

# Haasts Bluff Native Settlement

1940s – 1959

## Details

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Haasts Bluff Native Settlement began as a government ration depot in 1941. In 1942 missionaries from the Hermannsburg Mission, also known as the Finke River Mission, began to provide welfare services to the Aboriginal residents. Although no school or dormitories were established at Haast's Bluff, missionaries resided there and it operated as an outpost of the Hermannsburg Mission. In 1958 the settlement closed and residents were moved to a new settlement at Papunya.

Haasts Bluff Native Settlement, 280 miles northwest of Alice Springs was established in February 1941 as a government ration depot. It initially provided rations for elderly, sick and infirm Aboriginal people. From 1942, as part of an agreement with the government, missionaries from the Lutheran Mission at Hermannsburg, also known as Finke River Mission, were subsidised to provide welfare services at the settlement. They erected a number of permanent and temporary buildings at the settlement, both for mission staff and Aboriginal people.

The missionaries planned to establish a school at the settlement and in 1949 approached the government for financial assistance to erect a building and pay teaching staff. At this time the government rejected the request. It was concerned that the lack of drinkable and useable water at the settlement would prevent it from being viable on a long term basis.

Haast's Bluff became an outpost of the Hermannsburg Mission and along with Areyonga Native Settlement, the three were often referred to collectively as the Finke River Mission.

Over 400 people resided at the Haasts Bluff Settlement during its years of operation, including a large number of children. Without a school on the site, some of the children travelled many kilometres to the Hermannsburg Mission to attend school.

By the mid-1950s it appears that missionaries resided at the settlement. However no school or dormitories for children were established. In 1958, due to continued problems with obtaining drinkable water, the population of Haasts Bluff was moved to a newly established settlement called Papunya.

## Gallery

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**House at Haast's Bluff Mission [altered from original title].**

**Description:** This is a digitised copy of a photo showing a house at Haast's Bluff Mission. It is not certain whether or not this building would have housed children in the care of the mission.

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## More info

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## Related Entries

### Run by

- [Native Affairs Branch, Australian Government \(1939 - 1955\)](#)
- [Welfare Branch, Northern Territory Administration, Australian Government \(1955 - 1970\)](#)

### Related Organisations

- [Hermannsburg Mission \(1877 - 1982\)](#)  
Haast's Bluff Native Settlement became an outpost of the Hermannsburg Mission.
- [Areyonga Native Settlement \(1920s - 1990\)](#)  
Haast's Bluff Native Settlement and Areyonga Native Settlement both became outposts of the Hermannsburg Mission
- [The Lutheran Church of Australia \(1838 - current\)](#)  
The Lutheran Church sent resident missionaries to Haast's Bluff Native Settlement
- [Papunya Native Settlement \(1958 - 1978\)](#)  
Many Aboriginal people from Haast's Bluff Native Settlement were moved to the new Papunya Native Settlement in the late 1950s

### Related Places

- [Finke River Mission \(1877 - c. 1982\)](#)  
Haast's Bluff, Areyonga and Papunya Native Settlements along with the Hermannsburg Mission were often referred to collectively as the Finke River Mission

## Other Resources

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**Title:** Lutheran Missions - The Finke River Mission (1) Hermannsburg (2) Haasts Bluff (3) Areyonga. Part 2 (1935 - 1953)

**Type:** Image

**Date:** 1935 - 1953

[Details](#)

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## Records

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### Records

- [Records held by the Lutheran Archives \(1838 - current\)](#)
  - [Lutheran Missions - The Finke River Mission \(1\) Hermannsburg \(2\) Haasts Bluff \(3\) Areyonga. Part 2 \(1935 - 1953\)](#)
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