

Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home

1908 – 1988

Other Names:

- United Aborigines Mission Children's Home
- Bomaderry Infants' Home

Details

Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home, located near Nowra, was established in 1908 by the United Aborigines Mission. It was a home for children aged under 10 and ran until 1988. As the longest-running Aboriginal Children's Home in NSW and the first Home to be established for Aboriginal children in NSW, it has been called "the birthplace" of the Stolen Generations in NSW.

Bomaderry was started to receive seven Aboriginal children, six orphans and one baby rescued by Miss Thompson, a missionary working with Aboriginal people. A cottage was provided by Colebrook, the editor of the Bomaderry Mission's paper. The home developed until it had four cottages, the last of which was opened on 29 May, 1924. Up to 47 children were resident at the Home at any one time. In 1929, M.F. Morton, MLA, gave five acres of land to the home, bringing the total area of the property to nine acres.

Although Bomaderry was always independent of the Aborigines Protection (Welfare) Board, the Board sent children from reserves and stations to be cared for at the home. Once they reached the age of 10, children were returned to the care of the Board and were often sent into domestic service. The United Aborigines Mission continued their close relationship with the Aborigines Welfare Board until 1969 and then continued to work with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

Many of the original cottages have been lost, but cottages built from the 1960s to 1980s survive. The site has heritage listing and some buildings are used by the Nowra Land Council.

Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home was mentioned 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 New South Wales 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



View of four of the five cottages from the west. In the foreground is the site of the original cottage dormitories

Description: This image shows some of the cottages of the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home.



Bomaderry 13 [residence]

Description: This is a digital copy of a photograph held by the State Library of New South Wales. It is located within the collection called: Series 02: Alma Smith & Alva Atkins photographs of missions in New South Wales, 1909-1970.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [United Aborigines Mission \(1929 - 2020\)](#)

Related Glossary Terms

- [Homefinder \(1890 - 1920s\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Cootamundra Training Home \(1911 - 1969\)](#)
Children from Bomaderry Home were sent to Cootamundra once they were old enough for 'training'.
- [Aborigines Welfare Board, State Government of New South Wales \(1940 - 1969\)](#)
The Aborigines Welfare Board sent children to Bomaderry and received children who had grown up in Bomaderry.
- [Aborigines Protection Board, State Government of New South Wales \(1883 - 1940\)](#)
The Aborigines Protection Board sent children to Bomaderry and received children from Bomaderry.
- [Kinchela Training Home for Aboriginal Boys \(1923 - 1970\)](#)
Children from Bomaderry Home were sent to Kinchela once they were old enough for 'training'.
- [Singleton Boys' Home \(1920 - 1923\)](#)

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:* Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home was mentioned in the Bringing Them Home Report (1997) as an institution that housed Indigenous children removed from their families
- Aborigines Welfare Board of New South Wales, [Dawn and New Dawn 1952-1975: A magazine for the Aboriginal people of New South Wales](#), 2004
- University of Sydney, [A history of Aboriginal Sydney](#), 2020
- Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, [Report of the Inquiry into the Death of Malcolm Charles Smith](#), 1989
- Drewitt-Smith, Ainslie, ['Birthplace' of stolen generations opens healing room on 110th anniversary](#), ABC News Online, 25 May 2018
- Bernie, Brian, [Joy Fights For All the Stolen Children](#), Green Left Weekly, 29 September 1993
- Atkinson-Phillips, Alison, [Not a Celebration](#), 2017
- Telfer, EJ, [Amongst Australian Aborigines: forty years of missionary work](#), 1939
- United Aborigines Mission, [The United Aborigines messenger](#), 1929 - 1987

Records

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

Records

- [Alma Smith and Alva Atkins \(nee Smith\) papers and photographs relating to missionary work in New South Wales and Western Australia, 1909-2006](#)
 - [United Aborigines Mission, records deposited with State Library of South Australia \(c. 1908 - c. 1976\)](#)
 - [Indexes to Ward Registers, Board for the Protection of Aborigines \(1 January 1916 - 31 December 1938\)](#)
 - [Aborigines Welfare Board Photographs \(c. 1916 - c. 1961\)](#)
 - [Photographs of Indigenous people, c.1930-50 \(Provenance uncertain - probably from Bomaderry Children's Home\) \(c. 1930 - c. 1950\)](#)
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