FIND & CONNECT

Whitby Falls Hospital

1897 – 1972

Other Names:
- Whitby Falls Asylum
- Whitby Falls

Details

Whitby Falls Hospital was a government-run facility, established in 1897 at Jarrahdale, as an annexe of the Fremantle Asylum. Male psychiatric patients described as ‘quiet and chronic’ were sent there as well as adolescents with intellectual disabilities. In 1972 the hospital closed and a hostel was opened on the site.

Whitby Falls Hospital was started by the Colonial Government to take patients from the over-crowded Fremantle Asylum. The first twelve patients were ‘quiet and chronic’ males. Adolescents with intellectual disabilities may have been sent to Whitby Falls which has been described as having ‘farm colony facilities for a small number of people with intellectual disabilities’. Whitby Falls Hospital closed in 1972 and a hostel was opened on the site.

[From the State Records Office]
A one thousand acre property for Whitby Falls Hospital was purchased from a William Paterson by the State government in 1897 for the sum of 7, 000 pounds. Fremantle Asylum by this time had become over-crowded and it was decided to move some psychiatric patients to Whitby Falls. The farmhouse on the property was renovated to accommodate 50 patients and the first 12 patients were placed there on 12 July 1897.

Despite a proclamation on 12 September 1900 declaring Whitby Falls an asylum, it was eventually deemed too remote a location and a new asylum was built at Claremont instead.

Whitby Falls Hospital became an auxiliary to Claremont Hospital and a cooperative dairy farm and cattle breeding program was implemented by the two hospitals.

In 1914, Whitby Falls was gazetted a home for male alcoholics under the Inebriates Act 1912. The Hospital reverted again to take psychiatric patients from Claremont in 1918.

Due to the small number of patients at Whitby Falls Hospital, the Under Secretary declared in 1932 that ‘as an institution Whitby hardly justified its existence (financially)’ and it was declared ‘first and foremost a farm’. Whitby’s agricultural program was used as occupational therapy and rehabilitation for patients placed there but it also became a profitable operation that included poultry, dairy, vegetable, orchard, piggery and beef production.

In 1958, the government built a new hospital on the grounds of Whitby Falls. The original farmhouse was left unused until demolition in 1971.

In 1972, Claremont Hospital was divided into Graylands Hospital and Swanbourne Hospital. Whitby Falls became an annexe to Graylands and was de-gazetted from being an approved hospital to a hostel. The Armadale Health Service supplied psychiatric and allied health services to the hostel from the 1980s.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- Colonial Secretary's Office, Colony of Western Australia (1890 - 1924)
- Lunacy Department, State Government of Western Australia (1903 - 1934)
  Date: 1903 - 1934
- Mental Hospitals Department, State Government of Western Australia (1934 - 1954)
  Date: 1934 - 1954
- Mental Health Services, State Government of Western Australia (1954 - 1984)
  Date: 1954 - 1972

Related Events

- Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly to consider and report as to what is necessary to place the Asylum for the Insane on a satisfactory basis as to Accommodation and Maintenance, Colony of Western Australia (2 February 1891 - 19 February 1891)
- Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly appointed to inquire into the condition of the Fremantle and Whitby Falls Lunatic Asylums, Colony of Western Australia (17 October 1900 - 21 November 1900)
- Select Committee to inquire into the management of the Claremont Hospital for the Insane, Western Australia (24 September 1919 - 11 November 1919)
- Royal Commission in Lunacy, State of Western Australia (28 September 1921 - 21 September 1922)

Related Legislation

- Lunacy Act 1903, Western Australia (1903 - 1962)

Related Organisations

- Fremantle Asylum (1857 - 1909)
  Whitby Falls Hospital was originally established to take 'quiet and chronic' male patients from the Fremantle Asylum, including those with intellectual disabilities.

Resources

- *Patients amok at Claremont*, The Daily News, 11 February 1948
- *Fifteen Hundred Mental Patients*, The Daily News, 11 February 1948
- *The Bentley Case*, The West Australian, 23 April 1938
- *Bentley case*, The West Australian, 5 May 1938
- *Motion - Hospital for Insane, Inquiry. Extension of Scope [Hansard p809]*, Hansard Archive 1870 to 1995, 9 October 1919

Other Resources



Title: Researching Your Family History in Western Australia through Mental Health Records
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Details

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- Records of Whitby Falls Hospital (1897 - 1972)

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