

Doomadgee Mission

1936 – 1983

Details

The Doomadgee Mission was established by the Open Brethren on the Nicholson River, in far North Queensland, in 1936. It opened in 1936, replacing the Old Doomadgee Mission which was damaged in a cyclone. Children on the Mission were housed in girls' and boys' dormitories, and were trained to become domestic servants or station hands. It closed in 1983.

The Doomadgee Mission replaced the Old Doomadgee Mission run by the Open Brethren in 1936. The dormitories from the Old Doomadgee Mission were transferred to the Mission's new site.

All children over the age of five were housed in the dormitories which were locked at night. A photograph album dated about 1940, held at the Queensland State Archives, includes a group portrait of approximately 80 dormitory children. Other records cite the existence of two dormitories on the Doomadgee Mission in 1949 which jointly housed about 100 children over the age of five years.

Government reports about the Doomadgee dormitory system, tabled in 1949 and 1950, state that the children were being housed in very poor conditions that were poorly equipped. It was also reported that the Mission was without a school building and that classes were held in the dormitories, with all 60 children seated on the floor. Reports at this time also emphasised the Christian teachings, with hymn singing a permitted amusement.

Evidence shows that women up to the age of 24 were housed in the girls' dormitory in 1950. This was because girls often remained in the dormitory until marriage. Approximately 115 children aged between 6 and 20 years were in the 'complete care' of the Mission according to a 1958 Open Brethren report.

Girls were trained in domestic duties, while boys were required to take up station work at the age of 14, and left the dormitory at this time.

Renovations and extensions to the girls' dormitory were completed in November 1964. In 1965 there were 35 boys living in the boys' dormitory and 23 girls in the girls' dormitory.

Although it is not clear when the dormitories closed, one of the dormitories was still operational in 1968 when it was being used to house five children.

In 1983, the community was gazetted as a Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) community under the Community Services Act.

Gallery



Aerial view of Doomadgee Mission, 1950



Store at Doomadgee Mission, 1948

More info

Chronology

- Old Doomadgee Mission (1933 - 1936)
 - **Doomadgee Mission (1936 – 1983)**

Related Entries

Run by

- [The Open Brethren Assembly \(c. 1914 - current\)](#)

Resources

- [Nothing but the truth](#), ABC Radio National, 8 June 2019

Records

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

Records

- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Records \(1880s - current\)](#)
 - [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)
 - [Admission Registers - Doomadgee State School \(1959 - 2001\)](#)
 - [Doomadgee News \(1956 - 1988\)](#)
 - [Doomadgee Superintendent's Correspondence with Doomadgee Residents \(1945 - 1988\)](#)
 - [Population Registers - Protector of Aboriginals, Doomadgee \(1892 - 1985\)](#)
 - [District Registrar's Correspondence - Doomadgee \(1972 - 1975\)](#)
 - [Burial Register - Doomadgee Cemetery \(1965 - 1970\)](#)
 - [Births, Deaths and Marriage Correspondence - Doomadgee \(1948 - 1983\)](#)
 - [Correspondence Files - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs \(1916 - 1999\)](#)
 - [General Correspondence - Torres Strait Islands \(1922 - 1994\)](#)
 - [Photographs and Photograph Albums of Aboriginal settlements and missions \(1940 - 1960\)](#)
 - [Correspondence Files \[Offices of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals and Director of Native Affairs\] \(1901 - 1944\)](#)
 - [Correspondence - Alphanumeric Prefix - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs \(1909 - 1992\)](#)
 - [School Inspectors' Reports \(1874 - 1991\)](#)
 - [Child Registration Cards - Doomadgee \(1932 - 1983\)](#)
 - [Doomadgee Identification Cards \(1935 - 1989\)](#)
 - [Doomadgee Permit Cards \(1970 - 1979\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/doomadgee-mission/>