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## Australian Heritage Database

### Places for Decision

#### Class : Indigenous

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Item: 1

### Identification

<b>List:</b>	<b>National Heritage List</b>
<b>Name of Place:</b>	Hermannsburg Historic Precinct
<b>Other Names:</b>	Hermannsburg Historic Village
<b>Place ID:</b>	105767
<b>File No:</b>	7/08/013/0003
<b>Primary Nominator:</b>	104271
<b>Nomination Date:</b>	12/09/2004
<b>Principal Group:</b>	Aboriginal Historic/Contact Site

### Status

<b>Legal Status:</b>	20/09/2004 - Nominated place
<b>Admin Status:</b>	25/11/2005 - Assessment by AHC completed

### Assessment

<b>Assessor:</b>	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Place meets one or more NHL criteria
<b>Assessor's Comments:</b>	
<b>Other Assessments:</b>	:

### Location

<b>Nearest Town:</b>	Alice Springs
<b>Distance from town (km):</b>	140
<b>Direction from town:</b>	west
<b>Area (ha):</b>	3
<b>Address:</b>	Larapinta Dr, Hermannsburg, NT 0872
<b>LGA:</b>	Unincorporated NT NT

#### Location/Boundaries:

About 3ha, 140km west of Alice Springs on Larapinta Drive, comprising Lot 196 (A) township of Hermannsburg as delineated on Survey Plan S2000/59.

#### Assessor's Summary of Significance:

Hermannsburg Mission was established by German Lutheran missionaries in 1877 following an arduous 20 month journey from South Australia, at the forefront of pastoral expansion in central Australia. It was managed by Lutheran missionaries and the Lutheran Church from 1877-1982, and is the last surviving mission developed by missionaries from the Hermannsburg Missionary Society in Germany under the influence the German Lutheran community in South Australia. This community was established in 1838 supported by the South Australia Company, and in particular George Fife Angas.

The mission functioned as a refuge for Aboriginal people during the violent frontier conflict that was a feature of early pastoral settlement in central Australia. The Lutheran missionaries were independent and outspoken, playing a key role in attempting to mediate conflict between

pastoralists, the police and Aboriginal people, and speaking publicly about the violence, sparking heated national debate.

The history of the mission reflects several phases of missionary and government policy towards Aboriginal people spanning 105 years, from intervention to protectionist policies, assimilation and finally self-determination. It is the longest-running Aboriginal mission within Australia that was both continually managed by a denominational body and that operated as a separate Aboriginal settlement throughout its history. In the early 1900s, the Lutheran missionaries strongly resisted government attempts to close the mission and sourced independent funds when the government temporarily withdrew its financial support following WWI.

Hermannsburg Historic Precinct is one of the few surviving and relatively intact mid-to-late century denominational evangelical bush missions in Australia. In the context of twentieth century development and overlays, the mission complex illustrates the progressive establishment, self-sufficiency and operation of remote, denominational, evangelical bush missions in central Australia, together with the principal characteristics of mid-to-late nineteenth century denominational missions. These characteristics include: planning and layout along the major cardinal axes, with a modified 'village green' layout bordered by residential buildings and communal facilities and a central dominant church; the self-sufficient nature of the former gardens, date palm grove and irrigation system; and buildings associated with the housing, feeding, schooling and education of Aboriginal people. The layout reflects the inward looking nature of the community and the centrality of Church and school to Lutheran communities; while the buildings display some unusual examples of construction and design influenced by German pastors and tradesmen of German origin in South Australia, such as gable ventilators and internal cross-wall construction based on German *fachwerk* techniques. The mission complex is also important in illustrating many of the common themes of Aboriginal mission life in Australia in the late 1800s and early 1900s, such as the distribution of rations, communal meals, the separation of Aboriginal children from their parents, and a strong emphasis on church, schooling, work and self-sufficiency.

Hermannsburg Historic Precinct has a special association with Albert Namatjira and Aboriginal artists who paint in the watercolour tradition. Namatjira grew up at Hermannsburg Mission, and was introduced to European-style watercolour painting through visiting artist Rex Battarbee. The Lutheran missionaries played an important part in supporting and promoting Namatjira's early artwork, and managing his affairs. Namatjira was the first Aboriginal Australian to paint in watercolours, and to have his work commercially exhibited nationally and internationally. His work became widely acclaimed and a national symbol for Aboriginal achievement. Namatjira maintained a close association with Hermannsburg Mission throughout his later artistic career, frequently returning to the mission for periods of time until his death. Aboriginal artists from other family groups in this area continue the tradition of watercolour painting today.

Lutheran missionaries based at Hermannsburg Mission have made a singular contribution to the record of Aboriginal traditions through their work in this region. Pastor Carl Strehlow was a scholar and skilled linguist whose early research with the Western Arrernte and Luritja people in Central Australia over a 30 year period made a landmark contribution to the development of anthropology as a comparative discipline. His main work *Die Aranda – und Lorita-Stämme in Zentral Australien* adds to the early anthropological work of W. B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen on the Arrernte. Disagreements between the Lutheran Strehlow and the secular anthropologists set the scene for conflict over the interpretation of Aboriginal beliefs and traditions and over Aboriginal policy throughout the later twentieth century.

Carl Strehlow's work was consolidated and developed by T. G. H. Strehlow, his son. His

knowledge of Arrernte language and custom began with his early life at the mission, allowing him to develop the close relationships with Aboriginal people that were crucial throughout his career. He became a skilled linguist and was acknowledged as the leading anthropologist of Central Australia based on his intimate knowledge of Arrernte religious life and traditions. Hermannsburg Mission provided a base for much of his fieldwork, and many of his most important informants were associated with the mission.

#### **Draft Values:**

<b><i>Criterion</i></b>	<b><i>Values</i></b>	<b><i>Rating</i></b>
A Events, Processes	<p>Hermannsburg Mission was established by German Lutheran missionaries in 1877 at the forefront of pastoral expansion in central Australia. It is important as the last surviving mission developed by missionaries from the Hermannsburg Missionary Society in Germany under the influence of the German Lutheran community in South Australia. This community developed from 1839 in the Adelaide Hills and the Barossa Valley with the support of the South Australia Company, and in particular George Fife Angas. The influence of German Lutheran pastors and German tradesmen is expressed in the planning and layout of the mission, and in the design and construction of masonry buildings within the Historic Precinct.</p> <p>Hermannsburg Mission, managed by Lutheran missionaries and the Lutheran Church from 1877-1982, is one of the longest serving denominational missions in Australia. Its history, expressed through the structures and landscaping which are a feature of the Historic Precinct, reflects several phases of missionary and government policy towards Aboriginal people spanning 105 years, from intervention to protectionist policies, assimilation and finally self-determination. The mission functioned as a refuge for Aboriginal people during the violent frontier conflict that was a feature of early pastoral settlement in central Australia. The Lutheran missionaries played a key role in attempting to mediate conflict between pastoralists, the police and Aboriginal people, and spoke out publicly about the violence, sparking heated national debate. The Lutheran missionaries were outspoken and independent, resisting government attempts in the early 1900s to close the mission and sourcing independent funds when the government temporarily withdrew its financial support following WWI. The Kaporilja Tank and connecting pipes were constructed using donated funds.</p> <p>The Hermannsburg Historic Precinct, in the context of twentieth century development and overlays, is important in illustrating the progressive establishment, self-sufficiency and operation of remote, denominational, evangelical bush missions in central Australia, as well as the impact of Lutheran missionaries. The Historic Precinct, focused on a altered village green layout and flanked by gardens, includes buildings and structures which relate to the following development periods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>1877-1891</u> - Smithy, Colonists Residence and Manse;</li> <li>• <u>1894-1922</u> - Meathouse, Schoolhouse, Correspondence School, Strehlow's House, Old Church, Messhouse/Ration Store, Boy's Dormitory, Wagon Shed Wall, Storehouse Ruin,</li> </ul>	AT

- Stockmen's Residence and Stockmen's Outbuilding; and
- 1926-1946 – Underground water tanks, Kaporilja Tank, Maid's Quarters, Mortuary, Tannery, Kitchen, Bakery and Dining Room and Isolation Ward.

B Rarity	<p>The Hermannsburg Historic Precinct is one of the few surviving relatively intact mid-to-late nineteenth century denominational, evangelical bush mission station complexes in Australia. It contains a rare suite of features which enable the development of such missions and their associated Aboriginal communities to be illustrated, such as the notional 'village' green layout, the dominance of church and school, and the planning alignments dictated by the need to reflect church layout. Individual buildings illustrate the provision of accommodation for German pastors, lay colonists and Aboriginal people, and other operational functions of the mission.</p> <p>Hermannsburg Mission is also the only surviving relatively intact nineteenth century Lutheran mission. The influence of German pastors and tradesmen of German origin in South Australia (1877-1922) is clearly visible in the planning and layout of the mission, and in the design and construction of the masonry buildings. Residential buildings incorporate features of traditional German farmhouses, also seen in German Lutheran settlements in South Australia. These features include gable ventilators and internal cross-wall construction based on German <i>fachwerk</i> techniques. The Colonists Residence and the Manse, erected 1877-1891, are particularly important in demonstrating these features.</p> <p>The mission operated for 105 years, and is the longest-running Aboriginal mission within Australia that was both continually managed by a denominational body, and that operated as a separate Aboriginal settlement throughout its history.</p>	AT
C Research	<p>Hermannsburg Historic Precinct has some potential to yield information that would contribute to an understanding of Australia's mission history. Archaeological investigations may reveal information about the nature of Aboriginal and European interactions during the initial phases of the mission's history, and changes in Aboriginal occupation patterns. The recording of Aboriginal and Lutheran missionary oral histories may allow a greater depth of understanding of mission life and the interactions between these two groups.</p> <p>There is also some potential to investigate Indigenous culture in the Hermannsburg area at the time of first contact with Europeans, drawing on material in the Strehlow collection, oral histories, historical documentation and archaeological research.</p>	BT
D Principal characteristics of a class of places	<p>The Hermannsburg Historic Precinct, represents one of the few mid-to-late nineteenth century, denominational, evangelical mission stations in Australia which have survived relatively intact and which enable the principal characteristics of bush missions to be illustrated. These characteristics include:</p>	AT

- Planning and layout, reflecting the major cardinal axes, in which the planning was based on a modified ‘village green’ layout, bordered by residential buildings and communal facilities, including a school and eating house, and a central, dominant church. This layout reflects the inward looking nature of the community, and the centrality of Church and school to Lutheran communities.
- The self-sufficient nature of the former gardens and date palm grove and carefully engineered water supply system typical of remote missions and pastoral homesteads.
- A range of small-scale, residential accommodation erected from 1877, which illustrates the nature of accommodation erected and used by German Lutheran missionaries and lay colonists. These include the Colonists Residence and the Manse erected in the period 1877 – 1891, and Strehlow’s House erected after 1894.
- The Schoolhouse, Boy’s Dormitory accommodation, Messhouse/ration store, Old Church and housing (various buildings) erected under Strehlow (1894-1922), which illustrates the incorporation of Aboriginal people into both the pastoral and doctrinal functioning of the mission station.
- Items associated with the Old Church, including a wooden tabernacle and the church bell, illustrating the religious nature of the mission.

These features also illustrate some of the common themes of Aboriginal mission life in the late 1800s and early 1900s and the social structures that existed, such as the distribution of rations, communal meals for Aboriginal people, the separation of Aboriginal children from their parents, and a strong emphasis by the missionaries, in particular the Lutherans, on church, schooling, work and self-sufficiency.

E Aesthetic characteristics	Hermannsburg Historic Precinct is framed by the Finke River, Ntaria settlement and low ranges in the distance. The historic buildings demonstrate aesthetic characteristics of local value, due to their age, setting and associations.	BT
F Creative or technical achievement	The range of building techniques used at Hermannsburg Mission are typical of the building forms constructed across Southern Australia. The use of timber-framed <i>fachwerk</i> construction (wattle and daub with large section bush timbers) to internal structures in the Hermannsburg Historic precinct is unusual but not unique in Australia.	BT
G Social value	Hermannsburg Mission has fundamentally shaped the lives of Western Arrernte people and those from other areas who lived at the mission. The introduction of Christianity to Central Australia altered many peoples’ lives and beliefs, and Christian teachings have been woven into Arrernte law in some instances. However, Aboriginal people from the Ntaria community have mixed views about the mission days, and for some years many were reluctant to visit the	BT

former mission site.

The Lutherans in Central Australia maintain a special association with Hermannsburg Mission, as it represents the introduction of Lutheran missionaries and Christianity to Central Australia, in the face of harsh and violent conditions. The Finke River Mission in Alice Springs continues to manage one of the supermarkets at Ntaria, and undertakes pastoral work amongst Aboriginal communities. The Lutherans continue to work with Aboriginal people on language translations in Central Australia. The importance of Hermannsburg to the wider German Lutheran community is unknown.

H Significant  
people

*Albert Namatjira*

AT

Hermannsburg Historic Precinct has a special association with Albert Namatjira and Aboriginal artists who paint in the watercolour tradition.

Namatjira's importance lies in his development of a distinctive Aboriginal school of Central Australian landscape painting executed in watercolour. He was the first Aboriginal artist to be commercially exhibited nationally and internationally. Namatjira's work became widely acclaimed and a national symbol for Aboriginal achievement.

Namatjira grew up at Hermannsburg Mission, and the mission was pivotal to Namatjira's development as an artist. His first experience in art for commercial return occurred at the mission, and in the early 1930s Namatjira was introduced to European style watercolour painting during artist Rex Battarbee's visit to Hermannsburg Mission. The Lutheran missionaries at Hermannsburg played an important part in supporting and promoting Namatjira's early artwork, and managing his affairs. Namatjira maintained a close association with Hermannsburg Mission throughout his later artistic career, frequently returning to the mission for periods of time.

Aboriginal artists from other family groups in this area continue to paint in the watercolour tradition today.

*Carl T. G. Strehlow and Theodore G. H. Strehlow*

Lutheran missionaries based at Hermannsburg Mission have made a singular contribution to the record of Aboriginal traditions through their work in this region.

Pastor Carl Strehlow was a scholar and skilled linguist whose early research with the Western Arrernte and Luritja people in Central Australia over a 30 year period made a landmark contribution to the development of anthropology as a comparative discipline. His main work *Die Aranda – und Lorita-Stämme in Zentral Australien* adds to the early anthropological work of W. B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen on the Arrernte. Disagreements between the Lutheran Strehlow and the secular anthropologists set the scene for conflict over the interpretation of Aboriginal beliefs and traditions and over Aboriginal policy throughout the later twentieth century. Carl Strehlow's missionary posting at Hermannsburg Mission and the

relationships he formed with Aboriginal people in the region were fundamental to his work, and key elements in the enduring Lutheran perspective on Aboriginal affairs.

This work was consolidated and developed by T. G. H. Strehlow, Carl Strehlow's son. His knowledge of Arrernte language and custom began with his early life at the mission, allowing him to develop the close relationships with Aboriginal people that were crucial throughout his career. He became a skilled linguist and was acknowledged as the leading anthropologist of Central Australia based on his intimate knowledge of Arrernte religious life and traditions. Hermannsburg Mission provided a base for much of his fieldwork, and many of his most important informants were associated with the mission.

