

# Dhurringile Rural Training Farm

1951 – 1964

## Details

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The Dhurringile Rural Training Farm in Tatura was established by the Presbyterian Church in 1951. It was purchased to accommodate child migrant boys aged 8 to 14 sent out from the United Kingdom by the Church of Scotland. Dhurringile was also set up to take in local orphans or homeless boys. It housed 50 children in the 1950s, but numbers reduced in the early 1960s. The facility closed in 1964.

The Presbyterian Church launched an appeal in January 1949 to raise funds to establish an institution for child migrants from the United Kingdom. The Church had purchased a 100 acre property in Tatura, in rural Victoria, known as Dhurringile. This mansion had formerly housed German prisoners of war.

In February 1949 that year, the Church outlined its aims for the institution at Tatura. Dhurringile would house 100 boys, between 8 and 14 years of age. The institution would be a training farm, but its residents would also have the opportunity to attend local schools.

The Dhurringile Rural Training Farm was officially opened in June 1951. Initially, there were 30 boys in residence, who were child migrants from the UK. According to historian Barry Coldrey, the residents of Dhurringile were 'sought from the welfare services of the Church of Scotland and the Quarrier Homes at Bridge-of-Weir near Glasgow. Quarrier had sent many children to Canada before World War I and during the 1920s.'

Newspaper articles from 1951 reported that the first group of 'lads' at Dhurringile would attend local schools in Shepparton, and would not commence farm training until they had completed their studies. At the official opening on 9 June 1951, the Superintendent of the Church's Social Services Department, Rev A.G. Harrison, said that the number of boys at Dhurringile would soon rise to 60.

The Fact-Finding Mission into Child Migration visited Dhurringile as part of its investigations, and Dhurringile was listed in their final report as one of the institutions not up to acceptable standards.

The Northern Ireland Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry noted that children from Northern Ireland were sent to Dhurringile.

Coldrey's publication *Good British stock* states that the number of boys at Dhurringile peaked at 50, and dropped rapidly thereafter. The venture at Dhurringile was wrapped up in 1964.

## Gallery

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**Dhurringile**

**Description:** This image is included as part of the Dhurringile entry on the Victorian Heritage Register.

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## Immigration - Child migration schemes - Dhurringile Rural Training Farm boys arrive

**Description:** This is an image of boys destined for the Dhurringile Rural Training Farm for boys at Tatura, Victoria, disembarking from a ship.



## Dhurringile Homestead

**Description:** This is an image of Dhurringile Homestead when it was taken over by the military authorities as part of the accommodation for prisoners-of-war of number 13 Prisoner-of- War Group. It housed German officers.

# More info

## Related Entries

### Run by

- [Presbyterian Church of Victoria \(c. 1838 - current\)](#)

### Related Events

- [Inquiry Into Child Migration, Parliament of Australia \(2000 - 2001\)](#)
- [Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry, Northern Ireland \(19 January 2013 - 2017\)](#)
- [Fact-Finding Mission on Child Migration \(1956\)](#)

### Related Organisations

- [Kildonan, Burwood \(1937 - c. 1961\)](#)  
Some boys who were at Kildonan were sent to Dhurringile Rural Training Farm.
- [Overseas League \(1910 - current\)](#)  
The Overseas League was an 'approved recruiter' for Dhurringile Rural Training Farm

### Related Concepts

- [Child Migration \(1800s - 1970s\)](#)

## Resources

- Community Affairs References Committee, [Lost Innocents: Righting the record - Report on child migration](#), 30 August 2001
- Immigration Museum, [Stolen childhoods](#), 2012
- UnitingCare Victoria and Tasmania, [Uniting Church in Australia: agencies in Victoria delivering substitute care services](#), April 2008
- [Dhurringile \[Victorian Heritage Register \(VHR\) Number H1554\]](#), Victorian Heritage Database, No date
- Zwartz, Barney, [Search boys' homes for corpses: ex-ward](#), The Age, 5 February 2013
- McGowan, Hugh, [Transcript of Hugh McGowan's presentation to the Family and Community Development Committee: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations](#), 4 February 2013

## Other Resources

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**Title:** Dhurringile Rural Training Farm for Orphan Migrant Boys via Murchison Victoria

**Type:** Image

**Date:** September 1956

[Details](#)

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## Records

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

### Records

- [Records held by Uniting Church Archives \(1923 - 1994\)](#)
  - [Kildonan UnitingCare Records \(1881 - 2001\)](#)
  - [Child and Youth Migration Records \(1901 - 1983\)](#)
  - [Client Files, Dhurringile Training Farm \(1948? - 1964?\)](#)
  - [Correspondence files, multiple number series \(policy matters\) \(1922 - 1968\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/dhurringile-rural-training-farm/>