



Hon Tony Kelly MLC
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Minister for Infrastructure
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MEDIA RELEASE

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HISTORIC ABORIGINAL MISSION SITE STATE HERITAGE LISTED

The Warangesda Mission site at Darlington Point near Griffith has been listed on the State Heritage Register.

Minister for Planning, Tony Kelly, made the announcement as members of Aboriginal communities from around the Riverina met today to celebrate the listing of the former Christian mission.

“The listing formally recognises the historical and cultural significance of this site to thousands of Warangesda Aboriginal descendents,” the Minister said.

The Mission was one of 10 in NSW in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and was built by Missionary Reverend John Brown Gribble and his wife with the help of Aboriginal people between 1879-84.

Warangesda played a key role as a hub for early Aboriginal political activism and in the struggle for land rights, including being the site of a community strike in 1883, while the last great inter-group burbung (initiation) in Wiradjuri country was held at or near Warangesda in the 1870s.

Mr Kelly commended the landowner for his support for the listing and ongoing co-operation with the State Government and local Aboriginal community throughout the listing process.

“It’s the only mission or reserve site to retain its original 19th century building ruins and archaeological relics, including an intact school teacher’s cottage, ruins of the school house, girls’ dormitory and ration shed,” the Minister said.

“The remains of two burial sites – an infant and an adult cemetery – are also now recognised by the listing.

“The listing means any major works would be subject to decisions or advice from the Heritage Council of NSW and the site will now have increased access to State Government heritage funding.”

Warangesda descendents, Aunty Heather Edwards and Karen Davy, described the listing as a momentous occasion which brought great joy to the community.

“It’s one of the biggest things that’s ever happened and to know I’m a part of it is fantastic,” Aunty Heather said.

“Warangesda has always symbolised the fight for equality and rights. It means recognition for our people and gives an opportunity for the story of Warangesda to be included in education at local schools by putting our people back in the story,” Ms Davy said.

The Waddi Housing and Advancement Corporation has been granted \$17,300, from the 2000-2011 NSW Heritage Grants Program, to document today’s celebrations at Darlington Point.

A 20 minute DVD recording of the day’s events will be produced and used as an educational resource for the community, preserving the stories and memories of this iconic site for the future.