The Strehlows and other Lutherans based at Hermannsburg left one of the most comprehensive and detailed records of an Australian Aboriginal people. In Australian anthropology and Aboriginal policy circles T. G. H. Strehlow was regarded as an authority on Central Australia, and the positions he adopted on Aboriginal issues continued a strain of Lutheran non-conformity that developed at Hermannsburg Mission.

I Indigenous tradition

Hermannsburg area is on or near the travel route of the Ntaria Twins, BT ancestral beings who were born near Palm Valley. Limited information has been found about the importance of this story to Indigenous tradition, and whether the Hermannsburg site was a major place along the travel route, or as part of this story. Further information may be available from Indigenous people at Hermannsburg.

### **Historic Themes:**

**Group:** 04 Building settlements, towns and cities

**Themes:** 04.03 Developing institutions

**Sub-Themes:**

**Group:** 05 Working

**Themes:** 05.01 Working in harsh conditions

**Sub-Themes:**

**Group:** 05 Working

**Themes:** 05.07 Surviving as Indigenous people in a white-dominated economy

**Sub-Themes:**

**Group:** 06 Educating

**Themes:** 06.06 Educating Indigenous people in two cultures

**Sub-Themes:**

### **Nominator's Summary of Significance:**

The Hermannsburg Historic Precinct is a major historical and cultural site - it is where white Europeans first met and lived with Central Australian Aboriginals. Arguably one of Australia's most important heritage sites, Hermannsburg was also the home of Albert Namitjira and the Hermannsburg School of watercolour painting. The Precinct consists of 20 buildings from the mid and early 20th century that exhibit a range of building techniques, including those practised by the German Lutherans known as fachwerkbau.

Hermannsburg has a fascinating history. The cottages and churches built by German missionaries (who first came in 1877) remain standing, and offer an insight into the early interaction between the European and Aboriginal cultures.

Hermannsburg was also home to famous Aboriginal artist Albert Namatjira. His amazing and tragic life can be glimpsed upon in his white washed cottage that still stands.

The noted anthropologist Ted Strehlow, son of one of the German missionaries, gathered his entire collection of Aboriginal artefacts from the same area. A great number of those artefacts are housed in the Strehlow Centre in nearby Alice Springs.

Hermannsburg has enormous potential, particularly in tourism. The cottages were fully restored in 1988 and, at the time of preparing this nomination, further restoration works are being undertaken on major buildings with Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage funding.

In recognition of the immense significance and importance of the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct the Hermannsburg Historical Society has been formed and a full Conservation Management Plan prepared to secure and enhance the future of this major national heritage site.

## **Description:**

### **General Description**

The Hermannsburg Historic Precinct is located at a prominent bend on the Finke River, 140kms west of Alice Springs on the Ntaria Aboriginal Land Trust. It is a discrete site within the township of Ntaria (formerly Hermannsburg Mission).

The Arrernte people traditionally occupied the country around Hermannsburg Mission, and spoke the Western Arrernte dialect. There are stories associated with this country, such as the story of the Ntaria twins - one fat, one thin - who were born near a waterhole and later travelled across the country towards the present location of Hermannsburg (Mulvaney, 1989:141; pers. com, Judith Pungarta Inkamala).

### **Landscape Planning and Layout**

The planning and layout of the mission evolved from its close relationship with the Finke River as a water source. Although in general pastoral property boundaries ran along the major cardinal axes, internal boundaries often reflected land quality and terrain characteristics. Sheep yards and stockyards were separated from the small settlement, but remained close enough to maintain control. Evidence for this aspect of the early mission has been lost under twentieth century development.

A key aspect of Lutheran communities was the need to erect a church-school, as an expression of their faith. In the early stages of mission development such joint facilities were accommodated, as in most rural communities in the mid-nineteenth century, in the first permanent accommodation. The first permanent (stone) structures were erected aligned approximately north south/east-west, echoing the key principal employed in the planning and alignment of churches in European Christian society: the nave and altar defined the east-west axis of the building. The altar of the first Church was at the eastern end of the room identified as the Church section of the two-roomed Church /School building, which was aligned north-south. Winnecke's 1894 survey indicates that this first church, when erected in 1880, occupied



the centre of a potentially triangular space, a slightly modified 'village green' layout, which would be defined by the gardens along the river and by houses and service buildings erected between 1878 and the early 1900s. The Schoolhouse erected in 1896 was clearly aligned with the new Church of 1896/1897, which would dominate the triangular 'village green'. Buildings not aligned with these dominant axes were limited to the Messhouse (1903) and Strehlow's House (1896-1897), in which the alignment was dictated by the available space.

The first accommodation for Aboriginal people, the boys and girls dormitories, were erected sometime between 1894-1904. The increasing role of Aboriginal people in both mission and pastoral station activity is evident in the Messhouse and Stockmen's Residence, erected in the early 1900s. Grass huts occupied by Aboriginal people (date of construction unknown) were located north of the Manse and the School, although no physical evidence remains (refer photographs in Strehlow Residence).

Evidence for the original gardens exists in the narrow strip of land between the alignment of the permanent structures between the Messhouse/Rations store and the Stockmen's Residence and the Finke River watercourse and in the location of the date palm plantation on the western side of the precinct. Winnecke's 1894 survey indicates that a small number of wells and mud and slab huts were associated with the gardens, although no evidence of these appears to remain. In places, the gardens are terraced below the adjacent houses using local stone. The difficulty in providing water supplies is evident in the Kaporilja Tank and in the underground structures erected in the 1920s and 1930s.

The individual buildings and the development of the precinct over time contribute to a strong sense of place. In general, residential buildings line the river, but faced inwards to the public space and the Church and School. The 'Old Church' of 1896/1897, the tallest building, remains the focus of the heritage precinct, which, although based on alignments and buildings erected in the 1870s and 1880s, is an expression of Strehlow's intention to develop the mission in 1894. Strehlow's House was erected near the site of the first Church (1880) and the second Church of 1896 appears to have been erected on the site of an earlier residence recorded by Winnecke in 1894, which had accommodated some of the first church services. The planning and layout of the simple cellular buildings, the use of local materials and the public spaces created are important evidence of the approach by Lutheran missionaries to living in a remote area in Central Australia.

As was generally the case in the nineteenth century, the cemetery was located some distance (approximately 100metres) from the mission buildings. This is now identified as the Old Cemetery.

### **Buildings and Structures**

Although the immediate pastoral setting has been adapted over time through expansion of the mission station, Hermannsburg Mission Station retains its nineteenth century functional relationship to the pastoral landscape, evident in the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct and the related site of the Old Cemetery.

The Hermannsburg Historic Precinct includes the following significant extant structures, which are identified in the Conservation and Management Plan (Heritage Conservation Services 2003):

#### 1877-1891

Smithy (1)1882: a gabled, rubble-stone structure originally in two sections; a smithy and harness store. A front verandah functioned as a wagon shelter. Now enclosed in a 1960s steel shed.

Colonists Residence (2) 1885: the oldest surviving residence at Hermannsburg Mission. Built for married colonists or lay-workers. The gabled, one-room deep, rubble-stone structure includes a cellar at one end. A verandah shields the north front of the building.

Manse (3) 1888: regarded as the Missionaries House, since it was occupied by the early pastors. A gabled, one-room deep, rubblestone building with a verandah on the south side.

#### 1894-1922 Strehlow

Meathouse (4) pre 1896: date unknown, but possibly erected as a storehouse and originally part of a larger building. A single-room, gabled rubble-stone structure.

Schoolhouse (5) 1896: a gabled, single roomed, rubble-stone structure with calico ceilings.

Correspondence School (6): possibly erected as the 'eating house' in 1896. Similar design and construction to the Schoolhouse.

Strehlow's House (7a) 1897: the design of this residence differs from the others in the use of a two-room deep plan and central passageway. Construction and details generally similar to other residences. Additions 1905, 1912, 1920. The house still has some of the original contents.

Old Church (8) 1896: a single-roomed, gabled, rubble-stone structure higher than other buildings in the precinct. The walls are lime-mortared and lime-washed and reduce in thickness with height. Iron tie-rods were used to tie the side-walls together during construction. A raised platform at the eastern end accommodated the altar. A wooden tabernacle hangs on the wall near the altar, painted with pictures of bread, grapes and a chalice. The letters 'IHS' are inscribed on the front of tabernacle, and it is also inscribed with the words *pater, filius, non est, and spiritus sanctus*. Small crosses characteristically decorate the gables with a dedication plaque above the entrance in Arrernte, German and English with the inscriptions 'Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it' and 'Sep.21.1896'. A bell is suspended in a timber frame at the entrance to the church.

Messhouse/Ration Store (9) 1903: erected as the messroom for Aboriginal people. Of similar construction and details to the residences.

Boys Dormitory (10) c.1900: a pair of dormitories for boys (surviving) and girls (destroyed in 1954). Of similar design and construction to the other rubble-stone buildings.

Wagon Shed Wall (11) nd : a single stone wall that survives from the original rubble-stone shed.

Storehouse Ruin (12) c. 1900: a small, ruined, rubble-stone structure, now un-roofed.

Stockmen's Residence (13a) 1911: a four-roomed, gabled rubble-stone cottage with a cellar, pitched roof and encircling verandah.

Stockmens Outbuilding (13b) 1917: originally constructed as a bakehouse. A gabled, rubble-stone building with pitched roof.

#### 1926-1946 Albrecht

Underground tanks 1927-1930: four survive. Intended to assist with the tanning industry established in the 1930s.

Kaporilja Tank (14) 1934-35: an above ground tank constructed of local stone, lime mortar and plastered internally with cement. Covered by a corrugated galvanized iron roof.

Maids' Quarters (7b) 1933: attached to Strehlow's House. The rooms provided accommodation for guests and maids. Construction is similar to the other rubble-stone residences, but with a skillion roof.

Mortuary (15) 1936: erected behind the Old Church. A small, skillion-roofed, rubble-stone building in which the mortuary slab remains intact. A decorative cross is located above the entrance door.

Tannery (16) 1941: a skillion-roofed, rubble-stone structure with two rooms. Now enclosed in a larger building (1962).

Kitchen, Bakery and Dining Room (17) c. 1947-1948: a gabled, steel-framed shed clad with asbestos cement sheeting and flattened 44-gallon drums.

Isolation Ward (18): a timber-framed, skillion-roofed, 44-gallon drum clad building with a small chimney and fireplace.

The former gardens and date palm plantation are situated between the mission buildings and the Finke River, surrounded by a wire mesh fence. The gardens contain remnant date palms together with evidence of stone retaining walls and steps immediately below the mission buildings, a lower retaining wall of metal drums, below-ground concrete water tanks (2), and various pieces of irrigation equipment.

The nearby Old Cemetery contains graves dating back to 1886, including that of J. Heinrich. It was enclosed with a stone wall in 1930, the gates opening in the direction of the church (Radford, 1983:50). The stone wall remains along 2 ½ sides of the cemetery, the remaining sides are enclosed with a wire fence. Graves are aligned east-west with the headstones facing east and received both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Christian burials. The last recorded burial at this cemetery was in 1960 (NT Heritage Register). The early Missionaries' graves feature metal crosses with detailing characteristic of German precedents. Later graves often feature cement or concrete crosses, although early Aboriginal pastors' graves feature stone memorials.

Some of the buildings contain objects of value for their associations with the precinct and particular individuals. Within Strehlow's Residence there are several items including an 1890 dining table (from Germany), a bookcase (made in 1921 by Strehlow), a piano, photographs and paintings. The old church contains a wooden tabernacle, an organ and other religious items. Other objects within the Precinct include original paintings by Albert Namatjira and other well known Aboriginal artists, including members of the Namatjira, Ebatarinji, Inkamala and Pareroulitja families, and machinery, such as a 1930s Chevrolet utility, the first car used at Hermannsburg (Heritage Conservation Services 2003:50).

The development of Hermannsburg Mission Station is reflected in the landscape, planning and layout, and associated wells and gardens, and in the details, fabric and structure of the buildings in the Heritage Precinct.

## **Buildings and Structural Techniques**

Rubble-stone buildings were erected at Hermannsburg Mission from 1878 due to the ready availability of sandstone, limestone and sand. Such masonry buildings added both a sense of

permanency as well as the possibility of buffering the extremes of climate. A contract worker, G. Haemmerling, from Light Pass in the Barossa Valley, accompanied the missionaries in 1877, but had left the group before Dalhousie Springs. The missionaries' team was complemented in 1877 by builder F. Stone, who joined them in the vicinity of Dalhousie Springs. It is assumed that F. Stone erected the Smithy, Colonists Residence and the Manse under the direction of the missionaries between 1882 and 1888. A. Haemmerling and David Hart were responsible for the construction of buildings following the arrival of Strehlow in 1894, suggesting that colonially influenced German construction techniques and skills employed in the 1870s and 1880s under the influence of the German missionaries continued. It seems likely that there was a family connection between the two Haemmerlings in South Australia and that A. Haemmerling was familiar with and trained in traditional German construction techniques, including *fachwerk*, as well as colonial construction techniques and the planning and layout of cottages and farms.

Winnecke's 1894 description of the fabric of the buildings at Hermannsburg referred to all masonry buildings as being erected of sandstone rubble with thatched roofs, with no reference to timber framing. In particular the Colonist's Residence (1885) was described as a 'substantially built stone house of seven rooms, sandstone walls, 1' 3" in thickness'. All other stone buildings appear to have been erected with 18-inch (450 mm) thick walls, in keeping with rubble-stone construction techniques across Australia. During conservation works in the 1980s by Service Enterprises, it was discovered that the Colonists Residence was timber framed internally, a section of the construction being left visible for interpretation. This timber-framed section has been interpreted as *fachwerk* construction, and appears to have been limited to internal construction such as cross-walls, without being expressed in the external stonework. 'Fachwerk' is generally understood to be half-timbered construction in which the timber structural frame is infilled with brick and in some cases 'wattle and daub'. The technique used at Hermannsburg was a more primitive form of construction in which the panels were filled with a very basic form of 'wattle and daub', a form of infill generally restricted in use to outbuildings in SA.

Gabled roofs were often a feature of vernacular stone buildings in the Australian colonies and of traditional cottages and farmhouses in Germany. A distinctive feature of traditionally influenced buildings in South Australia was the use of gable openings providing external access to loft spaces within the pitched roof spaces. At Hermannsburg, similar loft openings appear in the gable end walls of many buildings, including the Colonist's Residence (1885) and the Manse (1888). Winnecke's detailed survey drawing shows that these early residences were of cellular, cross-wall construction with access provided to paired rooms by a verandah along one side of the building. Fireplaces were attached to the rooms on the side opposite to the verandahs. Existing early ceilings, such as in the Colonists Residence feature saplings as laths with thick, ant-bed based plaster. The provision of a cellar, providing secure safe storage, in the Colonists Residence also followed a practice seen in many German Lutheran farmhouses in SA in both the Adelaide Hills and in the Barossa Valley.

The separate Church and School erected in the 1890s represented a shift in the scale of accommodation, the functions formerly accommodated in a single building as the focus of the community. The dedication stone states that the new Church was completed in September 1898 by A. Haemmerling. The inscription includes messages written in German, Arrernte and English. Although these new structures continued the general scale, architectural idiom and use of materials, the use of gable-end fireplaces and chimneys reflected standards employed generally in the colonies by the end of the nineteenth century in such small institutional buildings. Strehlows' House also differed from the first residences in that it was two rooms deep with a central hallway patterned after the standard, four-roomed, Georgian style cottage but with verandahs on both long sides. In contrast to the earlier thatched roofs a mulga wood

and lime-based, concrete roof covering was employed on Strehlows' House.

