

Bayswater Boys' Homes

1897 – 1987

- Other Names:**
- Bayswater Boys' Home No 1
 - Bayswater Youth Training Centre
 - Bayswater Boys' Home No 2
 - Bayswater Boys' Home No 3
 - Bayswater Farm and Vocational Training Centre
 - Salvation Army Farm and Training Centre

Details

The Bayswater Boys' Home was established by the Salvation Army in 1897 at The Basin. It accommodated boys who had been placed in legal custody. The campus included three Bayswater Boys' Homes. These Homes closed progressively from 1980. The last, the Bayswater Youth Training Centre, closed in 1987.

The Salvation Army established the Bayswater Boys' Home in 1897 at The Basin, to cater for boys who had been placed in legal custody. Bayswater was the name of the railway station nearest the Home.

There were a number of 'Bayswater Boys' Homes' at The Basin. As well as 'Bayswater Boys' Home No 1?', there was a separate junior section (Bayswater Boys' No 2 Home). The No 3 Home operated from 1930 until 1947, and housed boys who were not classified as 'reformatory cases'. After its closure, boys were transferred back into No 1 Home, which was rebuilt and expanded in 1946.

No 2 Home catered for boys who could not be placed at the Salvation Army's Home in Box Hill, because they were too old and judged to be 'in danger of falling into criminal tendencies because of neglect'. The No 2 Home segregated its boys from older and more serious offenders in the No 1 Home.

Ensign T. Leech, who was sent by National Headquarters to help out at Bayswater No 2 for a couple of weeks wrote an account of his experiences in the *War Cry* in 1914.

He wrote about the need for 'constant strict surveillance', as the boys were so fond of absconding – 'on a foggy morning, one has to be more than usually vigilant, for some are strong, lithe and fleet of foot, knowing every inch of the ground, and able to get into cover like a rabbit or fox'.

Leech described his first impression of the boys at Bayswater: 'Such a variety of dispositions! So many with an unenviable past, which still leaves its mark, making it difficult for a stranger to fathom their motives and intentions, or detect their intentions.'

His article went on: 'Very soon I learned to feel a great affection for these little sons of misfortune and crime, entering into their many little troubles and temptations, thus sowing spiritual seed which, I believe, will in the future bring forth good fruit'.

This 'sowing of seeds' by staff at Bayswater was done in the hope of achieving the 'reform' of these boys, as well as their conversion to the Salvation Army faith. Ensign Leech wrote that:

Once a week Mrs Staff-Captain McClure holds a special meeting for the boys who profess conversion, and I was delighted to have applications from thirty-one boys to be allowed to attend. One feature of the profession made by these boys is that they soon confess the fact if they backslide, and the difficulty is to get them to try again.

Ensign Leech remarked that many of the boys were trustworthy and responsible and enjoyed tending their own patches of garden. 'Many can be trusted to go for the mail, about two miles, or bring up the cows, or go about a mile for the milk.'

He described the dormitories at Bayswater as 'spacious and beautifully clean, with their double rows of beds with snow-white covers. To see the boys tucked away, cosy and warm, or kneeling at their bedsides in their nightgowns as many do, asking God's protection, is a very pretty sight'.

The *Age* reported in 1937 on renovations at Bayswater. The article stated that 'considerable alterations' had been effected, providing better facilities for the boys who lived at the No 2 Homes.

The article described the Homes as accommodating more than 100 boys under fourteen years of age, who were educated on site. It also stated that meals were prepared at No 2, to feed the 30 older boys who lived at Bayswater's No 3 Home.

The new buildings were described thus:

... a new lavatorium building ... includes bathrooms and dressing rooms ... erected around a closed playing area forming a quadrangle. A commodious recreation room with an open fireplace provides ample warmth when necessary.

A special up to date laundry and a drying-room have also been constructed, as well as improvements to the dining room and elsewhere. The general living conditions have been greatly improved, at a cost of more than £1000.

From the 1950s, Bayswater Boys' Home No 1 received boys on fixed sentences from Turana.

No 1 Home originally focused on farming to provide training and direction, but expanded into a wide range of vocational training. It became known as the "Bayswater Farm and Vocational Training Centre".

The Acting Premier of Victoria, Arthur Rylah, visited Bayswater in 1955, on a tour of institutions for "delinquents". *The Argus* published an article, stating that Bayswater's superintendent, PK Leggett told Rylah: "We have about 100 boys here. All have records for truancy, factory-breaking, car stealing. They are considered to be among the most difficult lads in Victoria. But 90% never return. One day, a man drove up in a flash car. He said he wanted to show his daughter where their father learned to be a man" (*Argus*, 22 July 1955, p.6).

Accounts of Bayswater from former residents rarely describe their time at the institution as a positive experience. For example, in his submission to the Senate inquiry, Terry Dean described Bayswater and other Salvation Army Homes as 'a sad reminder of a bygone age of degradation and cruelty', and 'the epitome of hell on earth' (Submission 467).

In 1960, it became the Bayswater Youth Training Centre. At this time, the administration of the YTC and the No 2 Junior Home were combined and the whole entity given the name 'Bayswater Boys' Home'.

