

Hope Haven

1907 – c. 1927

Other Names: • Haven of Hope

Details

Hope Haven was set up by the Central Methodist Mission in George Street, Sydney in 1907 as a half-way house, or rescue home, for 'friendless girls'. Its residents were homeless, single mothers, addicts and ex-prisoners. Hope Haven was converted to a home for mothers and children in 1913, but still seems to have been performing rescue work until at least 1916, by which time it had moved to Castlereagh Street and was still open, and performing rescue and maternity work, in 1927.

In 1909 the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on the operation of the Alexandra Rescue Home, and the relationship it had with Hope Haven. The paper said:

Recently a new home known as Hope Haven has been erected in George-street North. There were two sisters in attendance, and it was part of their daily duty to attend the various police courts and offer shelter and protection to the friendless females who chanced to come before the magistrates. After a couple of days at Hope Haven the girls were sent to Burwood, and there they remained until situations could be secured for them, or until they could be restored to their parents.

In 1916 *The Sun* interviewed Sister Edith, of Hope Haven and the interview was reproduced in *The Richmond River Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser*:

It is Sister Edith's work, to visit the courts, – where she speaks to girl prisoners before the cases come on. After the cases are through Sister Edith bears off those she may to Hope Haven, where they have a rest, some food and, if necessary, clothes, and, above all, friendly intercourse with Sister Edith herself. She finds out where they live, why they have left home, and, if possible, persuades them to return to their own roof-tree after having interviewed the parents, make things easier for the culprit, and also to get some idea of why the break has been made.

Sister Edith is a firm believer in the basic goodness of humanity. 'You'll always find (if you look hard enough,' she says, 'the loose screw responsible for a girl's downfall. Often I find it in the home-training – sometimes I cannot at all make out how quite nice little girls got their kink, but I know there is some good reason at the back of it. Frequently at the courts there will be girl vagrants who wander the streets simply because their home-life is too unhappy for them to return to their families. They become vagrants because they have only two things to choose between – unhappiness at home or the freedom of the streets. Such girls turn to Sister Edith with joy, and after a rest at Hope Haven, and usually a tidying-up demanded by their term, of vagrancy, they are taken out to Alexandra Home at Burwood, where they learn to be happy and useful. Of course, there are unmanageables,' says Sister Edith. 'Sometimes you hear of a 15-year-old taking a room in town and having what she calls a good time with soldier boys. When you visit her parents you find that the youngest members of the family are quite uncontrolled, and there you have the loose

screw, lack of training. Again, there are a great many who fall through utter ignorance of the city's pitfalls.

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Girls were transferred from Hope Haven to Alexandra Rescue Home.

Resources

- [Central Methodist Mission](#), The Sydney Morning Herald, 18 May 1923

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