

# The House of Mercy and Retreat for Women Records

1881 – 1975

**To access these records:**

Please contact the Archivist, Diocesan Archives Centre:

Postal address: 26 King William Road, North Adelaide SA 5006

Phone: (08) 8305 9350

Email: [archives@adelaideanglicans.com](mailto:archives@adelaideanglicans.com)

Website: <https://adelaideanglicans.com/ministry-support/archives/>

**Records Location**

These records are part of [Records related to former Church of England Children's Homes \(1860? - 1990\)](#)

## Details

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The House of Mercy and Retreat for Women Records is a collection of records created between 1881-1975 by staff and officers of the Home. The records collection includes an admissions and discharges register; baptism records; committee minutes and correspondence; annual reports; matron's reports; social workers' reports and correspondence; financial records; property records; and a small number of photographs.

## Access Conditions

Former residents of the children's Homes of the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide and Church of England, or members of their families, can apply to the Diocesan Archivist to be provided with information and/or copies of records relevant to their time in care. Physical access to the historical records of the children's Homes or the church's Social Welfare Bureau is not permitted due to the fragility of the material and the need to protect the privacy of third parties.

## Records

Record keeping practices varied significantly from one Home to another and from one time period to another, with respect to the quantity and types of records that were created and preserved. Many of the following records are fragmentary or incomplete, or were created only for specific time periods during the overall duration of the Homes.

The House of Mercy and Retreat for Women Records includes an admission and discharges register, baptism records, annual reports, minutes and correspondence, matron's reports, social workers' reports, financial records, property records and some photographs.

The records in this collection include:

- Matron's reports, 1935-1939 & 1968 – Includes carbon copies of matron's monthly reports to the committee, these include the name of girls and babies.  
(These records were previously described on the Find & Connect web resource as Matron's Reports, House of Mercy (1935 – 1939).)
- Admissions and discharges register, 1971-1973 – Is a small notebook with handwritten admission entries. The entries include; surname, Christian name, address, date of birth, age, religion, occupation, admitted, baby. Entries provide information about adoption and record 'papers signed' allowing adoption, or note that mother kept baby. It is the only surviving Admission register.  
(These records were previously described on the Find & Connect web resource as House of Mercy Admissions (1971 – 1973).)
- Social worker's correspondence, 1966-1974 – Includes some reference to individual cases.
- Social worker's monthly reports, 1965-1974 – Contains reference to individual cases.  
(These records were previously described on the Find & Connect web resource as Social Worker's Reports, House of Mercy (1965 – 1974).)
- Minutes of the House of Mercy Committee, 1933-1975 – The Management Committee minutes sometimes include brief matron's reports, but rarely mention names of children. Early minutes are in a bound volume. Minutes can include applications for admission and confirmation of acceptance; adoption information; baptisms; social worker's report; financial records and news clippings. Occasionally, the records refer to a resident's Aboriginality, although individuals are not named. Many names of girls and babies in later minute books (from 1952) have been blacked out.  
(These records were previously described on the Find & Connect web resource as Minutes of Management Committee (1933 – 1972).)
- Annual reports, 1885-1974 with gaps – The reports are small booklets with a chairman's report and later a social worker's report. The reports provide information on numbers and activities of girls at the home and the number of babies born and adopted out.  
(These records were previously described on the Find & Connect web resource as Annual Reports of the House of Mercy (1950 – 1974).)
- House of Mercy Trust Fund records, 1975 – Includes correspondence and notes on assistance given to people.
- Secretary's file, 1975 – Includes minutes, correspondence, social worker's reports.
- Committee correspondence, 1968-1969
- House of Mercy Rules of Association, c.1880s-1970s – Includes various versions.
- Vestry Record Book of the House of Mercy chapel, 1905-1948 – Contains information on baptisms and confirmations.
- Property records, 1906-1974 – These include insurance records, building plans and specifications, documents regarding sale of parcels of land, and of the home itself.
- Photographs, mostly undated – Consists of 8 black and white photographs depicting interior and exterior views of the House of Mercy, including one image of a baby on the lap of an older woman and 18 colour photographs, dating to approximately the 1960s, depicting interior and exterior views of the House of Mercy, not including any people.

(Some of these records were previously described on the Find & Connect web resource as Miscellaneous Records, House of Mercy (1960s – 1970s).)

## More info

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### Organisations in these records

#### Related Organisations

- [House of Mercy and Retreat for Women \(1881 - 1974\)](#)

## Records

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### Related Contact Details

- [Diocesan Archives Centre - Contact Details](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://findconnect.efront.digital/entity/the-house-of-mercy-and-retreat-for-women-records/>