

Pleasant Creek Colony

1937 – 1999

Other Names:

- Pleasant Creek Special School, No 4549
- Pleasant Creek Training Centre
- Stawell Special School

Details

The Pleasant Creek Colony in the town of Stawell was established in 1937 by the Department of Mental Hygiene. It accommodated older children and young people up to the age of 20 who were classified as 'mentally deficient'. Residents attended Pleasant Creek Special School no. 4549 which was located on the site. Pleasant Creek closed in 1999.

The Pleasant Creek Colony was established when the former Pleasant Creek Hospital was taken over by the Department of Mental Hygiene. Some children transferred to the Pleasant Creek Colony were wards of the Children's Welfare Department.

Run along the lines of a 'farm colony' (similar to the Janefield Colony at Bundoora), Pleasant Creek accommodated older children and young people, up to the age of 20.

In an oral history interview, former resident of Pleasant Creek, Ken Merton, remembered being punished for various things, including bed wetting and not finishing your food. He described being force fed foods that he didn't want to eat, like tripe. Ken remembered being "belted" several times by staff at Pleasant Creek and needing to spend 3 months in Melbourne being treated for hearing problems.

In 1999, the Victorian government announced the closure of Pleasant Creek, in favour of 'community living' options for its residents.

A report from 1991 to the Director-General of Community Services dealt with incidents of sexual abuse of intellectually disabled residents of the Pleasant Creek Training Centre.

Gallery



Pleasant Creek Training Centre, Western Highway, off Grampians Road



Group shot of children at Pleasant Creek



Pleasant Creek Special School

Description: This image appeared in the Department of Mental Hygiene's annual report for 1953.



View of the front of Pleasant Creek Special School, Stawell

Description: This is a copy of a photograph from the collection of Department of Health and Human Services

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Department of Mental Hygiene \(1934 - 1944\)](#)
- [Mental Hygiene Branch \(1944 - 1959\)](#)
- [Mental Health Authority, State of Victoria \(1962 - 1978\)](#)

Resources

- Springthorpe, Guy, [The treatment of mental deficiency in Victoria](#), Medico-Legal Society Proceedings, 1940
- Simpkin, Lorraine, *Pleasant Creek Special School 50th birthday celebration*, 1987
- *State care a bloody hell for this special school victim*, Courier Mail, 2009

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Victorian Government Wardship and/or Out of Home Care Records \(1864 - current\)](#)
- [Mental Health Photograph Collection \(1850? - 2002\)](#)
- [Records of Pleasant Creek Colony/Pleasant Creek Training Centre \(1937 - 1993\)](#)
- [General Correspondence Files \(c. 1920 - c. 1981\)](#)

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/pleasant-creek-colony/>