

# Umeewarra Mission Home, Davenport Reserve

1964 – 1995

## Details

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Umeewarra Mission Home, Davenport Reserve continued the role of the Umeewarra Mission Children's Home from 1964 after the Mission was taken over by the government and became Davenport Reserve. The Home continued to be run by former superintendent and his wife and it accommodated a small number of Aboriginal children. The local Aboriginal community council took control of the Reserve in 1968. From the 1970s children from the Home were placed in foster care by the government. A small number of children remained in the Home in a foster care arrangement with the former mission superintendent and his wife until the Home closed in 1995.

Umeewarra Mission Home, Davenport Reserve continued the role of the Umeewarra Mission Children's Home from 1964 after the Mission was taken over by the government and became Davenport Reserve. Davenport Reserve lay four kilometres north of Port Augusta. The Home continued to be run by former superintendent and his wife and it accommodated a smaller number of Aboriginal children, mostly from the local community. The school at the Reserve was taken over by the Education Department.

In 1968 an Aboriginal Community Council took over the administration of the Davenport Reserve. The Home continued to accommodate Aboriginal children for a number of years. During the 1970s most of the children remaining in the Home were placed into foster care by the government as it worked towards closing down all large congregate care institutions. A small number of children remained in the Home in a foster care arrangement with the former mission superintendent and his wife. The main dormitory in the Home was renovated and redesigned for this purpose. The last two children left the Home in 1995 when the superintendent and his wife retired and moved to new premises.

Umeewarra Mission Home was mentioned (as Umewarra Mission) in the Bringing Them Home Report (1997) as an institution that housed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children removed from their families.

## National Redress Scheme for people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse

In 2021, the South Australian government has agreed to be a funder of last resort for this institution. This means that although the institution is now defunct, it is participating in the National Redress Scheme, and the government has agreed to pay the institution's share of costs of providing redress to a person (as long as the government is found to be equally responsible for the abuse a person experienced).

## Gallery



## Umeewarra Mission House Now Derelict

**Description:** This is an image of two of the mission houses at Umeewarra Mission. It shows two tin-roof, tin-clad buildings with boarded up windows. The photo has been taken from behind a chain-link fence. This image was published by ABC News in an article reporting on the decision to postpone the demolition of the buildings following community outcry. The description published by ABC News accompanying this image reads "A reprieve has been given to the old Aboriginal mission building Umeewarra on the outskirts of Port Augusta, 2011".

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## More info

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### Chronology

- Umeewarra Mission Children's Home (1937 - 1964)
  - **Umeewarra Mission Home, Davenport Reserve (1964 – 1995)**

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Department of Aboriginal Affairs, South Australian Government \(1963 - 1970\)](#)  
Date: 1964 - 1970
- [Department for Community Welfare, South Australian Government \(1972 - 1990\)](#)  
The Department for Community Welfare oversaw the running of the Umeewarra Mission Home while the day to day running of the Home was in the hands of the superintendent.  
Date: 1972 - 1990

#### Related Concepts

- [Stolen Generations](#)

### Resources

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, [Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families](#), 1997. *Relevance:* Umeewarra Mission Home was mentioned (as Umewarra Mission) in the Bringing Them Home Report (1997) as an institution that housed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children removed from their families
- Say, Steph, [Protests Continue Against Umeewarra Mission Demolition](#), The Transcontinental Port Augusta, 14 October 2014
- [Alan McWilliams and Ivy McWilliams interviewed by Karen George in the Bringing them home oral history project \[sound recording\] \(2001\)](#), 23 June 2001 - 25 June 2001

## Records

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

### Records

- [Records of Umeewarra Mission, Children's Home \(1937? - 1995?\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/umeewarra-mission-home-davenport-reserve/>