

# Anchorage Home

1889 – 1920

**Other Names:**

- Anchorage Rescue Home
- Anchorage Refuge Home

## Details

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The Anchorage Home, run by the Ladies Christian Association, opened in 1889. It was initially in Hobart. Later it moved to New Town. The Home was for young single mothers having their first baby. It closed in 1920.

The Anchorage Home opened on 17 September 1889 in Carr Street, off Argyle Street. The house had a sitting room, kitchen, scullery, four bedrooms, and a large yard with room for a garden, a chicken run, and to dry clothes. According to the *Mercury*:

*The house is in a pleasant situation, overlooked by Mt Wellington, and commanding a view of the harbour in the distance. It is not an overcrowded district and while within easy reach of the town, has the advantages of country life.*

By 1891, the house had become too small and the Home moved to Argyle Street. In 1894, it moved again, this time to its permanent site in Peddar Street, New Town, in the building of the former Normal School. The building had earlier been used by the Hobart Town Female Refuge and the Hobart Girls' Industrial School. A letter to the *Mercury* opposing the move, shows the strength of the stigma against single mothers in the 1890s. The author objected to the site for two reasons. Firstly, the women in the Home could have a bad influence on local young people. Secondly, the Home was too public.

*I allege that it is a needless introduction of our young to one of the great evils of life, let the conduct of the inmates be as exemplary as it may. For the inmates themselves, if they are true penitents, the publicity of the place, with its wide, exposed verandahs, the absence of trees and the close neighbourhood of cottage homes must be extremely painful.*

The Committee believed that young single mothers having their first child were most likely to reform. Therefore they did not take women with second or subsequent pregnancies. As part of their reformation, the mothers worked in the laundry attached to the Home. This contributed towards the cost of running it.

Mothers and babies remained in the Home for a year. After that, the Committee found them a position, preferably where the children could go too. If that was not possible, the child had to be boarded and the mother paid the costs out of her wages. The Committee did not want mothers to relinquish their babies because taking responsibility for them was part of their reformation. Even so, the difficulties of both caring for and supporting a child meant that many were forced to leave their children in the Home when they left. By 1895, there were 17 children living there.

The Committee tried to persuade the fathers to contribute towards their children's maintenance. Any money they received from them went into a trust account to pay for the child's education or apprenticeship.

The Anchorage Home closed in 1920 because it could not compete with the Anglican Home of Mercy and the Salvation Army's Elim Maternity Home. The Committee donated the Home's trust money to Elim. The Anchorage Home had been the first rescue home to open in Hobart.

## Gallery

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**The Normal School, later the Hobart Town Female Refuge, and then the Anchorage Home - window detail**

**Description:** This photograph was taken just before the demolition of the Normal School in 1962. The building of the former Normal School was the first home of the Hobart Town Female Refuge. It became the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart.



**The Normal School, later the Hobart Town Female Refuge, and then the Anchorage Home - before demolition**

**Description:** This photograph was taken just before the demolition of the Normal School in 1962. The building of the former Normal School was the first home of the Hobart Town Female Refuge. It became the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart.



**The Normal School, later the Hobart Town Female Refuge, and then the Anchorage Home - before demolition**

**Description:** This photograph was taken just before the demolition of the Normal School in 1962. The building of the former Normal School was the first home of the Hobart Town Female Refuge. It became the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart.

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## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Ladies' Christian Association \(1878? - 1930?\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Hobart Girls' Industrial School \(1862 - 1945\)](#)

The building of the former Normal School housed first, the Hobart Girls' Industrial School, and later, the Anchorage Home.

- [Elim Maternity Hospital \(1897 - c. 1973\)](#)

When the Anchorage Home closed, its Committee donated its trust money to Elim Maternity Hospital.

- [Home of Mercy \(1890 - c. 1953\)](#)

By 1920, the Anchorage Home was not needed, in part, because of the Home of Mercy.

## Resources

- Parry, Naomi, ['Such a longing': black and white children in welfare in New South Wales and Tasmania, 1880-1940](#), 2007
  - Alexander, Alison, *The public role of women in Tasmania, 1803 - 1914*, 1989
  - [Treat to children of the charitable institutions](#), 22 May 1900
  - [Demonstration at Hobart; the children entertained](#), Examiner, 22 May 1900
  - [Anchorage Home](#), The Mercury, 22 October 1904
  - [Anchorage Home](#), Mercury, 24 October 1906
  - [Anchorage Home](#), The Mercury, 27 September 1905
  - [Sub-Matron, Anchorage Home](#), Mercury, 18 September 1900
  - Evans, Caroline, *'Everything prompt': D. Williams Builders, Pty Ltd, 1855-2005*, 2005
  - National Archives of Australia, [Forced Adoptions History Project](#), 2013
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