The thatched roofs and lime-concrete and mulga wood used on early buildings were progressively replaced with corrugated galvanized iron, also employed in the later new buildings. Internally the lime-mortared, stone structures were plastered, the external surfaces lime-washed.

As a group, nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings in the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct are small scale, vernacular in their planning and construction and accretive in their development, all attributes of the general development of pastoral stations across Australia. The range of construction techniques includes examples of basic *fachwerk* techniques evident in the interior of buildings such as the Colonists Residence, to more recent vernacular techniques employed in the flattened 44-gallon drums in the Isolation Ward.

### Analysis:

**A The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in the course, or pattern of Australia's natural or cultural history.**

The nominator says that Hermannsburg Historic Precinct has outstanding heritage value under this criterion, however no specific information is provided to support this claim. The nominator advises that Hermannsburg Historic Precinct is where white Europeans first met and lived with Central Australian Aboriginals.

### ECONOMIC, POLITICAL OR SOCIAL PROCESSES

Hermannsburg Mission is important for its association with the German Lutheran community in South Australia, established under the influence of George Fife Angas and the South Australia Company who were instrumental in the establishment of South Australia and in promoting free settlement. As members of an evangelical missionary society, the Hermannsburg Mission Society, its pastors and lay people completed and operated a bush mission at the forefront of pastoral expansion in Central Australia, one which would become one of the longest serving denominational missions in Australia. During its initial development the missionaries sought to moderate the impacts of settlement on Aboriginal people, providing a place of refuge from the violent conflict that marked the frontier of pastoralism in Central Australia.

In its planning and layout, Hermannsburg Mission illustrates the progressive development of denominational bush missions and Aboriginal society in the context of pastoral activity in Central Australia. Evidence of several phases of missionary and government administration of Aboriginal people is also illustrated at Hermannsburg Mission.

### *The German Lutherans*

With the exception of the Moravians in Victoria, the German Lutherans were at the forefront of missionary activity in South Australia, Queensland and Central Australia, apparently drawn to more remote locations for their work.

In South Australia missions were established as early as 1839-1840 by the German Lutherans at Encounter Bay and Port Lincoln (DEH 2003: Appendix 3). The German Lutheran communities in South Australia promoted early advances into Central Australia by missionaries from the

Hermannsburg Missionary Society, Germany, following exploration by John McDouall Stuart in 1862 and the opening up of the Centre as a result of the Overland Telegraph to Alice Springs.

The German Lutherans were also amongst the first missionaries in Queensland, although in contrast to South Australia their initial endeavours were unsuccessful, and their missionary ventures generally followed the frontier by a decade or two. The earliest missionary activity in Queensland occurred in the late 1830's, when the NSW Presbyterians invited the German Lutheran Gossner Mission to operate a mission, known as Zion Hill, or Nundah, at Moreton Bay, following penal settlement of the bay area in 1824 (Harris, 1990:108-114). Although unsuccessful (1837-1845), some of Lutheran lay missionaries, ordained in the Presbyterian church, went on to found Lutheran congregations in later life (eg: Bethesda Aboriginal Mission, SE Queensland, 1866-1883). Two Lutheran missions were established in 1886: Mari Yamba mission (closed 1902), and Bloomfield Mission, North Queensland. In the Cooktown area, Lutheran involvement began in 1885 by missionary Johann Flierl. The original mission sites were at Elim (1885) and Cape Bedford. Elim became known as Hope Valley, and later Hope Vale (United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia, 1885-1975).

While German Lutheran missionaries were active from the early 1800's in both South Australia and Queensland, they were strongly supported in South Australia by the recently established German community, a feature lacking in Queensland. A strong work ethic, and drive for self-sufficiency and economic viability were key features of the early Lutheran missionary endeavours. Harris notes that at the 'Zion Hill' in the 1830s, the achievement of economic viability took precedence over other mission activities, and on at least one occasion the missionaries fired upon the Aborigines to frighten them away from the gardens. At Hermannsburg Mission, industrial training for Aboriginal people became a mission priority from the 1920s and it remained Lutheran policy to require work of some kind from 'able-bodied' adults receiving rations (Rowse, 1989:53). While many other missions also strove to be self-supporting, the Lutheran missionaries are set-apart by their strong work ethic, where increased effort equated to increased reward, as opposed to the more egalitarian principles that were in place in Australia by the late 1800s.

#### *The mission as a safe haven during frontier conflicts*

As an evangelical bush mission, run as a cattle station, Hermannsburg Mission was contemporary with pastoral expansion in Central Australia. It is worth noting that encounters with the missionaries were not the first time that Aboriginal people in the region came in contact with Europeans in the Centre - such contact occurred during exploration of the region in the 1860s by John McDouall Stuart (Carment, 1991:4). However, the missionaries' actions did provide Aboriginal people with an alternate view of Europeans during these early days of settlement. Insufficient evidence is available to demonstrate that this was the first time that white Europeans and Aboriginal people lived together in Central Australia, as claimed by the nominator.

The Lutheran missionaries were quickly in the midst of frontier conflict, at a time when the frontier, ever moving, was perhaps at its most extensive within the north and centre of Australia (Harris, 1990:375-376). The Lutheran missionaries played a key role in attempting to mediate the conflict that occurred between pastoralists, police and Aboriginal people as pastoralism restricted access to traditional lands and resources. Hermannsburg Mission functioned as a comparatively safer 'haven' for Aboriginal people during this violence (Heppell et al, 1981:4-5), with the missionaries attempting to protect Aboriginal people who were sought by the police.

Hermannsburg Mission managed to survive the violent frontier years and became one of the longest running missions in Australia. As a consequence, Arrernte people were to some extent sheltered from the harsh, often violent outside world. It has been suggested that the presence of the Lutheran missionaries was a key contributing factor in the survival of the Arrernte people in Central Australia (Austin, 1989:358; Harris, 1990:395); others however would argue that the missionaries' presence directly contributed to the loss of control that Aboriginal people experienced over their lives.

There are other examples of missionaries who criticised the treatment of Aboriginal people, for example missionary John Gribble and ex-convict David Carly were strongly outspoken against the mistreatment of Aboriginal people in north-west Western Australia (Harris, 1990:407-423); and missions in other areas were also perceived to provide protection from harassment and sexual exploitation by Europeans (eg: Ramahyuck mission, (Harris, 1990:204); National Inquiry, 1997:Ch. 6). It is difficult to compare this aspect of Hermannsburg Mission with other missions across Australia, in part due to limited available data. However, the early events at Hermannsburg Mission clearly demonstrate the way in which the Lutheran missionaries attempted to intervene and protect Aboriginal people from the violent frontier warfare of Central Australia.

#### *A bush mission*

The Hermannsburg Mission Precinct, in the context of twentieth century overlays and development, contains a range of buildings and land use patterns, in particular the remnant gardens and palm trees, which illustrate both the progressive establishment, self-sufficiency and operation of remote bush missions in Central Australia as well as the impact of Lutheran missionaries.

Many mid-nineteenth century denominational missions were replaced in the first half of the twentieth century in southern Australia, generally by so-called non-denominational missions (United Aborigines Mission and Aborigines Inland Mission). Some missions disappeared, others were taken over by pastoralists, such as Poonindie, while others such as Lake Tyers (1907) became government settlements, consistent with the government's policy of 'separating' Aboriginal people onto reserves and appointing protectors to look after their welfare. Warangesda in NSW ceased to be a Church of England mission in 1886 when it was taken over by the Aborigines Protection Board, and was the last mission in NSW run by a major denomination. New Norcia, Western Australia, is one of the few missions in southern Australia to remain under the management of a religious/denominational order, however after 1900 it became less of a bush mission and more a traditional European- style monastic settlement (Harris 1990: 551-552).

Hermannsburg Mission is set apart from these missions as it remained under denominational control (the Lutheran Church) throughout its history. In the early 1900s, when the government started to scrutinise the Lutheran operation of Hermannsburg Mission (consistent with their increased concern over Aboriginal welfare), the Lutherans resisted government interference and any moves to take over their activities.

Many denominational missions have not survived, e.g. both Lake Condah and Warangaresda survive only as archaeological sites, while the earlier Lutheran mission, at Lake Killalpaninna (1867) survives only in the archival record (Stevens 1994). Lake Tyers, Gippsland, Victoria, is relatively intact, retaining the church (1878), administration building, dairy, store and Cemetery, while Point Pearce in South Australia also retains a significant amount of fabric, and the original planning and layout are relatively intact. However, Lake Tyers operated in a rich

pastoral, settled area and Point Pearce occurred within an agricultural context, in contrast to the remote pastoral setting of Hermannsburg Mission.

### *Reflecting changes in the administration of Aboriginal people*

The history of Hermannsburg Mission reflects the changes in missionary and Government administration of, and attitude to, Aboriginal people over a 100-year period from protectionist policies to one of assimilation and finally self-determination.

Between 1877 and 1891, Aboriginal people came and went from the mission, maintaining many of their traditional practices. In their interactions with Aboriginal people, the Lutheran missionaries rapidly attempted to separate children from their parents, in order to better convert them to Christianity and 'civilisation'. This practice was a precursor to later government policies of separation and removal of children of mixed descent from their families, introduced in the early 1900s.

During the 1890s and early 1900s, Aboriginal people became increasingly involved in the mission, evidenced in the construction of the boys and girls dormitories, a messhouse, the stockmans residence, and the Aboriginal huts (no longer surviving) at the perimeter of the mission. These activities at Hermannsburg Mission can be understood within the context of government's protectionist policies, where missions received government subsidies to 'look after' Aboriginal people, and government rations were distributed to many Aboriginal people. Hermannsburg Mission, however, was not simply an administrative body for government. The Lutherans resisted government moves to close the mission in the early 1900s. With the anti-German sentiment following WW1, the government withdrew its financial support of the mission for a number of years. From the 1930s the Lutherans increasingly focused their efforts on work and industry development, evidenced for example in the establishment of the tannery and the development of the Hermannsburg School of Watercolour. In the 1960s-1980s, consistent with a growing call for Aboriginal land rights and self-determination, Aboriginal people asserted their independence from the mission by establishing outstations. The eventual handing back of the mission to Aboriginal people in the 1980s was an act repeated across Australia.

At least three other missions are comparable with Hermannsburg in their ability to demonstrate several phases in the administration of Aboriginal people, over a long period of operation (>100 years): Point McLeay, SA (1858-?), Lake Tyers, Victoria (1861 - 1971) and Point Pearce, SA (1868-?). However, in each case these missions were taken over by the government during the early 1900s in accordance with the governments' 'protectionist' policies. Point McLeay was established by a secular organisation – the Aborigines Friends Association – as distinct from a Christian missionary body, and was taken over by the South Australia Chief Protector of Aborigines in 1916. Point Pearce was established by the Yorke Peninsula Aboriginal Mission Society, and also taken over by the Government in 1916. The management of Lake Tyers mission similarly passed from the missionaries to the Aborigines Protection (later Welfare) Board in 1908, and the mission was later declared a permanent reserve prior to handover to the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust (ABC, 2004). Hermannsburg Mission is the only mission that operated in excess of 100 years and remained under denominational missionary control throughout the major phases of government policy on Aboriginal administration. It also demonstrates Aboriginal people's departure from missions during the homelands and outstation movement, which is not represented by the missions at Point McLeay, Lake Tyers or Point Pearce missions.

It is considered that Hermannsburg Historic Precinct has outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion a) in illustrating the progressive development of denominational bush



missions and Aboriginal society, stemming from the German Lutheran community in South Australia, in the context of pastoral activity in Central Australia; in moderating the impacts of early pastoral settlement on Aboriginal people; and in demonstrating several phases in missionary and Government administration of Aboriginal people.

**B The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history.**

The nominator makes no claims under this criterion.

Hermannsburg Mission is important as one of a small number of mid- to late- nineteenth century, denominational, bush mission stations in Australia which have survived relatively intact, and which enables the development of inland denominational bush missions and their associated Aboriginal communities to be illustrated. Hermannsburg Mission is also the only surviving relatively intact nineteenth century Lutheran mission. The influence of German missionaries and stonemasons and carpenters from SA is clearly visible in the planning and layout and in the design and construction of the masonry buildings, which define the 'village green'. Hermannsburg Mission was also one of the longest operating denominational missions in Australia

#### *An intact bush mission*

Key physical attributes in the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct include the notional 'village green' layout, the dominance of the church and school, and planning alignments dictated by the need to reflect church layout, in which the altar would traditionally be placed at the eastern end. Individual buildings illustrate the provision of accommodation for German pastors and lay colonists as well as dormitory accommodation for Aboriginal boys and accommodation for Aboriginal workers. Many denominational bush missions have not survived, e.g. both Lake Condah Victoria (1870s) and Wangaresda NSW (1880) survive only as archaeological sites, as does Killalpaninna SA (1867). Lake Tyers, Gippsland, Victoria (1861) is relatively intact and retains the church (1878), administration building, dairy, store and cemetery. However, Lake Tyers was operational in a rich pastoral, settled area. Point Pearce (1868) in SA also retains a significant amount of fabric and the original planning and layout are relatively intact in an agricultural context. Both Lake Tyers and Point Pearce were erected in the later, consolidation stages of rural settlement in southern Australia, rather than at the forefront of settlement (Refer to Criterion 'd' for further comparative information about these places).

Missions erected by German missionaries arriving via German Lutheran communities in South Australia include Hermannsburg and Killalpaninna (Bethesda). The latter has not survived other than as an archaeological site.

Mud brick structures erected at Killalpaninna Mission by the 1890s included the Church and the pastor's residences. The three-roomed residence erected for Missionary Flierl in 1882 displayed in its gabled form and twin central chimneys, features common to many houses erected by German settlers in South Australia after the pattern of smaller farmhouses in Silesia and Saxony in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Stevens 1994). Examples with similar timber construction techniques have been identified in the Barossa Valley at Light Pass on properties developed by German settlers (Young et al 1977 Vol 1: 81-82), in which both wattle and daub and brick have been used as panels between in-ground corner posts in contrast to the

more decorative, complex framing generally associated with the term *fachwerk*.

The cellular, one-room deep, rubblestone, gabled buildings at Hermannsburg Mission, erected from 1878 to the early 1890s, were similar to vernacular, masonry building forms constructed across southern Australia. However, the use of timber-framed *fachwerk* construction internally was unusual, since this technique was traditionally applied to the whole building, the roof being supported by the vertical framing. At Hermannsburg Mission the rubble-stone walls appear to support the roof framing and provide lateral stability to the internal *fachwerk* walls. The simple, cellular, one-room deep, gabled masonry buildings reflect traditional German precedents and colonial examples in SA, in which small openings in the gables provided access and ventilation of roof spaces (Young et al 1977 Vol 1: 83). However, in contrast to traditional farmhouses and cottages erected in Germany and SA, the fireplaces and ovens were not located internally, but placed to one side and generally at the corners of each of the early residential buildings. The influence of German precedents in design and construction can be identified, but these are not as clear as examples in SA. Residential buildings and the school and church erected in the 1890s and early 1900s were influenced by the prevailing colonial precedents in planning and construction.