The No 2 Home transitioned to 'cottage' accommodation from the early 1960s, to act as a 'half way house' between institutional care and return to the community.

Clement Howard Broadstock and his wife Valda were Superintendents at Bayswater Youth Training Centre from 1968 to 1976. (Previously the Broadstocks had worked at Lyndon Lodge as managers from 1958 to 1964, and as Superintendents at Box Hill Boys' Home.)

In line with trends in the provision of 'care', Bayswater No 2 Home closed in 1980. Resources released by the closure were transferred to the Salvation Army Western Region Program.

The Bayswater Youth Training Centre closed in 1987, following a government decision to cease funding non-government agencies to run statutory facilities such as YTCs.

Bayswater Boys' Home became the 'Mountain Valley Youth Camp and Conference Centre'. The Youth Training Centre became part of the Salvation Army's Bridge and Employment Programs.

Several submissions by 'Forgotten Australians' to the Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care made reference to Bayswater Boys' Homes and their negative experiences there.

The Salvation Army subsequently issued an apology to all people who were hurt during their time in Salvation Army Homes.

Bayswater Boys' Homes were investigated by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Case Study 33: The Salvation Army children's Homes, Australia Southern Territory. Three former residents of Bayswater gave evidence at the hearings for this Case Study. The July 2016 Report stated that the former residents of Bayswater (and Box Hill Boys' Home) "described an environment where corporal punishment was commonplace and where children suffered repeated sexual abuse by the officers and employees of [the Salvation Army] who were meant to care for them. The Royal Commission heard extensive evidence about the negative effects and lifelong impact on the former residents of their physical and sexual abuse. These impacts were both physical and mental (p.13)."

Gallery



Salvation Army Home near Boronia, Vic.

Description: 'The Rose Series P.1761'



The Salvation Army Boys' Home, The Basin, Vic.

Description: The Rose Series P.3856



New woodwork shop at Bayswater Youth Training Centre, constructed entirely by staff and trainees

Description: This is a copy of an image published in the annual report of the Social Welfare Department for 1970-1.



Bayswater Youth Training Centre

Description: This is a copy of an image published in the annual report of the Social Welfare Department for 1970-1.



The Bayswater Home for Boys

Description: This is an image of the Salvation Army Bayswater Boys' Home. It shows a long, narrow single storey building in a bushland setting. This image is one of a set of images of Salvation Army Homes published in the *Weekly Times* on 31 January 1903.

More info

Chronology

- Heidelberg Boys' Home (1893 - 1895)
 - Pakenham Boys' Home (1895 - 1897)
- **Bayswater Boys' Homes (1897 – 1987)**

Related Entries

Run by

- [The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory \(1921 - 2018\)](#)
- [The Salvation Army, Australian Territory \(1880 - 1921\)](#)

Related Events

- [Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care, Parliament of Australia \(2003 - 2005\)](#)
- [Interstate movement of Northern Territory children \(1930s - 1970s\)](#)
- [Case Study 33: The Salvation Army children's Homes, Australia Southern Territory, Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse \(2015\)](#)
- [Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations, State of Victoria \(17 April 2012 - 2013\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Lyndon Lodge \(1946 - c. 2004\)](#)
- [The Salvation Army Westcare \(c. 1980 - 2018\)](#)

Resources

- Dobbin, Marika, [The lost boys](#), The Age, 2 July 2009
- Petraitis, Vikki, *Salvation*, 2009
- 'Countless' rapes, abuse, Cranbourne Journal, 23 November 2009
- Salvos to work with police on investigation, Cranbourne Journal, 23 November 2009
- Treatment at home 'brutal', Cranbourne Journal, 23 November 2009
- Kids 'buried at boys' home', Cranbourne Journal, 23 November 2009
- Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools, [Report of the Secretary and Inspector for the year ... / Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools.](#), 1896 - 1924. *Relevance:* Mentioned in reports dated 1898-1924
- *Children's Welfare Department and Reformatory Schools. Report of the Secretary and Inspector.*, 1924 - 1954
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- Horne, John, [Submission no 268 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 2005
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- *The Salvos: Part 1*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation Compass, 2014
- [Bayswater Boys' Home \(1897-1987\)](#), Finding Records, No date. *Relevance:* See the 'List of records held by the department' section for information about records relating to Bayswater Boys' Homes
- [Salvation Army Child Care Centres](#), Finding Records, No date. *Relevance:* See the 'List of records held by the department' section for information about records relating to Bayswater Boys' Homes
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- The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territorial Headquarters (Vic), [Submission No. 46 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care: Appendix A: Children's Homes - A list of openings, closings and function](#), July 2003

Records

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

Records

- [Historical records and memorabilia of Salvation Army institutions, Southern Territory](#)
- [Salvation Army Australia, Records of Homes in the former Southern Territory \(c. 1889 - c. 1988\)](#)
- [Voluntary Children's Homes Files \(1921 - 1989\)](#)
- [Admission and Discharge Register of Wards \[Bayswater Boys' Homes\] \(1943 - 1950\)](#)

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/bayswater-boys-homes/>