



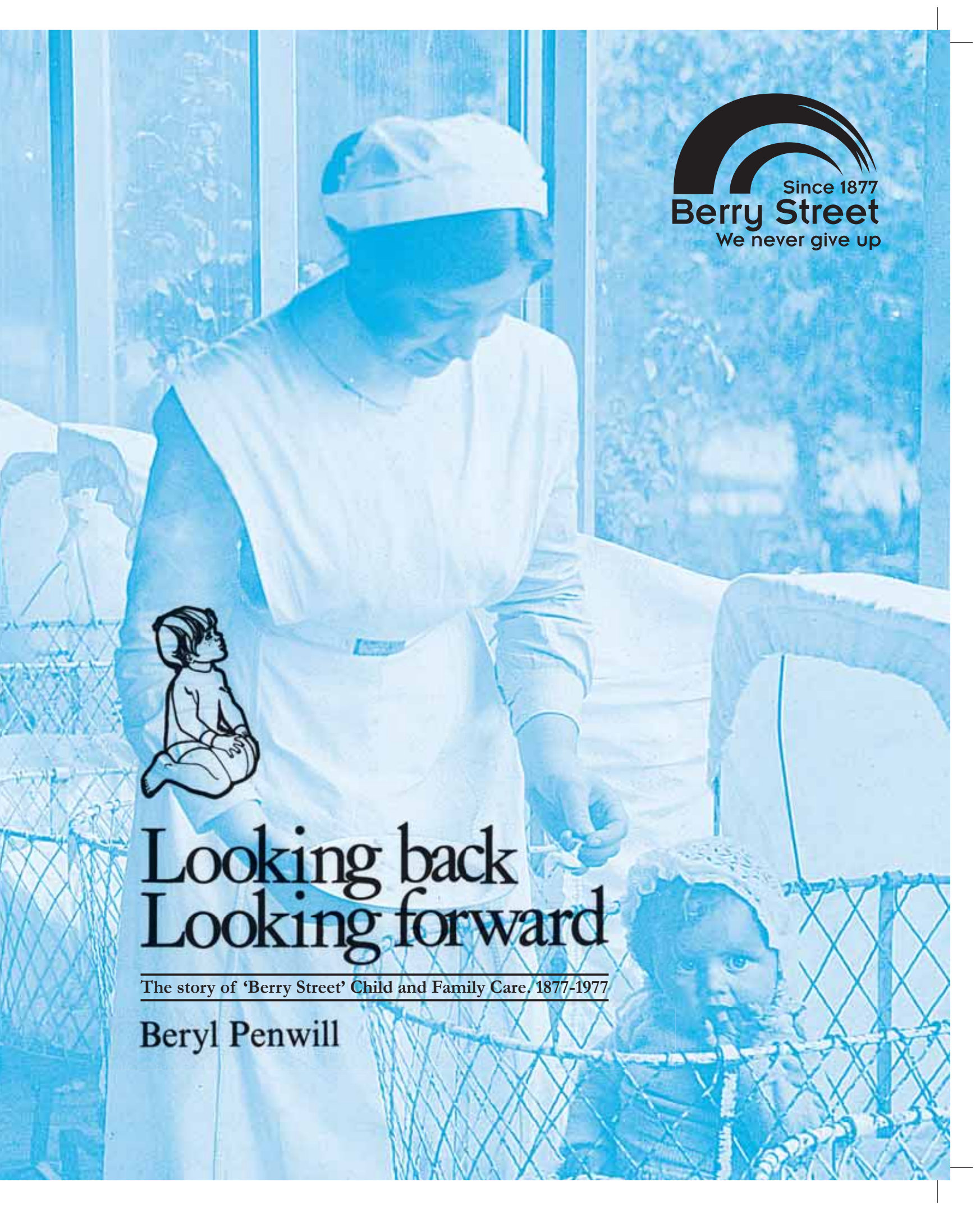
Since 1877  
**Berry Street**  
We never give up



# Looking back Looking forward

The story of 'Berry Street' Child and Family Care. 1877-1977

**Beryl Penwill**





Looking back  
Looking forward





*Top: Berry Street, 1885*  
*Bottom: Berry Street, 1977*



# Looking back Looking forward

The story of 'Berry Street' Child and Family Care.

ONE HUNDRED years of service to the Community.

Beryl Penwill

Berry Street Child and Family Care.  
Melbourne

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
MELBOURNE 3004

This most interesting book gives a history of service to the community through the care of the child.

Over the span of 100 years so much has been achieved by this body of dedicated volunteers, supported in later years by willing and loyal members of staff. Their courage and ability to overcome hardship and frustration has strengthened the bond between the mother and her baby and encouraged an awareness of the need for a social welfare service.

Medical science has contributed greatly to the changing pattern of society, and the Committee of Management of Berry Street has had the initiative and the foresight to grow and develop with this ever changing kaleidoscope, adapting programmes to suit the needs of the mother and child and working towards a more stable family relationship.

"Berry Street" has had five name changes in its 100 years but its charter has not changed. It is still providing help for babies, children and families, and will continue to generate love and security to all who enter its doors.

As Patroness, I am very proud to be associated with "Berry Street", and I commend this book to all who have the opportunity to read it.

*Garcy R. Wincke*

Patroness.

## Author's Note

Many names should be included in this story of Berry Street, those who have been involved in different ways over the years. But this is a very brief history and space does not allow me to mention but a few.

To those who offered help and information, to Mr Bill Fordyce who drew some of the sketches, to Mr David Dickeson who designed the booklet and laboured well with material which because of its variety and age was often difficult, to the printers and to Mr W. B. M. Hunter for much advice and assistance, I extend my appreciation and thanks.

This is the story as I see it. The views expressed are my own. It has been my pleasure to write this short history, and to present the copyright to 'Berry Street'. All profits from the sale of the book will go towards furthering the work already being done.

*Bert Penwill*



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*Hanover Street (Rented)*  
*Fitzroy*  
*First Home Victorian Asylum.*  
*Later moved to Berry Street.*



# Looking back Looking forward

It all began on 15th June, 1877. A group of ladies, concerned at the high death rate of infants, and the plight of pregnant girls and women, many without homes, money or hope, decided that help must be given.

Under the auspices of Lady Bowen, wife of the then Governor of Victoria, a meeting was held to raise money to give shelter to the 'unfortunates'. The dying babies and 'fallen women'.

As a result, a house was rented in Hanover Street, Fitzroy, and on the 9th November 1877 the first inmates were admitted.

The project was named *The Victorian Infant Asylum*.

The objects were:

*The prevention of infanticide.*

*The Saving of infant life from the evils of baby farming.*

*The rescuing of mothers of illegitimate children from further degradation.*

In the one hundred years of service to the community, there have been several name changes. For many years the Organization was known as the *Berry Street Babies' Home and Hospital*. Before that it was the *Foundling Hospital and Infants Home*, and, earlier still, the *Victorian Infant Asylum and Foundling Hospital*.

Today the full title is *Berry Street Child and Family Care*. To all, it is simply *Berry Street*.

The explanation for the changing name is simple. The word 'Asylum' meant 'refuge'. Later, the common use of the word gave it an unpleasant meaning, so it was dropped. Still later, it was considered that 'Foundling' also had an unfortunate tag so that, too, was deleted. Then the fostering of children ended and the Home was caring for babies and toddlers, so 'Babies' Home and Hospital' was descriptive. Now,



LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

with changed demands and the extension of services, it is *Berry Street Child and Family Care*.

In 1877 infant mortality was high. The pathos and tragedy of lost lives and lack of identity is shown in the returns of the cases of infanticide in 1878. The extract reads:

| <i>Place of death</i> | <i>Name of deceased</i> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Albert Park Lagoon    | Male child.             |
|                       | Unknown.                |
| Melbourne Cemetery    | Male child.             |
|                       | Unknown.                |

In those days, most families were large and it was accepted that some children would die, but in the poorer classes death was frequently the result of neglect or ignorance. Often, unwanted children were left on doorsteps of people in better circumstances, or in some public place or even left for dead in a rubbish tin.

Although the newly-established Infant Asylum was overcrowded, a baby in need was always admitted, but, as some restriction was necessary and inevitable, only those girls or women having their first baby out of wedlock would be given shelter.

The attitude of the public at that time was condemnatory. Pregnant girls had 'sinned' and must accept their punishment, (pregnancy) and should not be helped, or loose ways encouraged.

It was recorded that many of the young girls who took advantage of the refuge given by the Victorian Asylum were, as a rule, 'respectable young females' whose condition caused humiliation and grief to their families. Brought up to earn their own living, they were sent out to work in service or factory, at an age when daughters of the well-to-do were looked upon as school girls. Many were country bred, but obliged to earn a living in the city, many had to submit to the attentions of the males in the houses where they were in service. They were dismissed in disgrace when it became evident that they were pregnant.

They would not, perhaps could not, go back home and tried to exist in the streets. The *Victorian Infant Asylum* gave them shelter and help to plan their future.

The Government had been approached by the Committee of Management both for assistance in funding the Asylum and for land on which to build a suitable institution. The appeal was only partly successful.

Chief Secretary's Office,  
MELBOURNE,  
6th August 1877

Madam,

I have the honour by the direction of the Chief Secretary to inform you that this Government has carefully considered the question of giving support to the Infant Asylum as urged at the recent interview, and to state that he does not see any hope of being able to either provide a site or making a grant in aid of maintenance out of the charitable institutions vote, in view of the large number of charities already assisted out of public funds.

In his opinion an appeal to the wealthy portion of the public who in this Colony are not burdened with a poor rate, would, or ought to, put the promoters readily in receipt of the necessary funds to establish an Asylum, such as they contemplate and keep it in operation.

With regard to the Government responsibility of maintenance of the deserted children who may be left in the Asylum at the age of four years, the Chief Secretary understood that the Committee would endeavour to provide for these as far as possible by inviting benevolent persons to adopt them.

If the Committee undertake this, the Government on their side are prepared to pay the expenses of boarding out such as remain at that age on their hands, paying for them at the same rate as are given for children from the present industrial schools.

Your most obedient servant  
(Signature illegible)

So the Committee appealed to 'the wealthy portion of the public in the Colony', and apparently received enough help to warrant reserving a site on Eastern Hill, and going ahead with plans to have a suitable building erected.