### *Length of operation*

Hermannsburg Mission, operating for 105 years, is the longest running Aboriginal mission within Australia that was continually managed by a denominational body, and that operated as a separate Aboriginal settlement throughout its history. This is probably due to the strong Lutheran work ethic (where harder work brought greater rewards) and the missionaries' reluctance to hand over the 'fruits of their labour' to the government. Government efforts to close or interfere with the mission were strongly resisted.

There are a number of Aboriginal missions in Australia which survived for a similar length of time as Hermannsburg Mission, such as New Norcia, Western Australia (124 years), Point Pearce, South Australia (103+ years), Lake Tyers, Victoria (109+years), Framlingham, Victoria (100 years) and Broome, Western Australia (108 years). However, in each case there were significant changes in the management or focus of each mission over time. For example, New Norcia (124 years) was run by the Benedictine Monks as an Aboriginal mission and monastic settlement for the first 50 years, however after 1900 it became less of a bush mission and more a traditional European- style monastic settlement. Education and community care for Aboriginal peoples continued, but the emphasis shifted towards the educational and pastoral needs of the population of rural Western Australia (Benedictine Community, n.d.). The management of Lake Tyers passed from the missionaries to the Aborigines Protection (later Welfare) Board in 1908 (ABC, 2004) and the management of Point Pearce Mission passed from the Moravian missionaries to the Government in 1915. Framlingham (100 years) commenced as a gazetted reserve, and was managed by both the Church of England Mission and the Aborigines Protection Board (ABC, 2004). The Catholic Church had a long-standing missionary involvement in Broome, establishing the Parish of Brooke in 1897. While reference is made to a mission station, little detail has been sourced on what type of institution this was (Catholic Diocese of Broome, n.d.).

It is considered that Hermannsburg Historic Precinct has outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion (b) as one of few relatively intact mid-to-late-nineteenth century, denominational, bush mission stations in Australia which illustrates the development of inland denominational bush missions and their associated Aboriginal communities. Further, Hermannsburg Mission is the only surviving relatively intact nineteenth century Lutheran mission and the last surviving Central Australian mission developed by missionaries from the Hermannsburg Missionary Society in Germany, under the influence of the German Lutheran

community in SA. It was also the longest running Aboriginal mission within Australia that was continually managed by a denominational missionary body, and that operated as a separate Aboriginal settlement throughout its history.

**C The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's natural or cultural history.**

While the nominator states that the place has outstanding heritage value under this criterion, no specific information is provided in support of this. The structures, layout and history of Hermannsburg Historic Precinct have been quite well documented. The nominator has expressed an interest in identifying and excavating the site of the first well and the girls dormitory (G. Williams, pers. com August 2005); however it is not considered that such investigations would provide any new insights into the history of this place. The place may have the potential to reveal information about early interactions between Aboriginal people and missionaries at the mission and changes in Aboriginal occupation patterns through archaeological investigations; however it appears no such investigations have been undertaken to date. There may be some potential to investigate Indigenous culture in the Hermannsburg area at the time of first contact with Europeans, drawing on material in the Strehlow collection, oral histories, historical documentation and archaeological research.

A number of Lutheran missionaries have written about mission life from their perspective. Austin-Broos has recorded some people's stories at Hermannsburg, exploring the issue of Arrente law and God's law, and the different accounts of the arrival of the Lutherans on West Arrente land (Austin-Broos, 1994, 1996). Some Aboriginal people's memories of life on the mission are also documented in Isaac's book on the Hermannsburg potters (2000). Further oral testimony of Aboriginal people who lived on the mission would provide a greater understanding of people's experiences of mission life and its impact on their lives. Such testimonies have been recorded by Aboriginal people who lived on missions elsewhere in Australia, demonstrating a broad range of experiences and emotions about mission life.

While further documentation of people's experiences at the mission may provide a greater depth of understanding of mission life and the interactions between Aboriginal people and the Lutheran missionaries, it is unlikely that it would yield any new information that would significantly contribute to an understanding of Australia's mission history. Accordingly, it is unlikely that Hermannsburg Mission has outstanding heritage value to the nation for criterion (c).

**D The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating the principle characteristics of:**  
**(i) a class of Australia's natural or cultural places; or**  
**(ii) a class of Australia's natural or cultural environments.**

The nominator makes no claims under this criterion.

*Principle features of a remote evangelical bush mission*

The attributes and location of the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct is important for its ability to illustrate the planning, layout and self-sufficient functioning of remote, evangelical bush missions.

Few examples of bush mission stations survive intact and there is little material evidence or accurate description of places similar to Hermannsburg Mission. New Norcia, WA, both a monastery and a mission, differs in the scale and architectural treatment of buildings and in its formally planned relationship to the landscape (New Norcia, 1998). Information has survived about denominational bush and other missions at a number of comparable locations in southern Australia, all dating between 1850 and 1880, including: Ebenezer (Moravian 1859), Wimmera, Victoria; Ramahyuck (Moravian 1863), Victoria; Killalpanina (Lutheran 1868), SA; Lake Condah (Anglican 1867) Victoria; Lake Tyers (Anglican 1861), Victoria; Point Pearce (Moravian 1868), SA; and Wangaresda (Methodist 1880), NSW, although most are now archaeological sites.

The planning and layout at Hermannsburg Mission were based on the premise that use of the major cardinal axes would allow adherence to Christian principles of worship when the church was erected. This is also evident to some extent at New Norcia and at other mission sites but in itself is not necessarily an attribute of mission stations in general. Most pastoral boundaries across Australia also broadly followed the major cardinal axes in the establishment of boundaries, although stations and homesteads were not necessarily set out on these axes. However, the adherence to European church standards at Hermannsburg Mission should be seen as a Lutheran characteristic in contrast to the potentially less formal planning of later non-denominational missions.

Missions were commonly sited to take advantage of existing sources of water, demonstrated at Ebenezer, Lake Tyers, Lake Condah, Killalpaninna (Bethesda), Wangaresda and Hermannsburg missions. This careful siting is a key attribute of missions, as was in many cases pre-existing Aboriginal use of the area. Prior use of the Finke River site can be assumed, but not demonstrated based on the available evidence.

The 'village green' was a common layout used in mid-nineteenth century missions, in which the mission house and church dominated an open square flanked by cottages for Aboriginal people. This represented a particular power structure - the missionaries, symbolising God, were at the apex of authority, 'looked up' to by others. Examples of the 'village green' layout at other nineteenth century missions include:

- Ramahyuck Mission, Victoria (1863), erected by a Presbyterian minister for the Moravians. Archaeological evidence indicates a formal village green layout, with housing for Aboriginal families located opposite each other on two sides. The Church and mission buildings dominated the head of the 'village square or green' (Raworth, 1998:2). Nothing remains on the site.
- Lake Condah, Victoria (1867), where the Church was erected as the focus of the settlement, in close proximity to the mission house. The general arrangement of buildings on the site did not reflect the major cardinal axes, although the altar end of the church pointed south of east. Little survives on the site other than foundations.
- Wangaresda Mission (Darlington Point), NSW established by the Methodists in 1880. A small church was central to the mission. The complex of buildings has not survived.
- Point Pearce Mission Station, Yorke Peninsula, SA, developed from 1868. Wood and Westell's report clearly illustrates the 'village green' planning and layout in which the central green, although narrow, was flanked by double rows of huts and cottages with the church and administration buildings dominating and controlling the northern end

(Wood et al, 1999). The surviving buildings include the church, manse, school and a number of cottages.

- Poonindie Mission, South Australia (1850), a thriving Aboriginal mission in its time, was reportedly based on the village green plan used in Victoria (Raworth, 1998:4).
- Killalpaninna (Bethesda), South Australia (1868), where archival records suggest that the planning and layout were affected by the site characteristics, which resulted in a more linear layout rather than a formal 'village green' (Stevens, 1998:127)

While the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct generally portrays a 'village green' layout, the church has been placed in the central open space or 'village green', rather than at the head of the precinct, with residences and subsidiary buildings constructed around this. This suggests a slightly different power structure, with the Church and School as the central focus of the community. It also illustrates the more inward looking nature of the community as well as the cultural basis of Lutheran communities in both SA and in Europe, in which the Church and school were central to the community.

Hermannsburg Historic Precinct contains a range of buildings dating from 1878 - early 1900s, including the church, school, stores, mission houses, Aboriginal accommodation and a number of other functional structures. The buildings contain various items typically associated with the daily life on an outstation. Two items – a wooden tabernacle in the Church (date unknown but likely early 20th century) and the church bell (date unknown) - are significant to the religious functioning of the mission. The tabernacle, used in the Roman Catholic Church, was an ornamental fixture within the church containing the consecrated host and wine of the Eucharist. Church bell's were commonly used to call worshippers to church, and or to signify the time of day. The cemetery, set at a distance from the precinct, also remains. These structures were typical of the range of buildings located in a mission complex. Few other examples of relatively intact nineteenth century missions remain today. For comparative purposes:

- At Ebenezer Mission (1859), established by the Moravians, little survives on the mission site other than the church and kitchen associated with the mission house. The cemetery, a dominant feature of mid-nineteenth century denominational missions was one of the most important features, and survives as the largest and most intact in Victoria (Raworth, 1998:9-18).
- At Lake Condah, the first buildings, slab huts, dormitory and school, were erected in the 1870s. More permanent buildings were erected c. 1880 including a church, mission house and four cottages in bluestone, timber and limestone. The general arrangement of buildings on the site did not reflect the major cardinal axes, although the altar end of the church pointed south of east. Typically the cemetery was located some distance from the settlement. By the 1950s much of the fabric had been removed (Context, 2000:8-9), and little survives on the site other than foundations.
- Wangaresda Mission (Darlington Point) on the Murrumbidgee River, NSW (1880) comprised cottages, boys and girls huts, a schoolhouse, mission house and outbuildings in timber. The small church was one of the earliest buildings (Harris 1990: 410; Kabaila, 1993). Although the orientation of the church is unclear from existing records, this appears to have been similar to Lake Condah. The complex of buildings has not survived (Raworth, 1998:9).
- Point Pearce Mission Station, Yorke Peninsula, SA was developed from 1868. By 1882 the mission comprised a missionaries house, 4 cottages, a schoolroom, church, dormitory, woolsheds and underground stone water cisterns (tanks). A garden supplied the kitchen. Some 40 Aboriginal persons worked and lived on the mission at this time. By 1907 a total of 25 'native' cottages had been erected. The main street of the mission was paved and trees planted by 1910 (Wood et al, 1999:8-9). The planning and layout

reflected the dominant cardinal axes, although the planning of the church cannot be clarified. The surviving buildings include the church, manse, school and a number of cottages.

Although twentieth century overlays have obscured some early fabric and resulted in the loss of fabric, and introduced adaptive reuse and make-do solutions typical of bush situations and cattle stations are evident, Hermannsburg Historic Precinct represents many of the principle characteristics of mid-nineteenth century Aboriginal missions. In considering National Heritage values, evidence of these changes is important in telling the story of Hermannsburg Mission. The structures of power and the inward looking nature of this community are still evident in the layout of the extant buildings within the precinct.

#### *A particular way of life*

While the buildings within the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct are accretive and represent a vernacular approach to the provision of accommodation, the denominational nature of the community is expressed in the small-scale cellular buildings designed to provide minimal accommodation for missionary families, and their relationship to the Church and School.

In contrast to missions in Victoria such as Ramahyuck, no formal accommodation was provided for Aboriginal people until the 1890s. Grass huts were erected during this early period outside of the mission precinct (refer early photographs, Strehlow Residence). The boy's dormitory building (10) and girls dormitory (no longer remaining) erected c. 1900 illustrate the increasing involvement of the Aboriginal community into the mission in the 1890s, and extension of missionary control over their lives. This appears to have expanded during the twentieth century as the mission community evolved in parallel with the management of the mission as a cattle station.

Other attributes of Hermannsburg Historic Precinct illustrate some of the common themes of Aboriginal mission life across Australia in the late 1800 and early 1900s, and the social structures that existed. For example:

- the ration house - used to distribute government rations in the form of food, tobacco, blankets and tools. These rations were often used as a means of exerting control (eg: in exchange for labour);
- the schoolhouse – most missionaries have a strong focus on schooling and education as a means of ‘civilising’ Aboriginal children, who were less resistant to change than their parents. Its location close to the Church suggests a strong relationship between the two;
- the church – missionaries held an early perception that Aboriginal people were spiritually and morally depraved, and needed to be converted to Christianity and ‘civilised’. This extended to outreach work by Aboriginal Christian evangelists;
- the dormitories – used to separate children from their parents, facilitating conversion to Christianity and allowing missionaries to gain greater control over the children. The dormitories were positioned at the outer edges of the precinct, suggesting clear social divisions within the mission community;
- the messhouse – used for communal meals for Aboriginal people, and illustrative of the practical aspects of the governments ‘protectionist’ policy;
- the tannery – illustrating both the missionaries emphasis on the virtues of work and labour, as well as efforts to be self-sustaining; and
- the remnant gardens and date palm grove surviving on the flood plain of the Finke River - illustrating the self-sufficient nature of such remote settlements.

In summary, Hermannsburg Mission is one of the few mid- to late-nineteenth century denominational mission stations in Australia which have survived relatively intact and which demonstrate the principal characteristics of Aboriginal missions from this period. These characteristics include the planning, layout, way of life and self-sufficient functioning of remote, evangelical missions and the function and general relationship of individual buildings. Important attributes include the public open space, the church and school, houses for pastors and lay colonists, gardens, accommodation for Aboriginal people and carefully engineered water supply systems as well as more functional buildings such as the Smithy. The layout of the 'village green' suggests a more inward looking community with Church as the central focus than is typically illustrated at other missions.

The Hermannsburg Historic Precinct has outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion (d) as representative of mid- to late- nineteenth century denominational bush mission development and in illustrating features of everyday life experienced by Aboriginal people on missions in Australia.

**E The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group.**

The nominator states that the place has outstanding heritage value for this criterion, however no specific information is provided in support of this.

Hermannsburg Historic Precinct is framed by the Finke River, Ntaria settlement and low ranges of hills in the distance. While the historic buildings may have some visual appeal to visitors and local community members due to their age, setting and associations, there is insufficient information to demonstrate that this is of outstanding heritage value to the nation when compared with other local attractions elsewhere in Australia. It is further noted that while the nearby Western MacDonnell Range, the source of inspiration for much of Albert Namatjira's work, was included in the comprehensive list of inspirational landscapes in the report on identifying nationally significant inspirational landscapes (Crocker 2005), Hermannsburg Mission was not listed. It is considered Hermannsburg Mission is not of outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion (e).

**F The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.**

The nominator states that the place has outstanding heritage value under this criterion. The nominator's statement of significance notes that Hermannsburg was the home of Albert Namatjira and the Hermannsburg School of watercolour painting. It is considered that these attributes are more appropriately addressed under criterion (h), as they relate to the achievements of particular individuals associated with the mission, rather than being intrinsic attributes of Hermannsburg Mission itself.

