

Dr Barnardo's Homes (Australia Branch)

1883 – 1966

Other Names:

- Barnardos
- Dr Barnados

Details

Dr Barnardo's Homes (Australia Branch) began in 1883 when eight boys travelled from Dr Barnardo's Stepney Home, London, to Australia. From 1920 to 1965 Barnardos ran an official Immigration Scheme under which many children migrated to Australia. In the post-World War Two period, Barnardo's established family group homes in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Its child migration program had ceased by 1964 and the organisation then offered a range of children's and family services. In 1966 the name of the agency changed to Dr Barnardos in Australia.

The initial aim of the charity founded by Dr Thomas Barnardo, of Dublin, was to provide homes for the homeless children of London and other cities in the United Kingdom. Dr Barnardo's Homes has been operating since 1883 when a party of eight boys left Dr Barnardo's Stepney Home to start a new life in Australia. Barnardo's 'official' immigration scheme began in 1920, with the first party of 47 boys leaving the United Kingdom for Australia in 1921. Many children were sent to Australia under this scheme until 1965.

The first party of girls arrived in 1924. They were allowed to come to Australia on the condition they worked as domestic staff for at least two years after their arrival. According to an April 1924 advertisement from Barnardo House, girls were 'drafted into selected good homes for domestic duties.' Boys were 'placed in the country for training in rural pursuits.'

Dr Barnardo's was originally located at Scarborough House, Doll's Point, Botany Bay. This building proved not to be suitable and in 1924 Barnardo's moved to a mansion called Melrose at Ashfield. That house was renamed [Barnardo House](#). It was a receiving home and served as a temporary place of residence for up to 60 boys and girls who were on holidays, in between employment or convalescing from illness. By 1937 it was referred to as a Training Home and was for girls only.

In 1929, the Barnardo's farm training school at [Mowbray Park](#), Picton was opened. The school was initially for boys and girls aged six to fifteen years, but was later used entirely for boys. It closed in 1959, and was replaced by a smaller farm school at [Scone](#) on the Upper Hunter River, which trained boys aged fifteen to sixteen years in farming skills. The school took migrant children, and later admitted Australian children. It closed in 1982.

In its first 10 years 1,000 children came to Australia with Dr Barnardo's and by 1938, 2340 children had arrived in Australia. The first children were aged over 14, but by 1937 a number of younger children had been sent to Australia, with the smallest being aged six. Many were aged between 8 and 14, an action *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported had been taken by Dr Barnardo's to relieve 'congestion' in the boarding out scheme it operated in Britain.

No children arrived during the World War II years (1939-45). In 1944, the first Australian girl was admitted to Barnardo's care. After the war, Barnardos continued to send children to Australia on a diminishing scale.

Barnardo's UK suspended its child migration program to Australia in July 1958 following reports of child sexual abuse occurring at Mowbray Park in Picton, and similar concerns for children residing at [Green Wood](#) in Normanhurst. Following investigations conducted by Barnardo's, the NSW Police, and the NSW Child Welfare Department (which resulted in prosecutions) the migration ban was lifted in August 1958, on the condition that the Picton and Normanhurst homes remain under close supervision. These incidents eventually led to the closure of Mowbray Park in 1959. The Barnardo's child migration program ceased in 1964.

In 1955, foster care was introduced followed by a Holiday Home Scheme which allowed children in homes to be boarded with families during the school holidays. In 1964, [Barnardos House](#) in Canberra was opened. This was the first residential children's home for permanent care to be opened in the Australian Capital Territory. The Boarding Out Family Grant Scheme was also introduced in 1964 to help widowed or deserted mothers.

The post-war years saw a number of family group homes opened: Greenwood (1951-1968); Tarana at Belmont South (1959-1977); Hartwell House Kiama (1960-1970); Atherstone House Cronulla (1962-1977); Rickard House West Ryde (1962-1982); Illawong at Keiraville (1962-1975); Ladd House and Fairfax House at Normanhurst (1966-1976) and Karingal House, Lindfield (1960-1984).

In 1966 Dr Barnardo's Homes (Australia Branch) changed its name to Dr Barnardos in Australia.

Barnardos Australia controls the records of Dr Barnardos Homes and Dr Barnardo's in Australia. Some client records are lodged with the State Library of New South Wales (Mitchell Library).

Gallery



Teenage and child immigrants from Great Britain brought out by the Big Brother Movement on the P & O Liner *Canberra*, 10 October 1963

Description: This is a digital copy of an acetate negative taken by Mulligan, J. A. The image is held in the John Mulligan photograph collection, ca. 1960-1976, at the National Library of Australia.



