

Wyadra Hostel

1952 – 1957

Details

Wyadra Hostel, run by the Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution, opened in New Town in 1952. It was initially for children with partial hearing and later for those with no hearing. The Hostel closed in 1957.

Wyadra Hostel opened officially on 21 April 1952 in Clare Street, New Town.

The Institute for the Blind and the Deaf, formerly the Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution, ran the Hostel with the help of a government subsidy. The government also provided the house.

Since 1948, children with partial hearing had been going to special classes in lip reading and speech at New Town State School. In 1950, they began attending ordinary classes at the School. Before Wyadra Hostel opened the children lived at the Tasmanian Institute for the Blind and the Deaf with other children who had no hearing. When they returned to the Institute at night they used sign language to communicate with the others. In July and August 1949, Professor Alexander Ewing and Dr Irene Ewing, advocates of the oral method of teaching from Manchester University, visited Tasmania. The Ewings believed that living at the Institution inhibited the progress of the partially deaf children. They recommended separate accommodation to force them to use speech and lip reading all the time.

Joy Smith writes that the separation of children who were partially deaf from those that were deaf showed that:

little attempt was made to understand the bicultural and bilingual needs of prelingually deaf children, nor was there any realization that the deaf and partially deaf might be able to give each other mutual support. By accepting the prevailing philosophy and adopting the Ewings' recommendation for the partially deaf, the Institute was to leave the deaf children even more isolated than before.

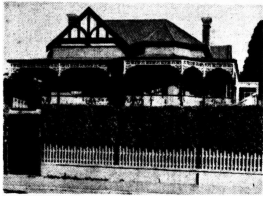
Four girls had moved from the Institute to Wyadra by 1951. It opened with 12 or 13 children in 1952. The Hostel was used for children with partial hearing until 1956. Then they moved back to Lewis Street and children with total deafness moved into Wyadra where they were taught in a special classroom at the Hostel. The aim was to integrate them into an ordinary primary school at a later date.

In 2013, Relationships Australia occupies the site of Wyadra Hostel.

Gallery



The former Wyadra Hostel as it looks in 2013



Wyadra Hostel

Description: This is a photograph showing the exterior of Wyadra Hostel that appeared in an article in *The Mercury* on 27 July 1958.



Children attending lessons at Wyadra Hostel

Description: This is a photograph of two boys during a lesson at Wyadra Hostel. They are seated at a desk wearing headphones, with microphones overhead. A woman stands in front of them holding a picture of the Queen. This photograph appeared as part of a photo-set in *The Mercury* on 26 March 1954. The caption reads "A special room is provided at the institute with equipment to help patriially deaf children. Microphones and earphones are used in amplifying the voices of teachers and children during lessons. Here Leigh Harrison (left) and Ian Bruce listen attentively to teacher Miss I. Arnott."



Children playing with a doll's house at Wyadra Hostel

Description: This is a photograph of two children playing with a large doll's house at Wyadra Hostel. This photograph appeared as part of a photo-set in *The Mercury* on 26 March 1954. The caption reads "This doll's house brings much joy, and it is also used in teaching. Two blind children - five-year-old Karen Williams and David Ransley (8) - explore the interior."



Children and staff at Wyadra Hostel

Description: This is an image of children and staff at Wyadra Hostel. Fourteen children are seated around two tables eating bread and jam and three female staff members stand in the background. This photograph appeared as part of a photo-set in *The Mercury* on 26 March 1954. The caption reads "The Wyadra hostel for partially deaf children at Clare St. is a happy place for all associated with it. Members of the staff pictured here with their charges at bread-and-jam time are (l. to r.) Miss M. Hyland, Miss D. Jackson, and Mrs. M. Ambrose, who is in charge of the hostel."

More info

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Run by

- [Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution \(1898 - 1987\)](#)

The Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution, which was also a Home, ran Wyadra Hostel.

Resources

- [Those afflicted make appeal for aid](#), *The Mercury*, 26 March 1954

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