

Tresillian Petersham

1921 – 1997

Other Names: • Tresillian

Details

Tresillian, in Petersham, was the first 'Infant Welfare Training School' established in 1921 by the Royal Society for Mothers and Babies. It was located at 'Tresillian', a fine house in Shaw Street, Petersham. The house name became the name of the Royal Society for Mothers and Babies mothercraft facilities. Tresillian Petersham cared for up to 10 mothers with babies and up to eight unaccompanied babies at any one time. It was involved in adoptions as it housed babies who waiting for adoption. The Petersham Tresillian closed in 1997.

The first Tresillian, at Petersham, was run by Dr Margaret Harper, the Society's first Medical Director. From that point the Society, and its nurses, adopted the name Tresillian.

In the 1960s Tresillian Petersham housed 10 mothers with breastfed babies at any given time, along with eight artificially fed babies and, by the 1960s, five premature babies. Over the course of the year it cared for more than 130 mothers and 220 babies.

Tresillian housed babies who were waiting for adoption in the 1960s. These babies were under the care of other agencies, including the Child Welfare Department.

The Petersham site closed in 1997 and moved to a new site in the grounds of Canterbury Hospital. As well as the Willoughby and Wollstonecraft sites, in 2013 Tresillian also operates at Penrith.

Records

Medical records for Tresillian centres at Willoughby, Wollstonecraft, Canterbury and Penrith are kept for approximately 30 years. Medical records from Petersham are kept in secondary storage and date from the 1980s to 1997.

Gallery



Tresillian, Petersham

Description: The first Mothercraft Centre, Tresillian Petersham.



Main entrance, Tresillian Home, Petersham

Description: This is a photograph of the front of the Tresillian Home, Petersham. It shows two nurses in white uniforms standing at the entrance to an ornate two-storey house with palm trees in the front yard.



A typical ward, Tresillian Home, Petersham

Description: This is a photograph of one of the wards for mothers staying at the Tresillian Home, Petersham. It shows a small room with two beds, and a table with scales at the foot of one bed.



Tresillian Home, Petersham

Description: This is a photograph taken at the Tresillian Home, Petersham. It shows a row of covered bassinets arranged outside in the garden, with babies being held or attended to by nurses. A toddler is sitting in a chair in front of the row of bassinets.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Tresillian Mothercraft Homes, Royal Society for the Welfare of Mothers and Babies \(1918 - current\)](#)
Date: 1921 - 1997

Related Organisations

- [Child Welfare Department, State Government of New South Wales \(1923 - 1970\)](#)
In the late 1960s and early 1970s Tresillian Petersham, and other Tresillian homes, housed babies who were waiting for adoption. The adoptions were arranged by other agencies, including the Child Welfare Department.
Date: 1960s - 1970

Related Concepts

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

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/tresillian-petersham-2/>