

Baptist Union of WA

1896 –

Other Names:

- Baptist Churches Western Australia
- Baptist Union of Western Australia

URL: <http://www.baptistwa.asn.au/>

Details

Baptist Union of WA was established in 1896 with the union of four Baptist churches in Western Australia. In 2014, the Baptist Union of WA was also known as Baptist Churches Western Australia, and is the coordinating body for the welfare and mission activities of Baptist Churches. The Baptist Union WA ran metropolitan hostels and larger country facilities for Aboriginal children and young people from the 1950s through its two Aboriginal welfare agencies: Baptist Aborigines Mission (1952?-1981) and Baptist Aboriginal Ministries (1981-1991).

The Baptist Union of WA which was established in 1896 is also known as Baptist Churches Western Australia. It coordinates the welfare and mission activity of a number of Baptist Churches in the State. There is a Baptist Union in each Australian State and the Northern Territory. In Western Australia, the Baptist Union of WA was indirectly involved in Perth Hostels for young Aboriginal people from 1958 but it was not until 1961, in response to change in the Department of Native Welfare policy, that the Baptist Churches were responsible for Department-owned premises. The Baptist Union of WA was responsible for administering hostels such as Katukutu and Kyewong, and had a number of associations with related denominations and special purpose multi-denominational groups such as the United Aborigines Mission. The Baptist Aborigines Mission and the re-named Baptist Aboriginal Ministries, [B.A.M.], were exclusively concerned with Aboriginal welfare. Administration of the Perth hostels was coordinated through a sub-committee of the B.A.M. Council.

From 1952, the Baptist Union of WA was also responsible for Marribank, a mission and training centre for Aboriginal children and young people near Katanning.

The administration and governance structures of the Baptist Church in hostel management as practiced in 1971 were described in *Signposts*:

The Baptist Churches are each autonomous, although they use a central Union to correlate and consolidate welfare/mission activity (the Baptist Union). Although the Baptist Union as such is responsible for the administration of Katukutu and Kyewong, there are a number of links with related denominations and special purpose multi-denominational groups such as the United Aborigines Mission.

The B.A.M. Is not directly involved with the United Aborigines Mission, but there is a great deal of mutual interest and a lot of them are Baptists.

Also associated is a loose organisation referred to as the 'Missionary Fellowship' consisting of Baptist, U.A.M., Roelands Mission, Wongutha Training Farm, the Australian Aborigines Evangelical Mission Board, and the Kurrawang Aboriginal Christian Centre Inc. So that as well as administrative and policy influence from within the Baptist Union, there is also influence from a number of other small Protestant-fundamentalist groups.

The Methodists, Anglicans, Presbyterians and Catholics do not affiliate with the Fellowship because of '...irreconcilable theological stances... The Anglican approach, for example is different in the sense that while they do a fair amount of social work (and, while we do this, too), we feel the real need is a spiritual one.' (according to the Baptist Union).

Administration of Perth hostels is co-ordinated through a sub-committee of the B.A.M. Council which directs and advises houseparents on policy and administration. Membership of this committee appears to fluctuate considerably and at least one houseparent was extremely vague about its constitution and responsibility.

Financially, the approach is to meet perceived needs only where funds are available to meet them, and emphasis is placed on raising finance through local church sources. For theological reasons, Lotteries Commission assistance is not accepted (although the Department [of Native Welfare] provides, e.g. In the case of the U.A.M., a grant 'in lieu of Lotteries' which apparently resolves the theological conflict and provides finance)...

[In terms of its selection and placement practices], the Baptist Aborigines Mission... would prefer to place emphasis on residents from its mission at Marribank. Whilst they do not insist upon it, they consider it a priority. Wilson and Robinson (1971) in Signposts 2004., pp.95-96

Baptist Union of WA (Baptist Churches Western Australia) holds records for facilities run by the Baptist Union of WA through the Baptist Aborigines Mission and Baptist Aboriginal Ministries.

More info

Related Entries

Ran

- [Alvan House \(1950 - 1961\)](#)
Date: 1959 - 1961
- [Katukutu Employment Hostel \(1958 - 1982?\)](#)
Katukutu Employment Hostel was run by members of the Baptist Union (Mr and Mrs McKeich) from 1958, but it is possible that the Baptist Union was not formally responsible for the governance of Katukutu until it moved to the Alvan House premises in 1961.
Date: 1958? - 1973
- [Kyewong Hostel \(1967? - 2002?\)](#)
Date: 1970 - 1974?
- [Marribank \(1952 - 1988\)](#)
Date: 1952 - 1988
- [Baptist Aborigines Mission \(1952? - 1981\)](#)
- [Baptist Aboriginal Ministries \(1981 - 1991\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Katanning Group Home \(1978 - 1989?\)](#)
The Baptist Union was responsible for the Katanning Group Home, which was managed by Marribank as a Baptist Union facility.

Holds

- [Baptist Union of WA, Records](#)

Resources

- [Baptists Take Over Carrollup](#), Sunday Times, 30 November 1952
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