

# Crusaders Camp Mission Hostel

1940? – 1946?

**Other Names:**

- Methodist Crusaders Camp
- Crusaders Camp

## Details

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Crusaders Camp Mission Hostel at Otford, near Sydney's Royal National Park, was used by the Church Missionary Society in 1942 to house 98 Aboriginal children who had been evacuated from Croker Island, north of Darwin in the Northern Territory. The evacuees, who were accompanied by the Croker Island Mission staff, were wards of the Commonwealth Government. These children, who were aged 1 to 16, were defined at the time as 'half-castes'. The evacuees had left by 1946.

The *Cairns Post* and *The Argus* of 20 May 1942 reported that 98 'half-caste' children from the Methodist Mission on Croker Island, Northern Territory, had arrived in Melbourne, after travelling seven weeks by lugger, truck, rail and foot via the Methodist Inland Mission in Alice Springs. The children were aged from 1-16 and the newspaper reported they would be sent to Sydney, to Otford (which *The Cairns Post* called 'Oxford'), under the care of Mr K. Wale, superintendent of Croker Island Mission. Wale told the newspaper they would be 'educated and fitted to take their place in society, which he considers has been denied them in the past.' The younger children from Croker Island attended Otford school during their time in the hostel, whilst the older children attended Scarborough school. Many of the high school aged girls attended Wollongong Domestic Home Science High School, and received weekly cooking classes at Burwood High School. The carers included Miss Margaret Somerville, who had been with the children since Croker Island, and Misses Olive Peek and J Marsh.

## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Church Missionary Society of Australia \(1916 - current\)](#)

#### Related Events

- [Interstate movement of Northern Territory children \(1930s - 1970s\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Milleewa Home for Boys \(1919 - 1966\)](#)  
Some of the children from Crusaders Camp Mission Hostel were sent to Milleewa.  
Date: 1942 - 1943
- [Church Missionary Society Home for Half-Castes, Mulgoa \(1942 - 1949\)](#)
- [George Brown College \(1942? - 1946?\)](#)  
Children from the Crusaders Camp Mission Hostel were sent to George Brown College.
- [Croker Island Mission \(1940 - 1968\)](#)

## Resources

- Bezant, Betty, *Our river days : a reflection of childhood memories, 1942-1946 : children from Otford, New South Wales and Croker Island, Northern Territory*, 2008
- McGregor, Steven [director], *Croker Island exodus*, 2012
- [\*Daisy Ingram and Bob Ingram interviewed by Karen George in the Bringing Them Home Oral History Project \[sound recording\]. \(2001\)\*](#), 9 April 2001

## Records

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

### Records

- [Church Missionary Society \(New South Wales\) - Records \(1893 - 2003\)](#)
  - [Church Missionary Society of Australia, North Australia Committee \(1907 - 1989\)](#)
  - [School Files \(1876 - 1979\)](#)
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