

Charlton Boys' Home, Ashfield

1966 – c.1979

Other Names:

- Robinson House
- Milleewa
- Charlton Memorial Home for Boys

Details

Charlton Boys' Home, Ashfield was established in 1966 by the [Anglican Home Mission Society](#). It had earlier been known as the [Charlton Memorial Home](#), located in Glebe, and moved into a property that was formerly the [Milleewa Boys' Home](#). In the late 1970s this property became known as Robinson Home. Like its predecessor, Charlton Boys' Home was in some ways progressive for an institution of its time, however former residents have also described major issues at the home with harsh punishments and sexual abuse perpetrated by staff and other residents.

Charlton Boys' Home was intended to be a modernisation and streamlining of its activities previously conducted at Glebe. Charlton took boys aged 8 to 17 who had been through the Children's Courts. Boys who were working age were expected to go out and work each day, while younger boys attended local schools. By 1969 over 1500 boys had lived at either the Charlton Memorial Home or the Charlton Boys' Home, Ashfield.

Charlton consisted of three buildings built at 16 Brunswick Parade Ashfield. The buildings were named Milleewa, Robinson House, and Wright House, and were each run by a set of 'house parents'. Milleewa was opened in 1966 and had capacity for 21 boys. When Robinson House and Wright House (also known as the 'round houses' due to their circular construction) were opened in 1969 they increased the capacity of the home to 69. These new houses each had six four-person bedrooms that were arranged around a central area, allowing more space for accommodation and less space taken up by corridors. Boys from the [Charlton Boys Homes at Bowral](#) and [Castle Hill](#) were moved into these new buildings, and those homes subsequently closed. The age of the boys determined which house they stayed in. A swimming pool and activity hall (which doubled as a community centre) were also constructed at Ashfield in 1969.

Charlton was, in certain ways, somewhat progressive for an institution of its time. Boys at the home were expected to take jobs in the community, and traveled unsupervised to their workplaces – a practice that was unusual for children's institutions. Boys at Charlton were also able to bring friends back to the Home, and members of the local community were encouraged to visit.

Several former residents of Charlton Boys' Home at Ashfield have spoken about physical and sexual abuse perpetrated by staff and employers against boys at the Home ('Raped by his supervisor then convicted of buggery: Life in a 70's boys' home', *The Guardian*, 3 October 2014). Abuse is known to have taken place at the Home, at the boys' workplaces, and when small groups of boys were taken on camps and weekend outings. Boys who disclosed abuse to other staff members were beaten, humiliated, and threatened with transfer to the infamous [Institution for Boys, Tamworth](#). In at least one instance a boy disclosing abuse was taken by staff at the Home to the police not to report his rape, but to "confess" to and be charged with buggery. At least one staff member from Charlton Boys' Home has been charged with offenses committed against the boys.

Charlton Boys' Home closed in the late 1970s. [Robinson House](#) continued to be used by the Anglican Home Mission Society as a Family Group Home.

Gallery



Milleewa Home for Boys, Ashfield

Description: This is a photo of the exterior of the new Milleewa building at Ashfield, which was built for the Charlton Boys Home after the previous Milleewa building was demolished. It shows two women and two men standing at the gate to a brick and timber single-storey building. At the front of the building is a sign that reads "Milleewa C of E Home for Boys". This photo was originally published on the cover of the Anglican Home Mission Society's 'Action' magazine, featuring an article about the purchase of Milleewa for the Charlton Boys' Home.



Exterior, Charlton Boys' Home

Description: This is an exterior photo of the Charlton Boys' Home at Ashfield. It shows a raised brick cottage on a sloped block of land, with what looks to be a garage underneath the Home. This building is likely one of the 'round houses' that was constructed at Charlton Boys' Home in 1969.



Pool at Charlton Boys' Home, Ashfield

Description: This is a photo of boys at the newly constructed pool at Charlton Boys' Home, Ashfield. It shows two boys swimming, one boy standing near the edge of the pool, and one boy climbing a ladder and preparing to jump into the pool. The pool is large, and is located close to a building with a steep-pitched tile roof. This photo was published in an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* titled 'Never too cold for the boys at Charlton Home' on 14 September 1969. It was published alongside the caption 'The water temperature is only 55 degrees but the boys at the Charlton Home at Ashfield dive in as if it was summer.'

More info

Chronology

- Charlton Boys' Home, Bowral (1961 - 1969)
- Charlton Boys' Home, Castle Hill (1960 - 1969)
- Charlton Memorial Home (1942 - 1966)
 - **Charlton Boys' Home, Ashfield (1966 – c.1979)**
 - Robinson House (1970s - c. 1991)

Related Entries

Run by

- [Home Mission Society of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney \(1857 - 1997\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Charlton Youth Services \(1950s - c. 2012\)](#)
- [Milleewa Home for Boys \(1919 - 1966\)](#)

Charlton Boys' Home was located on the site of Milleewa.

Resources

- F.E., *Statement in the matter of the Salvation Army Eastern Territory's Handling of Claims of Child Sexual Abuse: Statement and annexures of FE*, 11 March 2014
- Alan Gill, *City of God grows in heart of Sydney*, The Sydney Morning Herald, 7 May 1976
- Alan Gill, *Off to a good start: Giving the young a chance*, The Sydney Morning Herald, 8 March 1978

Records

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

Records

- [Anglicare Children's Homes, Foster Care and Out-of-Home Care Records \(1932 - 2010s\)](#)
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/charlton-boys-home-ashfield/>