

New South Wales Protestant Federation Children's Home

1921 – 1980

Other Names:

- Dulwich Hill Protestant Girls' Home
- Dulwich Hill Protestant Children's Home
- Protestant Federation Girls' Home

Details

The New South Wales Protestant Federation Children's Home was situated in Garnet Street, Hurlstone Park, on the border of Dulwich Hill. It was founded in 1921 and, despite the title, was a girls' home that in the 1940s held up to 90 girls at a time. In 1979 it was taken over by Church of England Homes. It closed in 1980.

As Garnet Street forms the border of Hurlstone Park and Dulwich Hill, and between the local government areas of Canterbury and Marrickville, there is sometimes confusion about the address for the Protestant Federation Children's Home. As the Home is on the western side of Garnet Street, the official address is Hurlstone Park.

The Home, and the Protestant Federation, were established by John T. Ness, a real estate agent and Presbyterian organiser who later entered state Parliament. Ness wanted to create a home for girls from single families of Protestant faiths and stated in a fund-raising appeal for the Home in 1927:

Protestantism is too precious to be filched from the children of Australia. Protestants must more jealously care for the children who are unfortunate and need shelter and training.

The original building in Garnet Street was called Tinonoe and more than 800 girls passed through the home in its first two decades. The home was extensively renovated in the mid-1940s. The new home was officially opened by the Governor on 5 July 1947.

Girls attended Canterbury Public School and Canterbury Central Domestic Science School, and went to a different Protestant church every Sunday. Leoni Greig and Anne Maher, sisters who lived at the home from 1940 until the 1950s, believe the home provided a routine that was as close to ordinary home life as possible, largely due to the efforts of a Matron. Uniforms were part of life, as was cleaning, as the Home had no domestic staff, but the Matrons avoided institutional features like long tables, allowing girls to dine in groups of four.

The sisters remember that older girls could remain living at the Home if they wished, and were called 'Business Girls', as they worked and paid board. Some girls lived at the Home until they married.

In 1979 the Home's Board was facing financial difficulty so approached Church of England Homes to assist with relocating the children in its care, disposing of its assets and storing its records. Church of England Homes took over the management of the home for just under 12 months while this process took place. According to the Church of England Home's *Care* Newsletter of May 1980, a social worker was appointed in January 1980 to find

new homes for 23 girls, aged 5-16 years.

Ex-residents of the NSW Protestant Federation Girls' Home [Children's Home] have been meeting since 1987. Members donated a superb collection of photographs from the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s to the Canterbury City Library.

Gallery



Protestant Federation Home, Hurlstone Park, 1940s

Description: This is a digital copy of an image in the Protestant Children's Home collection in the Canterbury Bankstown City Library Image Collection. The description given states 'NSW Protestant Federation Home, 50 Garnet Street, Hurlstone Park.'



Protestant Federation Home, [portrait], Hurlstone Park, ca 1942

Description: This is a digital copy of an image in the Protestant Children's Home collection in the Canterbury City Council Library Local History Photograph Collection. The description states 'Birds cage in the playground. Note the hall window painted over. This was to prevent light escaping at night in the event of air raids during the war.'



Protestant Federation Home, Hurlstone Park, 1940s

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More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Church of England Homes \(c. 1884 - 1984\)](#)

Church of England Homes took over the management of the Protestant Federation Children's Home in 1979, relocated the girls, closed the home down and preserved the home's records.

Date: 1979 - 1980

Resources

- Hardie, Catherine (information courtesy Mary Brown nee Stevens), [NSW Protestant Federation Girls' Home](#), Pictorial Canterbury, 2012. *Relevance:* The NSW Protestant Federation Girls' Home web page is a history of the NSW Protestant Federation Children's Home
- Maher, Anne, [Our life at the NSW Protestant Federation Girls' Home](#), Pictorial Canterbury, 2012
- [Don't forget](#), Australian Women's Weekly, 7 November 1936

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Canterbury Bankstown City Library Image Collection \(c. 2008 - current\)](#)
The City of Canterbury Local History Photography Collection contains photographs of children, staff and old girls from the New South Wales Protestant Federation Children's Home (1921-). This collection is digitised at Pictorial Canterbury. To see the photos type "protestant federation" into the Pictorial Canterbury search box.
 - [Anglicare Children's Homes, Foster Care and Out-of-Home Care Records \(1932 - 2010s\)](#)
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