

Collie Boys' Home

1902 – 1920

- Other Names:**
- Pollard's
 - Salvation Army Junior Industrial School for Protestant Boys
 - No. 2 Boys' Home
 - Small Boys' Home
 - Boys' Home, Collie Settlement

Details

The Collie Boys' Home was established by the Salvation Army in 1902. It was for boys aged from 4 years, including children who were sent by relatives. Around 1920 the Collie Boys' Home closed permanently and it is possible that the boys were sent to the Salvation Army's Boys' Home in the Perth suburb of West Subiaco (later Nedlands). The site was later used for the Coolangatta Farm and then the Collie Power Station.

The Salvation Army opened a Home for 'waifs' in 1902, on land previously settled by the Pollard family, outside the township of Collie, Western Australia. It was one of three institutions set on 8,093 hectares of land held by the Salvation Army. The other institutions were the Salvation Army Industrial School for Boys, Collie and the Salvation Army Industrial School for Girls, Collie. The establishment of these institutions received wide publicity and glowing accounts were published in the newspapers in the early 1900s.

The exact starting date of the Collie Boys' Home is unclear. The Salvation Army Industrial School for Boys, Collie, commenced in September 1901 and it is possible that boys of all ages were settled together there. In a June 1902 item written by the Superintendent for the Salvation Army magazine, *The Victory*, there is no mention of two boys' Homes at Collie so it is likely that the Home opened in the latter half of that year. Government reports suggest that Collie may have closed for a period during 1903, but it had re-opened by 1904. The Salvation Army's own documents report on a home for 'small boys' operating in Collie in 1903. Later reports show that older boys were also admitted and it is likely that most of the boys admitted privately through relatives were housed at the Collie Boys' Home rather than the Industrial School.

The *Bunbury Herald* ('Sketches in the District') reported in 1903 that 27 boys aged 6 to 15 years lived there. The 'Report by the Superintendent of Public Charities and Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, 1904' notes that the Collie Boys' Home had re-opened during 1904 on the site at Pollard's Home, three miles distant from the Salvation Army Industrial School for Senior Boys.

In 1908, the three Children's Homes at Collie were vilified in the *Sunday Times* newspaper, which alleged children suffered overwork, unduly harsh punishment and poor food and living conditions. In the words of the newspaper, the Homes were 'coffinages'.

'General instructions' regarding punishment at the Home were included in the Salvation Army's 'Punishment Book'. Discipline was meant to be 'mild and firm' with corporal punishment a 'last resort', but could be 'inflicted in the presence of a witness' for 'absconding, offences against morality, for gross impertinence, or for wilful and persistent disobedience'. Corporal punishment was not meant to be used for 'trivial breaches of discipline' and boxing children's ears was 'strictly forbidden'. All cases of corporal punishment were to be recorded in the Punishment Book immediately after the child was punished. The date, 'detail of the offence, number of strokes administered, and the name of the witness' were to be recorded. The instructions also gave guidance for 'light

punishments' for other offences. These included: taking away a child's privileges and confining the child to a room 'but not in darkness'. It was also allowed to reduce the quantity or quality of food allowed to a child, who could be given 'eight ounces of bread and water' instead of the normal meal, 'but no child must be deprived of two meals in succession'. The punishments were intended to comply with the Regulations of the *State Children Act 1907*.

In 1913, there were around 60 boys aged from 4 to 15 years in the Home.

In a 2003 memoir, former Governor-General Sir Paul Hasluck recalled boyhood memories as a child of the manager of the Collie Boys' Home from 1913 to 1917: the No. 1 Home (the reformatory) and No. 2 Home (Collie Boys' Home) were 'almost wholly self-contained', with separate schools, stores, bakeries, boot-makers' shops, smithies and dairies. There were few visitors to the Homes, and few trips into the township of Collie. Meat, cereals, fruit and vegetables were produced to be eaten on site and the surplus was sold. Horses were an important part of the workforce, which included around 'a dozen Salvation Army officers, two school teachers, two in the office and seven or eight' others including 'boundary rider, carters, farm hands, etc'.

Boys would have been an essential part of the labour force at the Home, as Hasluck recalled there were 'about twenty milking cows and perhaps two thousand sheep...some cropping, mostly wheat and oats for chaff, and a good orchard and vegetable garden [and] the homes also did some carting of sleepers for the sleeper-cutters who were hewing on Crown Land'. There was also a run of chickens.

As the Home was situated out in the bush, it was not a 'secure' institution – there were no fences to keep boys inside the perimeter. However, a report in the Salvation Army's newspaper, *The War Cry* (20 July 1918, p.5) mentioned that one of the punishments boys received was being 'sentenced to a period *within bounds*' so there was apparently some way of ensuring boys did not stray from the immediate vicinity of the Home.

