

Tardun Farm School

1928 – 2008

Other Names:

- St Mary's Agricultural School
- Clontarf Boys' Farm, Tardun
- Tardun Agricultural College

Details

Tardun Farm School was run by the Christian Brothers from 1928 as a Home where boys would learn farm skills. After World War II, Tardun housed British and Maltese child migrants aged from about 12 to 16 years as well as boys who were wards of state. Tardun Farm School closed in 1967 but remained open as an agricultural boarding school where some children were placed by the departments responsible for child welfare. Tardun closed at the end of 2008.

Tardun Farm School was established by the Christian Brothers in 1928 as St Mary's Agricultural School.

The 'Tardun Agricultural College' was described in the Report of the Royal Commission on Youth Employment and the Apprenticeship System in 1938:

The object of the school...is to recruit orphan boys from the Clontarf Orphanage at about the age of 12 to 15 years and give them a training in agricultural methods sufficient to enable them to conduct farming operations or to accept work as farm labourers. No fees are charged. The boys live on the farm. The idea is to select land and establish the most promising boys on their own farms. As regards the other boys, the Brothers place them in employment when they are ready, their wages ranging from 12s. 6d. to £2 10s. per week and keep. The school has initiated a system of instructing the boys in general educational subjects and putting them up for the Junior examination of the University – a policy to be recommended. The Principal of the school (Brother Conlon) states that there is no lack of application for the boys when they have finished their training. Report of the Royal Commissioner on Youth Employment and the Apprenticeship System, 1938, p.lxix

The Royal Commissioner recommended (p.lxx) that the Government pay a maintenance allowance of 10 shillings per week for each 'destitute orphan boy' at Tardun provided the school undertook vocational and general education and training to the satisfaction of the Education Department. By 1940, this recommendation had not been implemented.

In 1942, the UK High Commissioner in Australia, Sir Ronald Cross, inspected Tardun, and observed that he could not understand where money paid to the institution towards the maintenance of child migrants was going, given the poor clothing the boys were wearing (Child Migration Programmes Investigation Report, 2022, p.7).

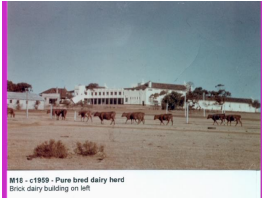
After World War II, Tardun admitted boys from various backgrounds including Wards of the State, child migrants, orphans and private admissions. Australian-born boys, and British and Maltese child migrants aged from about 12 to 16 years lived at Tardun. In 1967, the Farm School became an agricultural boarding and day school, which operated on the site until the end of 2008. Some children continued to be placed at Tardun by the departments

responsible for child welfare.

The Christian Brothers' institutions Bindoon, Clontarf, Castledare and Tardun first received widespread publicity about child abuse in the early 1990s. In 1993, the Christian Brothers in Western Australia issued an apology and from 1995 have funded independent services to help with family tracing, counselling and remedial education for men who had suffered in their institutions. Many former residents of these institutions have shared their experiences and memories (bad and good) at government inquiries, in books and in oral histories.

Tardun Farm School was investigated by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Case Study 11: Christian Brothers.

Gallery



Tardun Slideshow, Part 1

Description: This is Part 1 of a slideshow of photographs from the archives of the Christian Brothers Oceania Province. It was created by 'old boys' Peter Bent and Michael Hogan, with assistance from Ed Butler, using images from 'Institution Albums 1 and 2'. There are all sorts of scenes from life at Tardun from the 1940s to 1960s. Many people assisted with the identification of boys, brothers and staff to create captions for the images in this slideshow. DVD copies of this slideshow are available from Tuart Place. The Find & Connect website has split the slideshow into two parts so that it could be uploaded onto youtube. Please click on the photo, which will take you to youtube.



Tardun Slideshow, Part 2

Description: This is Part 2 of a slideshow of photographs from the archives of the Christian Brothers Oceania Province. It was created by 'old boys' Peter Bent and Michael Hogan, with assistance from Ed Butler, using images from 'Institution Albums 1 and 2'. There are all sorts of scenes from life at Tardun from the 1940s to 1960s. Many people assisted with the identification of boys, brothers and staff to create captions for the images in this slideshow. DVD copies of this slideshow are available from Tuart Place. The Find & Connect website has split the slideshow into two parts so that it could be uploaded onto youtube. Please click on the photo, which will take you to youtube.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Edmund Rice Education Australia \(2007 - current\)](#)
- [St Patrick's Province of the Christian Brothers \(1953 - 1967\)](#)
- [Holy Spirit Province of the Christian Brothers \(1967 - 2007\)](#)
- [Australasian Province of the Christian Brothers \(1885 - 1953\)](#)

Date: 1928 - 1953

Related Events

- [Fact-Finding Mission on Child Migration \(1956\)](#)

The Ross Fact-Finding Mission [British child migration] was interested in the welfare of British child migrants sent to Tardun Farm School.

