

going ahead with improvements on the Settlement, as it is a long time since any improvements have been carried out by the tenants, and I have no doubt that when the fencing operations are completed every one will start gardening again. At one stage this settlement was a blaze of colour and I have no doubt that when the frosts leave us the flower gardens will bloom again.

There are still a considerable number of Aborigines who elect to live in primitive conditions around Wilcannia. These people have been given the opportunity of living in one of the Board's Cottages but they still want to live an independent life in little tin shacks, or tents around the town, and along the banks of the River. Apparently these people prefer adverse conditions to paying the small rental charged for the Board's Cottages, and a little bit of elbow grease to keep the cottages up to the required standards.

However that is the position as it stands at the present moment at Wilcannia and I would advise the residents of this settlement and those camped off it, that it is time they woke up to themselves and started living a new life, a life altogether different to that our forefathers lived when there were no houses offering, and try and make life worth living by grasping the opportunities offered to them by the Aborigines Welfare Board and other institutions that are striving to make better citizens of them and helping them to take their rightful place as citizens of Australia.

Betty Black, that talented young artist who has had so many of her sketches published in *Dawn*, paid Wilcannia a visit and met up with many of her old school mates and many of her relations whom she has not seen in years.

Paddy Black, Betty's father, is also holidaying in Wilcannia, but it is believed that he will be returning to his job very shortly. Jimmy Williams and Stewart Turnbull have gone to Queensland for a trip.

Vincent Quayle and Joe O'Donnell who went to Queensland last April are still running brumbies up around Thargominda and are expected home in August for the Show.

### ABORIGINES GET BRAVERY AWARDS

The Royal Humane Society has made awards for bravery to two aborigines at Alice Springs, who saved the life of another aboriginal.

Jack Gidgigarrie has been awarded the Society's bronze medal and Gerald Fry the certificate of merit.

They rescued Howard Stephens in December, 1957, when he was being swept along in the flooded Todd River.

# The Sacred Bean Trees

*An aboriginal legend from the Kyogle district, told by M. T. CLOSE to MILDRED NORLEDGE.*

This legend refers to the bean of what is commonly known as the Black Bean Tree, which it is said correctly or otherwise to be poisonous. Many white people as well as the Aborigines believe this to be so.

Within the tribal grounds of the Kyogle tribes there are growing along the banks of the river many Bean Trees, and there is one place where the Bean Trees flourish and grow where the trees are more sacred to the Witches than the Bean Trees growing elsewhere. Sacred are all Bean trees to the Witches, and none may touch them, least of all in the place where the trees that are more sacred grow, for if people eat the bean of the tree the witches will punish that do so with DEATH.

Now it so happened that one day a young man went along the bank of the river and he came to the place where the Bean Trees that were more sacred to the Witches were growing. "The beans growing upon these trees look good" he said to himself "I think I should like to eat them. For what harm could come to me, for the witches surely would not miss one bean from the trees that are so sacred to them".

So the young man looked about for the bean that looked the nicest one to eat. "Ah, here is one that looks nicer than all the other beans on the trees" thought he; "This is the bean that I will eat. And as for the witches—they will never know, for they surely cannot miss one bean".

Now no sooner had the young man eaten the bean, he began to feel sick, then he became much worse and was very ill indeed—so ill did he become that he could neither rise nor sit up. So there he lay till DEATH had claimed him—for the Witches knew that he had eaten a bean off the Sacred Bean Trees.

And this is the story of the young man that ate the bean from the Bean Trees that are sacred to the Witches. And to this day the very same trees are sacred to the Witches, and no one may eat the beans from them for if they do so they will surely die, for the Witches will punish them with DEATH as they did the young man who ate the bean from the Bean Trees that are sacred to the Witches.

For then as now the Witches will guard them, and they will see, and they will know when anyone touches them, and eats the beans from the trees that are sacred to them. And so that the beans may be hidden from the eyes of man, the Witches have caused them to grow encased in a pod.