

Statement of Heritage Value: Jay Creek (Iwupataka)

Jay Creek (Iwupataka), located 45 kilometres west of Alice Springs in the MacDonnell Ranges, is directly associated with the nature of Aboriginal–non-Aboriginal relationships in Central Australia, and particularly government policies in respect of Aboriginal welfare, education and training, dating from the late 1920s.

During the period from December 1928 to November 1932 the site was the second iteration of The Bungalow, a government institution for Aboriginal children of mixed descent. The move to Jay Creek from Alice Springs in 1928 reflects the protectionist policies of the government at that time.

The remains of the old Jay Creek settlement are directly associated with the establishment of a ration depot and Aboriginal reserve at the site in the late 1930s under the supervision of Patrol Officer and Lutheran Missionary Theodor George Henry Strehlow, and subsequent development as the earliest of several Aboriginal settlements in Central Australia. These measures represent the implementation of the assimilation policies of that era.

Structures on site such as Strehlow's house, the church and the cemetery remain as testimony to the nature of Lutheran life in a remote settlement. In contrast the school, a prefabricated Hawksley building, reflects the increasing trend in late 1940s and 1950s towards the use of pre-fabricated buildings in remote areas to provide accommodation quickly, relatively cheaply, and to overcome shortages of materials and labour.

The site is significant to Aboriginal people who were sent to The Bungalow or incarcerated at the reserve and their descendants, many of whom were Arrernte, Luritja and Pitjantjatjara people, including Tjalkabota Uraiakuraia, also known as Blind Moses.

The site is significant for its association with Ida Standley, the school teacher who delayed her retirement to accompany children to the incomplete Jay Creek settlement in 1929.

The site is significant as a Lutheran Mission, ration depot and reserve associated with TGH Strehlow, noted for his missionary and anthropological work among the Western Arrernte people, and Pastor Friedrich Wilhelm Albrecht.