This did not happen. There is no record or mention of this failure to proceed—only a plan showing that the land was next to the old Eye and Ear Hospital.

Another site was secured in 1881, on the corner of Vale and Berry Streets. This was in an area that had once been the Police paddock, and on which still stood a building that had once been the Police Hospital.



Old accounts, still in the files, show the cost of the alterations to make it suitable for the use of the Victorian Infant Asylum.

The following year, 1882, the Government gave a grant of land in Berry Street alongside that already purchased by the Committee.

The title reads that this land and premises may not be used for any purpose other than as an Infant Asylum. It is signed *Normanby* by the Most Honourable George Augustus Constantine, Marquis of Normanby and Earl of Mulgrave, Viscount Normanby and Baron Mulgrave of Mulgrave, all in the County of York in the Peerage of the United Kingdom, and Baron Mulgrave of New Rose in the County of Wexford in the Peerage of Ireland, a member of our Most Honourable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of our distinguished order of St Michael and its dependencies and Vice-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of our Colony of Victoria and its dependencies and Vice-Admiral of the same in Melbourne, this twenty-sixth day of September in the forty-fifth year of Our Reign in the year of our Lord, eighteen-eighty-one.

From that date to this the land and premises have given asylum (refuge) to infants.

By 1882 the inmates were established in the new environment, a delightful area on the edge of Yarra Park, which itself provided both a spacious playground for the children, and a very pleasant view from the premises.

The Report that year reads that the children benefited greatly in health through the comfort of the new buildings, and under the care of the Honorary Doctors, one, aptly named Motherwell.

However, infant mortality was still very high. Fourteen of the sixty-five children admitted that year died.

To help to combat this it was decided that mothers should nurse their babies instead of the infants being boarded out to wet nurse, or, in the case of tiny ones, to artificial feeding, a method that was then considered very unsatisfactory.

This meant that the mothers had to stay in the Asylum for six to eight months, and gave rise to further problems of accommodation and maintenance costs.

It was also suggested that, by being under the influence of the home, it would bring back the women's 'better feelings'!

Once the Home in Berry Street became known for the work it was doing, the increasing number of applications for admission caused a need for changed attitudes on the part of the general public, and on the Government departments that still regarded the Asylum with some mistrust.

Members of the Committee did all the administration and supervised the boarding out and adoptions in these early years. Their husbands gave financial help, advice, and moral support.

The inmates did all the domestic work and cooking, as well as looking after the babies and older children. Later, a superintendent was appointed, then, as money became available and a greater need arose, a matron and nurses.

Sympathetic local residents supplied milk, eggs and fruit from the many gardens in the area. A vegetable garden was established in the Home grounds and was tended by those who had any time to spare.

As the number of adults and babies being helped increased, more and more money was needed to keep the Home going. A large nursery was a dream; extra accommodation was a must.

By 1889 some of the outbuildings which were in good condition were made into wards and offices, and a new laundry was erected. But tents had to be used to house those with infectious illnesses and the very sick children.

Death was still a regular visitor. Of seventy-two babies admitted in 1891, twenty-two died. All were under six months of age. Such a high percentage might have daunted less determined women than those on the Committee, but they were encouraged by the fact that the percentage of deaths was less in the Asylum than in the community outside.

Because of the number of unwanted children, it was suggested that a Foundling Home should be established by the Government to care for the babies being left in doorways, lanes and rubbish tins. Committee members of *The Victorian Infant Asylum* opposed the idea. They considered that they were already doing this work and that the money might well be better used to increase the accommodation they already had, and to help in its maintenance.

In *The Herald* of 7th August 1891, it was reported that Mrs Tester, Vice-President of *The Victorian Infant Asylum* had been examined on those very points by the Investigation Committee that afternoon.

The Chairman had commented that the number of deaths represented twenty-five per cent, which was very high.

Mrs Tester explained that the twenty deaths from the eighty-one children admitted that year, could be accounted for in two ways—*inherited disease* and *overcrowding*. There was not sufficient room in the Institution, but no child was ever turned away. Mothers were often boarded out with children, at the seaside, but this work could not be extended because of lack of funds. She was not in favour of a Foundling home except where mothers were admitted with their





Sketches at the Victorian Asylum



waifs. A foundling system might save a few murders, but could be taken advantage of by married people who wished to get rid of their children.

The appeal by the Berry Street Committee must have been successful, for later the word 'Foundling' was added to the name of the Institution, and it became known simply as 'The Foundling Home'.

Parents *did* take advantage, as Mrs Tester had foreseen. They left children, then could not be traced, but when the children were old enough to work the parents claimed them, though not always successfully.

If the question was asked on how could those administering the Home allow themselves to be 'taken advantage of', the answer was that any decision was always in favour of the child. The welfare of children always came first.

For example, one woman left her baby at Berry Street, then disappeared. *Sixteen years later* she claimed her child.

Legal advice was sought and a reply dated 1902 reads:

The Mother deserted the child. For two years the Institution maintained the child without reward, and then found some charitable person to relieve the Institution of its care.

For fourteen years that person has maintained and brought up the child, and the Mother now seeks to recover her, although for sixteen years she has left the maintenance and education of the child to strangers.

In law, the girl is nobody's child, and no Court would make an order that she should be taken from the person who has acted as parent to her, and hand her to her Mother, who bore her in shame, and deserted her for sixteen years.

The Institution is not bound to give the Mother any information as to where the girl is.

It had been the claim of the Committee that no child was ever turned away. There was always overcrowding, but in those days there were no health authorities to insist on so much space for each child or adult receiving assistance and to ignore the needs of those without shelter. However, in 1892 the Honorary Physicians were obliged to make the difficult decision to restrict admissions in order to prevent overcrowding and possible infection.

It was a desperate situation. Accommodation was quite inadequate and lack of funds prevented anything but the minimum of maintenance.

A country house was also needed so that the more delicate children might benefit in health during the trying summer months.

Government and public were advised of the immediate necessity for the enlargement of the Asylum and an appeal for help was made to the charitable. It was claimed that 'To overcrowd the Institution or to refuse admission is equally objectionable'.

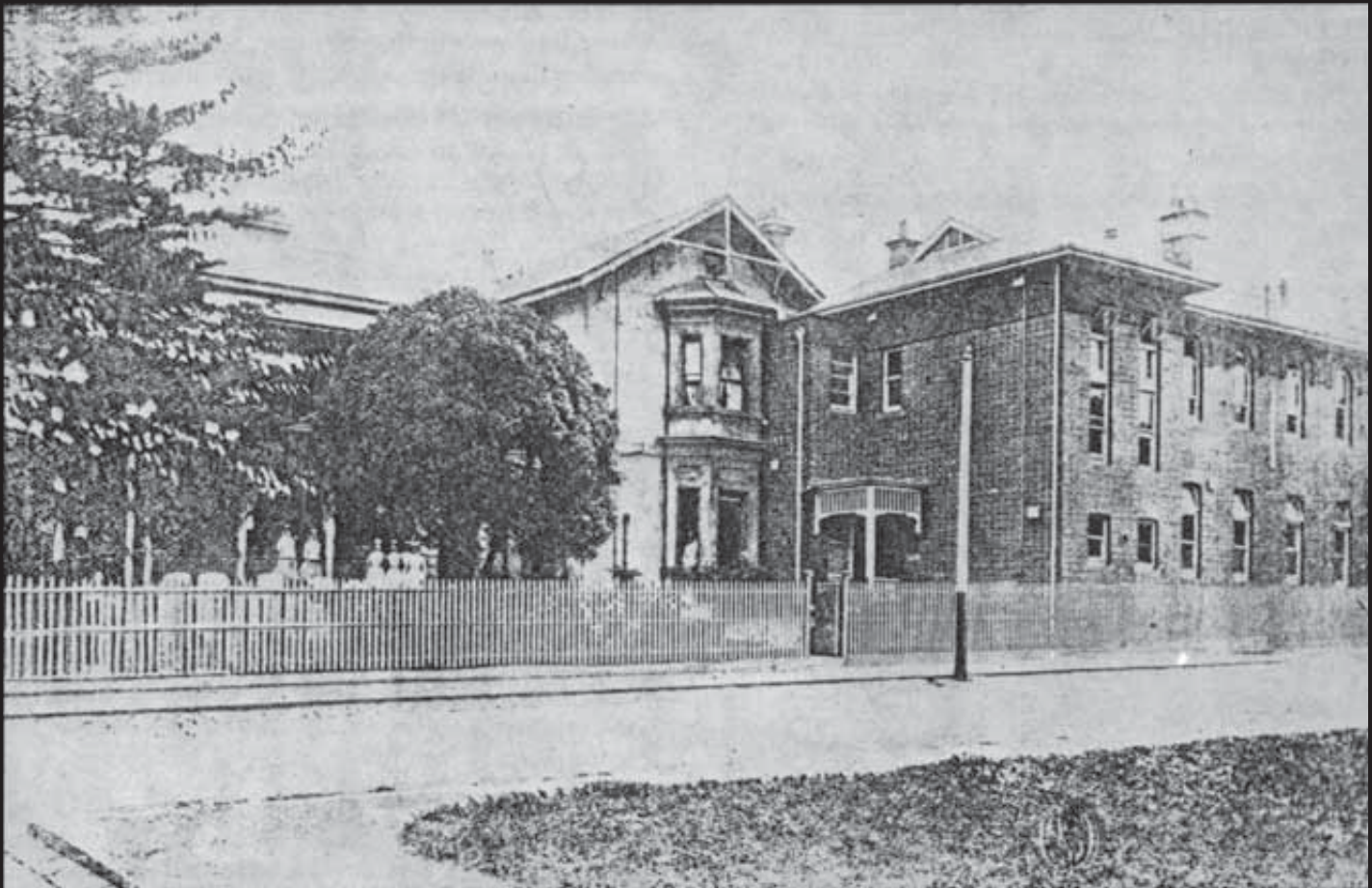
A contributor gave money to defray the cost of a house at Sandringham, where, accompanied by their mothers, children were sent for six weeks. To those whose lives were despaired of at the beginning of summer this change proved of great benefit.

