

The Northern Star

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Home happiness

NO GROUP of community representation in Lismore was as significantly placed as the combined service clubs to pay tribute to the personal role of Miss Jean O'Neill in carrying through the magnificently human functions of the North Coast Children's Home.

The seven clubs in the honour to Miss O'Neill all have a record of sustained assistance to the home and its care of children. It was acknowledged by the chairman, the Rev. R. MacFarlane, when he said the home would have been forced to close many years ago without their help.

The role of the clubs was appropriate background for the tribute, as their closeness to the home and its work for deprived children underlined their appreciation of the individual effort that was so splendidly endorsed by the community.

Miss O'Neill has been matron at the home since 1960 with a "family" who, in many instances, advanced from toddlers to secondary and tertiary education or into the workforce of industry and commerce.

The achievement of Miss O'Neill was in the tribute by Mr. Duncan, MLA, that "At the home they have found security, happiness, love, affection and companionship which has allowed them to take their proper place in the community."

The integrated role of the community has been generous and sustained — it is being put to test again today when the fete is held as the annual call for help by the people of the district. Few with families will not appreciate today's problems of coping with costs — here there is a "family" of 40.

The fete merits a community response to generously back the sustained behind-the-scenes efforts of so many for district children.