

Karalundi Mission

1954 – 1974

Other Names:

- Karalundie
- Karalundi Seventh-Day Adventist Native Mission
- Karalundi Training School

Details

Karalundi, at Crystal Brook near Meekatharra, was established by the Western Conference of the Seventh Day Adventist Church as a 'native institution' in March 1954, for up to 50 Aboriginal children and, from 1955, children aged over 8 who were transferred from Wiluna mission. By 1971, there were 61 school-aged children. Karalundi closed in 1974 and in 1986 it became Karalundi Aboriginal Education Centre (KAEC) with links to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. In 2007 a museum was established on the KAEC site, in one of the old mission buildings.

Karalundi was established as a Seventh Day Adventist mission in March 1954. Its name was taken from its location north of Meekatharra. Newspapers reported at the time that Karalundi meant 'clear waters' in the local dialect, a translation of Crystal Brook.

The Department of Native Affairs granted £9,700 towards the mission in addition to an earlier amount given to establish a school on the site. By August 1954, a girls' dormitory and shower room, kitchen and dining room and the school buildings had been erected.

In an article written for British Seventh-Day Adventists in 1957, the education program at Karalundi was described:

the education provided meets with the state requirements, and also includes Bible lessons and general instruction in Christian education. The industrial supervisor gives practical instruction to the boys in farming, saddlery, plumbing, and building. The girls receive training in cooking, sewing, and general domestic science. The Review and Herald 21 March 1957, p.17

The school was due to open on 13 September 1954. It provided primary school classes, Grades 3 to 7. By 1960, Karalundi was operating as a 'training school', with 90 children aged 9 to 16 years and a few older youth. According to a publicity article in July 1960, staff hoped that those students who were able to 'carry a full scholastic programme' would go on to the West Australian Missionary College. Most students learned practical skills in the afternoons. For senior boys, this included 'rough carpentry', 'farming, growing vegetables, caring for stock, and the irrigation and water supply equipment' and the girls studied 'mothercraft' and home management.

In 1962, Karalundi children were taught to recite a poem, based on Banjo Paterson's 'Man from Snowy River', to welcome their parents and others to a religious celebration at the mission:

*There was movement at the Mission, for the word had passed around,
That the Karalundi camp would soon be on.
And with it bring fine stories, too, of the Christ who died for all.
And that includes the outback people, too.
So all the coloured workers from the stations near and far
Had gathered at the Mission overnight
For they all love to be together
Where the gospel is made known,
And sing about the love of their own God. Australasian Record and Advent World Survey 8 October 1962,
p.5*

In 1968 there were 62 children enrolled. The manual training at Karalundi, which aimed to be self-supporting through vegetable gardening and poultry farming, continued.

By 1971, 61 school age children were living at Karalundi.

On 12 May 1974 the Executive Committee of the church decided to close Karalundi and Wiluna missions. In an article in the church newsletter in July 1974, the church gave two reasons for the closure: their action in banning alcohol at the missions had caused populations to drop; and the Commonwealth government's policy of discouraging missions was at odds with the church's philosophy:

The policy is to encourage these people in their tribal customs (which we discourage), and not to take children from their homes for school purposes. We have always housed the children from an early age in dormitories, in order to run a controlled school system. In this area we have found that chasing kangaroos, emus or bungaras has much more attraction than school, and parents take no responsibility in having children attend school regularly, as most of them have never done so themselves. Australasian Record 15 July 1974, p.1

Karalundi mission later became Karalundi Aboriginal Education Centre (KAEC) with links to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. In 2007 a museum was established on the KAEC site, in one of the old mission buildings.

Gallery



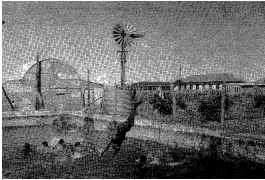
Karalundi Mission, September 1960, domestic science class

Description: This is a digitised copy of a still image and is part of the Portrait gallery, Volume 1, West Kimberley 1912 - South West 1960 series held at the State Library of Western Australia. The image shows girls from a domestic science class holding baked goods outside a building at the Karalundi Mission with their teacher.



Karalundi Mission

Description: 'Karalundi Mission' is a digital copy of an image published in the *Signs of the Times* on the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists' website, *Online Document Archives*. The caption reads, 'Karalundi Mission, 540 miles northeast of Perth in West Australia.'



Karalundi swimming pool

Description: 'Karalundi swimming pool' is a digital copy of an image published in the *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey* on the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists' website, *Online Document Archives*. The caption reads, 'The swimming pool provides hours of refreshment and happy relaxation'.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Western Australian Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church \(1890 - current\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Wiluna Mission \(1955 - 1975\)](#)
Karalundi Mission and Wiluna Mission were 'sister missions' of the Seventh-Day Adventist church. After they had completed grade 3 at school, children were transferred from Wiluna to Karalundi.
Date: 1955 - 1974
- [Adventist Support \(2000 - current\)](#)
Safe Place Services is an organisation for people who wish to register a complaint or discuss their experiences in institutions run by the Western Australian Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Resources

- [Site bought for mission for natives](#), *The West Australian*, 20 March 1954
- [Karalundi - Crystal Brook](#), *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey*, 1 January 1962
- [Life Sketch of Pastor A.D. Vaughan](#), *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey*, 12 August 1974
- [Among the Aborigines in Western Australia](#), *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey*, 18 October 1971
- Dowling, WG, [Camp Meeting for First Australians](#), *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey*, 19 November 1973
- Peach, Frank, [Karalundi's Children](#), *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey*, 24 January 1972
- [Miracle at Karalundi \[III\]](#), *Signs of the Times [Australian]*, April 1965
- [A first among Australian Aborigines](#), *The Youth's Instructor*, 28 June 1966
- O'Hara, Myrtle, [Jesus Understood](#), *Signs of the Times [Australian]*, July 1971
- [Karalundi Oasis of Opportunity](#), *Signs of the Times [Australian]*, February 1969

Records

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

Records

- [Archives of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists \(c. 1998 - current\)](#)
- [Department of Aboriginal Affairs \[predecessors\], Records \(1886 - 2004\)](#)
- [Files - Departmental \[Education Department\] \(1 January 1885 - 31 December 2000\)](#)
- [Files - General \[Health Department\] \(1899 - 1987\)](#)
- [Files - Aboriginal Affairs \(1908 - 1997\)](#)
- [Files - Community Welfare \("A" Series\), State Records Office of Western Australia \(25 August 1908 - 23 December 1990\)](#)
- [Files - Aborigines Departments \(1 January 1926 - 16 June 1972\)](#)

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/karalundi-mission-2/>