The nominator further refers to the buildings from the mid and early twentieth centuries as exhibiting a range of building techniques, including those practised by the German Lutherans known as *fachwerk*. As discussed under criterion (b), the building techniques used to construct mission buildings from 1878 to the early 1890s are typical of the building forms constructed

across southern Australia in this period. The use of timber-framed *fachwerk* construction (wattle and daub with large section bush timbers) to internal structures at Hermannsburg Mission was unusual, as this technique was usually applied to the whole building. There are good examples of *fachwerk* construction in the Barossa Valley on properties developed by German settlers, which illustrate the attributes of this technique (Young et al 1977 Vol 1: 81-82).

There is insufficient information to demonstrate that Hermannsburg Mission is of outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion (f) due to the use of *fachwerk* building techniques in mission buildings or other elements of the mission layout and design.

**G The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.**

While the nominator makes claims under this criterion, no specific information is presented to support this claim.

Hermannsburg Mission has fundamentally shaped the lives of Western Arrernte people and those from other areas who lived at the mission. However, initial discussions with a few people in Hermannsburg suggest that people today hold mixed feelings about mission days (field visit, August 2005. Michael Harris (Ntaria School Principal) noted that there is good debate within the community about the good and bad of the mission, with views on both sides. David Roenfeldt (Lutheran parish worker and linguist) said that many of the older people remembered it as a good life, which was organised, with regular food and care. Everyone worked for the mission in those days, but once the hand back occurred, things changed – people moved into Alice Springs, and stopped working. Lily Roenfeldt who grew up at the mission described the experience as being good and bad; and she felt that it was better when people were working (L. Roenfeldt, pers. com 2006). Gus Williams, chair of Ntaria Council, is reportedly still angry about some of the experiences that he went through (recounting a story to Michael Harris, pers. com. 2006). Steve Scarlett (with the Hermannsburg Historical Society) has observed that for a long time, Aboriginal people would not come into the historic precinct, but that this is slowly changing. Pastor Ron Buchold suggested during discussions that Aboriginal people continue to view Ntaria as a Lutheran centre, a place representing the introduction of Christianity to Central Australia (R. Buchold, pers. com 2005). The community holds an annual service and baptism at Kaporilja Springs to celebrate the day the water flowed, which is attended by hundreds of Aboriginal people. Given the mixed views towards the mission within the Ntaria community, it is considered that the nominated place is unlikely to be of outstanding heritage value to the nation because of its strong or special association with Aboriginal people.

It is probable that the German Lutherans who worked and lived on the mission continue to feel a strong association with the place for cultural or spiritual reasons. The German Lutherans could be considered a cultural group, as they share a common ethnicity and cultural background. Non-Aboriginal Lutherans retain some connections with the mission: they attend certain events at the mission (e.g. confirmation services), and the Finke River Mission, based at Alice Springs, continues to manage one of the supermarkets at Hermannsburg Mission at the request of the Aboriginal community (R. Buchold, pers.com.). Finke River Mission continues its pastoral work, including language work, with Aboriginal people across a large area of Central Australia. David Roenfeldt expressed the view that Hermannsburg was famous throughout Australia for the Lutheran church. In September 2002 the 125 year celebration of the missions' establishment was held. Dr Ludwig Hahns, from the Hermannsburg Mission



Society in Germany joined the celebrations, and returned some of the old records of the Lutheran church to the community. The views of German Lutherans beyond Central Australia towards the mission are not known. Given the paucity of evidence, it is difficult to conclude that the German Lutherans have a special association with Hermannsburg Mission that is of outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion (g).

**H The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history.**

The nominator claims that Hermannsburg Historic Precinct has outstanding heritage value to the nation under this criterion. While no specific information is presented, the statement of significance states that Hermannsburg was the home of the famous Aboriginal artist Albert Namatjira, whose life can be glimpsed upon in his white washed cottage. Further, it states that the noted anthropologist Ted Strehlow gathered his entire collection of Aboriginal artefacts from the same area.

*Albert Namatjira*

Hermannsburg Historic Precinct has a special association with the life and works of Albert Namatjira, and other Aboriginal artists who followed Namatjira in painting watercolour landscapes. He became one of the most successful Aboriginal artists in Australia, and his landscape paintings were iconic images synonymous with the Australian outback. He was the first Aboriginal Australian to paint in watercolour, and to exhibit this work commercially[1] (Megaw, 2000:199). He was also the first Aboriginal person to be listed in *Who's Who* in Australia and the first Aboriginal artist to be presented to the Queen (Meacham, 2002). While Namatjira's work has been the subject of much critique (refer for example Megaw, 2000:199; National Gallery of Australia, n.d.), his work was widely acclaimed and a national symbol for Aboriginal achievement (Meacham, 2002).

Hermannsburg Mission was pivotal to Namatjira's development as an artist. His first introduction to art and its production for income was a direct result of an economic initiative of the mission, involving poker etching of mulga wood to produce decorative items. Namatjira was introduced to European watercolour painting, which brought him national and international fame, by artist Rex Battarbee during the latter's visit to Hermannsburg Mission.

The Lutheran missionaries at Hermannsburg played an important part in supporting and promoting Namatjira's early artwork, with Pastor Albrecht selling the first six of Namatjira's paintings at a Lutheran Synodical Conference in March 1937. The mission established an arts advisory council to supervise the sale and standard of his work, and the mission managed the financial side of the venture (Albrecht, 1977:71). Namatjira maintained a close association with Hermannsburg Mission throughout his later artistic career, frequently returning to the mission for periods of time. It is noted that Albert Namatjira's house is not within the nominated area, but rather lies about three kilometres from the mission on the south bank of the Finke River (5km west of the junction of the Larapinta and Hermannsburg roads, on the road to Areyonga).

Hermannsburg Mission is also the origin of the Hermannsburg School of Watercolour, representing the first modern painting movement by Aboriginal people, which stemmed from Albert Namatjira's work. While this was not the earliest commercial Aboriginal art market[2], it was the earliest example of a group of Aboriginal artists using non-traditional techniques and materials to produce artworks for commercial sale. This movement preceded the modern acrylic art movement that began at Papunya in the early 1970s, and influenced many of its key members, who were related to Aboriginal families at Hermannsburg. Aboriginal artists

continue to paint in this tradition today. In discussions with David Roenfeldt during a field visit (August 2005), it was suggested that Aboriginal people within the community have mixed feelings about Namatjira, with some feeling that he 'opened the gate to the cemetery' by bringing alcohol into the community. He carefully suggested that any listing of values needed to include the other Aboriginal artists - there are a number of families involved, and this art continues today.

It is considered that Hermannsburg Mission has outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion (h) for its special association with Albert Namatjira, a prominent Aboriginal artist in his own right, who paved the way for Hermannsburg School of Watercolour, the first commercial modern Aboriginal painting movement in Australia.

### *The Strehlows*

Hermannsburg Mission has a special association with the lives and works of Carl T. F. Strehlow and, to a lesser extent his son Theodore G. H Strehlow.

### *Carl T. F. Strehlow*

Carl T. F. Strehlow, a Lutheran pastor who served at Hermannsburg Mission for twenty-eight years, is best known for his early anthropological and linguistic work amongst the Arrernte and Loritja people. This resulted in the production of *Die Aranda – und Lorita-Stämme in Zentral Australien* (1907-1920). His success in translating Arrernte and Kukatja sacred songs into a European tongue was a major linguistic achievement (Barratt, 1993:6). Three translations of *Die Aranda* into English have been attempted, some more accurate than others (that by Hans Obersheit is considered to be good) (M. Cawthorn, per. com. 2005). However, none have been published, due to issues relating to sensitive material within the book.

During this period he was also involved in the marketing of Arrernte artefacts. Jones (1996:248-249) suggests that the systematic and detailed documentation of his ethnographic transactions with Aborigines placed on record some of the most remarkable evidence for the currency which underpinned the acquisitions of ethnographic material on the Aboriginal and European frontier.

The contribution of Strehlow's work to 19th century anthropological discourse in Britain and Europe is difficult to ascertain (refer Veit, 1991; Austin-Broos, 1999). It was published in German in Europe at a time when scholarly thought can be characterised by British scientism and Darwinism (e.g. Spencer's approach) versus the psychological and hermeneutic traditions of European anthropology (e.g. Strehlow's approach) (Austin-Broos, 1999:215). Both W. B. Spencer (together with F. J. Gillen) and C. Strehlow had published works on the Arrernte, and strongly disagreed on certain matters. The publication of their works in Europe led to academic controversy and the aligning of prominent 19th century scholars on either side of the debate (Mulvaney et al, 1985, quoted in Veit, 1991:15).

It has been argued by Veit (1991) that the first important works of three eminent and influential European scholars on the same topic – Sigmund Freud's (1912-1913), Emil Durkheim (translated to English 1915) and B. Malinowski (1913) - were heavily based on information gathered by Carl Strehlow, and indicated a new direction for anthropology (Veit, 1991:118). Other's researchers however, argue that Spencer and Gillen's work was more influential (refer for example Morphy 1996:142; Malinowski, 1913). It has been suggested that the overbearing influence of Baldwin Spencer and his group of primarily British social anthropologists have 'cast a silence' over Strehlow's work, while the war hysteria in 1914 may also have impacted upon Strehlow's chance of winning respect in Australia as a scientist of international stature (Barratt, 1993:7, Veit, 1991:113).

In summary, it is apparent that Carl Strehlow was a scholar and skilled linguist whose work with the Western Arrernte people in Central Australia over a 30 year period was a significant achievement for its time, stimulating a range of influential scholars in early twentieth century Europe. Hermannsburg Mission was fundamental to these achievements, providing the very reason for Strehlow's presence in Central Australia, and the framework within which he conducted his work. It is considered that Hermannsburg Mission has outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion (h) for its special association with the life and works of Carl T. F. Strehlow.

#### *T. G. H Strehlow*

Hermannsburg Mission was also central to the life and career of Theodore G. H. Strehlow, Carl Strehlow's son. T. G. H. Strehlow lived at the mission until he was 14, where he became fluent in the Arrernte language.

T. G. H. Strehlow was one of the more significant and perhaps controversial of Australian anthropologists (Jones, 2002:2). It has been argued that with the exception of W. E. H. Stanner, he was the only Australian anthropologist of the 20th century to make the radical suggestion that Aboriginal culture might provide a model for Australian culture in general (Jones, 2002:2). His deep knowledge of Arrernte people arose from his long and close associations with the people, initially developed when he was living at Hermannsburg Mission, and over 50 years continuous linguistic and ethnographic work in Central Australia. His *Songs of Central Australia* translated and interpreted Arrernte songs, and introduced the concept of Aboriginal songlines to a broad audience. From the 1930's he started to collect sacred objects, *tjuringas*, and recorded their associated ceremonies. The Strehlow Collection later became a landmark in the Australian debate on the repatriation of Aboriginal material to Aboriginal communities, and Strehlow was a controversial figure in this debate. Strehlow's records of Arrernte culture (housed at the Strehlow Research Centre) have also become significant for Aboriginal land claims and native title. In Australian anthropology and Aboriginal policy circles he was regarded as an authority on Central Australia with academically unorthodox methods and views. The positions he adopted on Aboriginal issues were ultimately based on the authority of his Hermannsburg and Lutheran background and continued a strain of Lutheran non-conformity that developed in Central Australia at Hermannsburg.

Hermannsburg Mission provided the foundation for T. G. H. Strehlow's early life, shaping his views on Aboriginal people and providing him with the skills and close relationships with the Arrernte and Loritja community that were to be so important throughout his career. While much of Strehlow's work was undertaken away from the mission and from his base at Jay Creek, Hermannsburg Mission provided a base for some of his fieldwork, and many of his most important informants were from the mission.

The work of T. G. H. Strehlow and Geza Roheim on the Western and Northern Arrernte, together with the work of C. Strehlow, W. B. Spencer and F. Gillen on the Eastern and Central Arrernte uniquely document an Australian Aboriginal people and culture, with particular attention to spiritual beliefs and language (Austin-Brooks, 1999:213). As a result, the traditional culture of the Arrernte people is amongst the best-documented Aboriginal cultures in Australia.

It is considered that Hermannsburg Mission has outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion (h) for its special association with the life and works of Theodore G. H. Strehlow, whose detailed research of the Arrernte people in Central Australia made a significant contribution to Australian anthropology and an understanding of the richness and complexity of Aboriginal culture and traditions in early twentieth century Australia.

**I The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance as part of Indigenous tradition.**

The nominator makes no claims under this criterion.

Hermannsburg Mission is associated with the Ntaria Twins dreaming. The twins were born at a waterhole near Palm Valley, the thin one then the fat one, and went out into the bush and camped for a while until they became men. Then they travelled across the hills towards Hermannsburg. The area where they camped is a mens' area. The area where they were born is where women go if they want to get pregnant (Judith Pungarta Inkamala, pers. com. 2005). It was a little unclear during the telling of this story whether the twins stopped at the Hermannsburg site, but it is likely.

Given the extensive work that has been undertaken amongst the Arrernte people, there may be other information contained in the early work of C. Strehlow, T. G. H. Strehlow, W. B. Spencer and F. Gillen that would provide further insight into Aboriginal traditions associated with this area. However some of this material is difficult to access i.e. written in German, or subject to gender restrictions.

The birthplace of the ancestral twins is located outside of the nominated area. Stories associated with ancestral beings who travelled across the landscape are common throughout Aboriginal Australia, and there was no specific information available or accessible to demonstrate the nominated place was a major part of this story, although it is acknowledged that further discussions with Aboriginal people in the community may elicit information about this.

Based on the evidence available to date, it is considered that Hermannsburg Mission does not have outstanding heritage value to the nation under criterion (i).

[1] This is not the earliest example of Aboriginal artwork being exhibited. In 1929, for example, the National Museum of Victoria mounted the first major exhibition of Aboriginal art, *Primitive Art*, which included bark paintings collected by W. B. Spencer, as well as pen and ink sketches of the Victorian Aboriginal artist Tommy McRae (Allen, 2001).

[2] The commissioning and sale of bark paintings from Yirrkala, Arnhem Land occurred as early as the 1920s and 1930s, marketed by Methodist Overseas (Allen, 2001).

## **History:**

### **The missionaries in Australia**

Government policy regarding Aboriginal people varied over time and space in response to local conditions, and as changing social attitudes and economic realities required policy changes. The introduction and development of Aboriginal institutions, including missions and reserves, can be understood within this context.

Four broad phases of government policy on Aboriginal issues are identified:

#### **1. BRINGING ABORIGINAL PEOPLE UNDER COLONIAL RULE, THROUGH CONVERSION AND EDUCATION (1788 – 1830s).**

In 1814 Governor Macquarie funded the first school for Aboriginal children - the Native

Institution - in Parramatta, New South Wales (NSW). Its goals were to educate and 'civilise' Aboriginal children. The first Australian missions can also be traced to this period, when the NSW Colonial administration attempted to introduce Christianity to teach Aboriginal people the virtues of prayer, work and industry (DEH, 2003). Such missions included those at Lake Macquarie (1824-1841) and Parramatta (1820-28) (Horton, 1994:1301). Early missionary endeavours in NSW met with limited success (Harris, 1990:46).

