

Lockhart River Mission

1924 – 23 May 1967

Other Names: • Church of England Mission

Details

The Lockhart River Mission, on Cape York Peninsula, was run by the Church of England, and operated a dormitory system to house Mission children. It opened in 1924 and control was handed over to the State Government in 1967.

The Lockhart River Mission followed the usual pattern for Church of England missions, which was to establish a school for the children. The introduction of dormitory accommodation usually ensured the regular attendance of children at school, and additional vocational training.

A girls' dormitory was officially established at the Lockhart River Mission in 1930. In 1938 the dormitory was temporarily closed due to claims from Church administrators that the girls were not being looked after adequately. Annual Reports indicate that additional sleeping accommodation was added to the girls' dormitory during 1938.

In 1942 the Mission was closed for a period of around six months due to threats associated with World War Two. The Mission inhabitants were encouraged to 'go bush' during this time. In July 1942 the Mission was reopened.

A new boys' quarters (located near the stockyard) was completed in 1947. In 1955, a children's community centre was established on the Mission. This heralded the decline of the Mission's dormitory system, however, it is also possible that the children's centre was used from time to time, as somewhere to house children in need. The Centre fed and bathed children and laundered their clothes, under the supervision of a nursing sister. The communal kitchen fed around forty pre-school children one meal per day. There were communal bathrooms for the children who were made to shower each morning before school.

The Lockhart River Mission was handed over to the State government on 23 May 1967.

According to government records, on this date, three remaining children were discharged into the care of their parent/s.

The Lockhart River Mission degenerated under the care of the government, which tried to relocate residents of Lockhart River to Bamaga and other sites in far north Queensland. In 1970 the residents of the former Lockhart River Mission agreed to move to a site slightly north of the mission, which was closer to the airport and supply routes. This site is the current site of the Lockhart River community.

In 1987 the Lockhart River Community was given a Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) title of the lands which is administered by locally elected councillors.

Gallery



Bare Hill [Lockhart River Mission]

Description: This is an aerial photograph showing the site of the Lockhart River mission. It shows a clearing of land at the base of Bare Hill (near the Lockhart River) with two rows of buildings at the rear of the site, another smaller group of buildings to the right of these, and a couple of buildings scattered near the beach. The Lockhart River Mission Road can be seen running through the site. This image is one of a series of three images showing the site from different angles.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Anglican Diocese of Carpentaria \(1900 - 1996\)](#)
Date: 1924 - 1959

Related Organisations

- [Australian Board of Mission \(1850 - 1995\)](#)

Resources

- Coaldrake, Frank W., *Acceptance: the next step forward*, 1967
- Loos, Noel, *From church to state: the Queensland government take-over of Anglican missions in North Queensland*, Aboriginal History, 1991
- Guy, Russell, *Baptised among crocodiles. A history of the Daintree Aboriginal Mission, 1940 - 1962*, 1999. Relevance: pp.75-76
- *Old Lockhart River Mission Site*, Monument Australia, 2014
- *Police Commissioners Office Miscellaneous - 1940s*, Centre for Indigenous Family History Studies, 2014

Records

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

Records

- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Records \(1880s - current\)](#)
 - [Correspondence - Alphanumeric Prefix - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs \(1909 - 1992\)](#)
 - [Registers of Births, Deaths and Marriages - Lockhart River \(1885 - 1988\)](#)
 - [General Correspondence - Torres Strait Islands \(1922 - 1994\)](#)
 - [Miscellaneous Items and Correspondence - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander files \(1859 - 1997\)](#)
 - [Health & Home Affairs/Education Department Batch Files \[Correspondence\] - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander files \(1884 - 1970\)](#)
 - [Correspondence Files \[Offices of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals and Director of Native Affairs\] \(1901 - 1944\)](#)
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