

# School of Homecrafts Hostel

c. 1925 – 1976

**Other Names:**

- Homecrafts Hostel
- Homecrafts Hostel for Young Women

## Details

---

The School of Homecrafts, in Berry Street, East Melbourne (Jolimont) was established in around 1925. Previously, the Girls' Training Home was on the site until it closed in around 1923. Initially the School of Homecrafts was run by the Girls' Friendly Society from 1925. In 1935, its management was taken over by the Mission of St James and St John. The School of Homecrafts Hostel offered training in domestic service to young women aged between 14 and 18 years. It closed in 1976.

The School of Homecrafts Hostel, at 43 Berry Street, East Melbourne, was situated on land that was originally reserved by the government for the establishment of an 'asylum for the training of domestic servants'.

The Training Home for Girls (also known as Servants' Training Institute) operated on the site from 1883 until around 1923. On 1 May 1923 the Argus reported that premises were 'about to be reopened under the auspices of the Church of England, as a school of homecrafts, where it is proposed to give girls a complete training in every branch of household activities, cooking and laundry work, sewing and the care and management of children in infancy and in the kindergarten stage'. The paper also reported that the building had undergone 'extension alterations' and would be refurnished. Young women at the School would receive two years of training.

In 1935, the Girls' Friendly Society handed over management of the School of Homecrafts to the Mission of St James and St John. It received its first girls from St Agnes' Girls' Home) in Glenroy in July 1935, for 'training in domestic arts and other occupations calculated not only to be useful and interesting to themselves but of great value in securing them suitable positions and in teaching them to be helpful and reliable to the utmost in such positions.'

In their history of the Mission of St James and St John, Monk and O'Donoghue write that the Mission's provision of hostel accommodation for young people from 14 to 18 reflected anxiety about 'the temptations of adolescence' and children previously receiving supervision and guidance in children's homes 'going astray'.

The girls, generally former residents of institutions, aged between 14 and 18 years, were trained in laundry work at the School of Homecrafts, until the laundry was closed in 1939. The Mission then established a school for 'training girls in domestic economy'.

From this point on, the School accommodated not only ex-institutional young women, but also those from the country doing courses such as Domestic Science, Teaching and Hairdressing. Monk and O'Donoghue note that it closed in 1976.

In 1978, the Mission of St James and St John established Beryl Booth Court on the former site of the School of Homecrafts Hostel.

In 1997 the Mission of St James and St John became part of Anglicare Victoria. At this time, records of the Mission were transferred to Anglicare Victoria. These included records of the various orphanages, homes and

other residences run by the Mission. The custodian of these records is Anglicare Victoria.

## Gallery

---



### **Girls' Training Home for Domestic Service. Berry Street, East Melbourne.**

**Description:** This is a copy of a brochure about the Training Home for Girls, made available on the website of the East Melbourne Historical Society. The brochure contains information about the institution and a number of photographs of young women who lived there. The photograph of the building appears on the back page of the brochure.

---

## More info

---

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Mission of St James and St John \(1919 - 1997\)](#)  
Date: 1935 - 1976
- [Girls' Friendly Society \(Victoria\) \(1883 - current\)](#)  
Date: 1925 - 1935

#### Related Organisations

- [Beryl Booth Court \(1978 - 1991\)](#)  
Beryl Booth Court was situated on the former site of the School of Homecrafts Hostel.
- [Training Home for Girls \(c. 1883 - c. 1923\)](#)  
The School of Homecrafts Hostel was located on the former site of the Training Home for Girls.

### Resources

- Nunn, H.W., [Social Services \(Chapter VIII of A Short History of the Church of England in Victoria 1847-1947\)](#), Issued by the Editorial Committee of the Centenary Celebrations, Melbourne Diocese, 1947
- [East Melbourne Historical Society catalogue \[website\]](#), No date
- [Fine Work by Children](#), The Argus, 27 October 1938
- Testro, Ron, [He's a man with a mission](#), The Argus, 26 July 1956

## Records

---

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

### Records

- [Anglicare Victoria Records \(1886 - current\)](#)
  - [Clements Langford Pty Ltd \(1868 - 1960\)](#)
- 

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/school-of-homecrafts-hostel/>