

# St Martin's House

1944 – 2000?

**Other Names:** • St Martin's Hostel for Boys

## Details

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St Martin's House was established in June 1944, in Burwood Road, Auburn (Hawthorn East) on a site that had previously been St Martin's Home for Boys (1921-1926). In 1953, a new St Martin's House opened on the grounds of St John's Home for Boys in Canterbury. It accommodated boys over the age of 15, who would previously have had to leave St John's when they found jobs. The hostel accommodated child migrants from Britain. In the late 1970s it was converted to a specialist hostel. It would seem that St Martin's Hostel operated until around the early 2000s.

St Martin's House, 'a new hostel for senior boys from children's institutions, sponsored by St John's Home for Boys', was officially opened in June 1944 (*The Argus* 29 May 1944, p.6).

At St Martin's House:

*The boys enjoy greater freedom and personal attention at the hostel. They make some contribution towards their maintenance from their weekly wages, but most of their earnings are banked for their future use or spent in training for a profession or trade (The Argus 12 June 1944, p.6)*

In June 1953, St John's Home for Boys launched an appeal to complete 'the first working boys' hostel of its kind in Victoria'. The 'new' St Martin's House was located in a brick building on the grounds of St John's Home for Boys in Balwyn Road, Canterbury. It was opened by Prime Minister Menzies 30 November 1953. Newspapers reported on the event:

*The £12,500 hostel is build of oatmeal-coloured bricks and has a white pergola, gaily painted rooms and built-in furniture.*

*Twenty boys, aged 15 to 19, live in the hostel and all have jobs. They pay between £2 5/ and £3 5/ for board, do the washing up, their laundry (in a washing machine) and iron their own shirts (The Age 30 November 1953, p.4)*

The opening of St Martin's House marked the 'first step of a rebuilding programme' at St John's Home, according to the chairman of the board of management, Mr Caldwell.

He stated that 1 in every 4 boys accommodated at St Martin's House would be a British migrant (St John's Home was one of the institutions in Victoria to receive child migrants from Britain).

A Department of Human Services publication states that in 1978, St Martin's was converted to a 'specialist hostel' but does not provide further details (Jenkinson, Volume One, 2001). St Martin's House was listed in the Department's 'Approved Community Services Register' in 2000/2001 (Jenkinson, Volume Two, 2001).

## Gallery

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### Former St Martin's House, 20 Balwyn Road, Canterbury

**Description:** This is an image of St Martin's House, which was located next door to 'Shrublands', the mansion where St John's Home for Boys and Girls was located. The building where St Martin's House was located was demolished in the early 2000s.

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## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [St John's Homes for Boys and Girls Board of Management \(1926 - 1997\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [St John's Home for Boys \(c. 1924 - 1958\)](#)
- [St Martin's Home for Boys \(1921 - c. 1926\)](#)

The building for St Martin's Home for Boys in Auburn was moved to Canterbury in 1926 and from 1944 was used as St Martin's House.

### Resources

- [In the Churches: Boys Home launches appeal for £15,000](#), The Age, 22 May 1954

## Records

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For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

### Records

- [Anglicare Victoria Records \(1886 - current\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/st-martins-house/>