

# New South Wales Protestant Federation Children's Home

1921 – 1980

**Other Names:**

- Dulwich Hill Protestant Girls' Home
- Dulwich Hill Protestant Children's Home
- Protestant Federation Girls' Home

## Details

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The New South Wales Protestant Federation Children's Home was situated in Garnet Street, Hurlstone Park, on the border of Dulwich Hill. It was founded in 1921 and, despite the title, was a girls' home that in the 1940s held up to 90 girls at a time. It closed in 1980.

As Garnet Street forms the border of Hurlstone Park and Dulwich Hill, and between the local government areas of Canterbury and Marrickville, there is sometimes confusion about the address for the Protestant Federation Children's Home. As the Home is on the western side of Garnet Street, the official address is Hurlstone Park.

The Home, and the Protestant Federation, were established by John T. Ness, a real estate agent and Presbyterian organiser who later entered state Parliament. Ness wanted to create a home for girls from single families of Protestant faiths and stated in a fund-raising appeal for the Home in 1927:

*Protestantism is too precious to be filched from the children of Australia. Protestants must more jealously care for the children who are unfortunate and need shelter and training.*

The original building in Garnet Street was called Tinonoe and more than 800 girls passed through the home in its first two decades. The home was extensively renovated in the mid-1940s. The new home was officially opened by the Governor on 5 July 1947.

Girls attended Canterbury Public School and Canterbury Central Domestic Science School, and went to a different Protestant church every Sunday. Leoni Greig and Anne Maher, sisters who lived at the home from 1940 until the 1950s, believe the home provided a routine that was as close to ordinary home life as possible, largely due to the efforts of a Matron. Uniforms were part of life, as was cleaning, as the Home had no domestic staff, but the Matrons avoided institutional features like long tables, allowing girls to dine in groups of four.

The sisters remember that older girls could remain living at the Home if they wished, and were called 'Business Girls', as they worked and paid board. Some girls lived at the Home until they married.

In 1979 the Home's Board was facing financial difficulty so approached Church of England Homes to assist with relocating the children in its care, disposing of its assets and storing its records. According to the Church of England Home's *Care Newsletter* of May 1980, a social worker was appointed in January 1980 to find new homes for 23 girls, aged 5-16 years.

Ex-residents of the NSW Protestant Federation Girls' Home [Children's Home] have been meeting since 1987. Members donated a superb collection of photographs from the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s to the Canterbury City Library.

## Gallery

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### Protestant Federation Home, Hurlstone Park, 1940s

**Description:** This is a digital copy of an image in the Protestant Children's Home collection in the Canterbury Bankstown City Library Image Collection. The description given states 'NSW Protestant Federation Home, 50 Garnet Street, Hurlstone Park.'

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### Protestant Federation Home, [portrait], Hurlstone Park, ca 1942

**Description:** This is a digital copy of an image in the Protestant Children's Home collection in the Canterbury City Council Library Local History Photograph Collection. The description states 'Birds cage in the playground. Note the hall window painted over. This was to prevent light escaping at night in the event of air raids during the war.'

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### Protestant Federation Home, Hurlstone Park, 1940s

**Description:** This is a digital copy of an image in the Protestant Children's Home collection in the Canterbury City Council Library Local History Photograph Collection. The description given states 'NSW Protestant Federation Home, 50 Garnet Street, Hurlstone Park.'

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### Original NSW Kings Federation Girls Home building, about 1925

**Description:** This is a watercolour painting of the building called "Tinonoe", which housed the Protestant Federation Children's Home at Dulwich Hill. It shows a two-storey stone house with wooden upper balcony.

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### Protestant Federation Children's Home Post renovation

**Description:** This is a photo of the Protestant Federation Children's Home at Dulwich Hill, following the renovations to the home that occurred in the mid-1940s. It shows a large square-fronted brick building with formal front gardens, set behind a brick fence with the house number '50' visible. There are two plaques on the fence, on either side of the gate, however the words on them are not clearly visible. This photo is undated - the dates included are an estimate.

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## More info

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### Related Entries

### Related Organisations

- [Church of England Homes \(c. 1884 - 1984\)](#)

In 1980, at the closure of the Protestant Federation Children's Home, Church of England Homes relocated the girls and took custody of the home's records.

Date: 1980 - 1980

## Resources

- Hardie, Catherine (information courtesy Mary Brown nee Stevens), [NSW Protestant Federation Girls' Home](#), Pictorial Canterbury, 2012. *Relevance*: The NSW Protestant Federation Girls' Home web page is a history of the NSW Protestant Federation Children's Home
- Maher, Anne, [Our life at the NSW Protestant Federation Girls' Home](#), Pictorial Canterbury, 2012
- [Don't forget](#), Australian Women's Weekly, 7 November 1936

## Records

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

### Records

- [Canterbury Bankstown City Library Image Collection \(c. 2008 - current\)](#)
- [Anglicare Children's Homes, Foster Care and Out-of-Home Care Records \(1932 - 2010s\)](#)

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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/new-south-wales-protestant-federation-childrens-home/>