

Blackburn South Cottages

1963 – 1988

Other Names:

- Blackburn Family Care
- Blackburn Family Services

Details

The Blackburn South Cottages was established by the Mission of St James and St John in 1963. There were about 16 children in each cottage, but by the 1980s there were about 6 children with 'cottage parents'. By this time Blackburn Cottages mostly housed older children with challenging behaviours. The campus at Blackburn became known as Blackburn Family Services in the 1980s, and closed in 1988.

The Blackburn South Cottages on the corner of Highfield Avenue and Branksome Grove were established by the Mission of St James and St John, opening on 6 October 1963. The Cottages provided modern accommodation for: 'boys and girls from broken homes and those marred by family crisis or tragedy'. The Cottages were designed and built in line with the then-current ideas about child welfare, to replace the congregate care facilities run by the Mission, like St Agnes' and St Nicholas' in Glenroy.

Cottages were initially run according to a congregate care model with matrons overseeing each cottage, and meals for all children being prepared in a central kitchen.

Later came the introduction of 'cottage parents' in each cottage. The number of children in each cottage was 16, until this was reduced to 6 in the 1980s.

By the 1980s, the Blackburn Cottages mainly catered for older children with challenging behaviours. The campus at Blackburn became known as Blackburn Family Services in the 1980s, and closed in 1988.

The Cottages were named after significant figures in the history of the Mission of St James and St John, such as S. H. Burridge, J. B. Were, W. J. Schutte, Ainsley Yeates, G. E. Lamble, and J. L. Watt. The G.E. Lamble Cottage and J.L.Watt Cottage both catered for girls, between them accommodating 16 girls and 2 carers, while the Yeates cottage was built for 8 boys and girls as a family group. Blackburn Family Care also ran the Minna Johnson Mothers and Babies home, which was located in Balwyn and later Box Hill, away from the main Blackburn South Cottages site.

The Cottages also included the dining, recreation and administration block and a caretaker's cottage. In 1966, two flats were built for additional staff members.

For the first time in 1969, a married couple was appointed to work in the Lamble Cottage.

In 1979, the Mission of St James and St John made a decision to phase out the Homes at the Blackburn Campus over the next 5 years.

In the 1980s, the number of children living in the cottages was reduced, to better reflect 'normal' family living. Around this time, a new name was adopted, Blackburn Family Care. However, the model of care provided at Blackburn did not keep up with current thinking in child and family

welfare.

The agency, by that time known as Blackburn Family Services, closed in 1988.

The Blackburn South Cottages was mentioned in the Bringing Them Home Report (1997) as an institution that housed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children removed from their families.

Gallery



A perspective of one of the new attractive homes to be erected at Blackburn South for the girls of St Agnes', Glenroy

Description: This image was published in an issue of the Mission of St James and St John's journal, *The Brothers*.



Family group cottage in course of construction

Description: This photograph (of Blackburn South Cottages) was published in the Mission of St James and St John's journal, *The Brothers*.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Mission of St James and St John \(1919 - 1997\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [St Nicholas' Boys' Home \(1926 - c. 1955\)](#)
Proceeds from the sale of the site of St Nicholas' Boys' Home funded the Blackburn South Cottages.
- [St Agnes' Girls' Home \(1926 - 1963\)](#)
When St Agnes' closed in 1963, girls were transferred to Blackburn South Cottages.

Related Concepts

- [Stolen Generations](#)

Resources

- Paul, [Bringing them Home - Paul story](#), Bringing Them Home: stories from the report, 2001
- *The Blackburn Story*, The Brothers, 1961
- *Behind the scenes at Blackburn South*, The Brothers, 1964
- *Dedication and official opening of the Blackburn South Cottages*, The Brothers, 1963

Other Resources



Title: The Blackburn Story

Type: Image

Date: c. 1961

[Details](#)



Title: Dedication and official opening of the Blackburn South Cottages

Type: Image

Date: 1963

[Details](#)



Title: Behind the scenes at Blackburn South

Type: Image

Date: c. 1964

[Details](#)

Records

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

Records

- [Anglicare Victoria Records \(1886 - current\)](#)
 - [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)
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