

# Mitchell River Mission

1905 – 1967

**Other Names:**

- Trubanaman Mission
- Trubanamen Mission
- Kowanyama

## Details

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Mitchell River Mission, at Trubanaman, was established by the Church of England in 1905. In 1918 the mission relocated to a site on Magnificent Creek and was given the name Kowanyama (however, for many years after this move it was still referred to as Mitchell River Mission). In 1966, the Anglican Church approached the government to take control of the mission and responsibility for the mission was handed over to the Queensland Government on 1 May 1967. The mission became a government administered reserve known as Kowanyama.

In January 1903 an Aboriginal reserve on the Mitchell River was gazetted. The Church of England established a mission at Trubanaman near Topsy Creek in 1905. Although the Church administered the Mission, it was answerable to the State who subsidised them.

Children living on the Mission were separated from their parents and housed in segregated dormitories for the purposes of education. This practice was also viewed as a means of isolating the children from their culture.

In 1918 the Mission moved 19 kilometres from the original location to a site on Magnificent Creek and was given the name Kowanyama, meaning “many waters”.

In 1941 the Mitchell River Mission became an approved institution for the purposes of receiving child endowment payments from the Department of Social Services for each of the children under the guardianship of the Mission. At this time there were 65 children living in the mission dormitories.

In 1967 the Anglican Church handed over control of the Mission to the Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs.

## Gallery

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**View of Mitchell River Mission, 1919**

**Description:** The following description is included in the library catalogue: Moving a Mission in York Peninsula. New station at Kowanyama, Mitchell River. Reverend H. Matthews house on right, church in the distance.

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## More info

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# Chronology

- **Mitchell River Mission (1905 – 1967)**
  - Kowanyama Mission (1967 - 1987)

## Related Entries

### Run by

- [Anglican Diocese of Carpentaria \(1900 - 1996\)](#)

### Related Organisations

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

## Resources

- Loos, Noel, *The Australian Board of Missions, The Anglican Church and the Aborigines, 1850-1900*, Journal of Religious History, December 1992
- 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

## Records

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

### Records

- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Records \(1880s - current\)](#)
  - [Gribble, E.R.B. \(Ernest Richard Bulmer\) 1868-1957, Collected Papers, 1892-1970 \(1892 - 1970\)](#)
  - [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)
  - [Edward River \(Pormpuraaw\), Mapoon, Mitchell River \(Kowanyama\) and Normanton Identification Cards \(1933 - 1975\)](#)
  - [Diaries - Mitchell River Mission \(1937 - 1938\)](#)
  - [Correspondence Files - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs \(1916 - 1999\)](#)
  - [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 \[Offices of the Chief Protector of Aborigines and Director of Native Affairs\] \(1901 - 1944\)](#)
  - [Correspondence - Alphanumeric Prefix - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs \(1909 - 1992\)](#)
  - [Anglican Board of Mission \(Australia\) - further records \(1887 - 1996\)](#)
  - [Social History Cards - Mitchell River \(Kowanyama\) and Normanton \(1889 - 1970\)](#)
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