It should be remembered that in those years the weather played an important part in the welfare of the children. There was no air-conditioning or good ventilation to compensate for the excessive heat of summer, and in winter the large rooms were warmed inadequately by an open fire at one end of the ward. Food could not be kept by refrigeration. It had to be bought from day-to-day. Milk went sour in excessive heat or in the humidity of a thunderstorm. Meat went 'off'.

Clothing also played a part. It was the custom to swaddle infants in binders, singlets, petticoats of cotton, flannelette and flannel, long gowns, jackets, shawls, booties and bonnets. Napkins were bulky and presented a problem in wet weather; there were no disposable ones at that time. All this meant a great deal of laundry work without washing- or drying-machines, and time spent in dressing and undressing the children. Such problems have now been overcome with modern amenities, and it is much simpler to ensure the good health and safety of babies and children.

Artificial feeding was not satisfactory, and it was the breakthrough with this problem that gave the greatest help and satisfaction to those concerned with the rearing of the babies. Breast feeding was sometimes difficult or indeed not available. The Honorary Doctor and Superintendent who were responsible for the safe formula for the 'bottle' at Berry Street, were warmly congratulated and blessed. It meant that babies could now be kept at the Home under the supervision of the Committee and staff, and not boarded out to wet nurse. As a result mothers did not need to spend six months at the home, breast feeding their babies, but could go back into the work force and plan to make a home for their children. A change had to be made in policy.





*Berry Street, around 1905*



# Making Headway

In 1902, the Twenty-fifth Annual Report showed the change of the name to *The Victorian Infant Asylum and Foundling Hospital*.

During that year a severe outbreak of whooping cough stopped admissions for a time. A child admitted in a dying condition developed the dreaded cough. This promptly spread to the younger infants who had no strength to fight the infection. In many cases broncho-pneumonia supervened and the babies died.

This epidemic was a cause of great grief to the ladies on the Committee and to the staff who were working so well. It was resolved that it was imperative to increase the accommodation. If the epidemic had been confined in a proper isolation ward, lives could have been saved.

A 'Foundling Wing' was being added to the building, and it was planned that, when this Wing was opened a new branch of the staff would be made. This would allow children's domestic nurses to enter the

Home as probationers, and by enabling them to learn their work thoroughly, enhance their value, both to themselves as wage earners, and to their employers.

The Home has always been undenominational. In 1903 a table of religions of those children whose faith could be ascertained, showed:

|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Church of England | 58 |
| Roman Catholic    | 49 |
| Presbyterian      | 32 |
| Wesleyan          | 22 |
| Congregational    | 12 |
| Baptist           | 5  |
| Jewish            | 1  |

As for the girls and women who were given shelter, they could be visited at any time by a minister of their own religion.

Other organisations for helping children were maintained by members of the Church involved, or by some society with financial backing. Berry Street relied



## LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

on public subscriptions, interested regular donors and whatever Government help could be obtained.

Money *had* to be found. In that year, as was noted, the cost of living and provisions had increased, and it now needed eighteen pounds (£18) per year to keep a child. Consequently, the Committee had advertised for competitive plans for a building that could supply greater comforts and efficiency and the increased accommodation so urgently needed, and that could be built wing by wing.

The building fund stood at £174.3.0.

Unfortunately, the minutes of the Committee meetings for the years before 1920 are missing, and the Annual Reports of that period make little reference to the proposed building except to state that a Mr Arthur Peck was awarded the £100 prize for his design.

In the next year, 1904, it was reported that these plans were now in the hands of the Board of Health for a *new wing*, which it was hoped would be ready for occupation in six months.

This wing was added to the existing building, which was, as far as can be ascertained, the remodelled old Police Hospital.

One photograph (p. 14) shows the new wing and the enlarged home, while another (p. 23) shows the interior of the Foundling Nursery and Hospital.

Dying children were still being brought in, many of them by the 'Registered Nurse'. This was almost a derogatory term for these women who brought to the Home the weakest and the dying babies. Repeatedly through the Reports there is the comment that of so many of the infants brought in, the largest number (often five out of seven) had been received in a dying state from 'Registered Nurses'.

It seems unfair that these nurses should be blamed for the condition of the infants, when in all probability they were found and rescued in that pitiful state.

That more women needed training in the care of children was very evident and in 1907 a scheme to take probationers into Berry Street, to be trained in nursery work, was put into operation.

Those trained were to remain with the Home for twelve months and at the end of that time were to be given a certificate of proficiency if they passed the necessary tests.

This was apparently the pioneer scheme for Mothercraft Training. Over one hundred applications were received after the advertisement appeared in the papers. There was only accommodation for five, and these girls started training while the Committee planned some way to take in more of the applicants.

In the ensuing years accommodation of a kind was made, but it was not until sixty-five years later that the long desired, modern, comfortable Nurses Home, adequate for the numbers, was built.

Apart from trained staff, there was also a number of girls and women who did volunteer work around the Home. However, some Matrons did not approve of untrained women helping with babies, even though these women might have children of their own. The Matrons' attitude meant that the babies were isolated in their nursery from any contact with people other than the staff and Committee, except when taken for a walk and this was not always a regular habit because of staff shortages. The Doctors did not approve of this isolation and a medical report read:

Institutional treatment of very young children, not only here, but in other countries, has in many respects proved far from satisfactory.

It has been remarked that such children are slow in walking and talking, and generally backward in development, both bodily and mentally, as compared with children who have received the benefits of home life.

(In view of this appreciation it seems difficult to understand why fostering was later discontinued, unless it was by Government decree. With the trained social workers now available, it is thought that the regular and thorough supervision so necessary may make it possible for fostering at Berry Street to be workable again.)

The Honorary Medical Staff at Berry Street were also well aware of the need for children to have a change of air, and in 1911, two rooms of a house in Benteleigh, then a rural area, were placed at the disposal of the Home. Eggs and milk free of charge were also promised.

The next year a cottage at Balwyn was offered for three years rent free. This was gratefully accepted and the house furnished and a tent erected on the land. This gave accommodation for ten to twelve babies with nurses and domestic help. The children from Berry Street were sent out in rotation. It was unfortunate that heavy rains disrupted this arrangement, but the children who were able to take advantage of this change benefited greatly.

Mentally retarded girls were a great worry and a problem for the Committee.



It was reported that:

'These unfortunates' were affected to such an extent as to necessitate their detention in a lunatic asylum. The need for a home for weak-minded girls is apparent to all those concerned with the Institution.

Their remaining at liberty is a constant source of harm to themselves, and to their infants, besides perpetuating undesirable types.

It is earnestly hoped that the Government will, before long, see a way clear to make provision for these young women.

Such girls were constantly pregnant, and their babies usually sub-normal. This was a situation ignored by the general public and the Government, but one of which the Honorary Medical Staff and those concerned with the administration of Berry Street were only too conscious. The plight of the weak-minded was a constant and recurring problem that created difficulties especially as it was still the policy at the Home to give shelter only to girls having their first babies.

Another problem was the health of the infants admitted to the Foundling Home at birth. The Honorary Doctors found that:

Very few of the infants are found to be in a healthy condition when admitted. It is well known that deaths among the illegitimate, outnumber by more than 3 to 1 those among legitimate.

Many factors determine this susceptibility to disease, conspicuous among which are the child's grievously undernourished state, and congenital disease that is as a rule caused when the mother has been reduced in health from noxious drugs while carrying the baby and having given birth to it, ignorant of its proper care.

In 1913 the Committee at last found the country home they had been needing. It was at Beaconsfield, a property adjoining the Railway Station and comprised thirty-eight acres of pastoral land with a large brick villa surrounded by well laid out gardens, and with useful outbuildings. The price was £2750.

A government grant of £1000 was made towards the cost, and immediate plans for the alterations and

additions to make it suitable were begun. This cost an amount similar to the purchase price.

A creek surrounded the property and a windmill pumped the water to the tanks. There was a large cultivation paddock, poultry runs and cows to give fresh milk daily.

Underground and storage tanks had to be installed to supply the large amount of water required daily for the laundry purposes alone.

A tennis court was laid out and a piano provided by 'a music lover' to give some recreation for the staff who at Beaconsfield were then isolated from the city life to which most of them were accustomed.

The Beaconsfield Home was opened on the 6th May 1915 by Lady Stanley, wife of the Governor of Victoria, in the presence of a large and interested gathering and, it can be assumed, a very happy Management Committee.

Once again, it was felt that another milestone had been passed on the road to achieving the best possible care for the children.

There seemed to be some magic about Beaconsfield. All those who went to this extension of Berry Street felt that it was a very happy place. It was used at first for pre-maternity cases and as a convalescent home for mothers when discharged from the Women's Hospital (where they went from Berry Street to have their babies).

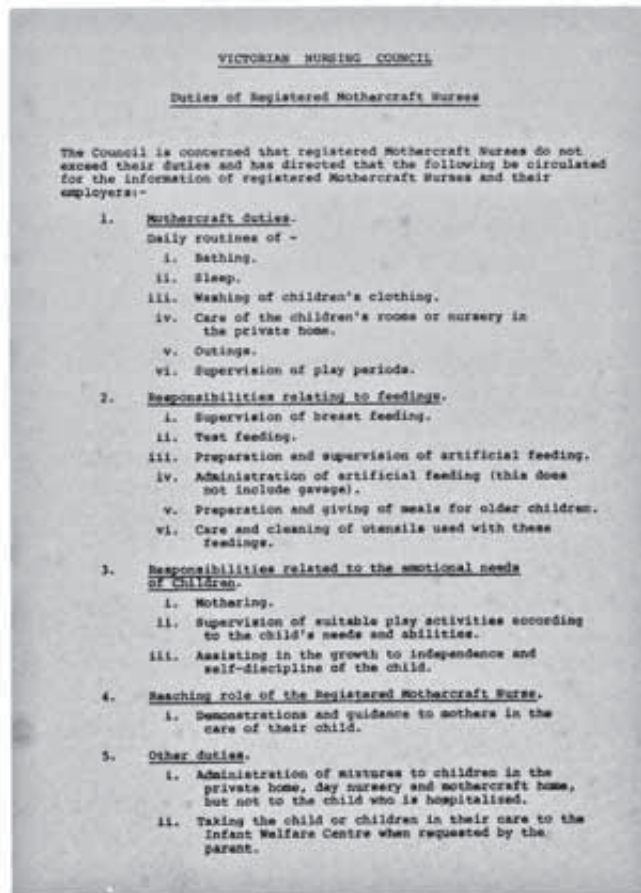
The older nurses, long since retired, speak of Beaconsfield with great affection and nostalgia. They talk of the 'wonderful days at Beaconsfield' yet they were hard working times, for there were few amenities. It was hot in summer and cold in winter. The nurses had to do work outside their training, such as bringing in wood for the fires that gave comfort to those who were near them, but inadequate warmth for those who were not.