## 2. PROTECTION AND SEPERATION (1830s – 1930s).

From the 1830s the Government adopted a policy of 'protectionism', based on the notion that Aboriginal people would willingly establish self-sufficient agricultural communities on reserved areas, and thus not interfere with the colonists' land claims (National Inquiry, Chapter 2). Various measures were adopted, such as sending in missionaries to convert Aboriginal people and the provision of schooling (Horton, 1994:903). Missions were established during this early period in South Australia (SA) (from 1840), NSW (1832), Victoria (VIC) (from 1837), Western Australia (WA) (from 1831) and Queensland (QLD) (from 1837); and a number of government stations were established in Victoria[1]. The first reported missionary activity in the Northern Territory (NT) occurred during this period near Port Essington (Catholic Diocese of Darwin, n.d.; Circoli Trentini d'Australia, n.d., Harris, 1990:288). Most of these missions were short-lived (less than 10 years).

By the mid nineteenth century the protectorate experiment had largely failed, and the very survival of Aboriginal people was questioned. In response, the government reserved land for the exclusive use of Aboriginal people, and assigned responsibility for their welfare to a Chief Protector or Protection Board, to 'smooth the dying pillow' (National Inquiry, Chapter 2). The management of reserves was delegated to government-appointed managers or missionaries who received government subsidies. The issue of government rations (food, clothing) to unemployed Aboriginal people through missions and other settlements was a common feature of this period. Special laws 'supervising' Aboriginal people were introduced. By 1911 the Northern Territory and every State had introduced 'protectionist legislation' giving the Chief Protector or Aborigines Protection Board extensive powers to control the lives of Aboriginal people (DEH, 2003). The position of chief protector continued in the Northern Territory until 1953 (Horton, 1994:904). The forced removal of Aboriginal people of mixed descent from their families to missions and government institutions was a feature of this period.

A majority of missions were developed during this later period (from mid 1800s), generally by one of more than eighteen missionary bodies active in Australia. In the first half of the twentieth century, a number of missions in southern Australia were replaced by so-called non-denominational missions (e.g. United Aborigines Mission and Aborigines Inland Mission) or transferred to the Aborigines Protection Board or government.

## 3. ASSIMILATION (1930s – 1970s).

In the mid 1930s, the government considered a two-pronged approach to dealing with the Aboriginal 'problem' – segregation of 'full bloods' in reserves and assimilation - the absorption of people of mixed descent into the general community (National Inquiry, Chapter 2). The removal of Aboriginal children from their families intensified during the 1950s and 1960s as part of the assimilation policy. State government institutions and missions who received Aboriginal children received a financial boost after 1941 (National Inquiry, Chapter 2). While few missions were established during this period, a number of children's institutions were set up.

## 4. SELF-MANAGEMENT / SELF-DETERMINATION (1972 - ).

Following the election of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1972, a policy of self-management and self-determination was adopted. The outstation and homelands movement in Northern Australia was one response to this, with Aboriginal people departing missions and stations to live on their traditional lands. Many of the surviving missions were

transferred to the control and management of Aboriginal organisations.

Life on Aboriginal missions was variable, depending upon the religious philosophy of the missionary body, the outlook and interest of individual missionaries, the response of Aboriginal people, the intersection of the Church with Government etc. In some areas the missions led to the loss of language, breakdown of traditional practices, the removal of people from their traditional country and their families, and were places of abuse. In other cases, the mission allowed Aboriginal people to stay within their traditional country, provided some protection from violence associated with the spread of European settlement, facilitated the retention of local language and culture, and allowed the community to stay together (DEH, 2003).

### **Lutherans in southern Australia and the Northern Territory**

In the early 1800s, a dissenting Lutheran pastor, August Kavel, in Brandenburg, Silesia (Prussia), was considering the problem of migration for Lutheran refugees who were suffering persecution in Europe. Following a meeting between Kavel and George Fife Angas, founder of the South Australia Company, Angas[2] and the Company contributed towards the shipping costs of migration. After some delays, the first two ships arrived in South Australia in November 1838 with the first settlers. Three further ships arrived in 1838, 1839 and 1841, the latter bringing German Lutheran settlers led by a Lutheran pastor. German Lutheran settlements were set up at Klemzig on the Torrens River, at Mt Barker where a township called Hahndorf was established; at Lobethal in the Adelaide Hills; at Glen Osmond in the Adelaide foothills; and at Bethany in the Barossa Valley (Young et al 1977 Vol 1: 44-46, Stevens 1994: 6-7).

By 1853 South Australia, originally part of New South Wales, had separated and achieved its own constitution. Constitution-making in South Australia was a serious political issue throughout the early 1850s, a product of the commitment to civil and religious liberty among the colonists. However, of the approximately 18,000 Germans who moved to South Australia in the nineteenth century, only some 5%, in particular the German Lutherans, had done so because of religious persecution in Europe. This included the first three groups of settlers who had moved because of the religious freedom offered in Australia (Young et al 1977 Vol 1: 44-46). The German Lutheran community would be instrumental in the establishment of missions in SA in the 1840s and in introducing and facilitating the evangelical role of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society in the Australian colonies.

The first missionaries in South Australia were German Lutherans from the Lutheran Missionary Society of Dresden, who were working in Adelaide by 1839. By 1840 two more German missionaries had arrived in South Australia, subsequently establishing a mission at Encounter Bay. At Port Lincoln, a Lutheran mission was established on one of the government reserves set aside for 'pacifying' local Aboriginal tribes who had shown a determined resistance to European settlement. However, due to doctrinal differences within the Lutheran Church resulting in a lack of financial support, most had abandoned their enterprises by the mid-1850s (Stevens 1994: 13-15).

In 1846 two distinct Lutheran Synods had formed as a result of the doctrinal differences: the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELCA), also known as the Immanuel Synod, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (UELCA), commonly known as the South Australian Synod. Pastor J. F. Meiszel, a Lutheran missionary, formed the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Society of South Australia in 1854. In 1862, he issued a challenge to Lutherans in Australia, in particular in SA, to begin missionary work among the Aboriginal

people. Pastors Auricht and Reichner approached the South Australian Synod with a proposal to unite the two Lutheran Synods in SA and seek support from the director of the Hermannsburg Mission Institute in Hanover. The two Lutheran synods joined forces and established a Missions Committee (Stevens 1994: 17).

It is unclear why the Lutheran missionaries took an interest in the lake systems of the north-eastern part of South Australia; although Stevens (1994: 17) conjectures that it was perhaps due to the reports of massacres of Aboriginal people, or of corroborree grounds hosting numerous Aborigines for ceremonial rituals. The areas around the depressions of Lake Killalpaninna and Lake Kopperamanna also attracted the Moravian Lutherans of Victoria. On 9 October 1866 the Barossa Valley German community at Langmeil witnessed the departure of missionaries from Hermannsburg in Germany. Killalpaninna Mission, established in 1866 by the Hermannsburg Lutheran missionaries from South Australia, was abandoned in late 1871 during a drought. The Killalpaninna Mission settlement (Bethesda Mission) was later re-established on the shore of Lake Killalpaninna (1879). The Moravians, a separate sect, also established a mission at Lake Kopperamanna in 1866, because the 'natives from over 100 miles in radius meet here' (Stevens 1994: 45, 52, 64-86).

Prior to the 1860s, little was known about the 'remote centre' of Australia. In 1862 explorer John McDouall Stuart led an expedition (his third and final attempt) through the Centre, navigating and mapping the country for white settlement (Heppell et al, 1981:1). By 1872 the legendary Overland Telegraph Line from Adelaide to Darwin was completed, opening up the Centre for pastoralists (Harris, 1990:384). The first cattle reached Alice Springs (then called Stuart) in 1872. Further explorations were undertaken through this country, outwards from the Telegraph line by W. Gosse (1873), E. Giles (1873, 1876) and Warburton (1873).

By the early 1870s, the future of Killalpaninna Mission was under discussion. In June 1874, the Missions Committee, interested in finding a more promising station site, appointed two members to interview the Surveyor General, Mr Goyder, about the possibility of land for a mission in Central Australia. Goyder directed them to the explorers Gosse and Giles, who agreed that an area about 90 miles west of Alice Springs would be adequate for their purposes. Reports from John McDougall Stuart's earlier expeditions were also examined (Scherer, 1975:3). Eventually it was decided that the Immanuel Synod would retain the Bethesda Mission and that the South Australian Synod, together with the Hermannsburg Missionary Society, should establish a new mission on the Finke River in Central Australia (Leske 1977: 7). The Missions Committee was dissolved. In 1874 the South Australian Synod was granted 200 square miles for a reserve, reportedly increased to 900 square miles by the South Australian government, who also promised a supply of rations for the Aborigines (Scherer, 1975:3).

## **Hermannsburg Mission**

### *Initial settlement and early mission development 1877 – 1891*

On 20 October 1875 missionaries A. H. Kempe and W. F. Schwarz were commissioned for service in Hahndorf (Leske 1977: 9-13). They set out on their journey from Bethany, South Australia accompanied by eight others, a wagon, cattle, horses, dogs, hens and several thousand sheep. It took over 20 months to complete the 2,000km trek, and it was clearly a very difficult and arduous journey (Scherer, 1975 provides a detailed account). In May 1876 they arrived at Dalhousie Springs, and a mission group set out on a nine-week trip to inspect the mission lease along either side of the Finke River. A year later (June 1877) the main party (Kempe, Schwarz

and three assistants - a builder, teamster and drover) travelled via Owen Spring[3] and established the mission site on the banks of the Finke River. At this time, there were little more than two cattle stations to the east and a telegraph station (Alice Springs) (Harris, 1990:389). In April 1878 the main party was joined by a follow-up missionary group from Germany, creating a complement of three missionaries and various lay personnel (colonists).

A well was sunk on 8 June 1877 (Lohe, 1977:13). The first structures to be erected at the mission site were a fowl pen of grass and bush materials, a small sheep yard and a dog-house (Scherer, 1975:48). Sheep shearing commenced soon after arrival. The first building was constructed of timber with a thatched reed roof and sandstone flagging. It is believed that this building was later replaced with a stone building used as a dining room, chapel and dwelling.

Work on buildings at Hermannsburg commenced in 1877, possibly by Gerhardt Johannsen, with assistance from some Aboriginal men. A lime-kiln was built, and building materials including stone, lime, clay and timber were readily available (Isaacs, 2000:17, Lohe, 1977:15). Buildings erected in the first decade included: the first timber dwelling single room (20'x 24') (1877); the first stone building (1877) with later additions of a 6 foot lean to skillion and a partition wall (the front half was used as a dining room and chapel, the latter for accommodation); a stone house thatched with grass, and a wooden building with a reed roof and a bush shelter for wagons (1878); a kitchen (stone 20'x15') (1878); a church-school stone (30'x16' - the chapel occupying 12x16 ft.; a verandah 6'ft wide encircled the whole) (1880); a stone smithy (1882); a stone Colonists Residence (1885) and a stone manse (1888) (Leske, 1977:13; Heritage Conservation Services, 2003).

The first date palm was planted near the first stone dwelling in 1877 and by the following year a garden was established on the floodplains of the Finke River with an initial abundance of vegetables, fruit trees and date palms, watered by an irrigation system.

The missionaries' objectives were to 'civilise' and Christianise the Aboriginal inhabitants: to train them in useful industries, make the station as self-supporting as possible, and teach them Christian ways (Scherer, 1989:362). Two Aboriginal men were the first to visit the mission in August 1877, and over the next three months larger groups of 70 – 80 men visited, camping nearby (Scherer, 1975:66). With time increasing numbers of men, women and children came into Hermannsburg, although the population tended to fluctuate. Lohe (1977:15) notes that the distribution of government rations (from the late 1870's) brought about a more stable population, and the missionaries used rations as a means of gathering children for schooling (Harris, 1990:388). It appears likely that Aboriginal people camped on the edges of the mission settlement in this early period.

While the missionaries' first impressions of the Aborigines were that they were 'degenerate, living like animals', naked, eating distasteful things and sleeping in the open, they concluded that the Aborigines were not as 'stupid' and 'depraved' as some 'civilised' people believed. They thought them physically handsome, and not lacking in intelligence (Harris, 1990:387). Schulze wrote:

'[The Aborigines] are not unable to be educated....they have sunk deep spiritually indeed...Nevertheless they are Adam's children the first glance indicates it' (Harris, 1990:387).

The missionaries soon gathered the children for schooling, partly to educate and partly to segregate them from their elders, and were quick to notice their 'intelligence' and 'rapid



learning' (Harris, 1990:388). As the numbers of Aboriginal children attending increased, work commenced on a school-church in May 1880 with assistance from local Aboriginal people. The first religious instruction classes were commenced in 1880, and in May 1887 the first seven Aboriginal teenagers were baptised (Scherer, 1975:84).

Soon after arriving the missionaries decided to learn the local language to better communicate and spread their message. Carols and a reading primer were produced in Arrernte in 1880, and in 1881, the first Arrernte book of Christian instruction and worship was compiled by Missionary Kempe and printed at Hermannsburg, Hanover. In 1888 Kempe compiled the first dictionary and grammar in the Arrernte language. A treatise on the habits and customs of the Finke River Aboriginal people was published by Missionary Schulze during this time, while in 1890 a 54 page 'Grammar and vocabulary of the language spoken by the Aborigines of the MacDonnell Ranges' was produced by the Royal Society of South Australia (Lutheran nd). It is understood that some of the school lessons were initially undertaken in German (Isaacs, 2000:72). The mission had a bilingual education program – in English and Arrernte – until the late 1930s (Isaacs, 2000:42).

By 1879 almost all the land surrounding Hermannsburg Mission had been occupied by cattle stations, and open conflict arose between the pastoralists and the missionaries over the harsh treatment of Aborigines (Leske, 1977:17). Towards the end of 1883 there were also serious outbreaks of hostilities between Aborigines and white station owners; a number of Aborigines were shot, and many fled to the mission for safety (Harris, 1990:389). Although armed police had been stationed in remote parts of the colony by the South Australian government to ensure the success of pastoral invasion, some of the worst atrocities were perpetuated by the police (Harris, 1990:392). By 1885, Kemp believed that they were observing genocide (Harris, 1990:390). It has been estimated that approximately 700 Aboriginal people were shot between 1881 and 1891 in the area around Alice Springs (Isaacs, 2000:18). Pastor Schwarz wrote in 1884:

'At the present time there are many...here for fear of the police, who had shot a number of natives around the neighbouring cattle stations. In recent weeks the police also visited Hermannsburg on numerous occasions, and took four of them away. As a result of our mediation one was returned, but the others have been shot' (Harris, 1990:390).

Pastor Schwarz brought the matter into the public arena, sparking heated debate in the press. The pastoralist lobby claimed that the missionaries were flogging Aborigines (which may have contained some elements of truth (Harris, 1990)). A joint Government investigation was conducted, with charges laid on both sides, and reported to parliament in 1890 (Leske, 1977:18). However, perhaps due to the involvement of Mounted Constable W. H. Willshire in the investigation (a notoriously brutal man, allegedly responsible for shooting many Aboriginal people), no charges were laid and matters were left (Harris, 1990:393-94).

