wanted; sometimes a youth or young woman needs help and advice on a very personal matter. In all such cases, the Board's Welfare Officer is at hand and his services should be sought. Maybe, too, some aboriginal person may be at cross-purposes with his fellow white man—there may be petty jealousy or animosity—and if these troubles are taken to the Welfare Officer, he would in all probability act as a "go between" and eventually restore harmony and goodwill. Aborigines too, sometimes have trouble in attending to their papers and documents—the filling in of income tax returns or completing an application for maternity allowance or child endowment claims; or possibly the witnessing of a signature. In all these cases, the Welfare Officer can be a great help to you.

Welfare Officers too, have an important duty in educating the white people to understand the dark people and to develop a proper attitude of tolerance and goodwill. The white community has still a lot to learn about the aborigines.

Welfare Officers are trained workers and have to be carefully selected. At the present time, there are only three in the field, but further appointments will shortly be made and others are still in training. The three already engaged in the work are stationed at the following centres:—

Coff's Harbour—for the Upper North Coast District.

Kempsey—for the Mid-North Coast District.

Moree—for the North-western Slopes and Plains.

It is expected that two new appointments will shortly be made, namely at Dubbo for the Central Western Slopes and Plains, and Nowra for the South Coast District.

Other districts to which future Welfare Officers will probably, in due course, be appointed are South-western Slopes and Plains and the far Central Western Plains.

Offices have been established at those centres where Welfare Officers have already been appointed, and aborigines are invited to call on the services of these Officers at any time.

Good wishes to you all,

*A.W.G. Lipscomb.*

Sup't. of Aborigines Welfare.



This lovely lass is Esther Johnson (16) who was recently screen tested for a leading part in a new Chauvel Film Production. Esther is Treatment Room Assistant at Murrin Bridge.

## BANKING ENCOURAGED

WITH the continuation of abundant employment, and the high wages received by aborigines throughout the State, opportunities are afforded them to improve their living conditions and to establish a bank credit for use on "a rainy day."



It is difficult, however, to convince many of the aboriginal people of the advantage of saving money.

Education, however, coupled with the development of a more stable social attitude will probably in time bring about a better outlook on the part of the people. Realising that any surplus capital held by the aborigines is, in a number of cases not being used wisely, the Board recently considered the question of inducing aborigines to save money and to open savings bank accounts. This aspect is regarded as of great importance in the process of assimilation of the aborigines into the white community. Arrangements are in hand for agencies of the Commonwealth Savings Bank to be established on a few stations as a trial and an extension of the scheme will be considered in the light of the results achieved.