Tales are told of how, at one time, a large possum would thump through the nursery every night; and of how a local policeman doing his rounds on his bicycle would always check the Home and stay for a cup of cocoa and a chat; of how aborigines would often poke unexpected heads, curious and friendly, around doors.

There was always plenty of fun at Beaconsfield—but just what the fun was it has not been possible to ascertain!

The local residents befriended the nurses and invited them into their homes. Women of the district took an interest in the children and women at the Home, and sewed, knitted and visited. They then formed an auxiliary to raise money, while their menfolk made vegetable plots and provided goods from their own gardens.





The Mothercraft Nurses who did their training at Beaconsfield during the Second World War years when the Women's Army Service had taken over Berry Street, tell of reporting to the Night Sister who required them to be in at midnight, then re-joining their local boy friends who waited for them at the end of the long drive, and returning thirty miles to a country dance. The boys drove cars equipped with Gas Producers so that it was not exactly a quiet departure. It must be assumed that the sympathetic Sister was conveniently hard of hearing.

The conditions of training were primitive. Babies and nurses had sleep-out type accommodation. On a winter's morning it was necessary to brush the frost off blankets, and literally to break the ice on the bowls of disinfectant for hand-washing. There was no running water. The junior nurse on night duty had the unpleasant and frightening task of dragging bags of soiled linen a hundred yards or so through the dark to the old stables that had been converted to a laundry. The hoot of an owl or an unexpected train whistle would send her scurrying back to the comfort of the big old-fashioned kitchen.

The Night Sister was waiting out the years at Beaconsfield, having helped with the evacuation of babies and children from Darwin after the bombing. Flying out was not then done, and weeks were spent on the road in trucks, sleeping on the roadside by night. She was later awarded the OBE for her part, and after the War returned to Darwin with her husband and an adopted baby.

Earlier, in March 1915 the Foundling Home became an incorporated Institution, the Governor-in-Council having granted the petition to the contributors to this effect. By-laws for the Institution were drawn up and approved by the Committee of Management, and confirmed by the contributors at a public meeting.

The Home was now recognised for its work and had status. That the service it was giving to the community was appreciated, is shown from the Fortieth Report.

Never in the history of this State has the preservation of life been more important. No less than 2,600 of the flower of our manhood have been lost to the War, and unfortunately the end is not yet, so we are in duty bound to do all we possibly can, not only to save life of the infants but to give them the advantages of healthy environment at the critical period of their lives.

That this Institution has succeeded in its efforts is shown in the fact that out of 174 children in the Institution up to four months old, only four have been lost. A percentage of 3.2 compared with 8.5 for Melbourne and suburbs.

Of six babies who had been left in the streets with little chance of survival, when their mothers had abandoned them, every one of the six has survived under the loving and efficient care of the nurses.

In 1919, of the 111 children cared for *not one death occurred*. This was remarkable.

The names given by the nurses to the street babies or 'Foundlings' were often very apt. 'Jack Frost' was found on a frosty night. 'Belle Lane' was discovered early one morning still alive after spending the night in the open. Night nurses heard the bell of the back gate into the lane, but disregarded it thinking it was caused by the wind. The tiny infant survived the cold night and was named by the nurse who found her.

'Peter Daw' was left in the doorway of Berry Street at night. Many of the babies were given the name of the street where they were found as a surname and a christian name after doctors or nurses.



These names were usually changed when the babies were adopted. (Adopting parents prefer to give the baby the christian name they have chosen while the children going to Foster Homes are usually known by the surnames of their foster parents.)

A Public Appeal was made in 1921 for £10,000. £5,000 was to be secured as an endowment fund, £3,000 devoted to additions to Berry Street which had been somewhat neglected since the buying and setting up of Beaconsfield, £1,500 would be used to clear the existing overdraft and £500 to effect certain repairs.

The need for the endowment fund was explained:

This Hospital which is the outcome of philanthropic ladies for the suppression of infanticide and baby farming, has gone through forty-four years with no endowment fund, and an ever-growing expenditure and increasing overdraft.

This Foundling Hospital is the only Hospital Institution in Victoria where only young babies are received, and it stands unsurpassed by its abnormally low death rate.

The appeal was successful.

During the year (1920-1) there had been a daily average of fifty-three infants in the Home.

|          |                                  |     |
|----------|----------------------------------|-----|
| Children | Boarded out                      | 143 |
|          | Adopted                          | 21  |
|          | Discharged with mothers          | 29  |
|          | Discharged to other institutions | 2   |
|          | At Berry Street                  | 61  |
|          | Deaths                           | 8   |

In noting those discharged to other institutions it should be remembered that while the children were normally taken care of until they were old enough to earn their own living, there were occasions when a child had to be sent to a mental home or children's hospital for more advanced treatment than was possible at Berry Street.

In later years the practice of caring for children until they were old enough to earn a living was discontinued, and the Institution became a babies' home, where the children stayed until three to four years of age, when they were either taken by their mothers or sent to an orphanage.

OFFICE-BEARERS & COMMITTEE  
FOR THE YEAR 1878-9.

*Patroness*  
LADY BOWEN

*President*  
MRS. J. G. FRANCIS

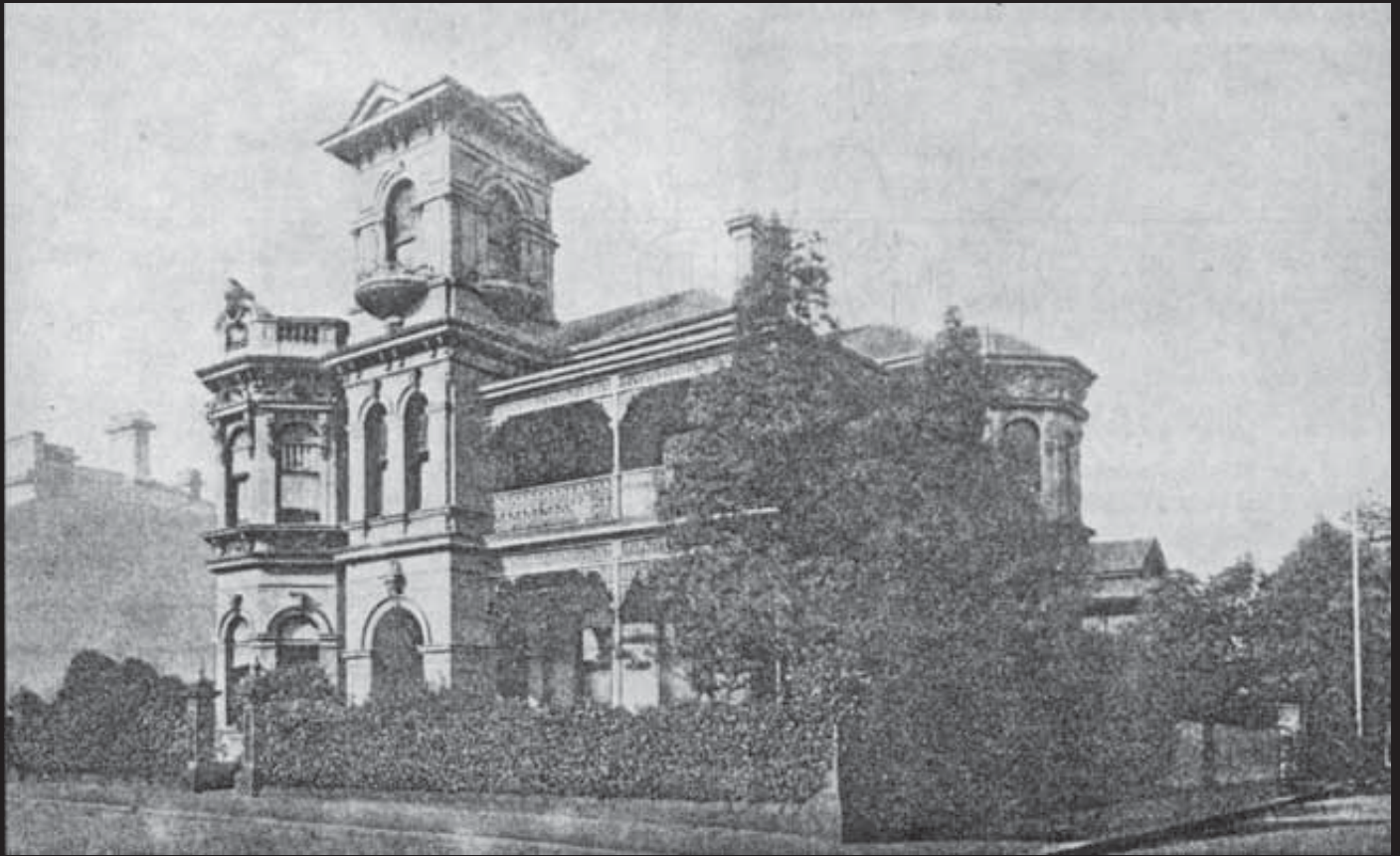
*Treasurer*  
MRS. NANKIVELL

*Secretaries*  
THE HON. MRS. C. E. BRIGHT  
MRS. A. PEARSON

*Committee*  
MRS. W. J. CLARKE  
MRS. G. STEVENSON  
MRS. SHIELDS  
MRS. W. PEARSON  
MRS. TESTAR  
MRS. PRENDERGAST

*Honorary Physicians*  
DR. MOTHERWELL  
DR. SHIELDS  
DR. YOUL





*'Tandarra',  
Infant Welfare Training School,  
East Melbourne*



# The Golden Years

The Golden Anniversary of the Home in 1927 was marked by the purchase of an adjoining property in Vale Street. This was a mansion named 'Minerva' and was separated by a lane from the Foundling Hospital and Home. It was re-named 'Tandarra' and alterations were made to allow the building to be used as an Infant Welfare Training Centre. There, mothers who had feeding problems with their babies, or needed additional rest after a difficult birth, could stay and receive advice and treatment.