The conflict led to a feeling of disillusionment amongst the missionaries, exacerbated by isolation, diet, harsh climate, overwork and subsequent ill health. All of the missionaries left Hermannsburg by 1891. Hartwig (1965:510, 520-525) has argued that the mission had limited impact on the local Arrernte people at this time. He suggests that while they cooperated with the mission to receive rations and other benefits available, this was limited because most people left once rations were distributed, and the religious converts were not people with strong influence amongst the Arrernte. However there were inevitable changes in settlement and subsistence practices as a result of contact with Europeans (Heritage Conservation Services,

2003:11). Present day Aboriginal people's stories about this early establishment phase and the intersection of Arrente laws and 'white-man's laws' have been explored by Austin-Broos (1994, 1996). She found that their narratives represented very different perspectives and rendering of events, and that such narratives were often used by Arrente people to canvass the relations between 'two laws', as well as making statements of attachment to the social order of the mission (Austin-Broos, 1994). The intersection of the Christianity and Arrente beliefs is also seen in Aboriginal artists stories told to Isaacs (Isaacs, 2000:73-74).

#### *Semi-abandonment November 1891 – October 1894*

There were philosophical differences within the Lutheran movement between the Hermannsburg Missionary Society and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod at this time, and in 1892 the joint venture between the two broke down (Alford, 1999:4). After a period of semi-abandonment the Lutheran Immanuel Synod decided to purchase the Hermannsburg property (it already had two other Aboriginal missions, the Bethesda Mission at Killalpaninna and the Bloomfield Mission, near Cooktown, Queensland) (Leske, 1977:23). A caretaker staff provided minimal supervision during this period, but the mission work was virtually halted, and many buildings fell into disrepair.

In May 1894 Professor Baldwin Spencer passed through Hermannsburg as a member of the Horn Scientific Exploration Expedition to Central Australia, commenting on the general disrepair of the place and the worth of the mission:

'If, which is open to question, the mission had ever done any permanent good, there was no evidence of it to be seen....'

(Harris, 1990:399).

A plan of the site was prepared by C. Winnecke during the 1894 Horn Expedition (Winnecke, 1894).

#### *Strehlow years: October 1894 – 1922*

Carl F. T. Strehlow arrived at Hermannsburg Mission from Bethesda Mission in October 1894.

In 1896 efforts were made to reconstruct many buildings, as the number of Aboriginal people at the mission had increased to over 100 and 24 children were enrolled in the school. Strehlow indicated that the mission house with six rooms and two kitchens was to be kept in addition to a second house with six rooms and kitchen, two houses with thatched roofs, a smithy, a store and the meat house (transferred to the storehouse in approximately 1903). The old church-school and eating house were to be demolished to make way for new buildings. A new church was opened and dedicated on Christmas Day 1896 (Lutheran nd). Other buildings constructed during this period included the schoolhouse (1896), Strehlows residence (1897, additions 1905, 1912, 1920), Messhouse (1896) and the Boys Dormitory (undated). The Girls Dormitory was probably built at the same time. It was a stone building north of the Manse (destroyed by fire in 1954) (Radford, 1983:35). Aboriginal people lived in traditional groupings on the outskirts of the station, although one sources states that 'pensioners', the old, sick and schoolchildren occupied huts within the compound (probably located north of the manse and the school, date not specified) (Radford, 1983:47). A photograph dating from c 1920 by H. A. Heinrich shows an Aboriginal hut made of spinifex grass with a domed circular roof (Isaacs, 2000:18). G. Haem[m]erling and D. Hart were responsible for construction of the buildings (Leske 1977: 24-25). Iron roofs were installed on all residences and galvanized iron tanks were installed (around 1903). Wells were also sunk close to the houses.

Hermannsburg was run as a cattle station during this period. (Lohe, 1977:26). Following the sale of sheep in 1901, cattle and horses remained, and camels were introduced to transport goods from Oodnadatta to Hermannsburg (Leske, 1977:26). Isaacs describes the increasing movement of Aboriginal families to the Hermannsburg area with the arrival of the cattle industry (Isaacs, 2000:18-19). Aboriginal involvement in mission activities, including the building program and stock work increased, although Strehlow reported that people were reluctant to work without supervision and generally returned to the bush during good seasons. The prolonged drought from 1897 to 1907 virtually destroyed the mission economy, and many Aboriginal people from outlying areas came into Hermannsburg seeking food and refuge (Leske 1977:26). It is reported that non-Christian Arrernte were barred from living on the mission, instead camping on the fringe, and were excluded from food from the communal kitchen (Mulvaney, 1989:141). There were reportedly tensions between Aboriginal people from different tribal groups within Hermannsburg at this time. Perhaps due to ill-health, outbreaks of measles (1898) and whooping cough (1900) occurred, resulting in a number of deaths (Lohe, 1977:26; Heritage Conservation Services, 2003).

Traditional Aboriginal ceremonies and dances were still being undertaken close to the mission during this period. Major ceremonies were held in 1898 and 1908, and Christian Aboriginal people were present, and sometimes took part (Strehlow, 2002). During his mission at Hermannsburg, Strehlow embarked upon further linguistic work and commenced intensive ethnographic and anthropological research on Arrernte and Luritja groups, to be continued by his son T. G. H. Strehlow (and extended to include other Aboriginal groups). His work included:

- A revision of Kempe's grammar;
- Publishing of the *Aranda Service Book* in 1904;
- Preparation of a 30 page school primer in *Aranda* (printed in 1928);
- Work on an Arrernte translation of the New Testament, with the assistance of Christian Aborigines (1913 to 1921) (part published in 1925, and later completely revised by his son T.G.H Strehlow and published in 1956); and
- A seven volume work on the culture of the Arrernte and Luritja tribes – *Die Aranda – und Loritja-Stämme in Zentral-Australien*, in reply to Professor Baldwin Spencer's book, sponsored and edited by M. von Leonhardi and published by Stadtische-Volker-Museum of Frankfurt, Germany.

A long and bitter controversy developed between Carl Strehlow and Walter Baldwin Spencer, formerly Professor of Biology at Melbourne University, and Chief Protector of Aborigines of the Northern Territory from 1911. They developed distinctly different views on key aspects of Arrernte society and culture: Spencer's views were firmly embedded in a social Darwinian evolutionary view of human development (Harris, 1990:404), undoubtedly stemming from his background in biological sciences, while Strehlow was a Christian theologian (Barratt, 1993:8). Their field techniques also differed to some extent: Strehlow was a skilled linguist, yet refused to attend traditional ceremonies and thus relied on oral tradition for his descriptions of totemic ceremonies (Barratt, 1993:5). Spencer and his colleague Gillen attended ceremonies, yet Spencer had no knowledge of the Arrernte language, and Gillen's translations have been questioned (Veit, 1991:115-116).

Between 1900 and 1921, Strehlow, together with Lutheran missionaries J. G. Reuther and O. Liebler gathered large collections of Aboriginal artefacts for sale, actively marketing these items in Europe (Jones, 1996:246). Strehlow sold at least nine collections of Arrernte artefacts to German and Swiss museums between 1906 and 1922 (over 1600 objects), and some were

given to his editor. It is believed that many of these collections were lost in WWII. Strehlow systematically documented his ethnographic transactions with Aborigines. He obtained his collections in exchange for European commodities of flour, tea and sugar (Jones, 1996:246). It would appear that Aboriginal artefacts became a significant part of the Hermannsburg mission economy in the pre-war period (Jones, 1996:252).

Challenges during this period included financial problems, changes of state government control, internal tensions between missionaries and poor communications with officials. The Government sought to extend its control over Aboriginal people in this period, and in 1910, the *Northern Territory Aboriginals Act 1910* provided for the custody, maintenance and education of the children of Aborigines', and the Chief Protector was appointed as the 'legal guardian of every Aboriginal and every half-caste child up to the age of 18 years' whether or not the child had parents or other living relatives (National Inquiry, 1997). The Chief Protector was also given power to confine 'any Aboriginal or half-caste' to a reserve or Aboriginal institution. In 1911, the Commonwealth took over control of the Northern Territory, and these powers were further extended under the *Northern Territory Ordinance 1911* and again in 1918. Concern over 'half-caste' children in the Northern Territory saw the forced removal of many children from their families from this period, up until the 1970s (National Inquiry, 1997).

With the advent of Commonwealth legislation, the conduct of the mission started to be subject to close Government scrutiny. Official investigations were conducted into the Lutheran missionaries' treatment of Aborigines commencing in 1911, and early critical reports received widespread publicity in the Australian press (Lohe, 1977:30). Later reports, including an investigation by Basedow in 1920 on Aboriginal health, were more positive. While the Government gave instructions to the mission regarding its program, it did not force the mission to close.

Towards the end of this period there was considerable anti-German pressure as a result of the social attitudes to German migrants and settlers during WWI (1914-1918) (Lohe, 1977:31). Perceived of as a German institution, many Australians called for the closure of Hermannsburg. While the Federal Cabinet decided to renew the missions' lease, the annual subsidy was eliminated until 1923 (Lohe, 1977:31).

In 1922 Strehlow's health failed and he departed the mission for Adelaide. Unfortunately he died en route at Horseshoe Bend, where his grave remains today. *Journey to Horseshoe Bend*, written by T. G. H. Strehlow and later performed as an opera with the Ntaria Ladies Choir at the Sydney Opera House tells this story (ABC, 2003). Isaacs' suggests that Strehlow is revered in the memories of many Aranda people today as *Inkata*, the founder of the community, the original hardworking man of God (Isaacs, 2000:21).

#### *Interim administration 1922 – April 1926*

The administration of Hermannsburg was taken over for an interim period by teacher H. A. Heinrich. This period is notable for the role and impact of lay preachers, particularly Aboriginal Christian Moses Tjalkabota (Old Blind Moses) who became one of Hermannsburg Mission's most noted preachers, travelling and ministering in the absence of a pastor (Lohe, 1977:35-37, na, 1954:1). This was the first spiritual outreach work of the mission, and led to a policy of training Aboriginal evangelists and sending them to live and work amongst tribal groups beyond the immediate Hermannsburg district (Leske, 1977:36-37).

In 1923 the mission was again the subject of Federal Government investigations into the 'difficult problem' of control of the Territory's Aboriginal population, including 'half-castes' and Aborigines, undertaken by Professor Baldwin Spencer. While the government did not act upon Spencers' recommendations, it concluded that 'industrial training of the natives had been

neglected', and they agreed an attempt was being made to alter this (Isaacs, 2000:22). Consideration was given to establishing a training centre for Aborigines at Hermannsburg, yet this was not acted upon (Leske, 1977:35).

#### *Albrecht - new industries and development April 1926 – 1946*

The isolation of the mission was ameliorated during this period by the establishment of a pedal radio link to Adelaide House, Alice Springs in 1926 (permanent contact by 1930), the use of motor vehicles and the arrival of a railway in Alice Springs in 1929.

Pastor F. W. Albrecht arrived at Hermannsburg Mission in 1926, at the beginning of a severe drought that did not break until 1929. It was closely followed by the Great Depression. While Aboriginal workers were paid a wage and expected to feed their families, the system of sharing with relatives meant this was seldom sufficient. The mission also fed the old, infirm and mothers with small children (Albrecht, 1977:43) (an analysis of the rationing system in Central Australia, including Hermannsburg Mission, has been undertaken by Rowse, 1989). It appears the missionaries recognised that ration distribution made people more reliant on mission food and less able to hunt traditional bush foods (losing skills); and probably contributed to the poor health of Aboriginal people at this time. There were several measles outbreaks (late 1920s – early 1930s), a whooping cough epidemic and a severe outbreak of scurvy resulting in many deaths, including 85% of children (Heritage Conservation Services, 2003). During the drought, Aboriginal people from outlying areas were drawn to Hermannsburg as their traditional food and water supplies diminished. Simultaneously, Aboriginal people who lived near the railway construction settlements were relocated at the mission for social reasons, putting a strain on resources (Radford, 1983:9).

Pastor Albrecht realised the need for a regular water supply, and to raise funds, established a craft industry at the Mission. Items such as pokerwork boomerangs and polished mulga wood plaques were made to sell to tourists; Albert Namatjira became particularly accomplished at this work (Mackenzie, 1988:16-18). At this same time (early 1930s) Melbourne artists Una and Violet Teague visited Hermannsburg. Concerned at the effect of the drought on the Aborigines, the sisters held an art exhibition in Melbourne in 1934 to raise money for a water pipeline from Kaporilja Springs to the mission. The exhibition contained over a hundred donated works by fifty artists and writers, including Arthur Streeton, Hans Heysen, Arthur Boyd and Rex Battarbee (who later visited Hermannsburg in 1934), and the money raised was supplemented by appeals in the Melbourne Argus and the Adelaide Advertiser (Australian Exhibitions Touring Agency, 1991:25). A pokerwork boomerang depicting the laying of the pipeline was made by Albert Namatjira to celebrate the pipelines completion.

A receiving tank was installed, and a number of dams were later built in 1942 (Albrecht, 1977:65-67). Additional infrastructure and renovations to existing buildings occurred during this time, including the installation of five underground tanks (1927-1930); construction of a mortuary (1936), the Maids quarters (1933), the original tannery building (1941) and the Kitchen-Bakehouse-Dining Room (c1947-48); additions of a washhouse and fence to the Manse (1927); and various renovations. In the 1930s, there were several rows of Aboriginal houses north of the Manse and the school, built of stone and concrete, some with chimneys and stone floors (demolished in the 1960s) (Radford, 1983:47).

Advancements at the mission facilitated the development of new industries and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people, seen as a priority by the mission and essential for economic reasons. Various options were explored, some more successfully than others, including the establishment of a tannery (processing bullock hides and kangaroo skins); small-scale cattle ventures through the Aboriginal Pastoralist Association (1944-c1959); and an expansion of the handcraft industry, producing brush-ware, mulga-ware, artefacts, decorative

pokerwork, embroidery, fur-goods, needlework and clay sculpture (Albrecht, 1977:68-75; Scherer, 1989:363). Other industries included the supply of meat to the Army depot in Alice Springs during the war, and trade with soldiers in leatherwork and curios (Heritage Conservation Services, 2003).

Hermannsburg was a port of call for numerous expeditions into the outback: by explorers, surveyors, anthropologists, medical researchers, gold-fossickers, artists, writers etc. It was also a springboard for rescue operations; for example, from here Bob Buck went out in search of Lasseter in 1931 (Scherer, 1989:363). A visit by artist Rex Battarbee in the 1930s was a catalyst for the development of the Hermannsburg School of Watercolour, which came to provide significant income and fame for Albert Namatjira, and in time other Aboriginal artists (discussed further below). Aboriginal people on the mission had increased opportunities to develop relationships with the outside world from this time and engage with the broader economy (beyond the mission).

This period also saw significant effort expended in spreading the Christian message beyond Hermannsburg Mission. Following the initial work of Moses and others, Albrecht together with Aboriginal evangelists travelled out to more remote areas spreading the Christian word. Aboriginal evangelists were also sent to cattle stations at Henbury, Napperby, Jay Creek and Maryvale (Lutheran, nd). Over time ration depots and mission centres were set up at Haasts Bluff (first depot in 1941, taken over by Government in 1954), Papunya (1959) and Areyonga (Albrecht, 1977:54-64). The mission played an active role in protesting against grazing leases at Haasts Bluff, which was subsequently made into a permanent Aboriginal reserve in 1941.

Further Government investigations were undertaken during this period. In 1927, the Commonwealth Government, responding to pressure from the Association for the Protection of Native Races, set up an inquiry under J. W. Bleakley (Queensland Chief Protector of Aborigines), into its administration of Aboriginal affairs in the Territory (DEH, 2003). He reported on poor living conditions, lack of schooling and wages, poorly run Government institutions, but spoke favourably on the work of the missions. One of his recommendations was that the half-caste children at the Bungalow be sent to Hermannsburg (Heppell et al, 1981:15). Chief Protector Cook (1927-39), however, was fervently opposed to mission involvement, voicing concern about their approaches to the treatment of 'half-castes' and attempting to have the missions closed (DEH, 2003). Despite Government debates on the merits of both reports, Cooks' views prevailed.

