

# Masonic Orphan Schools

1922 – c. 1924

**Other Names:** • Masonic Orphan School

## Details

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Masonic Orphan Schools was founded in 1922 at Baulkham Hills (in Sydney's north west) for the care and education of the children of deceased Freemasons. In 1924 its name was changed to William Thompson Memorial School.

In 2012 Find and Connect staff were advised by the United Grand Lodge of the Masons NSW/ACT that all records relating to the Masonic Orphan Schools, William Thompson Masonic School and related institutions Orana, Boronia and Wybalenna were destroyed by accident in 2002, during construction works. This includes records such as admission registers, which were described in the 1998 publication *Connecting Kin: Guide to Records*.

The Masonic Orphan School was the brainchild of William Thompson who was the Liberal Party member for Ryde from 1913-20, and Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons from 1914-24. Thompson's aim was to establish cottage homes for orphans. Land was purchased at Baulkham Hills in 1921 and the first stage of what was originally known as 'The Masonic Orphan Schools' was opened on 11 November 1922. The opening of the institution drew such a crowd of Masons that it was reported in Tasmania's *The Mercury*;

*There was a long procession of Masons in regalia on Saturday at the opening of the Masonic School for Orphans at Baulkham Hills. It was estimated that 10,000 Masons and friends attended the ceremony.*

*Most Worshipful Brother William Thompson, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, announced that Mr RS Cropley, a successful Sydney businessman and his wife had decided to give their services in superintending the school, which when completed would accommodate 100 boys and girls.*

*The institution is being financed by voluntary contributions from Masons in New South Wales and is modelled on the latest principles for the welfare of children. The school has a commanding position on the hills, and has 150 acres of land. Mr Cropley, who is a member of Cropley's Ltd, boot merchants, is giving up a lucrative business to devote his time to the welfare of orphans.*

In recognition of Thompson's leadership and service to the project, the school was renamed 'William Thompson Masonic Schools'. Please see the entry on William Thompson Masonic Schools for more information.

## Gallery



## William Thompson Masonic School

**Description:** This photo is undated, the date included is an estimate.

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## More info

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### Chronology

- **Masonic Orphan Schools (1922 – c. 1924)**
  - William Thompson Masonic School (c. 1924 - c. 1974)

### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Freemasons NSW & ACT \(1888 - current\)](#)

### Resources

- Wilson, Pam, [The William Thomas \[Thompson\] Masonic School](#), aMUSine: A zine for people interested in museums, galleries and collections, No date
- [The Masonian](#), The Sydney Morning Herald, 17 September 1925
- William Thompson Masonic School, *The Masonian: the magazine of the William Thompson Masonic School, Baulkham Hills*, 1924 - 1974

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