The acquisition of this property and the establishment of the training school with the benefits it gave to nursing mothers, gave great satisfaction and a sense of further achievement to the Committee and staff.

'Tandarra' was officially opened by Lady Somers, wife of the Governor of Victoria, on the 1st November, 1929.

In the fiftieth report it was recorded that seven Foundlings had come to the Home in the year. One had developed double pneumonia owing to exposure, and was in the Children's Hospital. Three had been adopted, and one discharged to the Police for adoption.

Young women entering the home for protection and care while awaiting their baby, had to sign an agreement, that they would remain in the Home for six months after the birth, so that the child could have the advantage of natural feeding.

While this may have benefited the baby, it must have made it a heartbreak for the mother if the child was to be given up for adoption.

It is usual in these days for the girl to sign adoption papers beforehand and not see her baby. In this way it is as if the baby had died. Whether this way is better . . . or not . . . is a very difficult question.

The Committee Women in helping these girls must have become involved in many an emotional crisis.



## LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

The "Boarding out" of children also caused emotional problems. While the greater majority of placements were satisfactory, there were some that did not work. Child and parent proved incompatible.

No child ever left Berry Street to go to a Foster Home, unless in good health.

The Foster Mother had been interviewed by Matron, and the home inspected by Members of the Committee. References were required from a Doctor or Minister who knew the family.

Despite the care taken to ensure the placement would be satisfactory to both child and substitute parents, it did not always work out. Parents became ill or left the State or Country, the child had to be returned to the Home and yet another home and new parents found. The trauma of continually adjusting to a new environment and new relationships did not make for well adjusted and happy children.

Any child separated from its natural parents, or discarded by a young mother has many hurdles to overcome in life. The Committee at Berry Street helped over the first hurdles by ensuring good health and in trying to find a secure and good home.

At this period there were staff difficulties. Girls were loath to go into service or domestic work. Better money and more freedom could be found in factory or shop work. Those girls awaiting their babies were not now expected to help with the toil and the chores as they had done in the early days, other than keeping their quarters clean and tidy.

Doctors and Matron ensured that the pregnant young women had adequate rest and simple exercise while carrying their babies, and drew up a programme to suit these requirements. This left little time for anything but washing dishes and doing vegetables.

Although there were some problems with domestic help at Berry Street, there were even greater difficulties at Beaconsfield. Staff, domestic or nursing, was just not available. No one now wanted to work in the country. Higher wages and shorter hours had to be offered, and were, but even this did not ease the situation. It was a worrying thought that it might be necessary to close the home at Beaconsfield.

This, it was thought, would again create health problems as many young children were sent there to benefit from the country air and environment, especially the sickly children who could be available for adoption or boarding out.

### *Extract from minutes . . . 1927*

Mrs R . . . and Mrs G . . . visited Beaconsfield and reported that everything was satisfactory, but commented on the extreme fatness of the bacon in the larder. It was suggested that Smith be asked not to fatten the pig as much.

. . . .

### *One wonders at the story behind this . . .*

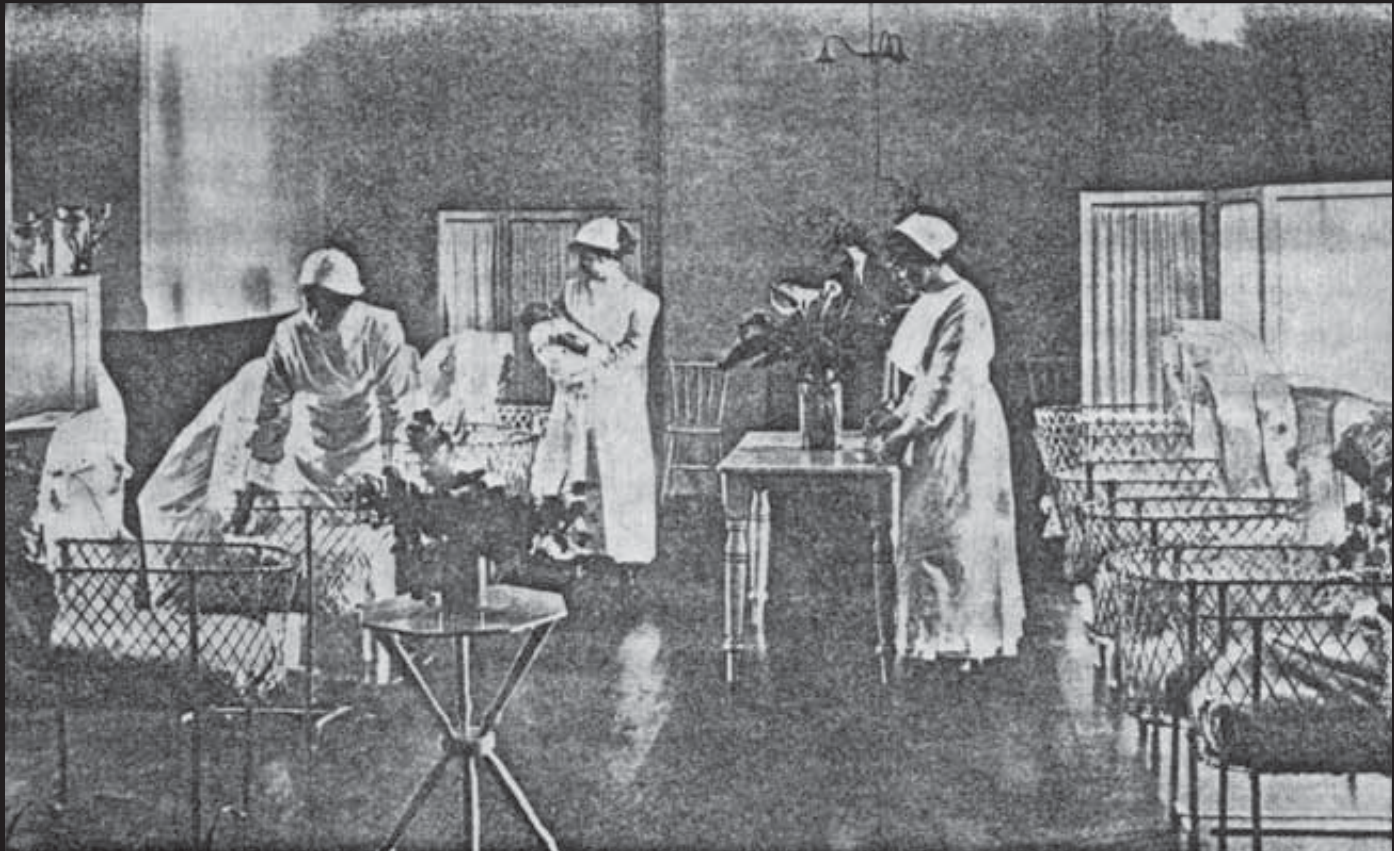
Mildred (a foundling) a baby about three months old was found in a tub in a back yard in West Melbourne, and admitted from Policewoman C . . .

By order, was taken to the Children's Court and discharged to her Mother.

. . . .

### *You can read what it says but you'll guess what it meant.*

Discharged R . . . This baby was admitted from Policewoman C . . . for one night, and discharged next day to her Mother being intoxicated at the time.



*Interior of a Ward*





*Top: Group of Little Inmates  
of the Victorian Infant Asylum  
and Founding Hospital*

*Below: Babies at Beaconsfield*



## Keeping Going

In the 1930s the depression brought greater demands and responsibilities to Berry Street. There were many more admissions being requested, yet there was less money to maintain those already in care. Children were boarded out. Those who had reached the age when they could be expected to be independent and no longer a charge on the Home had to be found jobs and a place to live unless their foster parents were prepared to keep them without payment. Many of the foster parents were themselves also affected by the depression and although willing to keep the boys and girls, had not the means to do so. Men everywhere were without work.

It had been hoped that the co-operation of those business men interested in the Home would find a way, but while eager to assist, the economic climate

was unhelpful. There were few openings for work of any permanency or with chance of advancement. Some of the boys did find positions and worked their way up in their jobs. Some kept in touch with Berry Street or Committee members for many years. Several went inter-state and made a point of visiting their contacts at the Home whenever they returned to Melbourne. One lad went to America, and sent back his first pay packet to the Home that had given him a future.

What happened to the girls is not recorded. It must be assumed that they either stayed with foster parents or were given work to do at Berry Street until outside work was available.

Berry Street was open every day, including Saturday and Sunday, for visits to children by parents, friends and even by the public. However, this open



house policy was later discontinued because of staff difficulties and also because the Matron and Honorary Doctors were concerned at the risks of infection.

The Foundling Home and Hospital was now affiliated to the National Council of Women Baby Health Centres Association, and the Children's Welfare Association.

Agreement had also been made with the Kindergarten Union of Victoria to co-operate in a scheme for short training courses for Kindergarten trainees at the Foundling Hospital and for Foundling Hospital trainees at the Kindergarten training school.

For many years the Foundling Home and Hospital had been training probationers in infant care. They were taught to look after a healthy baby in a private home or institution. Other institutions had established similar training, and it was now proposed to give these trainees a status, and call them Mothercraft Nurses. This was in 1931.

The trainees were familiar and popular figures around the streets of East Melbourne. Local residents took a keen interest in the babies being wheeled in their prams and the toddlers out walking with the young girls in their uniforms and scarlet capes. Although their official title was Mothercraft Nurse, they were affectionately known as 'The Berry Street girls'.

The design of the Mothercraft Nurses' first cap came from Berry Street, and Matron H.V. McGain, one of the longest serving Matrons, with over twenty years at the Home, was officially congratulated.

It was a sad day for the Committee when these 'Students' gave up that status for the one of wage earner, and the Mothercraft training had to be phased out. It was not economically possible to keep and train them and also pay the wages now demanded instead of pocket money.

However, this scheme continued until 28th February, 1975 when training at Berry Street was officially discontinued. The final graduation took place on 19th March, 1975.

