



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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I have succeeded in this area. Now I can hand my job over to younger aides and give them the opportunity and responsibility of working at the school and furthering their own education.

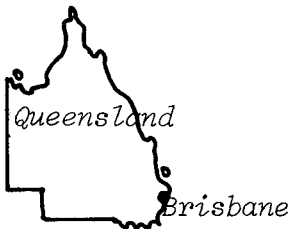
As a parent

As a parent, before I started work at the school I was always wondering about the school and the teachers and what work they did and how they went about it. I was suspicious too of what went on and I believed, like a lot of parents, that the teachers were not doing the right thing by the children, until I started working at the school. Then I found out for myself how the school worked and what the teachers are trying to do for the children, and I felt much happier. I am sure that if parents are encouraged to visit the school more often and allowed to take part in school work, and included in camping, taking the children bush walking and things of this nature, you will all have a happy time at these schools and will want to stay longer.

If you try to stay away from these people and not mix with them, then you are lost. A lot of teachers who go to these Communities to teach school make the excuse that the people won't accept them. But the sad thing is that the teachers don't try to make an effort to mix, and this is what they must try to do if you want them to help you.

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LETTER TO TEACHER AIDES



Mrs B. Coolwell,
Brisbane Central School,
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(In this contribution by Mrs Barbara Coolwell to a recent issue of *Bora**, the sharing of news and ideas about educative procedures, and the sharing too of a sense of the worthwhileness of the job, may suggest new avenues of communication to readers in other schools elsewhere in Australia)

Dear Girls,

As this is going to be my last newsletter from Brisbane Central, I thought I would bring you up to date on all the happenings this term.

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*Reprinted with permission. "Bora" is a newsletter for Aboriginal teacher aides in Brisbane, edited by Ms Lenise Schloss, Family Education Centre, Kittyhawk Avenue, Inala, Brisbane.

The school has had a face-lift, with new cupboards, floor coverings, fluorescent lighting, furniture and equipment. Next year we hope to have part-time nursing staff, and the medical room had a heater and fan installed for their comfort.

The school went on a bus trip to Gatton and surrounding districts, which was most enjoyable. We visited a small-crop farm and saw the pea-pickers at work and then went on to a potato farm and the Agricultural College. Finally we had a barbecue lunch at Apex Park before returning home.

The groups that have been attending the cooking classes prepared a barbecue lunch for the school on three occasions. They sent invitations to the P & C ladies to attend and their efforts were appreciated by everyone.

We have had a lot of sporting activities, apart from cricket and soft ball. We held an athletic carnival and a swimming carnival. I've even acted as scorer for the cricket team - the girls think I should approach Mr Packer.

The fancy-dress ball this year was again a great success. The upper school had a Calypso theme for their costumes and the lower school children were dressed in fairy-tale costume.

A wine and cheese night was another social event. This was arranged by the P & C committee, and was held in the teachers' building. Everyone thought it was a great evening.

Home visits have continued throughout the year. These were informal visits and the atmosphere was relaxed and seemed more beneficial to all concerned. Open mornings were held at the school and it was pleasing to see so many parents attend and discuss their children's progress with the teachers.

I have now moved to Woodridge to live and it is too far for me to travel into Central each day, so I am leaving with regret. However, my sister Iris will be taking over from me and she will, no doubt, let you know the happenings from Central in future.

Seasons Greetings to you all.

Sincerely,

Barbara Coolwell.