

# Daruk

1960 – 1985

**Other Names:**

- Daruk Boys' Home
- Daruk Training School
- Dharruk Boys Training School
- Daruk Training Farm

## Details

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Daruk was established at South Windsor in 1960 by the Department of Community Services as an annexe to Mount Penang Training School for Boys (Gosford Farm Home). It was a training school for juvenile offenders who were of school age. Some children who were committed to institutions in the Australian Capital Territory were sent to Daruk. Daruk closed in early 1985.

The 1960 Annual Report of the Child Welfare Department described the new facility at Daruk as being something of a half-way institution between its institutions at Mittagong, which by that time housed many state wards with physical and intellectual disabilities, and Mount Penang, which remained a more serious facility for 'delinquents'.

*Daruk will be a "house" institution, a type lying midway between the dormitory kind represented by Mount Penang and the cottage type such as Mittagong, and its population will be intermediate: there will be four houses each accommodating 50 boys, most of whom will be either 14 or 15 years old.*

The 550 acre site for Daruk was acquired from the Forestry Commission. Daruk was opened by the Minister for Community Services on 18 May 1960, and its official opening was on 4 November that year.

Daruk's enrolment met capacity almost immediately after it opened. According to CLAN, the institution held almost 200 boys and the premises consisted of three classrooms, two metalwork rooms, two woodwork rooms, two craft rooms, a science room and a library.

The 1961 Annual Report of the Child Welfare Department describes the physical facilities and houses:

*The inmates are accommodated in four "houses" bearing names from the Daruk tribe, viz., Bunda, Daru, Kumu and Wolara. These "houses" are an innovation in that they contain their own recreation room and shower sections as well as a dormitory and locker section and the usual conveniences.*

Each of the 4 houses accommodated 50 boys, most of whom were 14 to 16 years old, according to Boyle (1996).

The 1962 Annual Report noted that 75 per cent of the boys in the institution attended the internal school, with boys in the third year class encouraged to sit the Intermediate or Entrance Examination Certificates.

Brian Boyle's 'The Child Welfare Schools' (1996) includes the recollections of Alex Johnston, a former Education Officer, which give a sense of the regimentation at Daruk, for the boys and the staff:

*'I was put in charge of the senior class initially (the bright boys) ... We had to collect our class groups from the Institution's Assembly area and march them to school. They were marched in three deep rows even when being taken to the toilet at recess times ...*

*'On several occasions while EOs [education officers] were line up waiting to sign the Attendance Book at 7.30 am, the Superintendent pushed into the line exactly at 7.30 and ruled a red line across the page. Those who signed under the red line were deemed to be late, even though they were waiting to sign, and were required to apply for 1/4 days recreation leave. I, fortunately, had only twelve months at Daruk' (pp.436-437)*

The 1962 report also mentions a 'departmental psychiatrist', who visited weekly, and describes the treatment, which included sedatives, given to some boys:

*...there have been several cases of lads who have been so unstable and disturbed that mental hospital treatment could have been recommended, but who have responded particularly well to sedation and treatment under the psychiatrist's guidance.*

The first inmates of Daruk were transferred from Mt Penang; afterwards, all admissions came directly from Yasmar Children's Court, according to Boyle.

*All new boys except those over 15 were initially placed in school classes according to ability – emphasis was on remedial work and manual training work. A few boys worked through the Correspondence School in preparation for the Intermediate Certificate or courses such as ticket writing and book keeping. Before the Unit's own swimming pool was built in 1965, swimming was done at the RAAF base at Richmond, which was quite near. The RAAF even provided a physical training instructor for two afternoons a week for sport and gymnastics. Good relations were maintained with other sections of the community – a bookcase made from old cedar shelves originally hand sawn by early convicts was made by the boys for Windsor court House. At an Open Day there was a large attendance of local people; visiting days were extended to two per month (Boyle, p.437).*

State Records New South Wales notes that Daruk had its own radio station, 2DA, and the boys used to exchange programmes with the boys at Yawarra at Kurri Kurri, who had their own radio station called 2YA. The pre-recorded radio programs included talent quests, quiz games, sporting commentaries, news items and request numbers (Boyle, p.440). The boys also produced a school magazine, 'Talkabout'.