The years between the beginning and end of infant and child care training at Berry Street have been very rewarding both for the girls and the Home. The past trainees have been very loyal to Berry Street. Many of them joined the Past Nurses Association and continue to take an active interest in the children in care, by raising funds and providing many extras for their enjoyment and benefit.

In 1939, the Secretary's office was moved to 379 Collins Street, Melbourne. No explanations can be found for this move. It might have been to allow extra room at the Home, or it might have been foresight, as the military forces took possession of the Home in 1942. Admission had to be curtailed and the staff,

children, and unmarried mothers were moved to Beaconsfield. The Infant Welfare training school was closed down.

Very little mention is made of the Second World War years either in the Reports or in the few minutes that can be found for those years.

It was said that the children were moved because of the possibility of air raids. However, they benefited in the country surroundings and enjoyed the freedom of the large grounds. Although there were difficulties in getting labour for the home farm somehow the supply of vegetables, eggs, fruit and bacon continued.

During the war years, when the military forces were in occupation at Berry Street, the Annual Meeting had to be held elsewhere. In 1942 the meeting took place in the Secretary's office in Collins Street and an extract from the Report of that year gives some idea of the problems still facing the Committee.

Before the War permission had from time to time been sought from the Charities Board for some very necessary re-building at Berry Street, but could not be obtained. Instead, the Board invited the Home this year to agree to an amalgamation with another, in a new building on their site, forming one institution under a new name.

The diversity of the work of the two institutions was so great however, the Committee felt it would be a great breach of trust bestowed upon them to agree, involving as it would not only the risk of losing the identity of the Berry Street Home, but setting aside the whole basis of the work.

The Board therefore withdrew the continuance of the Government Grant, and thereby made the Home free to re-build and continue in accordance with its own policy.

The next Annual Meeting was held in the Melbourne Town Hall on 5th August, 1943. The Chair was taken by Mrs R. G. (later Dame Pattie) Menzies. The only mention of the war was a report that a man had visited the Secretary: he had been adopted from Berry Street forty-eight years before. He had been a foundling. Now he was married, with two sons in the R.A.A.F.

The speaker at that meeting was the Baroness von Aersson Beyeress von Veshal who gave an interesting talk on Infant Welfare Work in Holland before the war.



The Sixty-seventh Annual Meeting was held at the home of the President, Mrs S. A. Allen, at 390 Toorak Road, South Yarra.

In 1945, the Army was still in possession of Berry Street, and the Committee was pressing for the premises to be returned, so that renovations and alterations could be made to enable the care of the women and children and the full work of the training schools be resumed.

The military forces vacated the premises, and the renovations and additions were made. The new Berry Street was officially opened by Lady Dugan on 13th December, 1945. A large number of subscribers attended the opening and later inspected the home, many expressing approval and pleasure at what had been accomplished.

The Committee and Staff were elated at having what was then considered to be an up-to-date hospital from the very war-torn and damaged buildings.

In the accounts is an item of receipt:

'Compensation from Department of Army re Berry Street tenancy rent £306.3.4. for the year 1944 to 1945'.

The cost of the re-building was £13,000. Not all of this expenditure could be debited to the Army, though, as might be expected, there was much wear and tear. The Committee had taken the opportunity to make alterations and extensions while the staff and children were still at Beaconsfield.

A new service was also added—a Health Centre—fulfilling a need for that area, but making extra work for the Matron.

During the latter part of 1946 the Home at Beaconsfield had to be closed, through the resignation of the training and nursing staff. However, caretakers were employed and the home farm continued, the produce being sent to Berry Street. The staff vacancies were widely advertised, but without success. The antiquated facilities provided by the old buildings, which even at their best had only been conversions for use as a children's home, apparently were not attractive as a place of employment.

There were also staff problems at Berry Street, and children's admissions had to be limited as there was now not enough staff to cope with those already being cared for. Nurses and domestic help were endangering their own health by working very long hours and attempting a great deal of extra work to keep the Home functioning.

'Tandarra', which now meant the work of the Infant Welfare system (as well as the name of the building) was now moved to Berry Street, and it was planned to use the premises in Vale Street as a Toddlers Home with facilities for a kindergarten. Babies were to be moved from Berry Street at eighteen months and stay in The Toddlers Wing until they were three years of age.

After extensive alterations had been completed, The Toddlers Wing was duly opened on 1st April 1949 by Lady Herring. The Secretary reported later that the toddlers' immediate response to their new environment was in itself adequate justification of the wisdom of the venture: 'their appetites increased enormously, they slept better and seemed to grow from babies to energetic infants overnight'.

To give these children home and security when they were of the age to leave the Home, it was hoped to erect cottages at Beaconsfield, but apart from the cost, this could not be done until there was promise of suitable and dedicated staff.

The lack of such staff was the problem at that time. Much had been done by the Government to provide trained staff for hospitals and infant Welfare Centres, but those connected with children's homes and institutions realised the need for trained staff also, and it was hoped the newly formed Hospital and Charities Commission would also take steps to meet this need.

Staffing Berry Street was becoming more difficult and more costly because it was now expected and desired that those employed in the care of children would be highly trained and specialised—a far cry from the days when the inmates did the domestic work and cooking and also looked after the children.

The valuable time, love and care given by the Honorary Doctors was greatly appreciated. They gave long hours of attendance and specialised knowledge in the saving of lives, and often financial help as well. They were largely responsible for the low death rate and the progress to good health of the babies and mothers.

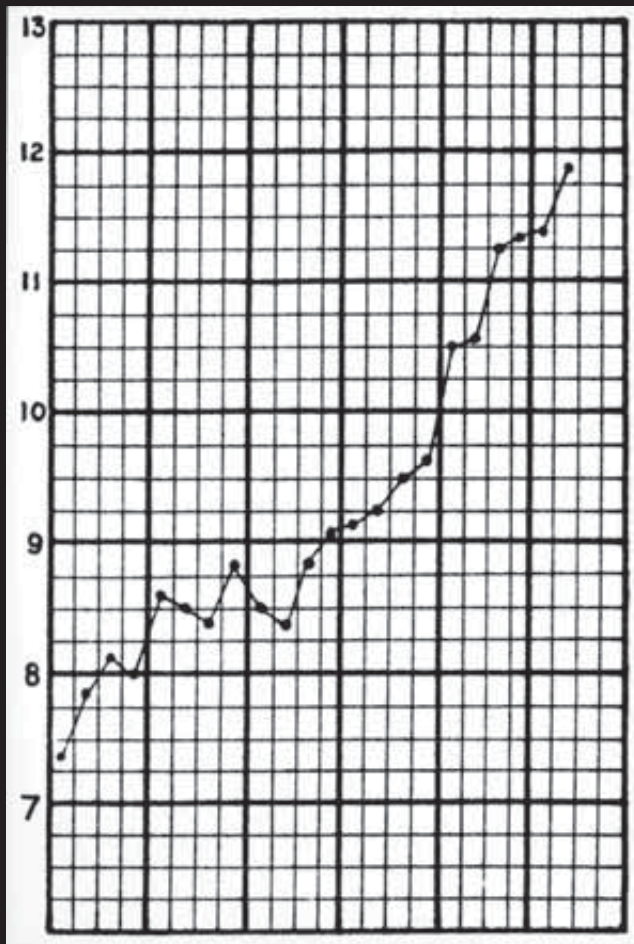
Many infants were still being brought in, puny, weak and dying, and unwanted. In a few months they were healthy, adorable and loved by those who looked after them.

The children with physical or mental disabilities warranted compassion. In 1948-9 there was an unusually large number of delicate and frail babies. At one point there were three with hare lips and cleft palates in the Home. A 'blue baby' at the Hospital was successfully operated on at the Children's Hospital and, after a brief return to Berry Street, was discharged as normal and returned to her parents.





*Type of illegitimate baby.  
He was admitted on 26th  
February, 1915, aged 2½  
months, and weighing 7 lbs.  
His weight on 5th August,  
1915, is recorded at 19½  
lbs.*



*Chart of a legitimate baby  
not able to be admitted at  
any other Hospital at the  
time. Admitted at the age of  
4 months, suffering from  
gastro enteritis, and  
weighing 7 lbs. He was  
discharged two months later  
quite well and weighing 12  
lbs. This is a type of many  
others treated in the  
Institution during the year.*

Mentally retarded children were kept until arrangements could be made to get them into suitable institutions. Help such as this contributed greatly to family welfare and the health of the mother.

As previously mentioned, in the early days of Berry Street, the Committee and staff worked long hours and did any job with great dedication. However, a changing pattern of employment and changing wage patterns 'outside' were bound to have effect on the running of the Home, and shorter hours and different staff ratios meant extra work for the Committee in trying to balance resources and attract staff of the right quality and dedication in order to keep up the tradition of service of the Home to the babies and unmarried mothers in their care.

The donors and contributors had already played an important part in the achievements at Berry Street. Without money, nothing could have been done, so in the continuing struggle on behalf of the children, mothers *and the employees*, it was again up to those who had provided the means to make a still greater effort.

Cities, municipalities, shires, schools, banks, estates, trusts, business houses, industries and individuals all contributed money and gifts in kind—clothing, food, toys, shoes, fruit, sweets and outings.

In 1949 the lowest donation was 1/6d and the highest, £200. There were three hundred contributions from all sources.

That the money given was well spent is clear from the medical report of 1950:

- 156 infants were housed, fed, clothed and given love and protection. Eighteen of these were premature babies or had dietetic problems, seven, of whom one died, had congenital malformations.
- Twenty-seven babies (sixteen girls and eleven boys) were adopted, fifteen children were boarded out.
- 226 babies attended the Health Centre, totalling 1760 visits, while new enrolments were 134.
- The Infant Welfare Sisters paid 519 visits to babies and mothers in their home.
- 28 adults were accommodated. These were pre-natal and post-maternity cases.

*An outline of the work of the  
FOUNDLING HOSPITAL  
in this era.*

It is undenominational.

Pre-maternity cases are usually admitted three months before the birth is expected.

Young mothers with babies are also admitted, the only stipulation being that they must remain three months after the birth.

Expert nursing and medical care is available at all times.

For the birth of her child the mother is transferred to the Women's Hospital and then returns to the Institution, where she remains to nurse her baby. She may, if she likes, leave and take her baby with her, or the child may be left with us for adoption or boarding out, as the mother desires, or may remain for up to two years in our charge, until she establishes herself in a position, if she wishes to keep her little one herself.

