

## *Xmas at Boggabilla*

The residents of Boggabilla had a very busy Xmas last year, with no less than three parties to attend.

The first was early in December, when Toomelah Branch of the C.W.A. held its first Xmas party. The temperature was around 100 degrees, but it did not melt the ladies enthusiasm, and everyone had a very busy day, decorating the Recreation Hall in the colours of the C.W.A., light blue, dark blue and gold, and baking cakes and nice things to eat.

Visitors from Boggabilla Billa Billa and Toobeah (Queensland) branches were made very welcome and the party commenced with the National Anthem and the C.W.A. Motto, after which several guessing competitions and games were held.

After a sumptuous afternoon tea, the visitors thanked members of the Toomelah Branch for a very enjoyable afternoon, receiving in return three very hearty cheers from the ladies for coming so far in the heat to their party.

The Station School held a 'breaking-up' Concert and once again the ladies were busy baking in high temperatures. After various songs and recitations, an ever popular "Punch and Judy" show brought the house down.

At last the day for which everyone had worked so hard, and the children longed for, arrived. The 21st December was the day Santa Claus arrived on the Station. It was very unfortunate that the weather-man decided to send the rain he had been saving up for months on that particular day. The races and the Treasure Hunt had to be cancelled, but when the children took their seats in the gaily decorated Recreation Hall there was no disappointment to be seen in any pair of shining eyes. After several Christmas Carols, Mrs. Susie McGrady said Grace in the absence of the Vicar, and the kids fell to on the plates piled high with food.

While the adults had their afternoon tea, the children sang themselves hoarse and tension mounted. The time for Santa Claus was drawing near! At last he arrived and the children went mad with excitement. They weren't at all disappointed that Santa had a cold and could not speak to them. After each child had received a present, and eaten as much ice-cream as little tummies could hold, it was time for Santa to visit other lucky children, and the residents gave him a send off that could be heard in Boggabilla, ten miles away.

After Christmas was over the ladies of the C.W.A. were invited into Boggabilla to attend a New Year party at that Branch. It was a nice change to sit and be waited on, after all the cooking and work of the Station Christmas, and it was nicer still to see the women of the town mixing freely with their dark neighbours.

Let's hope it will mean a good omen for the new year ahead, and let's pray a few more barriers will come down to friendship and ideals in common between dark and light.

## WILCANNIA DIGS IN

*by Jack Quayle*

The residents of the Settlement have finally commenced digging their way into their homes after eight months of hardships in tents, during the recent floods in the Darling River. The digging-in operations turned out to be a man's size job, but it was tackled with a will that would put any digger to shame; "whether gold digger, or otherwise". However the vegetation that took possession in their absence soon disappeared and in less than no time the area was cleared. One was surprised to note the difference in the appearance of the whole area after a day or two of work.

Everyone appears to have settled in quite comfortably and the painting operations that were halted, because of floodwaters have commenced again and progress is slow but sure and it is expected that by Christmas, several of the homes will have a new look.

Bill Harris gave his house a very nice outward appearance with two shades of green. Jim Bates, Bob Wilson, Bob Jones and several others are tackling the painting job, May Barlow, Mrs. Wyman, and Jim Clarke are other willing starters with the paint brush, as soon as more paint becomes available. We would like to congratulate these people on their efforts, because it goes to show that they do appreciate the comforts of a good home, and that they are taking an active interest in the progress of the Settlement.

A vast improvement is noticeable in the general conduct, and living standards of the majority of residents, though there is a minority that prefer the primitive conditions to the comforts of a good home. Efforts to encourage these people to accept better homes, and raise their living standards have been met with little or no results, they prefer the primitive life and way of living to that offered to them.

The welfare of the Aborigines at times become a problem to the Management, particularly those that live in small huts and shantys, who don't realise that inadequate sanitation, and bathing facilities, can have unsatisfactory results towards the welfare of children. Plonk, and cards are other enemies of Child Welfare. Many aboriginal children have been neglected for the sake of a bottle or two of "Red Ned", commonly known as plonk.

There are lots of ups and downs throughout life, and there is but one way to cope with them, and that is to keep on trying to overcome each obstacle as you come to it. Armed with courage, and, determination as a weapon, and willpower for a guide, you can fight your way to a new world of health and happiness, if you keep on trying.