

Nepabunna Mission

1931 – 1977

Details

The Nepabunna Mission was established by the United Aborigines' Mission (UAM) in north-east South Australia in 1931. The Missionaries assisted with housing, schooling, health and other facilities at the Mission. A dormitory for Aboriginal children was constructed at Nepabunna early in the 1940s but was not used for several years. The State Government took control of the Mission from the UAM in 1973 and in 1977 Nepabunna was handed back to the local Indigenous people.

The Nepabunna Mission was established by the United Aborigines' Mission (UAM) on 20 square miles of donated land on the Balcoona Station in 1931 in the north east of South Australia. In the late 1920s the UAM had begun searching for a permanent Home for the Aboriginal people of the area, collectively known as the Adnyamathanha. They had been displaced by colonisation in the 1850s.

The Missionaries assisted with housing, schooling, health and other facilities at the Mission. A school building was established in the 1930s which was also used for church services.

Protector's reports show that a dormitory for Aboriginal children was constructed at Nepabunna early in the 1940s. However, due to the lack of a matron to oversee its use the dormitory had still not come into operation in 1948. At some time after 1948 a dormitory was used for children whose parents were working away from the Mission. An education Department school was built in 1963.

The Government took control of the Mission from the UAM in 1973 and four years later in 1977 Nepabunna was handed back to the Adnyamathanha people.

National Redress Scheme for people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse

In 2021, the South Australian 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



Huts at Nepabunna Mission

Description: The photo of Nepabunna Mission is part of the the Mountford-Sheard Collection held at the State Library of South Australia. The library summary states: Huts at Nepabunna Mission Station, Northern Flinders Ranges, South Australia, Mt McKinlay in the background.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Federal Government \(1972 - 1990\)](#)
Date: 1973 - 1977
- [United Aborigines Mission \(1929 - 2020\)](#)

Related Concepts

- [Stolen Generations](#)

Resources

- [Clara Coulthard interviewed by Sue Anderson in the Bringing them home oral history project \[sound recording\] \(2000\)](#), 12 December 2000
- [Aboriginal Missions in South Australia](#), State Library of South Australia - Library Guides, 2013
- United Aborigines Mission, [The United Aborigines messenger](#), 1929 - 1987

Records

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

Records

- [Records of the Aborigines' Office and Successor Agencies \(1866? - 1971?\)](#)
- [Records of Aboriginal Missions in South Australia \(1850s - 1970s\)](#)
- [Records of Colebrook Home, United Aborigines Mission Archives \(1920s - 1980s\)](#)
- [Lantern slides taken by Ruby Hyde \(c. 1925 - c. 1930\)](#)

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/nepabunna-mission/>