A small payment must be made for the child once the mother leaves the institution, but while here, both she and her child are maintained free of cost . . . . The adult inmates assist with housework and laundry as far as their physical condition permits. They are known to each other only by their christian names and all other details are confidentially recorded. They are treated with kindness and not harrassed in any way.

Our object is to help the genuinely unfortunate girl, and make it possible for her to begin life anew. Positions are found for those we can recommend.

### THE TRAINING OF MOTHERCRAFT NURSES IN THE mid 1940's.

The period of training at that time, was fifteen months. No premium was required, and an allowance of 10/- (ten shillings) per week was made as pocket money. Full board and residence, laundry and medical care was provided, but Nurses had to supply their own uniforms.

At "Tandarra", the Infant Welfare Training School conducted at "Berry Street", the trained Sisters desirous of qualifying for the Infant Welfare Certificate had to pay a fee of £10 (Ten pounds) for a residential term of four months.



## Rules for Foster Parents

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Children will be boarded out to foster-parents subject to the following conditions:—

1. Each child over 12 months old will be paid for at the rate of 6/- per week, payable monthly, until two years of age, and thereafter at the rate of 5/- per week.
2. When the child is sent to a foster-home it will be provided with adequate and suitable clothing, but the foster-parent must provide adequately and suitably for all subsequent requirements.
3. Adequate and suitable food must be provided for each child. In the case of infants under the age of 12 months, instructions as to feeding will be supplied by the Matron, and must be strictly adhered to; the foster-parent will be held responsible for the consequences of any neglect in this respect.
4. Foster-homes must be open for inspection at any time by an Officer of the Institution.
5. Should a boarded-out child become ill, the Matron must be informed without delay.
6. Each child which has reached school age must attend both day school and Sunday school regularly and punctually, and must not be kept away for any reason other than its own illness, without the consent of the Matron.
7. In no circumstances whatever shall a boarded-out child be employed outside the foster-parents' home, without the written authority of the Committee or the Matron.
8. Foster-parents are reminded that in undertaking to rear children from this Institution, they lay themselves under an obligation to look after the morals and manners of the little ones, as strictly as if they were their own offspring. The whole future career of the boys and girls depends largely upon the home training they receive in childhood.
9. The Committee reserves the right to resume the custody of any child boarded out from the Institution, at any time, and without previous notice.
10. Women acting as Foster Parents to this Institution are forbidden to act in the same capacity, at the same time, to any other Institution.



## The changing pattern of care

In 1953, for the first time in the history of the Home, there were no children boarded out. All had reached the age when they were able to earn a living and it had been ten years since a child had been placed in a foster home.

This phase of work done by Berry Street was now finished. Fostering was not now encouraged and children were either adopted or sent to an orphanage, if they could not be returned to their parents.

Girls 'in trouble' were still helped and it was their infants who were adopted or cared for in the Home until the mother could make other suitable arrangements. This had to be done within a limited time as children over three years had to move on to an orphanage unless there were most exceptional circumstances.

The policy of the Committee was still 'Save the babies' whether it was achieved by rescuing unwanted infants or by building strong and healthy babies from the undernourished ones, or by caring for a baby until it could be restored to worthy parents.

Sometimes a mother undergoing treatment for tuberculosis in a sanatorium had no-one with whom to leave her child; or a woman would die in childbirth and the bereaved father had no relatives who could help him. There were also cases where the breadwinner fell ill and the mother had to go to work. Berry Street took care of the baby.

An extract from the Seventy-ninth Report 1955-6 shows that both the Government and the Committee were working towards better conditions and



opportunities for the unfortunate children that came within care. The Report read:

During the year the Home has been approved as a registered Children's Home under the New Child Welfare Act, and was also registered in accordance with the Infant Life Protection Act. It is hoped that this will extend the usefulness of the institution and also give better protection to little children of n'er-do-well and neglectful parents. The position of the unwanted babe brought to us for adoption will be unchanged. The Home will continue full responsibility.

Members of the Committee are much concerned with the prevailing extraordinary lack of responsibility and integrity shown by many young married people towards the welfare and well-being of their children. Applications to admit children are constantly being received because husband or wife have deserted the other, the ready solution being to place the children in a home, regardless of the devastating effect upon the children.

Little children obviously suffering from the privations and distress of bad parents cannot be refused admission. The future, however, is tragic. Their pathetic and ready response to the comforts and kindness provided by the institution only magnifies their need.

The parents by conforming to the very nominal charge under the Infant Life Protection Act, and by occasional visits can foil all our attempts by provision of sound foster homes and legal adoption to assist the children, and so the vicious circle of future delinquents is perpetuated.

Legislation to protect children from bad parents might be difficult to formulate, but no effort should be spared to protect the child at an age when something constructive can be done.

Another public appeal was made for funds in 1957. It was planned to arrange for a more efficient Welfare Training School and also for the erection of the proposed cottages on the Beaconsfield property as the nucleus of the homes for the older children.

The appeal was *not* successful. Of the £30,000 hoped for, only £3,416 was raised. This was placed in a building fund until such time as more money became available and allowed progress.

Applications from pregnant girls were numerous, and many had to be refused. The Committee Members were looking for ways and means to augment the accommodation. The policy of only admitting girls expecting their first baby was still in force. They usually came to Berry Street three months before the birth of the babe. No charge was made and ante-natal care was given.

All this cost money for maintenance. Mounting wages and rising costs in food again caused concern, and the difference between the money coming in, and going out, was alarming.

It was a small sum compared with the value it meant in service to the community.

In the eighty-second year the Report read:

Several pathetic cases have been admitted. In spite of all the care and expense lavished upon them, the future of some is not hopeful. Others have responded well and may be regarded as an unqualified success.

Two babies, each with congenital heart conditions, hold particular court in the nursery at present. One, a merry eyed aboriginal child, smiles through the bars of her cot, the other a little frail Chinese baby, often too weary to sit up, lies quietly acknowledging with a shy glance the constant homage paid to her.

A three year old whom we have had since birth, is now learning the joy of seeing and walking for the first time. The child was born with cataracts and has now been operated upon by one of our Honorary Specialists.

After much patient persistence by Sister Wilks from the nursery, the little girl recently walked into the garden for the first time to watch the waving leaves.

At the Annual Meeting on 13th August 1959, a renovated two-storey house, adjoining 'Tandarra' in Vale Street which had been purchased several years previously, was opened as a Nurses Home. This provided a quiet and restful sleeping area and did much to help with the overcrowded nurses quarters. However, this was still considered a stop-gap until all the buildings in Berry and Vale streets could be replaced with modern ones giving light, space and efficiency. Beaconsfield could then be used so that the older children could have a permanent home and as near a normal family life as possible.



In 1964 the name was changed to *Berry Street Babies Home and Hospital* and the word 'Foundling' dropped.

Discussions with the Hospital and Charities Commission on re-building was still in progress. Some suggestions were made regarding the transfer of the Home to another site, further from the City. However, it was decided that there would be no advantage in this. The present area was readily accessible and the parklands opposite were a great asset. Further, it had to be remembered that the land given as a grant by the Government was to be used only as an 'Infant Asylum'.

It was planned to demolish the existing buildings which were old, inefficient and expensive to maintain, and to replace them with modern ones more suited to the needs of the Home.

The first consideration was to get the money!

Reluctantly, in 1963, Beaconsfield was sold. The place had been leased for some time, but had been allowed to fall into disrepair and a great deal of money would have been needed to bring it back to the necessary health standards. It raised £7,500. The sum of £250 was paid to the agent, leaving the balance to be used as a building fund.

Permission for a public appeal for funds had been granted and Lady Delacombe, wife of the governor of Victoria, graciously consented to be Patroness of the re-building appeal.

In view of the failure of the last appeal it was thought wise to engage the service of a professional fund-raising firm and one was engaged. At their suggestion a Men's Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Mr Bruce Matear, and a Women's Group with Mrs Frank May as chairwoman. An Appeals Office was built in the grounds of Berry Street and the Appeal was officially launched at the Melbourne Town Hall.

The target was £200,000. That target was reached. There was grateful thanks from the Committee of Management and all those concerned to the public and business organisations who had responded so generously.

The first building completed under the new building scheme was the Toddlers Wing, now named the Appleton Wing, in honour of Miss E. M. Appleton who had served on the Committee for over forty years, and whose mother had served before her. In 1966 Miss Appleton had been awarded the M.B.E. for her service to Berry Street and other charitable organisations.

The Appleton Wing was officially opened on 3rd June 1969 by Lady Delacombe. There was accommodation for sixteen toddlers to live in, plus sick room accommodation, dining room, modern kitchen, bathrooms, storerooms, laundry and a large airy playroom with folding doors that can divide it into two areas. Wide verandas gave playing space for wet days while the outdoor playground was well equipped. A large sand pit had also been added.

The appeals office that had been built in the grounds was donated to the Home by the building firm, after the final settling, and was altered to make a small, but attractive pre-school. It was opened by Dr A. E. Wilmot, Director of Maternal Infant and Pre-School Welfare, Department of Health, on 9th December 1968.

The toddlers from the Appleton Wing who were old enough for pre-school could be seen walking the short distance from their own building down Berry Street to the corner, where the pre-school was situated, just as other children walk from home to school. This daily visit did much to bring on the youngsters, some of whom had been in institutions most of their short lives.

Many children forced to live in charitable places are unused to the normal way of life. They know little of the functioning of a family or the usual furnishing of a house. They have never been able to play with pots and pans in a kitchen or open cupboards to explore the contents or watch meals prepared. Some have been taken home by the Mothercraft Nurses, a few have lived with parents a short time, but the majority are deprived children, and despite the love and care given at Berry Street are perforce handicapped in learning the pattern of everyday life.

The pre-school Director was well aware of this and did her best to rectify the omission. The children played houses with miniature equipment. The pre-school was well justified, and the value it gave, greater than the cost. It was considered to be another developing phase in the better care of children.

At the suggestion of the Matron, Miss Cole, the first Graduation-day ceremony was held on 24th July, 1970. Members of the Committee entertained relatives and friends of the trainee graduates. Certificates and prizes were presented. This proved such a successful and happy event that it was decided to hold further graduation days, as the girls learning Mothercraft finished their training.

