

Marribank

1952 – 1988

Other Names:

- Marribank Children's Homes
- Marribank Family Services
- Marribank Family Centre
- Merribank Mission
- Merribank Hostel

Details

Marribank, near Katanning, was run by the Baptist Union as an Aboriginal mission from November 1952, when it continued the Marribank Farm Training School. Marribank accepted children who were wards of the state and private admissions. By the 1970s, Marribank was reported as operating with a community development model and by the 1980s was offering family support programs in cottages on the old mission site and in Katanning. Marribank had closed by January 1989.

Marribank, near Katanning, began on 1 November 1952 when the Department of Native Welfare handed over Marribank Farm Training School to the Baptist Union 'for establishment as a mission on a walk-out-walk-in basis' according to the Department of Native Affairs in its 1953 Annual Report.

Until 1963, children and young people at Marribank were under the guardianship of the Commissioners of Native Affairs and Native Welfare.

When Marribank was surveyed as part of a project to discover the residential facilities for Aboriginal schoolchildren in 1971, it was noted that children and young people at Marribank were going to primary and high school in Katanning.

By 1979, Marribank had opened a cottage in Katanning and had moved from dormitory accommodation to a cottage care model on the Marribank site.

In 1982, the Consultative Committee on Residential Child Care described Marribank as having evolved from a mission that had been mostly involved with child care to facility with a community development service model.

By 1983, Marribank was offering a Family Support Program where Aboriginal families could receive family reunification and support services, and accommodation assistance. Reportedly, from this time there was an increasing emphasis on working with children as part of a family group, rather than as individuals.

In 1984, Marribank's cottage in Katanning was used for short term emergency care rather than as student accommodation.

In 1985, the Consultative Committee on Residential Child Care outlined the admission criteria for Marribank:

People seeking admission to Murrumbidgee 'have to be homeless or evicted, consequently this is a very vulnerable group. People who can cope on the outside are not accepted. Most of the people are self referred, but Murrumbidgee has a Board of Aboriginals...who screen and interview people before they are accepted. The Board limits the number of people in the houses, including visitors. Visitors must report to Mr Nunn and they are allowed to stay for a maximum of two days. Unemployed children are not permitted to live at Murrumbidgee, unless they do some courses to keep them occupied.' (Report on the Activities of the Consultative Committee in 1984/85, in Signposts 2004, p.314)

In 1986, an education officer was appointed to Murrumbidgee and there are some items in the State Library of Western Australia that date from around this time, which were produced by the Educational Unit at Murrumbidgee.

In 1987, the range of programs offered at Murrumbidgee were reported as including: an Education Centre program; work therapy; role model relationships; and a museum/tourist centre. For staff, there was professional staff development, and in-service training for cottage parents.

On 30 December 1988, Murrumbidgee's funding ceased. Its residential facilities were closed by January 1989.

Records

There may be records for children placed by the Department of Native Affairs, the Department of Native Welfare or the departments responsible for child welfare. The Department for Child Protection and Family Support's Aboriginal Index may also hold information.

The State Records Office of Western Australia also has records, including items that name residents and administration items.

The Department for Aboriginal Affairs in Western Australia may also hold records or other information.

Students who were resident at Murrumbidgee after 1969 may have been Commonwealth Secondary Grant recipients. The National Archives of Australia may hold records relating to people who received these grants.

Gallery



Murrumbidgee Mission, 1965?

Description: This is an image of Murrumbidgee, formerly Carrolup Mission, in Western Australia. It shows a group of people outside of the mission church. Smaller cottages can be seen in the background.



Murrumbidgee Mission, January 1958

Description: This is a digitised copy of a slide and is part of the group of 14 images titled 'Murrumbidgee Mission, January 1958 [picture]' held at the State Library of Western Australia. The image shows some of the buildings at Murrumbidgee Mission.

More info

Chronology

- Carrolup (1915 - 1922)
 - Carrolup Native Settlement (1939 - 1951)
 - Marribank Farm Training School (1951 - 1952)
- **Marribank (1952 – 1988)**

Related Entries

Ran

- [Katanning Group Home \(1978 - 1989?\)](#)

Run by

- [Baptist Union of WA \(1896 - current\)](#)
Date: 1952 - 1988

Related Organisations

- [Kyewong Hostel \(1967? - 2002?\)](#)
Marribank sometimes sent working-age girls to Kyewong Hostel I so that they could receive supported accommodation in Perth.
Date: 1970 - 1974?
- [Mogumber \(1951 - 1974\)](#)
Young Aboriginal women from were employed in childcare at Marribank.
Date: 1952 - 1974

Resources

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, [Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families](#), 1997
- [Eliza Johns interviewed by Marnie Richardson in the Bringing them home oral history project \(2001\)](#), 25 January 2001
- Wilson, Katrin and Michael V. Robinson., *Aboriginal Hostels in Perth : A Comparative Survey*, 1971
- [AU WA A65 - Fisheries Department \[2\]](#), State Records Office of Western Australia - Organisations & People, 2015
- Valadian, Margaret, *Report by Margaret Valadian*, 1968
- Moore, Richard K (ed) and Baptist Historical Society of Western Australia, *Baptists of Western Australia : the first ninety years 1895-1985*, 1991. *Relevance*: pp.212, 218

Records

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

Records

- [Department of Aboriginal Affairs \[predecessors\], Records \(1886 - 2004\)](#)
- [Baptist Union of WA, Records](#)
- [The Marribank Children's Homes \[Katanning\] \(1982 - 1982\)](#)
- [Show us a light \[videorecording\]: the art of Carrolup \(1980s - 1980s\)](#)
- [Files - General \[Health Department\] \(1899 - 1987\)](#)
- [Files - Aboriginal Affairs \(1908 - 1997\)](#)
- [Files - Community Welfare \("A" Series\), State Records Office of Western Australia \(25 August 1908 - 23 December 1990\)](#)

- [Files - Aborigines Departments \(1 January 1926 - 16 June 1972\)](#)
 - [Administration Files - South West District Office \[S.D. Sequence\] \(1949 - 1976\)](#)
 - [Files - Departmental \[Education Department\] \(1 January 1885 - 31 December 2000\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/marribank/>