

# Birralee

1957? – 1968

**Other Names:** • Birrale

## Details

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Birralee, in Downer, was a government run shelter established around 1957. It offered emergency accommodation for children and young people aged up to 16 years. It was run by a matron and could accommodate 8 children at a time. 30 children passed through the Home between 1966-1967. Birralee closed in 1968.

'Birralee' shelter does not appear in annual reports after 1967. The decision to close the shelter may have been related to the opening of Marymead in February 1967 and the establishment of the Welfare Section, Department of the Interior in 1968.

## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Department of the Interior, Commonwealth Government \(1939 - 1972\)](#)  
Birralee shelter appears to have been jointly administered by the New South Wales Welfare Office in Canberra and the Department of the Interior.  
Date: 1957 - 1968

#### Related Organisations

- [Marymead Child and Family Centre \(1967 - current\)](#)  
The Birralee shelter does not appear in annual reports after 1967. The decision to close the shelter may have been related to the opening of Marymead in February 1967 and the establishment of the the Welfare Section of the Department of Interior after which there were no government-run shelters or homes, apart from the Quamby Youth Detention Centre operating in the ACT.
- [Quamby Youth Detention Centre \(1962 - 2008\)](#)  
Quamby Youth Detention Centre and Birralee were the only government-run institutions for children in Canberra, until the establishment of Bimberi Youth Detention Centre in 2008.
- [Welfare Section, Australian Capital Territory \(1957 - 1970\)](#)  
The closure of Birralee shelter may have been a decision made by the Welfare Section in 1968 as the Shelter is not referred to in annual reports after 1967.

#### Related Legislation

- [Child Welfare Ordinance 1957, Australian Capital Territory \(1958 - 1988\)](#)  
The Child Welfare Ordinance 1957 legislated for a regional officer from the Child Welfare Department (NSW) to be stationed in Canberra who would work collaboratively with social workers and 'other persons' from the Department of the Interior. The Ordinance also gave the territory power to establish depots, shelters, homes and hostels in the ACT. It appears that the Birralee shelter was established shortly after the Ordinance was

passed.

## Resources

- Walmsley, R., Coull, V., Vinson, T., *Report, Beyond the image, December 1984 / Review of Welfare Services and Policies in the A.C.T.*, 1985
  - Archives ACT, [Child Welfare Policy Records](#), 2012
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/birralee/>