

# Ilfracombe, Boys Reformatory

1869 – 1880

## Details

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Ilfracombe Boys Reformatory opened in Burnside in 1869. Run by the government it took in a number of boys convicted of offences who had been accommodated in the Grace Darling Hotel, Brighton. Other boys were sent to the Boys Reformatory, Magill. Ilfracombe closed in 1880 when the boys from both reformatories were moved to the Reformatory Hulk, the Fitzjames.

In 1866 the majority of children were moved out of the Destitute Asylum as a result of the passing of the new Destitute Persons Relief Act. Boys who had been convicted of offences were among the large group of children relocated briefly to the Exhibition Building on North Terrace and then to the Grace Darling Hotel at Brighton.

Due to overcrowding and pervading illness at the Hotel, however, all children there were moved to other institutions. In December 1869, a number of the boys were moved to a former mansion in Burnside known as Ilfracombe. The remainder went to the new Boys Reformatory at Magill.

In its 1869 report, the Destitute Board commented on conditions at Ilfracombe. It also stated that the boys were involved in shoemaking, stone-breaking, road-building shed building and gardening. The report also explained that:

*The building itself, which in some parts was dilapidated, has been, by several of the boys, with the help of the master, repaired, plastered.*

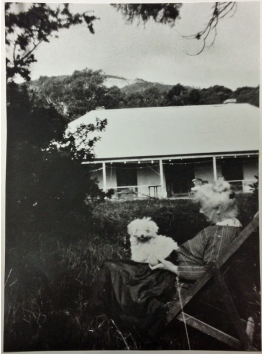
A newspaper article the following year commended the work the boys had done to the old building noting that:

*The whole of the improvements necessary to transform a private residence into a Reformatory Institution are being carried out by the boys themselves without any external mechanical assistance whatever.*

Rosamond and Florence Hill, English sisters who visited Ilfracombe in 1873, commented on the rough living conditions under which the 25 boys were living. However, they were impressed with the boys themselves whom they described as appearing healthy and happy. The boys attended school for two hours each day and were kept occupied at other times with caring for cows and pigs, making shoes and straw covers for wine bottles.

Ilfracombe continued to operate as a Boys Reformatory until 1880 when the boys from there and those from the Boys' Reformatory, Magill, were transferred to the Reformatory Hulk, the Fitzjames.

## Gallery



### Ilfracombe, facing north

**Description:** This image is included in the 'File on the property Ilfracombe: 1847-1943 [Local History]' and has the following caption written on the back of photograph: Ilfracombe, Facing North - Mrs Gee with her poodle Fifi - Original lent by Mrs R Jenkins, Kensington - Ilfracombe was built by Dr. Nash, first Colonial Surgeon. c.1847.



### Ilfracombe Boys' Reformatory

**Description:** This photo is undated, the date included is an estimate.



### Stonyfell wine label

**Description:** This image is included in the 'File on the property Ilfracombe: 1847-1943 [Local History]'. This photo is undated, the date included is an estimate.

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## More info

### Chronology

- **Ilfracombe, Boys Reformatory (1869 – 1880)**
  - Boys' Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames (1880 - 1891)
  - Boys Reformatory, Magill (1891 - 1967)
  - McNally Training Centre (1967 - 1979)
    - South Australian Youth Training Centre (1979 - 1993)
    - Magill Training Centre (1993 - 2012)

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Destitute Board, South Australian Government \(1849 - 1927\)](#)  
Date: 1869 - 1880

#### Related Organisations

- [Brighton Industrial School \(1867 - 1869\)](#)  
Due to overcrowding, boys from the Brighton Industrial School were moved to Ilfracombe Boys Reformatory.  
Date: December 1869 -
- [Boys' Reformatory, Magill \(1869 - 1880\)](#)  
Boys from the Boys' Reformatory, Magill and Ilfracombe Boys' Reformatory were sent to the Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames in 1880.

#### Related Legislation

- [Destitute Persons Relief Act 1866, South Australia \(1867 - 1872\)](#)

## Resources

- Dickey, Brian, *Rations, Residence, Resources: A history of social welfare in South Australia since 1836*, 1986

## Records

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

### Records

- [Records created by the Destitute Board \(c. 1845 - 1927\)](#)
  - [Minutes - Destitute Board \(1849 - 1927\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/ilfracombe-boys-reformatory-2/>