

Brush Farm

1803 –

Details

Brush Farm is a property that dates from 1803 and is located at Eastwood, or what is sometimes called Dundas Heights or Dundas. Brush Farm House, built on the farm in 1820, was bought by the New South Wales Government in 1894 and became the location for the Carpentarian Reformatory for Boys (1894-1908), Brush Farm Reformatory (1908-1912). Eastwood Home for Mothers and Babies (1915-1922); Brush Farm Home (1922-1988); and Brush Farm Infants' Home (1968-1988) were also established in the house and grounds. Brush Farm was transferred to the Department of Corrective Services in 1988.

Brush Farm was formed by wealthy colonist William Cox in 1801-1803 then, in 1807, was bought by Gregory Blaxland. Blaxland was a wealthy colonist who was part of the first expedition across the Blue Mountains in 1813. Blaxland built his homestead, Brush Farm House, from 1819-1820, and grew fine wine grapes. In 1832 Blaxland sold Brush Farm to his brother-in-law Dr Foster and left the area. Brush Farm was situated at 19 Lawson Street, Eastwood (Dundas).

Brush Farm passed through several buyers and most of the land was subdivided and sold by the 1880s. The remainder of the farm and the homestead was leased, then bought, by the New South Wales Government in 1894.

In 1894 the Carpentarian Reformatory for Boys was established at Brush Farm, under the Department of Charitable Institutions. The Reformatory used Brush Farm House and the outbuildings. The name was changed to Brush Farm Reformatory in 1908-1909 and was transferred to the control of the Department of Public Instruction. The boys were moved to Gosford Farm Home for Boys at Mount Penang in 1912.

Brush Farm was then taken over by the State Children's Relief Department. Brush Farm House was used as the Eastwood Home for Mothers and Babies from 1915 to 1922. In 1922 it became Brush Farm Home, an institution for girls who were considered to be 'feeble minded' (intellectually disabled). It used Montessori and Kindergarten principles to provide some degree of schooling and vocational training. It housed up to 60 girls. Boys were admitted in 1978.

In the 1960s cottages were added to Brush Farm Home but the older dormitory-style accommodation in Brush Farm House was retained, despite its age and unsuitability, due to the increasing rate of intellectually handicapped girls in care.

On 8 November 1968 Brush Farm Infants' Home opened in another building in the grounds of Brush Farm. The Infants' Home accommodated 40 infants of both sexes and sometimes older children as well. From August 1980 it served as temporary residential care of disabled children, mainly for respite care when parents or foster parents needed a break or a holiday, as a temporary placement centre pending long term care or during family crises, and also for behaviour training. In this period the buildings appear to have also been known as Brush Farm Reformatory for Girls, or Brush Farm Reform School for Girls, or Thorbery Lodge.

Brush Farm Home closed in 1988. The estate was purchased by the Department of Corrective Services, who re-opened it as the Brush Farm Corrective Services Academy on 1 May 1989. The historic homestead, Brush Farm House, has been sold to Ryde Council, but in 2012 Corrective Services retained use of the estate and the other buildings. Brush Farm House serves as a Council community centre.

Gallery

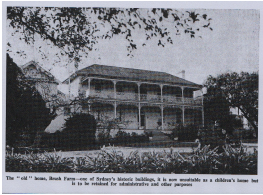


Brush Farm



Eastwood Brush Farm House

Description: This image was posted on Wikimedia Commons. The descriptions states: Brush Farm House, Eastwood, Sydney.



The "old" home, Brush Farm - one of Sydney's historic buildings, it is now unsuitable as a children's home but is to be retained for administrative and other purposes [original caption]

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1965.



Brush Farm

Description: This is a scan of an image from the cover of a 1978 NSW Treasury report into the costs of building and maintaining NSW Child Welfare Department buildings. It was chosen to illustrate the structure as an example of modern architecture.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Department of Public Instruction \(1880 - 1915\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [State Children's Relief Board \(1881 - 1923\)](#)
 - [Carpentarian Reformatory for Boys \(1894 - c. 1908\)](#)
Carpentarian Reformatory for Boys, run by the Department of Public Instruction, was located at Brush Farm.
Date: 1894 - 1908
 - [Brush Farm Reformatory \(1908 - 1912\)](#)
Brush Farm Reformatory was established in the homestead and outbuildings at Brush Farm
Date: 1908 - 1912
 - [Eastwood Home for Mothers and Babies \(1915 - 1922\)](#)
Eastwood Home for Mothers and Babies was in the homestead, Brush Farm House, at Brush Farm
Date: 1915 - 1922
 - [Brush Farm Home \(1922 - 1988\)](#)
Brush Farm Home was in the homestead, Brush Farm House, at Brush Farm
Date: 1922 - 1988
 - [Brush Farm Infants' Home \(1968 - 1988\)](#)
Brush Farm Infants' Home was at Brush Farm
Date: 1968 - 1988
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