

# Native Workers' Training College

1938 – 1953

**Other Names:**

- Native Training College
- Bible Training Institute

## Details

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The Native Workers' Training College was established as a Protestant ministry training school for Aboriginal people by the Aborigines Inland Mission (AIM) at Pindimar, near Port Stephens, in 1938. The College was evacuated during World War II and operated in rented premises in Dalwood. In 1946 it moved to Minimbah House, Whittingham. It took Aboriginal teens and young adults from all over Australia. It was renamed the Aborigines Inland Mission Bible Training College in 1953.

The Native Workers' Training College was established by Retta Long, the founder of the Aborigines Inland Mission, to train Aboriginal workers for ministry.

At the time of the official opening, by Leonard and Retta Long in April 1939, the college had two students. The *Durham and Gloucester Advertiser* reported:

*Mrs Long, in her address, said that Pindimar meant “vessels for carrying water”, and this would apply to the students going back to their own people, carrying the “living water.”*

The *Durham and Gloucester Advertiser* described the Native Workers' Training College in May 1940:

*The college is a new venture in the work amongst Australian aborigines, and is the only one of its kind in Australia. It has been established recently at Pindimar, Port Stephens, and at present there are five aboriginal full-bloods in residence at the college.*

*These students are being taught building, construction, agricultural work, in addition to being given a missionary training and such general knowledge as will be helpful amongst their own people. After they complete the college course, they will return to outback stations to work amongst their own people.*

Heather Radi says that the college began as ‘little more than a training centre for Sunday School teachers, but by the 1950s a trickle of applicants for the ministry began.’

Later photographs, in the State Library's Collection, show a number of girls, many of them very young, engaged in domestic chores. One can only hope they also received training in ministry.

## Gallery



**Bible Training Institute, Singleton, 1950?**



**Bible Training Institute, Singleton, late 1960s**



**[BTI] Singleton, interior [showing two students cleaning the banister]**

**Description:** This image shows two students cleaning inside the Aborigines Inland Mission Bible Training College. This photo is undated, the date included is an estimate.

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## More info

### Chronology

- **Native Workers' Training College (1938 – 1953)**
  - Aborigines Inland Mission Bible Training College (1953 - 1973)

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Aborigines Inland Mission \(1905 - 1998\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Australian Indigenous Ministries \(1998 - current\)](#)

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## Records

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

### Records

- [Bartrop family slides relating to the Aborigines Inland Mission, 1909-1930s, 1945-1950, 1971 \(1909 - 1971\)](#)
  - [Australian Indigenous Ministries Aggregated Collection of Records and Pictorial Material, 1903-2003 \(1903 - 2003\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/native-workers-training-college/>