

Berida Junior Red Cross Home

c. 1950 – 1974

Other Names: • Berida Red Cross Home

Details

Berida Junior Red Cross Home was established by the Junior Red Cross in Bowral in 1950. The house had previously been a Red Cross convalescent home for servicewomen and servicemen. Berida was a school for special purposes that provided temporary care to school-aged girls whose families were experiencing illness, childbirth or crisis. From 1972 until 1974 it also accommodated boys. Berida Junior Red Cross Home closed in 1974.

Berida Junior Red Cross Home was established in around 1950 by the Junior Red Cross, in Berida, a stately house that had been formerly used by the Australian Red Cross as a convalescent home for servicemen and women. It provided temporary care (including school) for school aged children whose families were experiencing difficulties.

Berida had been donated to the Red Cross in 1941 by Dr Jessie Freeman as a servicemen's convalescent home, but was used for servicewomen until Dr Freeman and a group of local women insisted it be returned to its original purpose.

In May 1951 Berida became a New South Wales Department of Education School for Specific Purposes. This indicates that the school was a residential school that had a special programme addressing psychological, behavioural and other difficulties.

Berida was for girls from 1950 until 1972 when it began to also accommodate boys.

This is an account from Cherry, who attended Berida in the 1960s:

I like many other girls was sent to Berida Children's Home with my two sisters; I think I was about 7, my sister was 6 and my youngest sister was about 4. We stayed for what seemed ages, I remember the dormitory and steak and kidney pudding followed by junket and prunes which was served for lunch I think every Tuesday. My sisters and I refused to eat it and they made us sit at the long dining room table for hours as punishment. I remember lining up to have your hair deloused with kerosene; this was compulsory and I remember my youngest sister wet the bed and they made her wash her own sheets in a laundry; I wet my bed and tried to hide it.

On the positive side, this was the first time I saw snow in my life and I remember walking into Bowral with all the other girls to see it. My stay would have been about early 1960's. ... I also remember the Berida song;

*The Berida kids are we
always up to mischief wherever we may be
the matron calls us lazy
she makes a great mistake
if you belong to the Berida dump
you're always wide awake
how many eggs for breakfast
how many eggs for tea.*

Berida Junior Red Cross Home closed in 1974, and was purchased by celebrity cook Margaret Fulton. The property later became a hotel known as Berida Manor. Since 2009 a number of former residents of Berida Junior Red Cross Home have left their recollections of their time at Berida on the Southern Highlands Online travel review section for Berida Manor. Some of the women recount negative experiences, but others found the staff caring and valued the routine and three square meals a day.

Gallery



Berida Convalescent Home

Description: This is an image of Berida Convalescent Home taken sometime before it was converted into Berida Junior Red Cross Home. It shows the ivy-covered front of the Home and the driveway approaching it, with a sign reading 'Berida Convalescent Home' in the foreground.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Australian Red Cross \(1914 - current\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Department of Education, State Government of New South Wales \(1915 - 1989\)](#)
The Department of Education ran a School for Specific Purposes at Berida Red Cross Home.
Date: 1951 - 1974
- [Shuna Red Cross Home \(1925 - c. 1951\)](#)
When Shuna Red Cross Home closed the children were transferred to Berida Junior Red Cross Home.
- [Kippilaw \(1945 - 1950\)](#)
When Kippilaw closed the children were transferred to Berida Junior Red Cross Home.
- [Junior Red Cross Society \(1918 - 1995?\)](#)

Resources

- ["Choklit Pudding for Dinner": relief of mind for an ex-RAAF](#), The Sunday Herald, 18 February 1951

Records

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

Records

- [Records of Red Cross Children's Homes \(1918? - 1990s\)](#)
 - [Archives of the Australian Red Cross Society, New South Wales Division, 1914-2014 \(1914 - 2014\)](#)
 - [School Files \(1876 - 1979\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/berida-junior-red-cross-home/>