

Child and Family Services Ballarat Records

c. 1865 –

To access these records:

Please contact the Heritage and History Service Team, Child and Family Services Ballarat

Postal Address: 115 Lydiard Street North, Ballarat, Victoria 3550

Phone: (03) 5337 3333

Email: records@cafs.org.au

Website: <https://cafs.org.au/services-records/>

Records Location

These records are held by [Child and Family Services Ballarat \(1998 - current\)](#)

Details

The collection at Child and Family Services Ballarat dates from 1865. It includes records of Ballarat District Orphan Asylum, Ballarat Orphanage, Ballarat Children's Homes, Ballarat Orphanage Boys' Hostel, Ballarat Children's Homes and Family Services, and Ballarat Female Refuge. The records relate to children who were placed in these residences. The types of records include admission book registers, individual files (from approximately 1930's on), committee minutes, photographs, short films, and other memorabilia.

Access Conditions

Care leavers (and their families) wanting to find information about their time in care, or access personal files can contact Child and Family Services Ballarat (Cafs).

In order to release records you will be asked to provide proof of identity. Preferably some form of photo ID with a signature, and where your name has changed, some form of verification of that change, e.g. marriage certificate. Where photo ID is not available, alternative forms of identification will be considered.

Cafs will strive to provide maximum provision of access to records, and provide all information relating to someone who spent time in care and core identifying information about their close family.

Records

Child and Family Services Ballarat Records is a large collection that contains the records of Ballarat District Orphan Asylum, Ballarat Orphanage, Ballarat Children's Homes, Ballarat Orphanage Boys' Hostel, Ballarat Children's Homes and Family Services, and since 2018, Ballarat Female Refuge.

In 1992, there was a flood on New Years Eve in the basement at Ballarat, and the photos and files in the bottom of the compactus were damaged.

Cafs received a Records Access Documentation Grant in 2019 to document and index records within the collection.

Ballarat District Orphan Asylum and subsequent institutions

The collection includes:

- Client files*, c.1930-current
- Foster care client files*, 1994-current – note: records of former residents placed in foster care are with the government
- Committee Meeting Minutes Notes, 1920-1986 – contain regular mentions of children in Ballarat Children's Home and Ballarat Orphanage. Including information about applications for admission to the institution, illnesses experienced and visits to hospital and other institutions, sporting achievements, lessons received, employment upon leaving the institution, and locations where children went when they left the institution
- Handwritten meeting notes, 1960-1959 & 1965-1968
- Superintendents' Reports, 1949-1962
- Annual reports, 1865-current – contains photos of children and the Home in the annual reports c.1914 onwards
- Marriage and birth certificates, 1860-1900
- Scrap books of press cuttings, 1930-1970 – there are digital copies of the cuttings
- Architectural maps, c.1860s-
- Client photos, 1920-c.1960 – includes photos of children in the Home which were taken by former staff and residents
- Photographs of buildings, 1900-c.1980
- Admission books, 1866-2000
- Application forms, 1880-1940
- Honour Boards of Matrons of the Homes, 1866-1972
- Honour Board of the "most honourable girls", 1925-1958 – includes graffiti on the back with some girls who didn't get on the list adding their names
- Honour Board for boys, 1925-1958
- Roll of Honour Board, First and Second World Wars
- Memorabilia, no date – includes trophies and videos
- "They Need Your Help" film, c.1960 – an appeal to the public depicting a day in the life of a little girl who is an orphan
- Menu book which shows what was served at every meal, 1959-1971
- Photos of children, 1970-1984 – contains photos of children taken by professional photographers at the Home in May and December of every year
- Detailed handwritten superintendent reports of Arthur Kenny, 1889-1908 – records if someone has died, if there's an epidemic, if they're doing work on the farm, etc.
- Plaque listing the names of the 26 children buried at the Ballarat Orphanage gravesite at the Ballarat New Cemetery (unveiled 5th February 2008).

** Former residents are given the original copies of letters addressed to them, school reports, wages receipts, and other receipts of purchases, and Child and Family Services Ballarat may keep a copy for their record. The organisation is legally required to keep client files forever. Some former residents have added information to their client file as a way of completing the picture.*

Ballarat Female Refuge records

In 2018, the Central Highlands Libraries (Ballarat) transferred records relating to Ballarat Female Refuge from its custody to Cafs. The records transferred to Cafs are:

- Admission Book, 1892-1921
- Daily Occurrence Books, 1901-1921

Finding Aids

There are several databases, typed lists and other documentation which are used to search records by Heritage support staff. They include:

- A photo database of buildings and former residents which contains 4,000 photos
- An "Orphanage database" of the original Admission books
- A client files database, which documents where the client files are physically located, what formats contained in the files, the condition of the file, and the nationality of the child, i.e. Whether they are Aboriginal
- Registration Forms listed by a volunteer in Excel
- Press cuttings were collected in scrap books, have been scanned and images are saved on hard drive
- Architectural Maps and other papers stored in map drawers, listed in Word documents by volunteers

Gallery



Sharon Guy, Heritage Worker, with Ballarat Orphanage Exhibition Board

More info

Organisations in these records

Related Organisations

- [Ballarat District Orphan Asylum \(1865 - 1909\)](#)
 - [Ballarat Female Refuge \(1867 - 1921\)](#)
 - [Ballarat Orphanage \(1909 - 1968\)](#)
 - [Testing duplicating ballarat \(1909 - 1968\)](#)
 - [Ballarat Orphanage Boys' Hostel \(1927 - 1961\)](#)
 - [Ballarat Children's Home \(1968 - 1984\)](#)
 - [Ballarat Children's Homes and Family Services \(1984 - 1998\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://findconnect.efront.digital/entity/child-and-family-services-ballarat-records/>