Raith Lark Hill Hostel

1964 – 1990?

Other Names:
- Raith Lark Hill
- Raith
- Raith House
- Lark Hill

Details

Raith Lark Hill Hostel at Campbelltown was established by the Child Welfare Department in 1964. The main house was called Raith, while Lark Hill was a baby and toddler complex that, according to the Child Welfare Department Annual Report of 1966, was within the same grounds. Raith Lark Hill accommodated children of a wide range of ages, from infancy to teens, including family groups, and is thought to have closed around 1990.

The State Library of New South Wales has a collection of photographs of children who were in Raith Lark Hill Hostel in 1978.

Raith Lark Hill Hostel was established in a 16 bedroom house built for HJM Merewether and his wife, Wilhelmina Gore. The house dates from 1903 and was sited on Appin Road. The area, now known as Bradbury, was later subdivided to form French Street, which the property now faces onto.

The Child Welfare Department bought Raith in 1963 from Lend Lease. An advertisement for its sale in *The Sydney Morning Herald* described it as a fine residence that presented opportunities for conversion to an exclusive club, restaurant, hospital or convalescent villa. It was in a secluded position, amidst landscaped grounds, and boasted 20 rooms including a dining room, guest lounge, two modern kitchens and 158 feet of covered verandahs, plus a two-bedroom staff apartment.

The 1965 Annual Report of the Child Welfare Department described the opening of Lark Hill:

> *Lark Hill. A recently built single storey private cottage at Campbelltown was purchased and adapted for the needs of 12 pre-school children and is proving most successful. … The first children were admitted on 10th September, 1964, and to date, approximately 50 per cent of children admitted have been placed in foster homes or restored to their own parents.*

'Raith' was a cottage on the same site as the original Lark Hill, opened in 1966, which, as that year's Annual Report claimed, was meant to 'provide for whole family groups thus avoiding the need for separation of brothers and sisters'.

Raith Lark Hill was described in the 1977 Annual Report of the Youth and Community Services Department as a short-term home for children 'of normal development suitable for early placement in the community'. It was associated, by the 1970s, with other cottages which housed pre-school children of similar ages at Guildford (McCredie Cottage) and Baulkham Hills (Thornbury Lodge).

There was a married couple in charge in each of the two cottages, under the supervision of a Manager who worked from the Lark Hill cottage. The complex was closed down in the 1990s.

In January 2013, according *The Campbelltown Macarthur Advertiser*, the property was severely damaged by fire. It was still owned by the New South Wales Department of Community Services.

Gallery

Raith House

Description: This is a digital copy of an image that appeared in a section of the Campbelltown City Council Local Environment Plan.
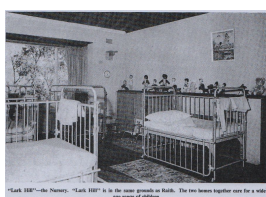

State wards at Raith Lark Hill Hostel at Campbelltown

Description: This is an image of children at Raith Lark Hill Hostel in April 1978. Please note the State Library of New South Wales collection includes 25 images of a group of young state wards (children) at Raith Lark Hill Hostel, Campbelltown, taken in April 1978 by the Government Printing Office.

"Lark Hill" - milk time for toddlers

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1966.
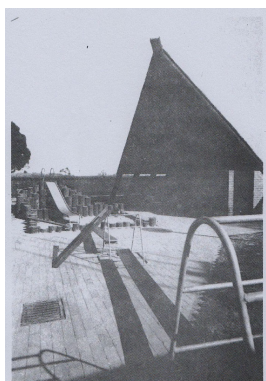

"Lark Hill" - the Nursery. "Lark Hill" is in the same grounds as Raith. The two homes together care for a wide age range of children [original caption]

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1966.

Raith House [street view]

Play equipment (Lark Hill, NSW Treasury Report)

Description: This image is from the cover of a 1978 NSW Treasury report into the costs of building and maintaining NSW Child Welfare Department buildings.

"Raith" - children arriving home from school

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1966.

Children at "Raith", Campbelltown

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1966.

More info

Related Entries

Run by
- Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare, State Government of New South Wales (1970 - 1973)
- Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales (1973 - 1975)
- Child Welfare Department, State Government of New South Wales (1923 - 1970)
- Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales (1976 - 1988)
- Department of Youth, Ethnic and Community Affairs, State Government of New South Wales (1975 - 1976)
- Department of Family and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales (1988 - 1991)

Resources

- Gorrey, Megan, *Restoration plans for Bradbury's Raith*, Campbelltown Macarthur Advertiser, 12 March 2013
- *Raith: Lot 6 DP 223301 Fern Avenue, Campbelltown*, Campbelltown City Council Local Environment Plan, 2002

Records

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

Records

- Departmental Records relating to State Wards, New South Wales (1918 - current)

You can view this page online by visiting https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/raith-lark-hill-hostel/