

Nazareth House, Wynnum North

1926 – 1982

Details

Nazareth House, Wynnum North, was operated by the Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth. It accommodated the aged, orphans and children from various backgrounds. Nazareth House opened in 1926 and ceased taking children in 1982.

Nazareth House, situated at 272 Wynnum North Road, Wynnum North, was operated by the Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth. It opened in 1926 and was licensed under the *Infant Life Protection Act 1905* on 10 February 1927. It was later licensed under the *State Children Act 1911* on 10 July 1964 and the *Children's Services Act 1965* on 4 August 1966. It closed 28 November 1982.

Nazareth House was designed by the architectural firm Hennessy, Hennessy, Kessing & Co. The foundation stone was laid by Archbishop Duhig on 13 April 1924. It was located at Wynnum, on the outskirts of Brisbane. A departmental child care officer in 1974 described the building:

The design of the building itself is along the lines of a monastery, with cloisters, crucifixes, statues etc in great abundance. First impressions of it are that it is a very cold, imposing place, and it must be extremely frightening for a child, especially one of tender years, to be placed there (p.64).

While Nazareth House was not heavily involved in British child migration, it does appear that it received some girls sent from Nazareth institutions from England, in the 1920s and 1930s. The Northern Ireland Historical Abuse Inquiry received evidence from people who were sent from Northern Ireland institutions, to Nazareth House, usually via a Nazareth-run institution in England.

The 1999 report of the Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions described the living conditions at Nazareth House, which were more or less constant from its establishment in 1926 until the early 1970s. The residents at Nazareth House (who were almost all girls) were all housed in dormitory accommodation.

There was a nursery for infants aged under six which held between 30 and 60 children. The junior dormitory housed girls aged between 6 and 10, the senior dormitory those aged 11 and above. The evidence suggests that up to 60 girls were housed in the junior and senior dormitories until numbers began to decline in the mid-1970s (p.64).

A publication from 1968 states that Nazareth House accommodated some boys, but only up to the age of 9. It described the children's accommodation as "apartments, quite separate from the old people" (Social Services Queensland, 1968, p.93).

This system could result in siblings being separated at Nazareth House.

Former residents of Nazareth House gave evidence to the Commission of Inquiry, the majority of which was very negative. Many former residents spoke of the institution's regimentation and preoccupation with order. Residents remembered inadequate food, a lack of medical or dental treatment, and having to spend a lot of time working. A resident from the late 1960s remembered being in her early teens and being put in charge of around 25 children in the junior dormitory.

Gallery



Foundation Stone 1924

Description: This is an image of the foundation stone of Nazareth House. The inscription reads: "This first stone of Nazareth House, to be erected to the Glory of God, as a home for aged people, orphans and infirm children, was blessed and laid by Most Rev. J Duhig. D.D. archbishop of Brisbane 13th April 1924"



Front view of Nazareth House



Main Entrance of Nazareth House Wynnum North



Main entrance to Nazareth House



Nazareth House Wynnum North



Official opening of Nazareth House, Wynnum, 1925

Description: This description was supplied with the photograph and included in the library catalogue: Archbishop Duhig, Sir Matthew Nathan and J. G. Appel were among the large group pictured at the opening.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Sisters of Nazareth \(1888 - current\)](#)

Related Events

- [Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions \(1998 - 1999\)](#)

The Commission of inquiry into abuse of children in Queensland institutions visited the site of Nazareth House.

- [Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care, Parliament of Australia \(2003 - 2005\)](#)

Nazareth House, Wynnum North was mentioned in Submissions 1, 237, 410, and 412 to the Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care

- [Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry, Northern Ireland \(19 January 2013 - 2017\)](#)

Resources

- Forde, Leneen et. al., [Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Child Abuse in Queensland institutions](#), May 1999
- [For aged people and orphan and infirm children](#), Brisbane Courier, 11 April 1924
- Social Work Staff, Faculty of Education, University of Queensland, [Directory of Social Services Queensland](#), 1958
- Moore, Tony, [MP wants 'sorry sites' to be in plain sight](#), Brisbane Times, 8 July 2016

Records

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

Records held by other organisations

- [Nazareth House, Wynnum North Records \(1926? - 1982?\)](#)

- [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)

Item B250 of the Child Endowment correspondence files relates to Nazareth House, Wynnum North

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