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ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER VIEWS

OOMBULGURRI -

THE AUSTRALIAN PILOT PROJECT

Veronica Edwards,
Oombulgurri School,
via Wyndham W.A.

In the December 1974 issue (Vol.2 No.5), we published an article by Mrs. Deidre Dowsett, Headmistress, Oombulgurri, giving an account of the establishment of the community and its progress. Now we are happy to hear from one of the assistant teachers.

In October 1973 we started moving back to Oombulgurri to build our own community. We wanted a school so we decided to have a qualified teacher and two teachers from the community. I was chosen to be one of the teachers. We went to the teachers' conference at Pundulmurra, Port Hedland, in May 1974.

The school has grown since. There are four teaching assistants and two qualified teachers. Also there are three pre-school teaching assistants and one qualified teacher. In the school there are 72 students and 20 children in the pre-school.

After I'd been teaching for a year I decided to go to Batchelor Teachers' College to learn more about teaching. I was at Batchelor for all of 1975.

For two weeks of our school holidays last Christmas, seven of us planned for this year's curriculum. We wrote about the key events of last year's programme. These were that some elders participated in the school and also that Crispin came to the school and showed the children boabnut carving.

Then we decided some things for this year's programme. We made a list of 52 things. Gloria Clark is using the Endeavour Reading Programme to improve the students' reading. Jennifer Eura is meeting with the health team to talk about health to the children.

The three major topics we talked about for this year were -

TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3
Oombulgurri and the World	Australian and other rural communities	The City

On Mondays through the year we have our teachers' general meeting, and on Thursdays we have our planning for next week's programme.

One of the things that has made the school a success is that the Council appointed one to see that the children come to school. Many of the parents take part in the school. Stella and Sheila teach cooking, Leray teaches sewing, and Robert, Barbara and Ronald teach language and dancing.

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