

The Menzies Home for Boys

1943 – 1961

Other Names: • Home on the Hill

Details

The Menzies Home for Boys was the new name given in 1943 to the Minton Boys' Home. The Menzies Home for Boys was for "neglected" boys under the age of eighteen who had been recommended by the Children's Welfare Department. The Home was often referred to as 'The Home on the Hill'. The organisation also ran a hostel for older working boys in William Street, Frankston from 1955. In 1961, the name changed to The Menzies Home for Children.

The Menzies Home for Boys was named in honour of its long-serving president, James Menzies. James Menzies died in 1945, and the presidency was taken over by his son, J.L. Menzies (brother of Prime Minister R.G. Menzies). The name on the gateway to the Home was changed so it now said The Menzies Home for Boys.

In 1948 Mr and Mrs Price became Superintendent and Matron of the Home. Mr Price encouraged boys to participate in the Scouts and Cubs and coined the motto *One small improvement every day and one big improvement every week*.

In the early 1950's renovations were completed on the home; a new shower and toilet block was built and the kitchen, dining room and playing field were upgraded.

In 1955 the Home bought a Hostel on William Street, Frankston for the use of boys who had gone to work for the first time but had little family support. A car was also purchased by the home and was shared between the home and the hostel.

In November 1955, the Menzies Home for Boys was declared an approved children's home under the Children's Welfare Act 1954.

On 1 March 1956 Ted and Jean Price tendered their resignation as Superintendent and Matron. Mr and Mrs Jupp took over these positions until 1958 when Mr and Mrs Lewis were appointed.

In August 1958 Prime Minister Robert Menzies visited the Home to cut the annual birthday cake. He was given a guard of honour by Cubs and Scouts of the Home and was introduced as the son of the man the Home was named after.

In the book, *Delinquent Angel*, Georgeff writes that the Menzies Home "was a minor irritation for some of the Frankston locals".

It was the stigma of having orphans in the neighbourhood. Any petty crime was put down to the boys' home. The Menzies boys went every day to the local school but parents didn't encourage friendships.

There were occasional jibes from classmates and exclusions from birthday parties. If they lingered in the streets they might be slung a rebuke from a total stranger who called them ratbags, or little bastards, and told them to get back to the home (Georgeff, 2007, p.91).

The book describes Shelton Lea's impression of the place: "The property had acres of land, with an old fashioned summer tea garden and a fernery. It was surrounded by orchards and was only a short walk down a sandy path to the beach. In one way it was a dream place he had come to up on Oliver's Hill, a rambling home overlooking the sea" (p.92).

On 16 October 1961 the name of The Menzies Home for Boys became The Menzies Home for Children so that siblings of both sexes would be able to be accommodated in the same Home.

Gallery



Boys smile for the cameras

Description: This is a copy of a photograph published in 'One Thousand White Onions': a history of caring for children since 1865 on p.78. It shows a group of boys running through the Gateway at The Menzies Home for Boys.



School No.4136 in the grounds of the Home staffed by members of the Education Department

Description: This is a copy of a photograph published in 'One Thousand White Onions': a history of caring for children since 1865 on p.114.



The Home on the Hill at the top of Olivers Hill

Description: This is a copy of a photograph published in 'One Thousand White Onions': a history of caring for children since 1865 on p.141.



Children at play at Williams Street

Description: This is a copy of a photograph published in 'One Thousand White Onions': a history of caring for children since 1865 on p.147.

More info

Chronology

- Seaside Home, Frankston (1901 - 1924)
 - Minton Boys Home (1924 - 1943)
- **The Menzies Home for Boys (1943 – 1961)**
 - The Menzies Home for Children (1961 - 2000)
 - Menzies Inc. (2000 - current)

Resources

- Rowland, E. C., *Inasmuch: a history of the homes*, 1980
- Dean, R.M., [Submission no 432 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 2004
- [The Menzies Home for Boys \(1943-61\)](#), Finding Records, No date. *Relevance*: See the 'List of records held by the department' section for information about records relating to The Menzies Home for Boys

Records

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

Records

- [Menzies Inc. Records \(1886 - current\)](#)
 - [Menzies Homes - Client Records \(c. 1914 - c. 2014\)](#)
 - ['Closed' Agency and General Correspondence Files \[Charities Board of Victoria\] \(1923 - 1983\)](#)
 - [Voluntary Children's Homes Files \(1921 - 1989\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/the-menzies-home-for-boys/>