



Bill Johnston, Jaycee president for North Queensland and Papua zone, congratulates Jim Canuto, president of the newly-formed Yarrabah Jaycees, at the inaugural dinner in June

Yarrabah Forms Australia's First Aboriginal Jaycees

The people of Yarrabah Aboriginal Settlement, near Cairns, North Queensland, formed Australia's first Aboriginal Jaycees (Junior Chamber of Commerce) Chamber in June. Twenty-years-old James Canuto (pictured)—the settlement's post-master—is the Chamber's first president.

Most of the eighteen members are, like vice-president Charles Fourmile, labourers, truckdrivers or sawmill workers; secretary Robert Sands is a boat skipper.

The Yarrabah people became interested in the Jaycee organization late in 1966. In May this year the three office bearers mentioned above went to a Jaycee zone conference in Mackay to further their knowledge of the organization in action.

Within a month of the Mackay trip, the Yarrabah community held a Council meeting which called for the formation of a Jaycee chapter at the settlement.

The inaugural dinner in the Yarrabah Progress Hall on 15 June was attended by many local people and representatives of Mulgrave Shire Council, Cairns Rotary, Lions and Apex clubs, and about 50 Jaycees from Innisfail, Mareeba, Mossman and Cairns.

Mr T. Murphy, regional district officer of the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs, was guest speaker. The event was extensively covered by news media of the North, and TV film was screened in all eastern capitals; Radio Australia broadcast the news in three of its overseas programmes.

Mr Duncan Ezzy, public relations officer of Cairns Jaycees, wrote to *Dawn* about the inauguration and the events leading to it.

"Yarrabah Aboriginal Settlement was founded 75 years ago by the Church of England, but has been run for the past five years by the Queensland