

# Hobart Girls' Industrial School

1862 – 1945

**Other Names:**

- Hobart Town Female Refuge
- Industrial School for Girls - Hobart
- Hobart Town Female Reformatory and Industrial School

## Details

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The Hobart Girls Industrial School opened as the Hobart Town Female Refuge in 1862. It was for girls considered to be neglected. In 1945, the Salvation Army took the School over and renamed it the Maylands Salvation Army Home for Girls.

Hobart Girls' Industrial School had eight different locations between 1862 and 1945. The first was in the old Normal School in New Town which existed between 1850 and 1852. (The Normal School was designed to offer an academic education to boys and good quality teacher training. Teachers also took classes with the boys at the Queen's Orphan Asylum. The Legislative Council refused to fund the School and it closed in 1852.)

Other sites for the Hobart Girls' Industrial School included a house in Upper Bathurst Street, Forest Road, Church Street in Trinity Hill, Murray Street, the former Anglesea Barracks hospital, Kensington House on Davey St (now the Commonwealth Law Court), and Maylands, an imposing building on Pirie Street in New Town.

The School was brought under the auspices of the 1867 *Industrial Schools Act* in 1868. Under the Act, children under the age of 14, deemed to be neglected or who were under 12 and had been convicted of an offence could be sent to an industrial school by two Justices. Parents or guardians who considered their children uncontrollable could also place them in an industrial school.

Hobart Girls' Industrial School was a certified children's Home under the Youthful Offenders, Destitute and Neglected Children's Act 1896.

The School was partially supported by donors and subscribers who elected a Ladies Committee as well as five men to be governors and members of an advisory committee. The women of the Ladies Committee oversaw every aspect of the girls' lives. They also employed staff. Other duties included dealing with repairs to the building, bedding, furnishings, food, and clothing. Each member of the Committee visited the School at least once a month.

According to the rules, the Matron had to make sure that the girls were 'properly washed and dressed', their beds 'clean and properly made', and that everywhere in the School there was 'neatness, order and obedience'. She had to say prayers and read the Bible to the girls every morning and evening. The girls were expected to be quiet in the dormitories at night. Punishment was by keeping a girl apart from the others. 'Friends of the girls' could visit once a month if they had the Committee's permission. All the girls remained at the School until they were 16, unless the government removed them or they were adopted.

After receiving 10 girls from the Queen's Orphan Asylum when it closed in 1879, the School offered a basic education taught by a school mistress. The girls also attended Church and received religious instruction from a Minister. For their last two years at the School, they were apprenticed to the Matron who taught them laundry

work, needlework, cooking, and general housework. All the girls did laundry and needlework to support the School.

The Committee women believed that the School offered better training than foster care and that the Secretary of the Neglected Children's Department, F.R. Seager, should send more girls to it. In 1909, the Committee resolved that all girls who were wards of state should spend the last year before their apprenticeships as domestic servants in an industrial school. Seager refused, stating that the schools fell 'far short of the requirements of childhood' and that the 'motherly interest' of the foster mothers provided much better training.

In 1923, the School gave up laundry work because there were many more young girls than there used to be. According to the Annual Report, it was better to lose the income 'than that there should be any risk of growing girls being overworked'.

The move to Maylands took place in 1924 because the Committee believed that it would be better for the girls than living in town with only a 'basic yard' as a playground.

After the move, the girls began attending New Town State School or, if they were under school age, the New Town Free Kindergarten. Girls with learning difficulties went to the Girls' Welfare School. In the 1940s, girls with visual impairments went to the Sight Saving School.

In 1940, the Director of the Social Services Department suggested that the School change its name. At a special meeting, the subscribers voted to change it to Maylands School for Girls. A couple of weeks later, the Committee decided against the name change. The reason is not clear.

The Committee women agreed that a girl could be shut in a room for short periods of time as punishment in 1941. They decided to make the tower room safe by putting netting around the windows. Later, they changed their minds because the tower room was 'unsuitable'.

A member of the Committee made a formal protest against the children's treatment, which she thought was too 'strict', in March 1942. When asked to explain, the Matron said that 18 of the 33 girls had intellectual disabilities. She resigned shortly afterwards. It is not clear whether this was associated with the complaint.

