Entry type: Place
Entry ID: AWE1089

Lake Tyers Mission

(1861 - 2001)

Born	18610101, East Gippsland Victoria Australia
Died	20011231
Occupation	Aboriginal Mission or Reserve

Summary

Lake Tyers Mission was established in 1861 when the Central Board for the Protection of Aborigines approved the allocation of 2,000 acres at Lake Tyers for the purpose of providing a base for missionaries in eastern Victoria. Consisting of a manager's residence, church, school and huts, the mission attracted a number of Aboriginal people and as such was seen by the Mission Societies as successful and flourishing.

In 1908 it was taken over by the Board for the Protection of Aborigines as a Government station. At this time the Board believed that Victorian Aboriginal people were dying out and so it instituted a policy of closing all the reserves around Victoria and sending the people living on them to Lake Tyers.

In the 1960s the Aborigines Welfare Board attempted to close Lake Tyers as a reserve, however, it met with the residents' opposition. The Aborigines Advancement League, led by Pastor Douglas Nicholls, fought for eight years to retain Lake Tyers Reserve. The *Aboriginal Amendment Act 1965* changed the status of Lake Tyers from temporary to permanent, thus strengthening Aboriginal claims to preserve it. In 1971 the fight was finally won, when freehold title to Lake Tyers was given to the Lake Tyers Trust under the Aboriginal Lands Act of 1970. Today, Lake Tyers is also known as Bung Yarnda.

The Lake Tyers Mission and later Reserve was home to many Aboriginal women, some of whom became prominent Aboriginal spokespersons.

Published resources

Pamphlet
Reading Sources in Aboriginal history: mission station visitors books, Attwood, Bain, 1989

Journal Article
Off the mission stations: Aborigines in Gippsland 1860-1890, Attwood, Bain, 1986

An 'unfashionable concern with the past': the historical anthropology of Diane Barwick, Kijas, Johanna, 1997

Archival resources

AIATSIS Manuscript and Rare Books Collection
A History of Aboriginal lands and reserves in Victoria, 1835-1971 / by Philip Felton

Author Details
Leonarda Kovacic and Nikki Henningham

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