

Millbrook Rise Psychopathic Hospital

1933 – 1968

Other Names: • Millbrook Home

Details

Millbrook Rise Hospital opened in New Norfolk in 1933. It was a public psychiatric hospital which took some adolescent patients. In 1968, Millbrook Rise merged with Lachlan Park Hospital to form the Royal Derwent Hospital.

Millbrook Rise officially opened on 21 February 1934 (Willow Court Tasmania website). Initially, the main purpose of Millbrook Rise Hospital was to treat World War One veterans and their families. The hospital was governed by the provisions of the [Psychopathic Hospital Management Act](#) of 1933. The hospital was managed by the Millbrook Home Board. According to the Tasmanian Archives, several members of the Board were appointed from the Tasmanian Veterans Trust, which had financed construction of Millbrook with funds given to it by the Red Cross after World War One.

The *Mercury* newspaper described it as a “home for borderline cases” in an article about its opening. In 1935, another article described it as being for “the treatment of returned soldiers suffering from shell-shock and disabilities of a nervous character” (*Mercury*, 1 July 1935). The front door incorporated the rising sun emblem “to recall not only the war origin of the [Tasmanian Veterans] trust, but also to serve as a constant encouragement towards ever increasing health and strength for those who would reside in the home” (*Mercury*, 22 February 1934). According to the Centenary of ANZAC, Millbrook Rise was “primarily for shell-shocked veterans of World War 1 and their families who were, 20 years after the cessation of hostilities, still suffering from ‘nerves’ as a result of that conflict but who did not require to be admitted to [Lachlan Park Hospital](#)”.

In 1935, the medical superintendent Dr BM Carruthers stated that the home was built primarily for returned soldiers, secondly for the treatment of their relatives and dependents, and thirdly, for the treatment of “other persons” (*Mercury*, 1 July 1935). Patients at the hospital could receive “electrical treatments, occupational therapy and sports” and could be attended by their private practitioners (*Mercury*, 14 May 1934). There was a nine-hole golf course adjoining Millbrook, which patients could use. A [1936 publication to advertise the facility](#) was sent out to doctors and hospitals around Australia. The foreword to this document demonstrates the ongoing impact of World War One on the Tasmanian home-front:

The ailments and disorders with which Millbrook Rise is designed to deal are, without doubt, truly an ever increasing anxiety to those responsible for home life as well as to those whose duty it is to care for Public welfare.

Few citizens, indeed, can nowadays be found anywhere who are unacquainted with these troubles among those near and dear to them; fewer still are those who in the past have been able to secure the care and treatment so necessary for the avoidance of either chronic ill-health or more serious mental derangement.

To-day the social service of the State is able to offer both residence and care in one of the most beautiful districts of Tasmania, with every attention that can possibly be provided; and in Millbrook Rise there is nothing to suggest that a resident is regarded in any other light than that of a guest who is taking a rest-cure – endeavouring to regain peace of mind and strength of body under conditions which fully warrant not only the admiration, but also, perhaps, the envy of visitors.

Although Millbrook Rise had its own nurses and attendants, doctors and psychiatrists were provided by Lachlan Park Hospital and the Mental Diseases Hospital. From 1946, Millbrook Rise had its own doctor in residence. From the outset, Millbrook Rise had a close association with Lachlan Park Hospital. Patients were readily transferred between the two Hospitals, which explains why a few adolescents sent to Lachlan Park went on to Millbrook Rise.

Millbrook Rise and Lachlan Park Hospital merged in 1968 to create the new Royal Derwent Hospital. In 2024, the Millbrook Rise Centre provides inpatient mental health services on the same site.

Gallery



Millbrook Rise

Description: Photograph taken by Mike Key

More info

Chronology

- **Millbrook Rise Psychopathic Hospital (1933 – 1968)**
 - Royal Derwent Hospital (1968 - 2000)

Related Entries

Run by

- [Division of Mental Hygiene \(1945 - 1956\)](#)
- [Division of Mental Health \(1956 - 1963\)](#)
- [Division of Psychiatric Services \(1963 - 1968\)](#)
- [Department of Health Services, State of Tasmania \(1956 - 1989\)](#)

Resources

- [Royal Derwent Hospital records](#), Libraries Tasmania, No date
- [Willow Court History Group](#), 30 April 2014

Records

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

Records

- [Patient Records Removed from Case Books, Millbrook Rise Psychopathic and Royal Derwent Hospitals \(1894 - 1979\)](#)
 - [Admission Register, Millbrook Rise Psychopathic Hospital \(1934 - 1976\)](#)
 - [Patient Files, Millbrook Rise Psychopathic Hospital \(1934 - 1968\)](#)
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