

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE

Anzac Oval, Alice Springs

Anzac Oval is located at the base of Anzac Hill in Alice Springs, just north of Wills Terrace. Anzac Oval had its beginnings as a Recreation Reserve that was established in the mid 1930s by The Reverend Harry Griffiths and other returned servicemen, at a time when the European population of Alice Springs was rapidly expanding following the extension of the 'Ghan' railway to the Town in 1929.

Prior to World War II, the area was a venue for playing tennis, and for social events. During World War II, it was occupied by the military, and accommodated as many as 8,000 soldiers in tents and 'Sidney Williams' Huts. After the war, many of the Sidney Williams huts were removed, but two remained at the eastern edge of the recreation reserve; these now accommodate the Totem Theatre.

The Oval has a strong association with the growth of sports and recreation activities in Central Australia in the post-World War II era, in particular Rugby League and Rugby Union, and with major events and festivals held there.

Anzac Oval can lay claim to several 'firsts'. In 1955 it became the first grassed sports oval in Alice Springs, when the small Alice Springs community banded together to 'grass' the area in what can be considered an extraordinary achievement for the period. It was also the site of the first Alice Springs Show in 1960.

Anzac Oval is in a picturesque setting, and is considered a local landmark. It has been the location of many sporting events over many years, involving Aboriginal people from all over Central Australia.

The Anzac Oval Precinct contains several sacred sites.