

Mintaro Reformatory Home for Girls

1903 – 1912

Details

The Mintaro Reformatory Home for Girls at Monegeetta, Lancefield was established in 1903 by the Methodist Home Mission Department to take the girls from the Brookside Reformatory at Cape Clear when it closed in 1903. This action took the Wesleyan church into reformatory work. It closed on 31 March 1912.

The Mintaro Reformatory Home for Girls was established in the mansion called Mintaro, on a farming property of 273 acres. The Methodist Home Mission Department responded to the opportunity to establish a private girls' reformatory when the secretary of the Neglected Children's Department indicated that there were many girls who required the shelter and training of such an establishment. The Department was prepared to send them to Mintaro from the Police Courts, where they came as 'first offenders', thus saving them from their 'evil' environment. If the cases were dismissed the view was that these girls would inevitably end up as criminals.

The Home initially housed 15 girls, with a capacity to accommodate up to 40. The girls received instruction in 'regular and orderly habits.' They acquired dairying, cooking, laundry, house cleaning, sewing and knitting skills in order to equip them to work on farms and ultimately to manage their own homes. The aim also was to encourage them to a Christian life. The Home Mission committee stressed that Mintaro was a Home and not an institution.

By 1910 Mintaro received no girls which led to its closure on 31 March 1912. It became clear that girls were not being arrested as there was a difficulty in getting convictions. If a girl could prove that she was in paid work or was being supported by her parents, the case broke down.

On its closure, 147 girls had lived in the Home with an average age of 14 years. The Committee stated that the work would continue, but in a less expensive setting. They believed that these girls were saved from being committed to gaol.

Gallery



A country mansion: Captain Gardiner's new house, Lancefield Road [picture]

Description: This is an image of the Mansion Mintaro, located at Monegeetta, Lancefield, Victoria.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Methodist Church of Victoria and Tasmania \(c. 1851 - 1977\)](#)

Date: 1903 - 1912

Related Legislation

- [The Neglected and Criminal Children's Act 1864, Victoria \(1864 - 1888\)](#)
- [The Juvenile Offenders' Act 1887, Victoria \(1888 - 1890\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Brookside Private Reformatory for Protestant Girls \(1887 - 1903\)](#)

Following the closure of Brookside the remaining girls in residence were sent to Mintaro.

Resources

- Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools, [Report of the Secretary and Inspector for the year ... / Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools.](#), 1896 - 1924. *Relevance:* Mentioned in reports dated 1904-1912

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