While Collie received a lot of positive publicity, some men took memories of hardship into their adult lives. In 1981, a former resident who had been sent there in 1912 recalled 'deplorable conditions' at Collie, including 'him and another young lad being made to use nothing but a spade and a wheelbarrow to make a road to the home. Their only form of sustenance was a mere glass of water.' (*West Australian* June, 1981).

A letter of appreciation of the *The Daily News* Orphans' Christmas Cheer Fund in 1915 gives an insight into life at the Boys' Home at Collie. The letter shows that donations enabled the children to occasionally have extras that were not part of their daily experience:

[The money was spent on] Cordials, £3 15s.; sweets, £1 7s.; peanuts £1 1s.; almonds, 8s. 6d.; hams £2 11s. 9d.; cakes, £3 10s.; prizes £1 10s.; cricketing set, £1 10s. The balance of £1 11s. 9d. Will be utilised for a picnic for the boys on the 30th [of January]. Letter, 22 January 1916 published in The Daily News 2 December 1916, p.10

In 1918, 36 boys were transferred from the Collie Boys' Home to the Salvation Army Boys' Home, Nedlands.

In 1920, the institution closed and the remaining boys were sent to the Salvation Army's reformatory, Seaforth, in the Perth suburb of Gosnells. The site was later used for the Coolangatta Farm and then the Collie Power Station.

Gallery



Home for Little Boys - Salvation Army Industrial School, Collie, 1906

Description: 'Home for Little Boys - Salvation Army Industrial School, Collie, 1906' is an image included (after p.22) in the *Report by the Superintendent of Public Charities and Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools* for the year ending 31 December 1906. This image shows a group of approximately 40 young boys in front of a timber-framed building. The boys range in age from about 3 to 10 years old. They are wearing a uniform of light-coloured shirts, collars, light or dark coloured pants or shorts, and boots. Two female staff members are kneeling in front of the group, with the youngest children seated besides them or on their knees, and two male staff members stand behind the group.



Salvation Army Children's Homes, Collie, ca. 1910

Description: This image shows buildings used as the Salvation Army Children's Homes near Collie, Western Australia.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [The Salvation Army, Australian Territory \(1880 - 1921\)](#)
- [The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory \(1921 - 2018\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Salvation Army Industrial School for Boys \[Collie\] \(1901 - 1920\)](#)
Collie Boys' Home was located on the same land owned by the Salvation Army in Collie as the Salvation Army Industrial School for Boys [Collie]. Salvation Army Industrial School for Boys [Collie]), and probably began by housing young boys transferred from that School.
- [Salvation Army Industrial School for Girls, Collie \(1901 - 1920\)](#)
The Salvation Army Industrial School for Girls, Collie was located on the same land owned by the Salvation Army in Collie, as the Collie Boys' Home.
- [Salvation Army Boys' Home \(1918 - 1965\)](#)
When The Collie Boys' Home closed, boys were sent to the Salvation Army Boys' Home in the Perth suburb of West Subiaco (later known as Nedlands).

Related Legislation

- [State Children Act 1907, Western Australia \(1907 - 1948\)](#)
The Collie Boys' Home was classed as an orphanage within the meaning of the *State Children Act 1907*.

Resources

- Kirkham, John C, *Southern Soup-Soap-Salvation, a compendium of Salvation Army Social Services in the Australian Southern Territory*, 2003
- [Salvation Army at Collie](#), Western Mail, 22 March 1902
- [No heading \[Salvation Army at Collie - illustrations\]](#), Western Mail, 22 March 1902
- [Salvation Army Rescue Work](#), Kalgoorlie Western Argus, 23 June 1903
- *West Australia*, The Victory, 1 September 1921
- *Remaking Young Australians*, The War Cry, 26 March 1921
- *The Chief in the West*, The Victory, 1 October 1919
- *Distinguished Visitors at the Boys' Home, Collie, W.A.*, The War Cry, 20 July 1918

- *Thomas struggled to millionaire status*, The West Australian, June 1981
- Hasluck, P., *Memoirs of his boyhood in the Collie Region*, The Skeleton, 2003
- *Salvos given a caning*, Sunday Times, 19 November 1995
- [Collie Salvation Army Home: A Complaint](#), The Northam Advertiser, 7 March 1908
- [Salvation Army Settlement, Collie](#), Southern Times, 25 May 1901

Other Resources

Title: Our Collie Boys' Homes

Type: Image

Date: September 1913

[Details](#)



Title: General instructions

Type: Image

Date: 1907 - 1920

[Details](#)

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Historical records and memorabilia of Salvation Army institutions, Southern Territory](#)
 - [Children's Homes Files, Western Australian Salvation Army Homes \(1897 - 2012\)](#)
 - [Department of Aboriginal Affairs \[predecessors\], Records \(1886 - 2004\)](#)
 - [Salvation Army Australia, Records of Homes in the former Southern Territory \(c. 1889 - c. 1988\)](#)
 - [Files - Department of Aborigines and Fisheries \(1909 - 1920\)](#)
 - [Files - Chief Protector of Aborigines \(1898 - 1908\)](#)
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