

# Collaroy Convalescent Home

1921 – 1969

**Other Names:**

- Collaroy Hospital
- Children's Convalescent Home at Collaroy
- Royal Alexandra Convalescent Home for Children, Collaroy

## Details

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Collaroy Convalescent Home opened in July 1921 to accommodate children recovering from illness or needing ongoing hospital stays and treatment. The Home was located on the beachfront in Collaroy and was donated to the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children. The Home continued to operate until 1969 when it closed and became an annexe of the Grosvenor Hospital.

The building was a former holiday home donated by Frederick Sargood via the Citizens' War Chest Fund to the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children. Five beds were also endowed in perpetuity by the Fund for the children of soldiers and sailors. Prior to the Home's formal opening on 24 June 1922 renovations occurred to make it more suitable including the verandah being extended to allow for three rows of beds. Upon its opening 30 children could be accommodated, and *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported the home was "managed by a matron, certificated staff, assisted by voluntary workers." Children who lived in the Home were often recuperating from back or hip operations, as well as illnesses such as tuberculosis or polio.

The Home received additional support through fundraising activities in the form of fetes, concerts, and musical afternoons to raise funds for activities and building works. The Sun Toy Fund also ensured children who were in the Home over Christmas received gifts. Not long after it was opened land was purchased around the Home to ensure the view was maintained, as well as acquiring additional land to expand with a new building for nurses and other staff quarters.

Over the years several newspaper articles provided positive accounts of the Home and the way the children were cared for. In 1927, *The Daily Telegraph* reported that children spent on average 79 days in residence, and maths, English and kindergarten work were taught daily. While in 1931, *The Sun* reported on the arts and crafts the children created as part of their time there, including raffia, drawing, knitting, embroidery, macrame work, toy making, cardboard modelling, and toys they would create from the seashells they collected on outings to the beach.

In 1936, the Home received funding to undertake renovations including increasing the number of beds to 100, adding a sunroom, and building ramps to improve access to the promenade and beach for those in beds. By the 1940s it was noted that some children spent years living at Collaroy, with most patients who lived in the Home needing long-term treatment and some having been in hospital since they were babies. Children were generally aged between two and 14 years.

People have shared their memories, or those of family members who either stayed or worked at the Home in the 1950s and 60s on a Facebook page. Common recollections include stays being of significant lengths of time, and many being encased in plaster or splints/frames that meant they were unable to move from the bed. Some shared that only one visitor a week was allowed on Sundays for a couple of hours, and while other children were allowed on the grounds they weren't allowed to visit with the children in the Home. Some noted they didn't

remember any craftwork occurring at the Home.

The *Manly Daily* stated that following an increase in available vaccines and better medication, Collaroy saw a decline in occupancy. By 1962, 70 children were accommodated in the Home, by 1968 it was only 25. As a result, babies awaiting adoption and children with additional needs were also admitted.

The Home closed in 1969 and was transferred to become an annexe of the Grosvenor Hospital. The building was demolished in 2004.

## Gallery

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### Children's Convalescent Hospital, Collaroy

**Description:** This image shows the construction of the hospital extension in 1924.

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### Collaroy Home [title altered from original]

**Description:** This clip is part of a longer film created by Reverend Dobbinson, and shows him visiting the Collaroy Convalescent Home. Children in the Home as well as the verandah and some of the grounds are shown in the video.

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## More info

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### Related Entries

#### Related Organisations

- [Grosvenor Hospital \(1965 - 1985\)](#)

Collaroy Convalescent Home became an annexe of Grosvenor Hospital

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