

South Yarra Hostel

c. 1974 – c. 1982

Details

South Yarra Hostel was established in a vacant building on the Methodist Babies' Home site. Run by Wesley Central Mission it was described as a 'supportive hostel for young people'. The Mission closed down South Yarra Hostel in February 1982. The hostel's residents were taken on as clients by the Richmond Fellowship of Victoria (a community mental health service provider).

According to a former resident, the South Yarra Hostel accepted young people of any age once they had left school. Some residents worked full time, some worked part time and some were unemployed.

South Yarra Hostel accepted referrals from the Director of Prisons and the Mental Health Authority (Howe & Swain, p.175).

In the early 1980s, Wesley Central Mission was undergoing reform as an organisation. It embraced the theory of 'normalisation' to restructure its services with a long-term aim of completely abandoning institutional models of care. In the short term, its services would be restructured, to be based on the principle of the 'right of people to control their own lives' (Howe & Swain, p. 196).

In March 1981, Wesley's new director of welfare, Peter Worland, was asked to prepare a report on the future of the program at South Yarra Hostel. By the beginning of 1982, the Hostel was closed down. Worland said of this decision: 'We just closed it down. We went to the Richmond Fellowship [and] sat down and said how much to take these cases off our hands?' (Howe & Swain, p.197).

In the late 1980s, the Mission sold the premises in Copelen Street, South Yarra. The buildings were demolished in the mid 1990s.

Gallery



Front gates at 12 Copelen Street, South Yarra

Description: This is a copy of an image of the front gates at 12 Copelen Street, South Yarra. At the time this photo was taken, the buildings housed the Copelen Street Family Centre. The South Yarra Hostel was next door. There are signs on the gate for the Methodist Babies' Home (previously located on the list, closed in 1974), South Yarra Hostel, Copelen Street Family Centre and the Presbyterian and Methodist Child Care Service.



Copelen Street, South Yarra

Description: This is a copy of an image of the buildings and grounds at 12 Copelen Street South Yarra, the former site of the Methodist Babies Home and the site of South Yarra Hostel and Copelen Street Family Centre in the 1970s and 1980s.



South Yarra Hostel, front entrance

Description: This is a copy of an image of the front entrance of the South Yarra Hostel.

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