

Boys' Home

April 1890 – 1906

Other Names:

- Boys' Home Brisbane
- Boys' Home Woolloowin

Details

The Boys' Home was established in April 1890 in the South Brisbane home of Mr and Mrs Thompson. It was run by a Committee of private citizens. In late 1897 it moved to a property named 'Rowallan' at 84 Kedron Park Road, Woolloowin. In 1906, under Canon EC Osborn, the home moved to a nine-acre property at Hurdcliffe Street, Enoggera and changed its name to Enoggera Boys' Home.

The Boys' Home was opened in April 1890 by Mr and Mrs Thompson in their own home in Stanley Street, South Brisbane. It was maintained by private subscriptions and donations of food, clothing and furniture. Mr James Ferguson (of Messrs Watson and Ferguson, booksellers) acted as honorary Secretary and Treasurer of the home. He also acted as trustee for most boys when they left the home to take up employment. The boys' employers forwarded their wages to Ferguson who deposited the wages in their Savings Bank Accounts.

Within a few years new premises were sought to meet increasing demand and the Boys' Home moved to a property named "Rowallan" at Kedron Park Road, Woolloowin.

The Home was operating from the new premises when the Committee reported to the Home Secretary on 6 November 1898:

Total number of boys admitted to date 397. In addition to the above number, we have had over 100 children sheltered in the home for a short time being lost children, boys sleeping out or boys whose parents were locked up, they being brought to us by the police. All boys remanded by the Police Magistrates are sent to our Home instead of being locked up in the Police cells, crippled and other boys unfit to send to the reformatory have been sent to the Home. The Home is also open to orphanage boys returning from situations who are too old and who it is not deemed advisable to send to the receiving home at Sandgate.

Many of the boys are sent to situations on Stations or farms.

In 1900 Mr Walter Wassell replaced the Thompsons as Superintendent of the Home. By 1903 nearly 500 boys had "passed through the Home".

In the Annual Report of the Boys' Home for the year ending 30 June 1905 it was stated that:

The Committee are now pleased to announce the purchase, at a most reasonable price, of an ideal position at Enoggera from the money placed a few years ago at a fixed deposit in the bank . The

Committee are enabled to pay two-thirds of the purchase money, leaving a balance of about £100 still due. As soon as the committee are able to clear this off, every effort will be devoted to raise sufficient funds to erect suitable premises, and thus be enabled to give the boys under healthy surrounding, an initiatory training in agricultural work, whilst at the same time contributing to some extent to the support of the Home.

According to the Annual Report the institution classed itself as:

not only unsectarian, but also undenominational. Protestant boys are sent to the nearest Protestant Church, and Roman Catholic boys to the nearest Roman Catholic Church.

In February 1906 Superintendent Walter Wassell was charged in the Supreme Court with serious assault on a boy at the Boys' Home, Woolloowin, in April 1905. He was found guilty and the Chief Justice, in sentencing the prisoner, remarked upon the gravity of the offence and the probability that he may well have ruined the lives of the boys affected by his conduct. Wassell was sentenced to seven years imprisonment with hard labour.

In April 1906, Rev. Canon (later Archdeacon) Edward C Osborn advised the Home Secretary that a new Committee was formed to carry on the work of the Boys' Home. The tenancy of the Woolloowin home terminated on 6 May 1906 and in June 1906, the home moved to the new nine acre property at Hurdcliffe Street, Enoggera. The new Committee decided that the home should care only for boys aged 11 to 15 years.

The name of the home was changed to Enoggera Boys' Home in 1906.

Gallery



Woolloowin State Children's Home, Brisbane, ca. 1931

Description: This description was supplied with the photograph and included on the library website: The house was originally called Rowallan which was owned by the Muir family on Kedron Park Road before it became the Diamantina Receiving Depot.

More info

Chronology

- **Boys' Home (April 1890 – 1906)**
 - Enoggera Boys' Home (1906 - 1978)

Related Entries

Related Organisations

- [Diamantina Receiving Depot and Infants' Home \(1910 - 1962\)](#)

The Diamantina Receiving Depot and Infants' Home was on the former site of the Boys' Home, Woolloowin.

Resources

- [A Serious Charge](#), Sydney Morning Herald, 27 February 1906

Records

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

Records

- [Johnston, John, Historian, News clippings and photographs - Children's Homes \(c. 1840 - c. 1990\)](#)
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