

Werrington Park

1954 – c. 1988

Other Names: • Claremont

Details

Werrington Park was established at Werrington, near St Marys, by the Child Welfare Department in 1954. It was originally a home for boys defined as intellectually disabled and taught farming and basic life skills. Starting with 12 boys, the home held 120 by the 1970s. In 1978 Cobham Children's Court and Remand Centre were built on the corner of the estate. When Taldree closed in 1980 the boys were sent to Werrington Park. Werrington Park had closed by 1988 and is now part of the University of Western Sydney.

The main building, originally called Frogmore, dates from 1806 and was built for Governor Bligh's daughter. It was named Werrington Park in 1935 and acquired by the Child Welfare Department in 1954.

According to the Annual Reports of the Child Welfare Department, in 1962-3 to add to the original building, there were two new 'cottages' or dormitory buildings opened at Werrington Park, *Coallee* and *Dunhevid*, each accommodating 30 boys. By 1966 there were four cottages holding a total of 96 boys. Each was run by a married couple, with a Superintendent in charge of the overall home.

There was an on-site school, with some of the older boys having training in some semi-rural activities, and others engaging in sheltered workshop work. A separate residence, Claremont, was also added.

In 1964 the Child Welfare Department Annual Report described the home as caring for 120 'retarded boy wards, aged from 10 to 18'. Werrington Park had a substantial sheltered workshop, for older boys.

In 1970, the Child Welfare Department produced a black and white 16mm film about Werrington Park, *The Long Climb*. It was a promotional film to introduce the home to people unfamiliar with disability education and as a training film for new employees to the Department. It shows a boy first arriving at Werrington Park, the dormitories, some of the activities and education the boys took part in, and ends with a young man leaving the home finding a job and a place to live. At that stage, the home held 120 boys.

By 1976, according to the Youth and Community Services Department's Annual Report, the four cottages housed children from the age of 10 up, all of whom attended school until at least 16.

A Children's Court and remand centre – Cobham – was built on a corner of the estate in 1978. The site became part of the lands allocated by the New South Wales government for the development of the University of Western Sydney. Werrington Park had closed as a child welfare institution by 1988.

The main building of Werrington Park has since been restored and renamed Frogmore and is now part of the University of Western Sydney's Werrington North campus.

Gallery



Werrington Park

Description: The photograph is taken looking at the northern side of the house. Werrington Park is located on the Great Western Highway Werrington. The house stands on what was once the land grant Frogmore, given to Mary Bligh and her husband John Putland in 1806 by Governor King. There is some conjecture as to whether the house is partly that of the original home built for Mary and her second husband Maurice O'Connell. The house has had extensive renovations with the modern Werrington Park being created by Alan and Laura Williams in the 1930s. During the 1950s the property and house become a home for intellectually disabled boys but was eventually sold to the University of Western Sydney. The house is now the Chancellery building for the University and has been renamed Frogmore. The property was also known as Brooklands.



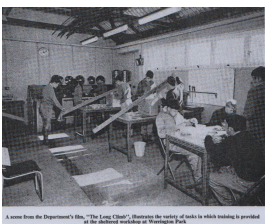
A classroom shop at Werrington Park - a practical lesson in money sums for intellectually handicapped lads [original caption]

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1966.



Werrington Park

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1959.



A scene from the Department's film, "The Long Climb", illustrates the variety of tasks in which training is provided at the sheltered workshop at Werrington Park

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1970.



"Coallee", the new cottage at Werrington Park

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1962.



The dining room at Werrington Park

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1960.



The new wing at Werrington Park

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



Swimming pool at Werrington Park made by the boys and finished during the year

Description: This is a copy of an image that appeared in the Child Welfare Department of New South Wales Annual Report of 1960.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

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

Related Organisations

- [Taldree \(1974 - 1980\)](#)
When Taldree closed in 1980 the remaining boys were transferred to Werrington Park.
- [Cobham Remand Centre \(1980 - current\)](#)
Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre was built in a corner of the Werrington Park estate and opened in June 1980.
- [Cobham Children's Court \(1978 - 2006\)](#)
Cobham Children's Court was built in a corner of the Werrington Park estate in 1978.

Resources

- Boyle, Brian, *The Child Welfare Schools: Recollections of these unique schools and the men and women who taught in them often under considerable difficulty*, 1996
- [George Bloomfield interviewed by John Maynard in the Bringing them home oral history project \(2001\)](#), 7 April 2001

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Departmental Records relating to State Wards, New South Wales \(1918 - current\)](#)
- [Inmate Punishment Book \[Unidentified\] \(1959 - 1972\)](#)
It is possible that this punishment book is from Werrington Park, but this has not been confirmed.
- [Werrington Park, St. Marys Institutional files \(\[I\] "B" files\) \(1977 - 1981\)](#)

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