

ANNA'S RESERVOIR CONSERVATION RESERVE

Updated: 4th March, 2002

Located about 165 kilometres north of Alice Springs on Aileron Station, Anna's Reservoir Conservation Reserve is important because of its association with the early exploration and pastoral history of the Territory. It also has conservation value as an important wildlife watering hole.

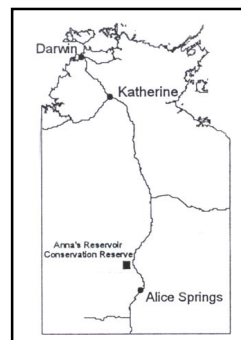
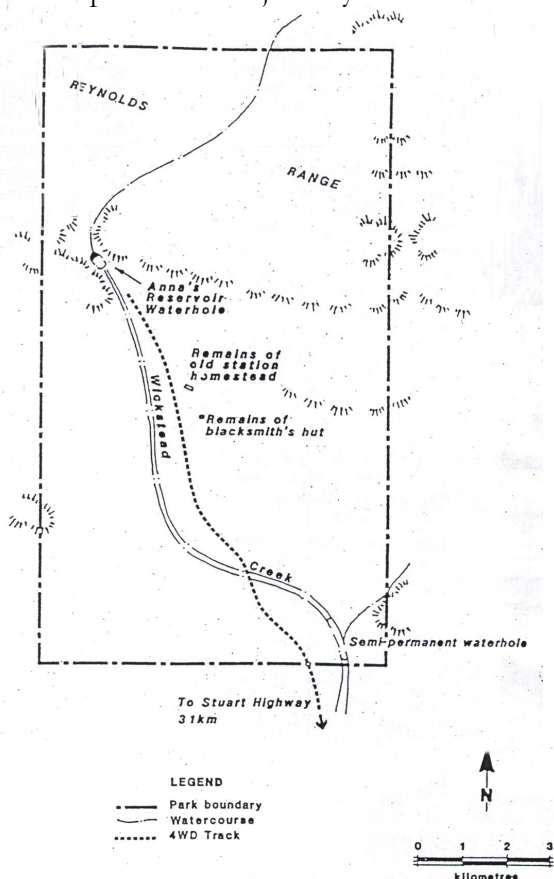
The rockhole, Anna's Reservoir, which was discovered, described and named by John McDouall Stuart in April 1860, played a critical role in Stuart's attempts to reach the north coast. The site was visited by Stuart during each of his three journeys. It was the availability of water and grass at Anna's Reservoir upon Stuart's return journey from the north coast in September 1862 that enabled the successful completion of his journey.

The Reservoir also played an important role in the epic journey by Alfred Giles, who between 1879-1880 overlanded 8,000 sheep and 4,000 cattle to establish Springvale Station near Katherine.

Giles took advantage of Stuart's description of water at Anna's Reservoir and forced the sheep over a dry stage of 108 miles from Colyer's Creek (north of Alice Springs) to the Reservoir. This was the only reliable water source in that dry year between Colyer Creek and Tea Tree Well.

The homestead ruins within the reserve are also of heritage value owing to their association with the Barrow Creek Pastoral Company venture, the most ambitious enterprise of its kind in Central Australia. In 1884 Billy Benstead, the company manager chose Anna's Reservoir as the site of the station homestead. The homestead ruins remain as evidence of one of the few locations where Aboriginal resistance actually forced the withdrawal of white settlers.

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