The Committee began appointing prefects to help the staff in the early 1940s.

During the 1940s, the School had so many difficulties obtaining and keeping trained staff that the Committee thought that it might have to close. Instead, its Trustees negotiated with the Salvation Army to take it over. Under the agreement, the Salvation Army acquired all the property and assets of the School on certain conditions, including retaining the School's Protestantism and keeping all the girls. The Committee was apparently concerned that the younger ones would be sent somewhere else. The handover took place on 31 January 1945 following a special afternoon tea for the children and staff given by the Ladies' Committee.

## Gallery



**Industrial School for Girls, Barrack Square**



**Henry Hunter's design for Maylands, later the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart, Maylands Salvation Army Home for Girls, and Maylands Girls' Unit**

**Description:** A photograph of Henry Hunter's design for Maylands taken by Albert Sargeant.



**Maylands, formerly the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart, Maylands Salvation Army Home for Girls, and Maylands Girls' Unit**

**Description:** Heritage Tasmania supplied this photograph

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**Maylands, formerly the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart, Maylands Salvation Army Home for Girls, and Maylands Girls' Unit**

**Description:** Heritage Tasmania supplied this photograph.

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**The former Industrial School for Girls - Hobart in Davey Street, part of the Commonwealth Law Courts in 2012**



**The Normal School, later the Hobart Town Female Refuge, and then the Anchorage Home - window detail**

**Description:** This photograph was taken just before the demolition of the Normal School in 1962. The building of the former Normal School was the first home of the Hobart Town Female Refuge. It became the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart.

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**The Normal School, later the Hobart Town Female Refuge, and then the Anchorage Home - before demolition**

**Description:** This photograph was taken just before the demolition of the Normal School in 1962. The building of the former Normal School was the first home of the Hobart Town Female Refuge. It became the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart.

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**The Normal School, later the Hobart Town Female Refuge, and then the Anchorage Home - before demolition**

**Description:** This photograph was taken just before the demolition of the Normal School in 1962. The building of the former Normal School was the first home of the Hobart Town Female Refuge. It became the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart.

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## More info

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### Chronology

- **Hobart Girls' Industrial School (1862 – 1945)**
  - Maylands Salvation Army Home for Girls (1945 - 1981)
  - Maylands Girls' Unit (1983 - 1998)

# Related Entries

## Related Organisations

- [Girls' Welfare School \(1924 - 1954\)](#)  
Some girls from the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart attended the Girls' Welfare School.
- [Hobart Girls' Training School \(1881 - 1905\)](#)
- [Anchorage Home \(1889 - 1920\)](#)  
The building of the former Normal School housed first, the Hobart Girls' Industrial School, and later, the Anchorage Home.

## Related Legislation

- [Industrial Schools Act 1863, Tasmania \(1863 - 1867\)](#)
- [Industrial Schools Act 1867, Tasmania \(1867 - 1896\)](#)

# Resources

- [The Boys' Home](#), Launceston Examiner, 31 October 1905
- [Joy Stewart interviewed by Caroline Evans for the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project](#), 18 April 2012
- [Treat to children of the charitable institutions](#), 22 May 1900
- [Demonstration at Hobart; the children entertained](#), Examiner, 22 May 1900
- [Hobart Town Industrial School For Girls](#), The Mercury, 28 November 1871
- [Girls' Industrial School Anniversary](#), The Mercury, 23 September 1893
- [The Mercury](#), The Mercury, 7 August 1873
- [Hobart Town Female Reformatory and Industrial School](#), The Mercury, 6 September 1869
- [The Girls' Industrial School](#), The Mercury, 4 March 1873
- [Gazette Notices](#), The Cornwall Chronicle, 18 July 1866
- [Hobart Town Female Refuge](#), The Mercury, 8 July 1862
- [Our\[?\] Hobart Letter](#), Daily Telegraph, 27 August 1892

# Records

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

## Records

- [Records of the Industrial School for Girls - Hobart \(1862 - 1945\)](#)
- [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)
- [Correspondence Files \(1919 - 1998\)](#)
- [Register of children at Boys Home Lansdowne Crescent; Girls Industrial School, Hobart Training School for Females, St Josephs Orphanage for whom a Government Allowance is Payable \(1869 - 1898\)](#)

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