Date: 1956 -

- [Royal Commission appointed to Inquire into the Care and Reform of Youthful Delinquents, State of Western Australia \(1943\)](#)
Tardun was used to confine boys who had been convicted of offences by the Children's Court, according to evidence given in the Royal Commission appointed to Inquire into the Care and Reform of Youthful Delinquents.
Date: 1943 -
- [Royal Commission on Youth Employment and the Apprenticeship System, State of Western Australia \(1937 - 1938\)](#)
Tardun Farm School (Tardun Agricultural College) was reviewed by the Royal Commission on Youth Employment and the Apprenticeship System.
Date: 1937 -
- [Case Study 11: Christian Brothers, Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse \(2014\)](#)
- [Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry, Northern Ireland \(19 January 2013 - 2017\)](#)
- [Child Migration Programmes Investigation, UK Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse \(2017 - 2018\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Castledare \(1934 - 1983\)](#)
Boys often went to Tardun from Castledare.
Date: 1934 - 1966
- [Catholic Episcopal Migration and Welfare Association \(1947? - 1970\)](#)
The Catholic Episcopal Migration and Welfare Association [CEMWA] coordinated the placement of child migrants to Catholic Episcopal Migration and Welfare Association [CEMWA].
Date: 1947? - 1966
- [Bindoon \(1936 - 1966\)](#)
It was not unusual for boys to be transferred between Bindoon and Tardun Farm School.
Date: 1936 - 1966
- [Presentation Sisters, Society of Australian Congregations of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary](#)
The Presentation Sisters had a working community at Tardun.
Date: 1941 - 1966
- [Catholic Child Welfare Council, United Kingdom \(1929 - 2003\)](#)
- [Father Hudson's Society, United Kingdom \(1902 - current\)](#)
Father Hudson's Society was one of the Homes in Britain that sent children to Tardun Farm School.
Date: 1947 - 1957
- [Clontarf \(8 September 1901 - 1983\)](#)
It was not unusual for boys to be transferred between Tardun Farm School and Clontarf. In 1942, boys were evacuated to Tardun from Clontarf, at the request of the defence forces.
Date: 1928 - 1983

Related Concepts

- [Child Migration \(1800s - 1970s\)](#)

Resources

- Community Affairs References Committee, [Lost Innocents: Righting the record - Report on child migration](#), 30 August 2001
- Immigration Museum, [Stolen childhoods](#), 2012
- [On their own: Britain's child migrants](#), Australian National Maritime Museum website, 2010
- [First Catholic Boy Migrants arrive in West Australia](#), Southern Cross, 19 August 1938
- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, [Report of Case Study No. 11: Congregation of Christian Brothers in Western Australia response to child sexual abuse at Castledare Junior Orphanage, St Vincent's Orphanage Clontarf, St Mary's Agricultural School Tardun and Bindoon Farm School](#), December 2014
- [John Walsh interviewed by Hamish Sewell in the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project](#), 28 March 2011
- [David Plowman interviewed by John Bannister in the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project](#), 18 February 2010 - 25 February 2010

- [Ivor Knight interviewed by Christine Choo in the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project](#), 14 June 2011 - 28 June 2011
- [Catholic Church schools and homes with the most child abuse claims revealed](#), ABC News, 17 February 2017
- Australian Catholic Social Welfare Commission and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, *A piece of the story : national directory of records of Catholic organisations caring for children separated from families*, November 1999
- [Child Migrants Trust \[website\]](#), 2011
- Plowman, David, *Enduring Struggle*, 2003. *Relevance*: Tardun Farm School is the focus of the book
- Knight, Ivor Alan, [Submission No 11 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 2005
- Knight, Ivor Alan, *Out of darkness : growing up with the Christian brothers*, 1998
- Coldrey, Barry, [Submission No 40 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 19 April 2003
- Walsh, John, [Submission No 41 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 23 July 2003
- Department for Community Development, State of Western Australia, [Submission No 55 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), July 2003
- Congregation of the Christian Brothers WA and SA, [Submission no 65 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), July 2003
- The International Association of Former Child Migrants and Their Families, [Submission No 129 to the Senate Inquiry into Child Migration](#), 2001
- Family Care Society, [Memorandum by the Family Care Society](#), Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Health Committee on 11 June 1998, 11 June 1998
- [Boy Migrants](#), The West Australian, 10 August 1938
- Bent, Peter, [Submission No 365 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care](#), 25 March 2004
- Coldrey, Barry, [Submission No 15 to the Senate Inquiry into Child Migration](#), 2001
- Hawkins, John Patrick, *The bush orphanage : recollections of a British child migrant and the truth about Australia's human trafficking past*, 2009
- Thrupp, Peter, [Reflection 25 - Closure of Tardun](#), Edmund Rice Philippine Mission News Pages, 2011

Other Resources

Title: The Christian Brothers' Agricultural School, Tardun, Western Australia
Type: Image
Date: c. 1936
[Details](#)

Records

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

Records

- [Catholic Archdiocese of Perth CEMWA and CMC Files \[Former Child Migrants\], Catholic Archdiocese of Perth \(c. 1928 - 2008\)](#)
- [Tuart Place Historical Photos Collection](#)
- [Father Hudson's Society, Records \(1902 - current\)](#)
- [Records of Christian Brothers Children's Institutions in Western Australia \(1888 - 1983\)](#)
- [Commonwealth Child and Youth Migration Records \(1901 - 1983\)](#)
- [UK fact finding mission 1956 part 2, National Archives of Australia \(1955 - 1956\)](#)
- [John Moss C.B.E. U.K. Child Welfare Expert. Visit to Australia. Part II, National Archives of Australia \(1951 - 1952\)](#)
- [PHIND Personal History Index \(1938 - 1965\)](#)
- [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)
- [Correspondence files, multiple number series \(policy matters\) \(1922 - 1968\)](#)
- [Files - Aborigines Departments \(1 January 1926 - 16 June 1972\)](#)
- [Files - Child Welfare, State Records Office of Western Australia \(1 January 1917 - 16 June 1972\)](#)

- [Indentures \(Guardianship\) \(1947 - 1960\)](#)
 - [Former Child Migrants Referral Index \(1913 - 1968\)](#)
 - [Former Child Migrants Blue Index Cards \(1947 - 1968\)](#)
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