

Falling Leaves

c. 1950 – c. 1970

Details

Falling Leaves, at Avalon, operated from around 1950. It was a licensed children's home approved by the New South Wales Child Welfare Department. Licensed children's homes were considered part of the foster care system. Falling Leaves closed around 1970. In 2013 it is a private house.

Falling Leaves was run by a mother and daughter (the Coopers) who lived at the home. The home provided accommodation for up to 15 children. It generally only took in girls, though at least one boy lived at the home until the age of 5 years old. Most of the children in the home slept in one of two dormitories, although some children had their own rooms. The length of time children stayed at the home varied from a few months to several years.

Phileppa Doyle and her sister Joanna Penglase spoke about their recollections of Falling Leaves in interviews for the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project. Phileppa described the atmosphere of the home as cruel, and recalled children in the home receiving frequent beatings. She remembered eating the same food every day – porridge for breakfast, vegemite sandwiches for lunch, and mince and potatoes for dinner. At Christmas time the children would each get an apple as a treat. She also noted that the Coopers ate much better than the children, and that some children received preferential treatment and were allowed to eat with the Coopers. She recalls that children were confined to one room in the house, unless they were in their dormitories or the small concrete play area outside. The children weren't allowed to use the indoor bathroom, and instead had to go outside to use one underneath the house.

Gallery



Falling Leaves

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared on the CLAN website, it shows the letter box, sign for Falling Leaves, and the building in the background. This photo is undated, the date included is an estimate.

More info

Related Entries

Related Organisations

- [Child Welfare Department, State Government of New South Wales \(1923 - 1970\)](#)
The Child Welfare Department licensed 'Falling Leaves' as a children's home.

Resources

- [*Joanna Penglase interviewed by Susan Marsden in the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project*](#), 2 June 2010
- [*Phileppa Doyle interviewed by Virginia Macleod for the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project \[sound recording\]*](#), 25 April 2012 - 26 April 2012

Records

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

Records

- [Departmental Records relating to State Wards, New South Wales \(1918 - current\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/falling-leaves-2/>