

FINE GARDENS AT CAROONA

Residents House Proud

The total aboriginal population on the Station is 227, and a number living nearby, while not actually residing on the Station, are a part of the Station community. They are closely related to the Station residents, take a prominent part in Station activities, the children go to the Station school, and they come to the Manager and Matron for assistance in their troubles and illnesses.

All cottages are fitted with laundries and showers, and Station water is laid on. In addition, each new cottage is equipped with a 1,000 gallon rain water tank. Earth closets are provided, and a supply of disinfectant is regularly issued. Garbage is emptied once a week, and drawn to the township garbage dump.

Water is pumped from a well about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the buildings into overhead tanks, from which it is reticulated through the Station. This water, while very hard, has been passed as fit for use by the Health Department.

The employment position on this Station is good. No rations are issued. One family of nine has just moved onto the Station from poor living conditions in Moree. None have left the Station to merge into the general community. All houses on the Station are occupied.

There is no community garden. In a Station like this where there is practically full employment and men are only home for the weekends, community gardens would not be successful. Instead, every encouragement is given to home vegetable gardens. The home gardens on the Station are very creditable indeed, and with assistance and encouragement from the staff, should be a feature of the Station in the future.

There is a dairy herd of 34 and milk is supplied to the School for the school lunch. Milk is also distributed to the cottages for the benefit of the pre-school children.

There is a primary school on the Station with 43 pupils at present, but there is a seasonal fluctuation in numbers. The Headmaster is doing most excellent work. He is very interested in the children, both in school and out of school hours. The children are well behaved and reflect the care he has given them.

There are fifteen children from the Station attending the Quirindi High School, travelling by bus. Owing to the distance from Quirindi, the parents of High School children cannot attend the High School Parents and Citizens' meetings, and take no part in the various activities.

Buildings are in very fair condition. The residents take great pride in their houses and most are tastefully furnished and well kept.

The health of the residents is, generally, very good.

Religious instruction is given by clergymen of various denominations who visit the Station from time to time.

Football is a favourite sport and the football club entered two teams for the Tamworth League Competition. Working bees were organised and cleaned and levelled the playing area, fenced it, erected dressing sheds and generally improved the field. The teams did very well and achieved a reputation for sportsmanship through the whole district. The club is functioning with great enthusiasm. At one dance and match held, nearly £60 net profit was shown.

Some of the boys are attending the Quirindi Police Boys' Club. Owing to the long distance and transport difficulties, attendance is rather spasmodic. It is hoped to start a club of this description on the Station in due course. Some assistance is received from the white residents of the district and good relationships are developing.

Nine pupils who constituted the entire sixth class, commenced their studies at High School at the start of the school year. A school visit to the Binnaway Public School was very successful. The behaviour of the children was exemplary, and the entire lack of colour prejudice was extremely heartening.

A breaking-up party was held at Christmas. Gifts of drinks and ice cream were made by Caroona storekeepers. The Parents and Citizens' Association is functioning satisfactorily. Generally the school had a successful year.

Caroona is a well designed Station in beautiful surroundings. It has a large number of visitors from the outside community who come from a wide area. The residents of the Station are generally of a very good type, although there are some backward families. They have considerable pride in their homes and in the Station generally, but it is disappointing that they will not pay their rent though well able to do so.

Betty Ridgway of Redfern didn't look at all happy when she posed for the cameraman. Nerves perhaps ?