The Friends of Daruk Association was formed in March 1970, 'in an endeavour to match the functions of Parents' and Citizens' Association', according to Boyle. The Association pressed the Minister for information about the educational program at Daruk. Former Education Officer Alex Johnston recalled the difficulty in delivering innovative education programs at Daruk. Education Officers spent much of their time on administration of the institution, and the programs they tried to deliver in the school 'were either undermined or taken credit for by the managers and administrative staff of the Institutions and Establishments' (Boyle, p.438).

Daruk had a Privilege Cottage in what was the old laundry, with room for 12 boys. This group were taken camping at weekends, which involved pitching tents at the far end of the Daruk grounds, and cooking their own meals (Boyle, p.441).

Daruk school was transferred to the Education Department in 1981. According to Boyle, in 1983 there were 61 boys in Daruk school, one boy at Windsor High School, and another 65 in 'work groups', undertaking special projects within Daruk or in the local community. The school closed at the end of 1984. The John Moroney Correctional Complex was later built over the site of Daruk.

Stories of abuse in Daruk emerged in 2014 when former residents told their stories to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. In March 2018, the television program 60 Minutes aired a story ('Home of Horror') in which former residents told of sexual, physical and emotional abuse. One man told of how he was put in isolation in a cell known as 'The Boob' after he reported the abuse.

## Gallery

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**Photo for pamphlet on Daruk**



**Murals at "Daruk", Windsor**

**Description:** This image is of murals on the wall at Daruk.



**Series for pamphlet on Daruk**

**Description:** This image shows children walking towards a building at Daruk.



**Photo for pamphlet on Daruk**

**Description:** This images shows the recreation room at Daruk.



**In the metal-work room at Daruk**

**Description:** This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1961.



**A broadcast in preparation at station 2DA, Daruk Training School**

**Description:** This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1961.

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## Daruk Training School

**Description:** This is a video with footage of the Daruk Training School at the time it opened in 1960.

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## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Run by

- [Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare, State Government of New South Wales \(1970 - 1973\)](#)  
Date: 1970 - 1973
- [Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1973 - 1975\)](#)  
Date: 1973 - 1975
- [Child Welfare Department, State Government of New South Wales \(1923 - 1970\)](#)  
Date: 1960 - 1970
- [Department of Youth and Community Services, State Government of New South Wales \(1976 - 1988\)](#)  
Date: 1976 - 1981?
- [Department of Youth, Ethnic and Community Affairs, State Government of New South Wales \(1975 - 1976\)](#)  
Date: 1975 - 1976

#### Related Events

- [Transfer of children from Australian Capital Territory \(ACT\) and Norfolk Island to New South Wales \(NSW\) \(1941 - 1986\)](#)
- [Case Study 07: Parramatta Training School for Girls, Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse \(2014\)](#)  
Daruk was briefly mentioned in Case Study 07: Parramatta Training School for Girls, but was not the primary focus of the study.

#### Related Organisations

- [Mount Penang Training School for Boys \(1946 - 1987\)](#)  
Daruk was an annexe of Mount Penang Training School for Boys.  
Date: 1960 - 1981?
- [Yawarra Training School \(1969 - 1979\)](#)  
Daruk had its own radio station called 2DA and boys exchanged programs with the boys at Yawarra, which had a radio station called 2DA.

## Resources

- Olsson, Kristina, *All the lost children*, The Weekend Australian Magazine, 30 March 2013
- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, [Report of Case Study No. 7: child sexual abuse at the Parramatta Training School for Girls and the Institution for Girls in Hay](#), October 2014.  
*Relevance:* Daruk was briefly mentioned in Case Study 07: Parramatta Training School for Girls, but was not the primary focus of the study
- [Man arrested over 'horrific' boys' home abuse](#), Nine News, 12 March 2018
- Anonymous, [Daruk Boys Home](#), No date
- [Bruce Callaghan interviewed by Gail Winkworth in the Children and the State oral history project \[sound recording\]](#), 30 October 2009
- Vince, Mary-Louise & Lapham, Jake, [Former Gosford mayor Laurie Maher charged with child sexual abuse offences](#), ABC News, 21 April 2020

# Records

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

## Records

- [Departmental Records relating to State Wards, New South Wales \(1918 - current\)](#)
  - [Daruk, Windsor: Institutional files \( \[I\] "B" files\) \(1978 - 1984\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/daruk/>