

Boys' Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames

1880 – 1891

Other Names:

- Fitzjames, The
- The Reformatory Ship

Details

The Boys' Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames was refitted as a reformatory for boys by the Destitute Board in 1880. The former Canadian ship was moored at Largs Bay. Boys were brought to the Hulk from Illfracombe Boys Reformatory, the Boys Reformatory, Magill and Magill Industrial School. In 1891 the boys were moved back to the newly renovated Boys Reformatory at Magill.

In 1876 the South Australian Government bought the Fitzjames, a Canadian three masted ship. Unseaworthy, it had been moored in Melbourne's Hobson's Bay since 1866. The Government initially used the vessel as a quarantine hulk and then later, at the encouragement of the Destitute Board, had it refitted to serve as a Reformatory ship for 'uncontrollable' boys who were wards of the State. Prior to 1880 these boys were accommodated at Illfracombe, a mansion in Burnside temporarily leased for the purpose, and the Boys Reformatory, Magill. Once brought to South Australia the Fitzjames was moored in shallow water at Largs Bay.

Boys from Illfracombe and the Boys Reformatory, Magill, were transferred aboard the Fitzjames. Some boys from the Magill Industrial School were also sent to the Hulk.

On board the vessel, boys underwent 'nautical' training as well as regular schooling. They were under the control of a Superintendent. Boys made their own clothing and boots under the supervision of a tailor and a shoemaker. Other staff on the vessel included the schoolmaster, a carpenter and a cook. Clergymen from various faiths visited the Hulk every Sunday to conduct services. In 1888 a special arrangement was made for Protestant and Catholic boys to attend churches at Semaphore and Port Adelaide respectively. Only a small number of boys 'trained' on this floating reformatory actually went to sea. The majority were placed out on farms.

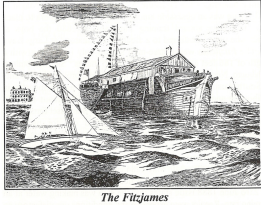
During its life as a reformatory the Hulk was under constant repair, leaks being a continual problem. Conditions on board for the boys were very harsh. In May 1891 the boys were moved back to the newly renovated Boys Reformatory, Magill.

Gallery



Boys Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames

Description: This photo is undated, the date included is an estimate. This webpage is no longer in operation. This URL is taken from the wayback machine and is dated 12 March 2022.



The Fitzjames

Description: This is a sketch of the Fitzjames with the Largs Pier Hotel visible in the background.

More info

Chronology

- Ilfracombe, Boys Reformatory (1869 - 1880)
- Boys' Reformatory, Magill (1869 - 1880)
 - **Boys' Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames (1880 – 1891)**
 - Boys Reformatory, Magill (1891 - 1967)

Related Entries

Run by

- [Destitute Board, South Australian Government \(1849 - 1886\)](#)
Date: 1880 - 1886
- [State Children's Council \(1886 - 1927\)](#)
Date: 1886 - 1891

Related Events

- [Way Commission, Province of South Australia \(1883 - 1885\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Magill Industrial School \(1869 - 1898\)](#)
Some boys from the Magill Industrial School were sent to the Boys' Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames.

Resources

- Morley, Charles, *The Glandore Story: from Hulk to Haven*, 1995
- Robb, Simon, *The Hulk*, 2003
- Spence, Catherine, *State children in Australia : a history of boarding out and its developments*, 1907

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Records of the Social Welfare Department and predecessors \(1849 - c. 1987\)](#)
- [Records created by the Destitute Board \(c. 1845 - 1927\)](#)
- [Register of Admissions to the Reformatory Hulk and Boys Reformatory, Magill \(1877 - 1898\)](#)
Held by State Records of SA. This large register contains information across two pages on each child admitted to the Boys Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames. From 1892 the register refers to the Boys Reformatory, Magill.
- [Minutes - Destitute Board \(1849 - 1927\)](#)
Held at State Records of SA. These minutes concern the general business of the Board. Some details about

individual cases are given.

- [Minutes - State Children's Council, later the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board \(1886 - 1965\)](#)
Held by State Records of SA. These minutes contain some entries related to the Boys Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames, including admissions, comments on conditions aboard and information regarding the transfer of boys to the Magill Reformatory.
 - [Correspondence files \('SCD' files\) - State Children's Department \(1887 - 1927\)](#)
Held by State Records of SA. These records comprise files of letters and other documents. Dockets relate to many different subjects and may include correspondence related to the Boys Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames.
 - [Register of Admissions to the Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames \(1879 - 1893\)](#)
Held by State Records of SA. This large register contains information across two pages on each child admitted to the Boys Reformatory Hulk, Fitzjames.
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