

Mothercraft Home

1925 – c. 1988

Details

The Mothercraft Home opened in New Town in 1925. The Child Welfare Association ran it until 1947 when the government took it over. Its main purpose was to give breast feeding advice to mothers but it also provided accommodation for children. In 1982, the Home moved to South Hobart. It closed around 1988.

The Mothercraft Home, established by the Child Welfare Association, opened in Flint House which was in Pirie Street, New Town. It provided inpatient help for mothers whose babies had breast feeding or dietary problems as well as accommodation for premature and boarder babies whose mothers were in hospital. It also trained mothercraft nurses.

The Child Welfare Association modelled the Mothercraft Home on similar New Zealand institutions known as Karitane Hospitals. They were established to carry out the baby care methods advocated by Dr Truby King who favoured breast feeding and a strict routine.

When the government took the Home over in 1947, it agreed to continue using it to accommodate and treat mothers and babies as well as training mothercraft nurses. The *Mothercraft Home Agreement Act 1949* formalised this agreement.

However, by the 1970s, that usage had broadened to include the accommodation of wards of state with physical disabilities so that they were not sent to the Royal Derwent Hospital. In part, the Tasmanian Spastics Association established Rosebank Cottage to take those children.

By the 1980s, the Mothercraft Home looked after toddlers with intellectual disabilities up to the age of three or four and children needing palliative care. It offered respite care to children whose parents needed a break. According the Child Health Association, it also accommodated children who were 'emotionally deprived and physically abused' or 'whose parents are unable to cope with them at home'. It could cater for up to 16 children and 10 mothers. The Home took referrals from general practitioners, paediatricians, clinic sisters, the Child Protection Assessment Board, and the Department of Community Welfare. In addition, it provided a Parent/Infant Telephone Advisory Service.

On 15 March 1982, the Mothercraft Home moved to Gore Street, South Hobart.

The Mothercraft Home was mentioned in the *Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices Inquiry (2012)* as an institution that was involved in forced adoption.

Gallery



Flint House [New Town]



Flint House, Pirie St. Hobart / C.L. Allport

Description: Painted by Allport, Curzona Frances Louise, 1860-1949 Signed and dated lower left. Note on reverse of backing: The house of Col. T.M. Evans, later the Mothercraft Home.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Child Welfare Association \(1917 - 1956\)](#)
The Child Welfare Association ran the Mothercraft Home until 1947.
Date: 1925 - 1947
- [Public Health Department, State of Tasmania \(1904 - 1956\)](#)
In 1947, the Public Health Department took over the management of the Mothercraft Home.
Date: 1947 - 1956
- [Department of Health Services, State of Tasmania \(1956 - 1989\)](#)

Related Events

- [Inquiry into Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices, Commonwealth of Australia \(2011 - 2012\)](#)
The Mothercraft Home was mentioned in submission 367 to the Inquiry Committee as an institution that was involved in forced adoption.

Related Organisations

- [Child Protection Assessment Board \(1975 - 1991\)](#)
The Child Protection Assessment Board made referrals to the Mothercraft Home.
- [Rosebank Cottage for Disabled Children \(1979 - c. 1994\)](#)
Rosebank Cottage was, in part, established to take children with physical disabilities from the Mothercraft Home.
- [Parenting Centres \(c. 1993 - current\)](#)
- [Southern Parenting Centre \(c. 1989 - current\)](#)

Related Legislation

- [New Town Mothercraft Home Agreement Act 1949, Tasmania \(1949 - 1998\)](#)
The *Mothercraft Home Agreement Act* stipulated that when the government took over the Mothercraft Home that it maintained its original usage.

Resources

- Greene, Rachel, *Through the window*, 2007

Records

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

Records

- [State Council Correspondence and Associated Papers Relating to the Mothercraft Home. 1981-1990 \(1919 - 1991\)](#)
 - [Annual Reports of the Matron, Mothercraft Home \(1954 - 1963\)](#)
 - [Daily Record of Children's Treatment and Calorie Intake, Mothercraft Home \(1968 - 1969\)](#)
 - [Daily Record of Instructions and Orders Relating to Medication, Treatment, Admission and Discharge of Patients, Mothercraft Home \(1968 - 1969\)](#)
 - [Patients' Records Giving Personal Details and Details of Treatment, Mothercraft Home \(1964 - 1969\)](#)
 - [Record of Personal Details of Children Admitted, Mothercraft Home \(1951 - 1963\)](#)
 - [Register of Children Admitted, Mothercraft Home \(1947 - 1966\)](#)
 - [Correspondence Files \(1919 - 1998\)](#)
 - [General Correspondence-Hospital and Health Administration \(1932 - 1987\)](#)
 - [Building Applications, Hobart City Council \(1919 - 1990\)](#)
 - [General Correspondence, Department of Public Health \(1920 - 1956\)](#)
 - [General Correspondence \[3\] \(1842 - 2002\)](#)
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