In 1946 Pastor F. W. Albrecht moved to Alice Springs, leaving Pastor Gross in charge of the mission. Leadership was then passed to Paul Albrecht (Lutheran nd).

#### *Post war expansion prior to and during 1960s*

The mission underwent rapid expansion in the late 1940s through to the 1960s. Electricity was introduced in 1947, financed by donations (Radford, 1983:50). A long-range program of home building commenced, with homes erected for pensioners (pre-fabricated garages with a small veranda) and two-roomed houses for Aboriginal families in regular employment. In time three villages were established (Leske, 1977:99). The Strehlow Memorial Hospital was erected in 1960. Other construction activity included: expansion of the Smithy (early 1960s), part demolition of the meathouse to allow for the kitchen complex, expansion of the tannery (1962, 1964) to include the remains of the old wagon shed, and construction of the new Bethlehem church. Street lighting was also installed in this period. A major drought from the late 1950s to 1967 led to phasing out of the large vegetable garden by March 1967 (Leske, 1977:103). In 1968 the 'White Correspondence School' for staff children closed down and the Hermannsburg School became a multi-racial school.

In 1966 the Arbitration Commission granted equal wages to Aboriginal pastoral workers. Many pastoralists reacted by phasing out Aboriginal labour and driving Aboriginal communities off their properties. This, coupled with the drought, forced Aboriginal people to come into the mission and towns (Leske, 1977:1020). In the drought period, many mission cattle were agisted in the south, and it appears that a decision was made to end all meat rations: from 1967 all meat was purchased in bulk from Alice Springs and sold at virtual cost through the 'meat house' (Leske, 1977:102).

By the 1960's the Finke River Mission had been consolidated as a field with six circuits – Hermannsburg (as the centre of work), Alice Springs, and the cattle stations of Alice Springs South, Alice Springs North, Areyonga and Papunya (Leske, 1977:99). With the amalgamation of the two main Lutheran synods in 1966, the mission became the responsibility of the enlarged Lutheran Church of Australia (Lutheran nd). In 1964 the first two Aboriginal pastors were ordained to the Holy Ministry at Hermannsburg - Conrad Raberaba and Peter Bulla, and evangelists schools were set up and run biannually. A two-language hymnal in Arrernte and English was completed in 1964 and published in 1965 with assistance from Adelaide Conservatorium of Music (Leske, 1977:95). The New Testament, translated into Arrernte, was published in 1956, following revision of the original manuscript by T.G. H. Strehlow (Albrecht, 1977:83)

There were greater employment opportunities in this period, and social activities such as the Hermannsburg Choir flourished (ABC, 2003). However, there were also increasing social problems such as alcohol abuse, and the missionaries actively tried to stop Aboriginal people from visiting Alice Springs (Rowse, 1989:50-51).

This period saw a general growth of tourism in Central Australia, and the late 1950s-early 1960s there was a surge in visitors to the Centre and surrounding areas. Small numbers of tourists had been visiting Hermannsburg since the early 1930s, and the numbers increased after Bond Tours set up a tourist camp in Palm Valley in the mid 1950s, and a nearby chalet in the early 1960s. Tourists from the chalet received conducted tours of the mission, and artefacts were sold onsite. Private visitors were not encouraged until the 1970s, when improved roads allowed a one-day trip to Palm Valley (Heritage Conservation Services, 2003).

#### *Self determination, land rights and the outstation movement – 1970s – 1980s*

The building program continued in the 1970s with the help of capital grants from the Department of Welfare. Additional staff residences were built, together with a joinery works, an administration building, a powerhouse, a cool store and Aboriginal homes.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s Aboriginal people at Hermannsburg took on more decision-making roles: in 1974 a local Village Council was elected, followed by a Town Council and a School Council for dealing with community affairs. (Leske, 1977:97). This period coincided with the rise of the land rights movement during the late 1960s (Attwood *et al*, 1999:173), and the election of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1972.

In 1973 the Commonwealth Aboriginal Land Rights Commission was established, leading to the *Aboriginal Land Rights Northern Territory Act 1976 (Cth)*. It has been suggested that the missionaries were opposed to the Land Rights Bill (refer Hagen, 1976 for a discussion on this).

Under a new Commonwealth Government policy of self-management, thousands of Aboriginal people moved out of the missions and settlements back onto their traditional lands – known as the 'homelands and outstation movement'. Different views have been expressed on the reasons for the outstation movement at Hermannsburg, such as the missionaries desire to hand over the direction of work and property to Aboriginal people, (Leske, 1977:99); or a Arrernte-Lutheran

initiative to decentralise the families at Hermannsburg as fighting and illicit drinking increased (Austin-Broos, 1994:139). One Western Arrernte man observed that the outstation movement was more a 'decentralisation' from Ntaria than a 'land rights' movement as such (Austin-Broos, 2001:4). The first outstation camp was established at Ellerys Creek about 16km away. By the end of 1974, there were nine outstations, and 33 by 1983. The outstations retained some contact with the mission, with teachers visiting some communities, and a supply truck visiting the outstations. Leske reported that some communities were keen to start small-scale industries (1977:115).

There was a significant element of cultural revitalisation in the outstation movement, and ceremonial activity was practiced more openly at this time, sometimes with missionary staff in attendance. Staff were told that while many ceremonies had never ceased, they had to be performed secretly and often in an abbreviated form (Albrecht, 1976:314; Pfitzner, 1976:316). From 1974 there also appears to have been an increased effort on the part of the missionaries to 'try and see through Aboriginal eyes', with the appointment of a team to research tribal laws, culture, customs and clan-group genealogies amongst Aboriginal people at Hermannsburg.

As a result of the outstation movement many of the facilities based at Hermannsburg became redundant. The mission relinquished their official ownership of Hermannsburg property to Aboriginal people in a ceremony on 2 June 1982, and it is now managed and run by the Ntaria Council.

During the 1970s large tour companies started visiting Hermannsburg, however this level of tourism could not be sustained, and declined between mid 1970 and 1982. Since that time, the Historic Precinct has functioned as a tourism venture, owned and managed by Ntaria Council.

In 1988 considerable Bicentenary funding was spent on buildings in the Historic Precinct. The Hermannsburg Historical Society was set up to manage the historic precinct, and a Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) for the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct was completed in November 2003.

### **Significant people and events associated with the mission**

#### *Hermannsburg School of Watercolour*

Of Western Arrernte descent, Albert Namatjira was born as Elea, his birth registered at Hermannsburg Mission on 28 July 1902. He was baptised in 1905. For part of his early life, he lived in the boy's dormitory at the mission, and attended the mission school, learning to draw in a European way (Mackenzie, 2000). In the late 1920s he participated in an economic initiative involving the etching of mulga wood with pokers to produce decorative plaques, coat hangers, boomerangs and woomeras (Mackenzie, 2000; Albrecht, 1977:70). In addition to his artistic work, Albert worked as a stockman, blacksmith and camel driver.

From the late 1920s many artists visited the Centre, using it as a new icon to define Australia's national and artistic identity (Megaw, 2000:198). Namatjira's interest in painting was sparked by visits to the mission by various artists between 1932 and 1936, including Jessie Traill, Violet Teague, Una Teague and Arthur Murch. Artists Rex Batterbee and John Gardner visited in 1932, and again in 1934, and were the most important in terms of Namatjira's development as an artist (Mackenzie, 1988). They showed their final works to the Hermannsburg community, Albert expressed interest in the work and proffered the view that he could also produce it (Albrecht, 1977:71).

When Batterbee returned in 1936, Albert accompanied him as a guide on a two month painting



expedition, in exchange for learning how to paint with watercolours (Battarbee et al, 1971). In eight weeks he had mastered the finer details of watercolours, and his first paintings were sold in 1937. In 1942 the Lutheran Mission Art Advisory Council (also known as the 'Committee') was established to supervise the pricing, sale and standard of his work, with the mission handling the financial side of the venture (Albrecht, 1977:71).

His first solo exhibition was held at the Athenaeum Gallery in Melbourne in 1938, with all 47 paintings sold in three days. A second exhibition was held in Adelaide in 1939, and Namatjira sold his first work to a public gallery – the Art Gallery of South Australia (Albrecht, 1977:71). Subsequent exhibitions were held in the 1940s. His art was shown to the Duke of Gloucester in 1946, in 1953 he was awarded the Queens Coronation Medal, while in 1954 he met Queen Elizabeth II and attended his own exhibitions in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide (Horton, 1994:757).

Namatjira's wealth accumulated, and in 1945 he built himself a cottage about three miles from the mission (Batty, 1963:55-57). He later moved out, and erected an Army disposals hut near the mission buildings. In 1949 he applied for an NT graziers lease, which was rejected and in 1951 his application to build a house in Alice Springs was also turned down (Horton, 1994:757). In the early 1950's he spent some time camping at a waterhole at Morris' Soak, a camp outside of Alice Springs, increasingly disillusioned with the society in which he lived (Mackenzie, 2000),

There were changes in the administration of his affairs during this period: in 1951 the mission, concerned about rumours of financial exploitation, relinquished management of Namatjira's affairs, and the Native Affairs Branch of the Northern Territory Administration established the Aranda Arts Council (AAC) (French, 2002:16-17). Battarbee, Chairman of the AAC, worked as Namatjira's agent until 1956 (Batty, 1963:91), and after this time it appears that Namatjira sold his work privately. Despite his reluctance, Namatjira and his wife Rubina were granted full citizenship in 1957 (Aboriginal people did not gain citizenship until 1967). He became a user of alcohol during this period, and served a short term in detention (jail and then open detention at Papunya Native Reserve) in 1958 for sharing alcohol with a relation who did not have citizenship (Horton, 1994:757). He was released from custody in May 1959, contracted pneumonia soon after and died on 8 August 1959 (Albrecht, 1977:73).

Albert's work inspired his relatives to pursue watercolour painting, initiated in the 1940s with the establishment of the Aranda Arts Council (Battarbee et al, 1971). At first this was confined to close male relatives (e.g. sons, grandsons), many of whom also had close ties to the Arrernte evangelists. Some were taught by Namatjira and advised by Battarbee. Their work included animals, humans, people and mission life; however it was not initially widely exhibited or published. There were also some early women artists, although it appears women were not encouraged to continue painting (Batty, 1963:66; Megaw, 2000:201). Members of the Luritja-speaking Pannka family also became landscape painters.

These watercolour painters have become recognised artists in their own right, and come from a number of Aboriginal families (French, 2002:29-35). Their work primarily depicts landscapes, although in the 1950s a small group of artists also undertook Christian subjects, an amalgam of traditional Arrernte scenes and the religious images from the Lutheran Bibles and religious tracts used by the Aboriginal evangelists. Strehlow also noted that sacred *tjuringa* decoration and aspects of secret-sacred ceremonies were embedded in the works of some artists (Megaw, 2000:201).

### *Hermannsburg potters*

Pottery was introduced to Hermannsburg in the early 1960s as part of an economic initiative (Sharp, 2000:205), but did not persist. The development of new enterprises was discussed in later years, and in 1989 the Northern Territory Open College appointed Naomi Sharp to develop pottery at Hermannsburg. She drew upon Native American Pueblo pottery, and developed coil-built terracotta containers. The hand-built pots incorporate modelled clay animal and bird figures on the lids of pots (Megaw, 2000:203). A history of its early development is provided by Sharp (2000) and Isaacs (2000).

Today the artists are women (Sharp, 2000:206). The work draws on Western Arrernte traditions, reaffirming connections to country while also actively incorporating elements from a wide range of contemporary influences. In addition to pots, the women produce large, tiled murals depicting Dreaming stories, landscapes, animals etc. Isaacs' book *Hermannsburg Potters: Aranda artists of Central Australia* (2000) provides a history of the potters and stories told by many of the women artists about their lives and their work.

Hermannsburg pottery is located in private and institutional collections (e.g. the Australian National Gallery, the Darwin Museum, the Power Museum, Sydney) in Australia and overseas and is regularly exhibited (Knight, 1992:62; Sharp, 2000:206).

#### *T. G. H. Strehlow*

Born at Hermannsburg Mission in 1908, T.G. H. Strehlow, Carl Strehlow's son, lived at the mission until he was 14. He spoke fluent Arrernte and formed very close relationship with the Arrernte and Loritja community. In 1932 after graduating with an Honours Degree in English Literature and Linguistics from the Adelaide University, Strehlow returned to Central Australia to study the Arrernte language and culture (Northern Territory Government, 2002). In the early 1930s, he started to obtain *tjuringas* from Arrernte elders. The men, concerned about being able to look after these objects as the Centre opened up, transferred custodianship of the objects and their associated sacred knowledge to Strehlow. He filmed the associated ceremonies and recorded genealogies and Dreaming stories, commencing a systematic recording of the religious beliefs, social systems and history of the Central Australian language groups.

After serving in World War II, Strehlow returned to Central Australia, renewing his contacts with Aboriginal elders and building on the material that he had gathered during the 1930s. Assisted by research grants from various organisations, he made numerous lengthy visits to the region between 1946 and 1974. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, T. G. H. Strehlow commented influentially on Aboriginal affairs, policy and practice. The Strehlow Collection became a landmark in the Australian debate on the repatriation of Aboriginal material to Aboriginal communities, and Strehlow was a controversial figure in this debate.

T. G. H. Strehlow attracted many critics, and yet he was foremost a linguist and scholar of classics and European literature, and did not specifically train as an anthropologist (Jones, 2002:4). Strehlow's life's work resulted in one of Australia's most comprehensively documented collections of Australian indigenous culture. He wrote over one hundred papers, articles, and books, including *Aranda Phonetics and Grammar*, *Aranda Traditions*, and *Songs of Central Australia*. While not the work of an academic, this latter book translated and interpreted Arrernte songs, and introduced the concept of Aboriginal songlines to a broad audience. He also amassed a huge quantity of artefacts, myths, songs, photographs, films, sound recordings, diaries and translations which are currently stored at the Strehlow Research Centre. Strehlow's records of Arrernte culture have become significant for Aboriginal land claims and native title. He died in 1978.

[1] Note that in this period, the annexation of states was still occurring. South Australia separated from NSW in 1853. The Northern Territory was part of South Australia from 1853 to

1910.

[2] Angas had intended the new colony to be a 'place of refuge for pious Dissenters from Great Britain', but the largest group of such dissenters was the German Lutherans (Stevens, 1994:6).

[3] Owen Spring was the first cattle lease established in Central Australia (Scherer, 1975).

### **Condition:**

The 20 remaining structures/buildings at Hermannsburg Historic Precinct vary in the level of conservation or restoration works required to bring them to their optimum state. Major conservation works were carried out in the late 1980's and further works were undertaken in 2005, focusing on six of the major buildings, ie. the Church, Strehlow's Cottage, Old Colonists Residence, Old School, Meathouse and Correspondence School, which would be "fully restored". The remaining buildings are in varying states of repair and all are due for full restoration under the Conservation Management Plan (2003).

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**End of Report**

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