

# Yuendumu Native Settlement

1946 – 1976

**Other Names:**

- Mt Doreen Native Settlement
- Rock Hill Bore Ration Depot

## Details

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The Yuendumu Native Settlement was established at Mount Doreen, 350 kilometres north west of Alice Springs, in 1946 as a government ration depot. That same year missionaries from the Australian Baptist Home Mission began welfare work at the settlement. Although two dormitories were constructed in 1947-48, it is unclear for how long they were used. A school was established. Control of the settlement was handed to the Warlpiri Aboriginal people in 1978.

The Yuendumu Native Settlement was established at Mount Doreen 350 kilometres north west of Alice Springs in 1946 as a government ration depot. The residents of the settlement were primarily Warlpiri people. In December, 1946, the Native Affairs branch granted permission for two members of the Baptist Union of Australia, Reverend Laurie Reece and Reverend Phillip Steer, to begin welfare work at the Settlement. The first mission buildings and an aerodrome were constructed in 1946. A bore was struck and gardens were started. The missionaries started at the settlement on 13 February 1947.

During the 1947-1948 financial year, the government provided the mission with 3000 pounds towards the building of a school, kitchen, mess room, infirmary, latrines, bathroom, laundry and two dormitories. Although dormitories were built, it is unclear for how long they were used.

A new missionary couple took over from the original staff in April 1950. They remained at Yuendumu for 25 years.

On 17 April 1952 an area of 850 square miles around the settlement was declared an Aboriginal Reserve. The population of the Yuendumu Native Settlement that year was 450 including 187 children. Statistical tables in a 1953 NT Administration report show that while in 1951 55 children attended the mission school, by 1953 the number had risen to 184. This was probably a result of the declaration of the entire area as a reserve. In 1955-56, a new school building was erected as a response to the increasing numbers of students. Children attended school daily and received meals in a mess hall/dining room.

Until 1959 and the opening of the Papunya Native Settlement, Yuendumu was the largest government settlement in the Northern Territory.

With the passage of the Aboriginal Land Rights (N.T.) Act 1976, reserve land was returned to the Aboriginal community. The official handover of the land title for Yuendumu occurred on 4 September 1978.

## Gallery



## Yuendumu Mission School [altered from original title]

**Description:** This is a digitised copy of a photograph showing the Yuendumu Mission school.

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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 \(1955 - 1970\)](#)
- [Welfare Division, Northern Territory Administration, Australian Government \(1970 - 1972\)](#)
- [Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Northern Territory Division, Australian Government \(1972 - 1990\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Hooker Creek Native Settlement \(1948 - 1978\)](#)  
A large number of Warlpiri people from the Yuendumu Native Settlement were transported to the new Hooker Creek Native Settlement in 1948
- [Australian Baptist Home Mission \(c. 1945 - 1978\)](#)  
The Australian Baptist Home Mission supplied missionaries to work at Yuendumu Native Settlement

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

### Records

- [Records of Baptist Church Missions, Central Australia \(1947 - 1970s\)](#)
  - [Lutheran Missions - The Finke River Mission \(1\) Hermannsburg \(2\) Haasts Bluff \(3\) Areyonga. Part 2 \(1935 - 1953\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/yuendumu-native-settlement/>