

WIRRAWAY HOMESTEAD

YOUTH CENTRE

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March, 1975.

It is apparent to us here at Wirraway Homestead that the Lord has been doing great things; and we would like to share with you some of the events of the past couple of months, our present situation, and our plans for the immediate future.

Perhaps we should begin by filling you in on the progress of the Centre up to the end of 1974.

A beautiful site was chosen between Meadows and Strathalbyn, 60 km. South-West of Adelaide, and work began on the Centre early in 1974. The property, consisting of 186 acres of undulating land, covered with shady gum trees, and with a stream running through the middle, already had on it an old shearing shed and a quaint old cottage. To add to these we purchased three transportable buildings, which will serve as Bunk-houses and the kitchen. We were thrilled that the kitchen already had in it suitable equipment to cater for 60 or more campers with ease.

During the year we acquired 5 horses, (3 of which were outright donations, where people provided the money and we were given the pleasure of picking suitable animals.) They are: Monarch, Pebbles, Pepe, Cider and Revel. They range in age from 4 to 10, and are all of a suitable height to carry the average camper. Saddles, bridles, halters etc. were also bought, and in many cases these too were donated. A highlight in October was the birth of Pintado, a skewbald colt that was given to us. We expect to have him up here with us before camps start. Archery and volley-ball equipment was also purchased at this stage at a very reasonable price at an auction.

Hard working young people from Brighton Church of Christ made a noticeable impression, as they joined with us in clearing up the shearing shed and the surrounding area. Later in the year Bethesda young people joined with a group from Burnside Christian to put in a hard day's work - in the never-ending job of clearing rubbish from the site. We do appreciate everything these young people have done for the Homestead.

Below is a summary of some of the items which have been given to the Centre, and we are thankful to God for these provisions. We pray that God will abundantly bless those who have contributed, for their generosity.

- Finance for the land, buildings, and the Arnotts' house;
- A new caravan for temporary accommodation for the Fawcetts;
- The use of a Toyota Land Cruiser; a Front-End Loader;
- A 6-minute colour movie film (for publicity); a spring waggon;
- A beach buggy (especially good when its muddy!); Table Tennis table;
- A windmill (as yet not located on site); building materials;
- Skilled work on the electrical system, building the girls' toilet block and fencing;
- Material for curtains; kitchenware (other than the camp crockery and cuttlery, which we bought new);
- Refrigerator; Rush-matting; A canoe; 100 bales of hay; 60 native trees; and much of the horse gear, as mentioned above.

Since the middle of December 1974 the four of us have been working full-time at W.H. and in the last three months we have seen rapid changes take place. Some of these are:

- The septic tank has been built and is now operational;
- The interior of the boys' Bunk-house has been completely reconstructed with wood veneer panneling, new floors and ceilings;
- New lino, varnished walls and painted double bunks have brightened up the campers' accommodation;
- A vegetable garden has been established;
- Internal roads around the buildings have been constructed (these are super-highways compared with the previous tracks!);

The camping area has been fenced, and 20 native trees planted;
The grassy area around the buildings is green (watered through a pressure system supplied by a pump on the bore);
The girls' amenity block has been commenced;
The gable rooves and verandahs on the Bunk-houses are well under way;
The Arnotts' house is nearing completion.

As most of you will know, we intend W.H. to be a Counsellor centred camp, where young Christians spend the whole time they are up here getting along side the campers and taking opportunities to share their faith with them. With this in mind we are running our first Counsellor Training Weekend an Anzac Weekend, with the Christian Witnessing side of the programme being run by the Open Air Campaigners.

A publicity brochure is on the drawing board, and should be available shortly. Already a number of camps have been booked, and enquiries made. Our first camp will be a 5-day "Muster" in the second week of the May school holidays.

New additions to the Wirraway family are Mystery, a 4-year old bay mare, who is very quiet and gentle; and Sunshine, Ron and Leonie's puppy, a perfect playmate for Pirate.

There was great excitement here when the property was struck by lightning in January. This resulted in a grass fire in which about 2 acres of land was burnt. Fortunately no damage was done, and it certainly was a good opportunity to meet many of the locals as they rallied to our aid.

Some snippets of news:

After many months of negotiations we have finally been formed into a non-profit company;
Peter and Nina's Northumberland St. house has been rented;
Ron and Leonie are happily settled in the caravan;
The telephone has been connected;
We have been worshipping and sharing in fellowship at Strathalbyn Church of Christ.

What of the immediate future?

There is still a great deal of preparation that is needed to be carried out before our first camps and so we will be very busy with the following:

Further renovation of the existing buildings;
Completion of the girls' amenity block;
Building the Dining Room;
Visiting High Schools - to publicise the camp;
Detailed planning of the Counsellor Training Course, follow-up meetings and programmes for camps;
Extension and renovation of the shearing shed for indoor recreational purposes;
The appointment of a full-time cook.

We would value your prayers, and thank you for your interest and support. We hope that you will rejoice with us as we see the Lord accomplish His purpose at Wirraway Homestead.

In His Service,

Ronald Fawcett
Peter Arnott
Leonie Fawcett
Nina Arnott