

Tresillian Vacluse

c. 1935 – October 1968

Other Names:

- Tresillian Mothercraft Home Vacluse
- Tresillian Home Vacluse

Details

Tresillian Vacluse was established around 1935 or 1936 in Greycliffe House, which is within Nielsen Park, Vacluse. It was a mothercraft home run by Tresillian. It cared for mothers with babies and for babies who needed nursing. By the 1960s it looked after around 110 mothers and 177 babies a year. Unmarried mothers worked at Tresillian Vacluse as domestics while they waited for the birth of their babies. In the late 1960s Tresillian Vacluse cared for babies who were waiting to be adopted, taking around 220 a year. It closed in 1968.

Tresillian Vacluse is sometimes confused with the older Vacluse House, which is located nearby. Greycliffe House is a Gothic-style building with steep gables, which once had many glassed-in verandahs, whereas Vacluse House has turrets, and never had glassed in verandahs.

Greycliffe was owned by the New South Wales Government and had been used as the Lady Edeline Hospital for Sick Children since 1914. In 1936, at the invitation of the government, the Royal Society for the Welfare of Mothers and Babies took over the management of the Lady Edeline Hospital (Greycliffe House), and renamed it Tresillian Vacluse. (Some sources suggest this occurred in 1939). It became a Mothercraft Home.

Tresillian Vacluse operated as a nursing centre, Mothercraft Training Home and provided residential care for new mothers. In 1939 Margaret Harper House was built at the back of the property, and used to house nurses.

In the 1960s, Tresillian Vacluse housed 10 mothers with babies and eight unaccompanied babies at any given time, and looked after approximately 110 mothers and 177 babies during the year.

From the 1950s to the 1970s a number of unmarried pregnant women were sent to Tresillian Centres by social workers from Sydney hospitals. The women were paid as domestic help, and worked around the homes. At the time social workers considered this was a better option than working in private households or commercial laundries. The nurses did keep an eye on these women, but did not treat them. The women were not patients, but staff. The only records kept of their time in the home were the pay books, which have not survived.

The domestic staff of Tresillian Vacluse lived in an area of the house that had been the stables, above the nursery. It was entered from the rear of the house, adjacent to a 20 foot high sandstone wall, through the boiler room. The nursery itself had huge windows, which have since been removed. The babies' cots were wheeled out on to a sandstone platform so babies could receive sunshine.

In July 1967, according to the organisation's Annual Report, Tresillian agreed to care for babies awaiting adoption, at the request of the Hospitals Commission. In that year 224 babies were admitted to Tresillian Homes.

Tresillian withdrew from Greycliffe in 1968. According to the Annual Report, the number of young families in the area was declining and the organisation needed funds for its other homes in the more heavily populated areas of the north and west. However, Tresillian did not own Greycliffe, whereas it owned the other properties.

In 1968 the New South Wales Government resumed control of Greycliffe House. Since 1974 it has been managed by Parks and Wildlife.

Gallery



The Lady Edeline Hospital for Babies, 'Greycliffe'

Description: This image shows the building, Greycliffe, where The Lady Edeline Hospital for Babies operated in.



Tresillian home, Greycliffe

Description: This image shows the building where the Lady Edeline Hospital for Sick Babies and later the Tresillian Vaocluse operated in.



Tresillian Home: Vaocluse

Description: This image shows the dining room at Tresillian Vaocluse.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Tresillian Mothercraft Homes, Royal Society for the Welfare of Mothers and Babies \(1918 - current\)](#)
Please note, no medical or personal records from Tresillian Vaocluse survive.

Related Organisations

- [Crown Street Women's Hospital \(1893 - 1983\)](#)
Crown Street Women's Hospital referred unmarried mothers for jobs as domestics at Tresillian Vaocluse.
- [Lady Edeline Hospital for Sick Babies \(1914 - 1936\)](#)
Tresillian used the house Greycliffe after the Lady Edeline Hospital for Sick Babies closed.

Related Concepts

- [Adoption in New South Wales \(c. 1923 - current\)](#)

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