

Aborigines Rescue Mission, Jigalong

1946? – 1969

Details

The Aborigines Rescue Mission, Jigalong was a mission established at Jigalong in central Western Australia by the Apostolic Church in 1946. Dormitories and a school operated at the mission. The mission closed in 1969 and the Australian Government took ownership of the land, returning it to the Martu people in 1974.

The Aborigines Rescue Mission initially took over responsibility from the Department of Native Affairs for the supervision of providing rations to the Aboriginal inhabitants of the area. It soon established a school and dormitories for children. Gardens, church, workshops, a nursing post, an airstrip, pastoral station, mission store, a post office and bank agency were also established at the mission during its operation.

In 1947 there were 47 children living at the mission.

In 1954 the mission received funding from the Department of Native Welfare for the building of two cottages and four dormitories to allow for expansion. At that time the population of the mission was approximately 100, including 50 children.

In 1967 the mission was criticised for using “excessive” corporal punishment on several young girls at the mission (*The Canberra Times*, 1967). A former teacher at the mission school stated that children were caned “for trivial breaches of discipline, such as being late for meals and missing prayers.” The matter was reported to the Department of Native Welfare by visiting anthropology researchers.

In 1969 the Apostolic Church withdrew management of the mission. At this time there were 227 people resident at the mission, including 93 children under 16 years old. The Church requested that the mission not be closed entirely and that it be continued by another body, such as an Aboriginal cooperative, and that the church be allowed to retain use of some of the facilities in order to continue religious instruction. The government subsequently took control of the Jigalong Mission, and in 1974 control was handed to the Martu community.

Gallery



Jigalong Mission, between 1967 and 1969

Description: This image is a aerial photograph of Jigalong Mission (also known as the Aborigines Rescue Mission, Jigalong) taken between 1967 and 1969. The photograph shows mission buildings and what look to be livestock enclosures.

More info

Resources

- [*Doris Pilkington interviewed by John Bannister in the Bringing them home oral history project \(2001\)*](#), 6 June 2001 - 26 June 2001

Records

For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

Records held by other organisations

- [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)
Item B332 of the Child Endowment correspondence files relates to Aborigines Rescue Mission, Jigalong
 - [Files - Aborigines Departments \(1 January 1926 - 16 June 1972\)](#)
 - [Files - Departmental \[Education Department\] \(1 January 1885 - 31 December 2000\)](#)
 - [Files - General \(1899 - 1987\)](#)
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