Stepney Causeway

Description: The original caption for the image reads: No. 18 opened December 1870 as a home for working and homeless boys. 1908 provided a trade and general education. Closed 1922/23. This webpage is no longer in operation. this URL is taken from the wayback machine and is dated 13 June 2018.



Greenwood exterior from Miss Butcher's album

Description: This is an image from the Nardy - Old Boys & Girls Reunion Club website Cottage Homes album. It shows the exterior of one of the buildings at Green Wood. This photo is undated, the date included is an estimate.



Dr Barnardo's Home for Girls, Burwood, New South Wales

Description: This image shows girls waving at the gates of Dr Barnardos Girls' Home, Burwood.



Boys getting refreshments from the Tuck Shop, Barnardo Farm School, Mowbray Park, New South Wales

More info

Chronology

- **Dr Barnardo's Homes (Australia Branch) (1883 – 1966)**
 - Dr Barnardos in Australia (1966 - c. 1995)
 - Barnardos Australia (c. 1995 - current)

Related Entries

Ran

- [Barnardos House \(1964 - 1982\)](#)
Date: 1964 - 1966
- [Dr Barnardos Girls' Home, Burwood \(1938 - 1957\)](#)
- [Scarborough House \(1921 - 1924\)](#)
- [Karingal House \(1960 - 1984\)](#)
Date: 1960 - 1966
- [Tarana \(1959 - 1977\)](#)
Date: 1959 - 1966
- [Mowbray Park \(1929 - 1959\)](#)
- [Barnardo House, Ashfield \(1924 - 1938\)](#)
- [Scone Farm School \(c. 1959 - 1982\)](#)
Date: 1959 - 1966
- [Green Wood \(1951 - 1966\)](#)
Date: 1951 - 1966
- [Hartwell House \(1960 - 1970\)](#)
Date: 1960 - 1966
- [Atherstone House \(1962 - 1977\)](#)
Date: 1962 - 1966
- [Rickard House \(1962 - 30 January 1982\)](#)
Date: 1962 - 1966
- [Illawong \(1962 - 1975\)](#)
Date: 1962 - 1966

Related Events

- [Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry, Northern Ireland \(19 January 2013 - 2017\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Barnardos Children's Family Centre \(c. 1983 - current\)](#)

- [Millions Club \(1912 - current\)](#)

The Millions Club was a supporter of Dr Barnardo's Homes and child migration.

Date: 1912 - 1966?

Related Concepts

- [Youth Migration \(1850s - 1980s\)](#)

Resources

- [Barnardo Home Price Cut](#), The Canberra Times, 7 February 1964
- Matthews, Bernie, [Reap as you sow](#), Griffith Review: Unintended Consequences, May 2007
- Hill, David, *The Forgotten Children: Fairbridge Farm School and its betrayal of Australia's child migrants*, 2007
- Moore, Allan, *Growing up with Barnardo's*, 1990
- Spearritt, Peter, [Rickard, Sir Arthur \(1868-1948\)](#), Australian Dictionary of Biography Online, 1988
- Humphreys, Margaret, *Empty Cradles*, 1994
- Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, [The Forgotten Australians, Business of the House, Speakers Horner Ms Sonia; Goward Ms Pru; Ashton Mr Alan; Maquire Mr Daryl; Morris Mr Matthew](#), Hansard, 25 November 2010
- Paton, Hugh (Rev), [Barnardo House. A visit to Ashfield.](#), The Sydney Morning Herald, 4 October 1924
- Remmer, Clifford, [Nardy Old Boys & Girls Reunion Club](#), 2005
- Lyon, Doreen, *With the Best of Intentions: Stories from Dr Barnardo's Farm School At Mowbray Park, near The Oaks, NSW 1929-1959 / collected by Doreen Lyon for The Oaks Historical Society*, 2010
- [No Need for Tears: an orphan remembers](#), The Australian Women's Weekly, 25 May 1966
- National Archives of Australia, [Destination: Australia - sharing our post-war migrant stories](#), No date
- [Barnardo Boys - Training Home Opened](#), The Sydney Morning Herald, 16 November 1929
- Langfield, Michele, [More people imperative: immigration to Australia 1901-1939](#), 1999

Records

Records

- [John Mulligan Photograph Collection, ca. 1960-1976 \(c. 1960 - c. 1976\)](#)
 - [Barnardos Australia, Records \(c. 1883 - current\)](#)
 - [Commonwealth Child and Youth Migration Records \(1901 - 1983\)](#)
 - [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)
 - [Immigration Photographic Archive 1946 - today \(1946 - current\)](#)
 - [Correspondence files, multiple number series \(policy matters\) \(1922 - 1968\)](#)
 - [Correspondence files, Class 5 \(British Migrants\) \(1920 - 1957\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/dr-barnardos-homes-australia-branch/>