

# Wotjulum

1951 – 1956

**Other Names:**

- Wotjulum Presbyterian Mission
- Wotjulum Mission Station
- Wotjulum Native Mission

## Details

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Wotjulum, near Yampi, was established as a mission station by the Presbyterian Church in 1951, with people transferred from Kunmunya Station and the government station at Munja. Children at Wotjulum were under the guardianship of the Commissioners responsible for Aboriginal welfare. Wotjulum closed in 1956 and residents were transferred to Mowanjum, near Derby.

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In his report to the Department of Native Affairs in 1952, the superintendent of Wotjulum reported that all school-age children undertook correspondence lessons 'under white supervision'. Older children were given 'technical training in carpentry, boatwork and engineering or stockwork' but this was 'not as thorough as was planned' due to staff shortages.

In February 1954, the WA government granted £3,800 to the Australian Presbyterian Board of Missions to upgrade and extend the facilities and equipment at Wotjulum.

In 1954, *The Australian Women's Weekly* carried a short report from Mrs Macmillan, who worked at Wotjulum and wrote that there were 23 children under 6 years of age. Three years earlier, there were only six in this age group. There was a Baby Health Centre on site, and missionaries had 'trained an aboriginal girl' to run it. Mother at Wotjulum could get 'baby oil, soap and boracic' at the Baby Health Centre and according to Mrs Macmillan, 'do everything we tell them to keep their babies healthy'. The baby clinic had been established in 1951, after a suggestion by Sister Garlick, from the Child Welfare Department.

On 25 September 1956 the Presbyterian Mission began transferring people from Wotjulum to a new site at Derby, called Mowanjum.

## Gallery

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**Wotjulum 1955**

**Description:** 'Wotjulum 1955' is an image published in *Mowanjum: 50 years community history* (p.79). It shows the Wotjulum site, which is made up of a series of small shacks located along a dirt track.

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## Map West Kimberleys

**Description:** 'Map West Kimberleys' is an image published in *Mowanjum: 50 years community history* (p.23). It shows a map of the West Kimberley region, with names of communities and landmarks along the coast from Bigge Island to King Sound identified.

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## More info

### Chronology

- Port George IV Mission (1912 - 1951)
  - **Wotjulum (1951 – 1956)**
    - Mowanjum (1956 - 1972)

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Presbyterian Church \(1879 - 1977\)](#)  
Date: 1951 - 1956

#### Related Glossary Terms

- [Commissioner for Native Affairs \(WA\) \(1936 - 1954\)](#)  
The Commissioner of Native Affairs was the legal guardian of children at Wotjulum.  
Date: 1951 - 1954
- [Commissioner of Native Welfare \(WA\) \(1954 - 1972\)](#)  
The Commissioner of Native Welfare was the legal guardian of children at Wotjulum.  
Date: 1954 - 1956

### Resources

- Western Australia. Department of Native Welfare, *Annual Report: Department of Native Welfare*, 1955 - 1972.  
*Relevance:* Annual Report of the Commissioner of Native Welfare 1959 p.9
- [Native mission at Yampi Sound](#), The Argus, 15 December 1951

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## Records

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

### Records

- [Department of Aboriginal Affairs \[predecessors\], Records \(1886 - 2004\)](#)
  - [Files - Aborigines Departments \(1 January 1926 - 16 June 1972\)](#)
  - [Files - General \[Health Department\] \(1899 - 1987\)](#)
  - [Files - Departmental \[Education Department\] \(1 January 1885 - 31 December 2000\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/wotjulum-2/>