

Renwick

1976 – 1994

Other Names:

- Renwick State Ward Home
- Renwick Child Welfare Home

Details

Renwick was established by Department of Community Services in 1976, using the buildings and land that had been occupied by the Mittagong Cottage Homes and Mittagong Training School for Boys. Renwick was a home for dependent children (state wards) of all ages and both sexes. It closed in 1994 and was sold to developers. The site has been subdivided and many of the cottages have since been demolished. Challoner Cottage was heritage listed in 2014.

Renwick was formed from the buildings that had been Mittagong Cottage Homes (for state wards) and the Training Home (for convicted boys). The name Renwick honoured Sir Arthur Renwick, the first President of the State Children's Relief Board, who had established the Mittagong Cottage Homes in the late 1880s. Renwick was a complex of cottages, solely for 'dependent children', as state wards were often described as in the 1970s.

Each cottage home had house parents living in with the children. The 9 cottages were:

- Challoner – for around 20 boys
- Delauret – for around 24 boys
- Garran – for around 24 boys and girls
- Goodlet – for around
- Linden – for around 24 boys and girls
- Rotherwood – for 24 boys and girls
- Rowe – for around 16 boys
- Suttor – for around 20 boys
- Turner- for around 17 boys
- Waverley – for around 15 girls

Many of the children attended the local schools in Mittagong, while the remainder went to school on the premises.

In 1980, the Department's annual report remarked upon the flexibility of the multi-cottage system at Renwick, and that it enabled sibling groups to be kept together. That year, there were a total of 163 boys and girls living at Renwick. By 1984 the average weekly population at Renwick was 65.

Renwick was closed in 1994.

In 2005, plans were announced for subdivision and development on the former site of Renwick, which had been sold by the New South Wales Government. Many former residents and members of the Mittagong community were concerned about the loss of heritage that would result from the destruction of buildings.

The Renwick Association was formed in 2011. Its members include former residents of Renwick and the institutions that preceded it, former workers and house parents, as well as family members and local people who

are interested in the history of this institution. Former residents of Mittagong often refer to themselves as 'Govos'. The Renwick Association campaigned for heritage protection of the site after it was sold by the New South Wales government and there were plans to subdivide and redevelop the area, resulting in substantial loss of buildings. The Renwick Association hosts reunions at the site.

In 2014 members of the Mittagong community and former wards were trying to preserve surviving buildings for use as a children's museum and youth centre.

Challoner Cottage was heritage listed in 2014.

Gallery



Heffernan [Mittagong Homes]

Description: This is a digital copy of a photograph from an album collected by Child Welfare Department officers in the late 1940s. From the collection of Leonie Knapman.



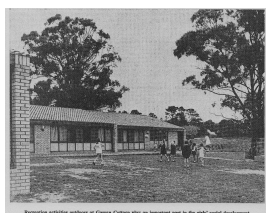
Time for change: Children work in the garden at Renwick State Ward Home

Description: This photograph was supplied to The Sydney Morning Herald for the 2014 article 'Renwick State Ward Home at the centre of feuding between the government and community group over plans for the site'.



Houseparents at Garran and other cottages share hobbies and other interests with the children in a warm family atmosphere (Mittagong Cottage Homes)

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1970.



Recreation activities outdoors at Garran Cottage play an important part in the girls' social development (Mittagong Cottage Homes)

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1970.



Rowe Cottage

Description: This image shows a building that was part of the Mittagong Training School Group.



Goodlet Cottage: Mittagong Training Centre Group



Challoner Cottage viewed from Bong Bong Road

Description: This image shows Mittagong Farm Home, Cottage No.12, Old Dormitory Building, Renwick Child Welfare House, Mittagong Training School for Boys, Renwick Farm Home, Renwick State Ward Home.



Suttor Cottage

Description: This is a copy of an image of Suttor Cottage (also known as Suttor House) which is published on the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage website.



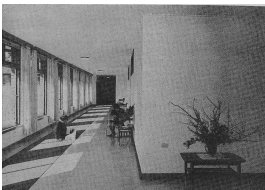
The dining room at Linden Cottage [Mittagong]

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1968.



Linden Dormitory [Mittagong Cottages]

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1968.



The spacious hallway in Linden Cottage is designed as a sun trap [Mittagong]

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1968.



Facing the starter at Waverley Cottage, Mittagong

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1959.



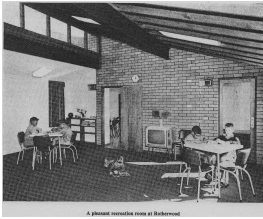
Houseparents and boys at "Rowe", the newest of the cottages at the Training School for Boys, Mittagong

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1967.



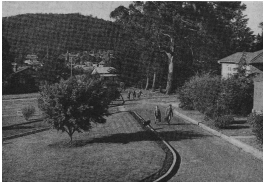
Children from Garran, Rotherwood, Suttor and Renwick Cottages benefit from co-education at Southwood School, Mittagong

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1970.



A pleasant recreation room at Rotherwood

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1969.



Turner Cottage boys returning home from school (Mittagong Cottage Homes)

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1966.



Turner Cottage. Attractive spacious grounds are a feature of the ward cottages at Mittagong

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1963.

More info

Chronology

- Mittagong Cottage Homes (1885 - 1976)
 - **Renwick (1976 – 1994)**

Related Entries

Run by

- [Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1976 - 1988\)](#)
- [Department of Family and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1988 - 1991\)](#)
- [Department of Health and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1991 - 1992\)](#)
- [Department of Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1992 - 2009\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Mittagong Training School For Boys \(1947 - 1976\)](#)
When Mittagong Training School for Boys was closed in 1976, its buildings were taken over and became part of Renwick.
- [Renwick Association Inc \(15 September 2011 - current\)](#)

Related Places

- [Mittagong Cottage Homes Area \(1896 - 1994\)](#)

Resources

- Quinn, Peter E, [Unenlightened efficiency: the administration of the juvenile correction system in New South Wales 1905-1988](#), 27 March 2006
- Association of Children's Welfare Agencies, [A Short History of Out of Home Care in New South Wales](#), 2010
- Downie, Leeallison, [Challoner Cottage - Mittagong](#), Heritage Watch NSW, 2013
- [Hassall and Jefferis Cottages \[Cutler's Inn, Government or Mittagong Farm Home, Kangaroo Inn\]](#), State Heritage Inventory, 2022

- [Rowe Cottage \[Mittagong Training School Group\]](#), State Heritage Inventory, No date
- [Goodlet Cottage: Mittagong Training Centre Group](#), State Heritage Inventory, 2013
- [Renwick Child Welfare House](#), State Heritage Inventory, 2022
- [Renwick Group](#), State Heritage Inventory, No date
- [Suttor Cottage](#), State Heritage Inventory, No date
- [Challoner Cottage, Mittagong Farm Home \[Other names: Cottage No.12, Old Dormitory Building, Renwick Child Welfare House, Mittagong Training School for Boys, Renwick Farm Home, Renwick State Ward Home\]](#), State Heritage Inventory, 2022
- [Renwick Reunion attracts big crowd](#), Southern Highland News, 5 November 2014
- Arnold, Alex, [Renwick State Ward Home gets listed](#), Illawarra Mercury, 27 March 2014
- [Reliving the Renwick State Ward Home years](#), Illawarra Mercury, 29 October 2012
- Meyers, Jackie, [Historian records tales of 30,000 children who called Renwick home](#), Southern Highland News, 2009

Records

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

Records

- [Departmental Records relating to State Wards, New South Wales \(1918 - current\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://findconnect.efront.digital/entity/renwick/>