Remembering Territory families

‘Took us in...’

Anyway, we got on this truck at Larrimah; it must have been the terminal for the trains at the time – a railway station. We went as far as Katherine – must have stayed there overnight. Then next day – maybe next day, or whatever – we travelled on a bit more comfortable ride – we got in a carriage – a few carriages. So we travelled from Katherine to Darwin.

We arrived in Darwin, and there was a truck waiting there. A truck – it was Native Affairs, maybe they were called, or Welfare; I think it was Native Affairs those days. This was in 1928. So there was a truck there waiting to pick the passengers off the train. The Aborigines, and the three kids – Sarah, the quadroom girl, and I – we all got on a lorry; it was one of those old open truck sort of a thing. So we all got on the lorry and it took us in to Kahlin Compound.

The Aborigines went down to the reserve; that was just a little distance away from where the half-caste home was. Just up the road we had these – upstairs house, it was. Today, I think, where the site was, the street name is Schultze Street.

Anyway, I arrived there and met up with all the rest of the children that was already there. Everybody gets all so excited, interesting, all crowded around you and asking you questions. ‘What’s your name?’ ‘Where you come from?’

And I was frightened and shy, didn’t know much English anyway, coming from the busy. I must have answered a few things. One thing they asked me, ‘You had something to eat?’ probably. And I said, ‘Yo-way’ [yes]... Anyway, I lived in the home there from 1928 till 1934. And the home – there wasn’t nothing much really. We hardly had any beds, maybe those who were lucky – you know, the older girls – they might have had beds. But us other little children we just only had blankets... [Northern Territory Archives Service NTRS 226, TS 793 and NTRS 219, TP 913, Hilda Muir]