The Nurses Home was under construction, but completion was delayed because of industrial disputes. However, the third stage of re-building had to be





*Nurses' Home, opened April, 1972*



re-thought. With the change in the social pattern and the needs of the community, with greater financial help being given to unmarried mothers through Social Services, there was a lessening need for refuge and shelter by pregnant girls, or the unmarried Mothers keeping their babies. This also meant fewer infants for adoption, but, on the other hand, it created a heavier demand for day care of children. The work at Berry Street had to be extended in that direction.

The huge capital outlay and the high cost of administration gave cause for concern. Weighed against this was the realisation that by training girls for Mothercraft, caring for unmarried mothers, arranging adoptions of babies, looking after under-privileged children and very ill babies, Berry Street was doing essential community work and giving babies a good start in life.

There was much concern for the three-year olds who had to go on to another institution when that age was reached. Some had been at Berry Street since birth, and it was considered to be traumatic for such little children to be moved suddenly to a new environment with complete strangers. It was felt that the Home should return to the old policy of being responsible for the children committed to its care until they became self-supporting.

Against this had to be considered the financial obligations that would occur. After much deliberation, it was decided that consideration would be given to the purchasing of suburban houses and installing cottage parents, making, as near as possible, normal home life for these children. This was already being done by other institutions with some success. Again, money would have to be found, but the Committee was quite optimistic of public re-action and help.

A sub-committee was appointed to investigate the possibilities and to look for suitable houses if a positive decision were made on this policy.

At that time the economic advantage of suburban homes appeared to be a less costly method of caring for children than the institutional one, where expenses were soaring through costly administration, high wages and rising food costs. Then there were the physical and emotional advantages to be considered.

The need for short-term emergency care was still important and appropriate housing had to be planned. East Melbourne was a convenient environment, and the site at Berry Street seemed to be the most suitable. Plans were made accordingly.

The new Nurses Home was completed and was officially opened on 11th April 1972 by Lady Delacombe.

Mrs T. H. Steel, Chairwoman of the Building Committee, was also President of the Committee of

Management in that year, and in her report, she says:

It was a warm autumn day, and the guard of honour of children and nurses, provided a colourful backdrop.

After the official ceremony the guests were shown over the home by the nurses.

The new building has single study-bedrooms for fifty-one nurses. There is a sitting room with a pantry and laundry on each floor. An intercom system links the home with other buildings. Norris and Partners, our Architects, are to be commended for the attractive building on a limited site. The total cost with furnishings and fittings will exceed \$410,000 and we are indebted to the Hospital and Charities for their prompt re-imburement of the Government contribution.

A plaque on each bedroom door gave the name of subscriber or organisation who had so generously paid for the furnishing of that room.

The Nurses and Committee were delighted with the new home, and the privacy and comfort it gave.

In 1973 a suitable property had been bought to establish a suburban home for the growing children. It was hoped that with substitute parents they would live a normal family life, go to school, go for holidays, belong to Scouts or Brownies and do all the things that other children are able to experience as a matter of course.

Consideration was also being given to the opening of a day care centre, instead of residential care, in the Appleton Wing. Meanwhile, renovations and upkeep still had to be dealt with in the old buildings.

For the first time in the history of the home, a professional social worker was employed to take over many of the duties previously undertaken by members of the Committee of Management. It was now felt that more specialised expertise and knowledge was required for conditions of increasing complexity.

When the Mothercraft Trainees who had always been treated as students were now re-classed as employees and given a recognised wage award, plus penalty rates, while they were training and living in, it placed additional strains on the financial resources and it was necessary to consider the Mothercraft training programme, the cost it involved, and to evaluate its place in the proposed new day care scheme.

An extended curriculum put forward by the Victorian Nursing Council, and substantial increases in the trainees' awards also added financial strain. After



much discussion and consideration, it was regretfully agreed it would be necessary to phase out Mothercraft Training. Other organisations had already been forced to make a similar decision.

The final Graduation Ceremony took place on 19th March 1975 when forty-nine girls received their certificates.

It was a sad day for the Committee to realise that the 'Berry Street Girls', a familiar sight in East Melbourne, walking with their small charges, would no longer be a part of the Home. It was sad, too, that after so many years of striving towards a modern and comfortable home for the nurses and trainees, there would be such little use for the purpose for which it had been built.

Later, the building was leased to the Hospital and Charities Commission as an Ambulance Officers Training Centre.

With the closing of the Mothercraft training, the placing of children in suburban homes with substitute parents, the change-over planning to day care, it was considered desirable on the resignation of the Secretary/Manager, to appoint a Director who would co-ordinate all the services already being given, and the extension of those planned.

Mr Robert S. Elliott was appointed. Formerly of Northern Ireland and Minda House, Adelaide he has a wide experience as a Social Worker, Administrator in Statutory Health and Social Services, particularly in the field of child care.

This year (1975) saw also the closure of the Adoption Agency. No pregnant girls had asked for help and, therefore, no babies were available for adoption. It became necessary to look at the needs of single parents and girls who were keeping their babies with Government help, yet who still needed some assistance from a charitable organisation.

The Home temporarily closed on 28th February, 1975 and suitable accommodation was found for the children.

When it was necessary to vacate Berry Street, for the old Home had to be demolished, space was found in the Nurses Home until the administration block was ready, by courtesy of the Ambulance Training Centre who had leased it.

After the Nursery had been emptied and all the equipment moved, curtains and lights taken down and packed away for future use, an emergency arose: *Vietnamese war orphans* arrived in Melbourne in April 1975 to await clearance to foster homes and adopting parents.

The Committee offered Berry Street as a temporary refuge. A tremendous effort was made to open the nursery again and make it habitable and attractive for these unfortunate waifs. Staff members who had left returned. Past nurses and Committee

members unpacked all the equipment, crockery, etc. and with the help of the recruiting unit of the Army, worked rapidly to get everything ready in time to welcome these displaced children. The Army Unit members moved back all the heavy equipment and put up curtains and replaced lighting and also assisted with laundry and supplies. The ladies of the staff and Committee made beds, found clothing, ordered food, brought in the toys and flowers and made the place as gay and welcoming as they could.

Forty-two children were admitted. Their ages ranged from six weeks to fourteen years. Their time of residence at Berry Street was to be from four hours to seven weeks.

These children required a special diet. Pounds of boiled rice, unsalted, in fish and chicken dishes came from the kitchen. Powdered skimmed milk was used for the older children to drink, and the babies were fed on a special formula, low in fat and sugar.

Compassion, love and care and a great deal of understanding were also necessary ingredients for their well-being.

Dr Stanley Williams, the Honorary Medical Consultant to Berry Street Babies' Home and Hospital, said in the 1975 Annual Report:

It was fortunate indeed that Berry Street Hospital was made available for these Vietnamese children . . . nothing quite like this medical or para-medical exercise has been experienced here before in peace time.

When I was asked to act as Consultant to these Vietnamese children, my long and happy association with Berry Street Babies' Home and Hospital proved to be of great assistance.

In assessing the children who arrived from Sydney, after varying periods in hospital, we were concerned that they were medically fit to be discharged to prospective parents.

A detailed medical history from Sydney, accompanied the children, and great credit is due to my colleagues at the Royal Children's Hospital of Sydney for the recovery of these children who had been desperately ill. The chief illnesses were intestinal infection, malnutrition, gastro-enteritis and Dermatitis. These conditions had largely been corrected when the children arrived in Melbourne.

When batches of children arrived at Berry Street from Sydney, the scene was usually quite busy and at all times extremely harmonious.

It was a wonderful demonstration of how people of different disciplines, working for children, can get on well together.



Again, the name of the institution was changed. This was in anticipation of the re-development programme and the wider scope of child care, family counselling, giving of help to forestall family breakdown, to keeping children in their own homes, or establishing them in group homes. All were part of that planning.

*Berry Street Child and Family Care* was an appropriate choice. It would be used officially, but as 'Berry Street' the Home was well known and that name would be generally used.

The old building, once the Police Hospital, and altered and added to so many times, had to be demolished. It was with much regret that this was done as there was nostalgia for the old place. However, the site was needed for the modern, easy to manage, and less institutional emergency homes and the administration offices.

The Appleton Wing, providing residential care for sixteen toddlers, was now converted to a day care centre where up to forty children could be given care by day, and have the benefits of parental love and discipline by night and at week-ends.

In February, 1976 the first three children were admitted and within a short space of time the full number of children were being left, and a waiting list begun.

Many of the mothers who put their children in day care were able to avail themselves of the help and advice given by the Sister-in-charge and the social

workers. Deserted or widowed fathers, struggling alone to bring up children, also found day care an easement of their problems. Warm clothing could also be provided when the need arose. The store room at the home was kept well supplied by kindly donors.

As Berry Street was no longer a hospital, financial help from the Hospital and Charities Commission ceased in 1975. Application was then made for the Institution to be reclassified as a Category 1 Approved Children's Home. This was done and monetary assistance provided.

Meanwhile, the generous Victorian public had responded to the plea for greater help, and the Committee had used reserve funds which fortunately and with foresight had been set aside over a long period for just such an emergency as the present day requirements demanded.

Three suburban homes were functioning, but were more costly to run than had been anticipated, owing to increased wages and inflation. However, the children benefited from the family environment.

The trend now in care of the child was to ensure that family life was maintained and help and financial aid given to those who were trying to keep a home going and the family together. It was realised that more social workers would be needed at Berry Street to deal with this aspect of charitable work.

The pattern of social welfare was again changing with the times, and Berry Street was changing with it.



*Happy healthy babies  
at Berry Street*





*The 'Money Tree' donated by a cleaning firm. 500, one-dollar notes made it a worthwhile Christmas gift.*

*By courtesy of The Age*



# Making it all possible

While much praise must be given to the Honorary Doctors and Nurses who gave of their specialised knowledge, time, and expert care to the women and children who passed through Berry Street during the one hundred years of the Home's existence, and to the ladies of the time whose compassion and enterprise was responsible for the idea and who worked on the policy and the administration, all their love and their labour would have been of little use without the backing of all those donors and contributors who produced the money to make it all possible.

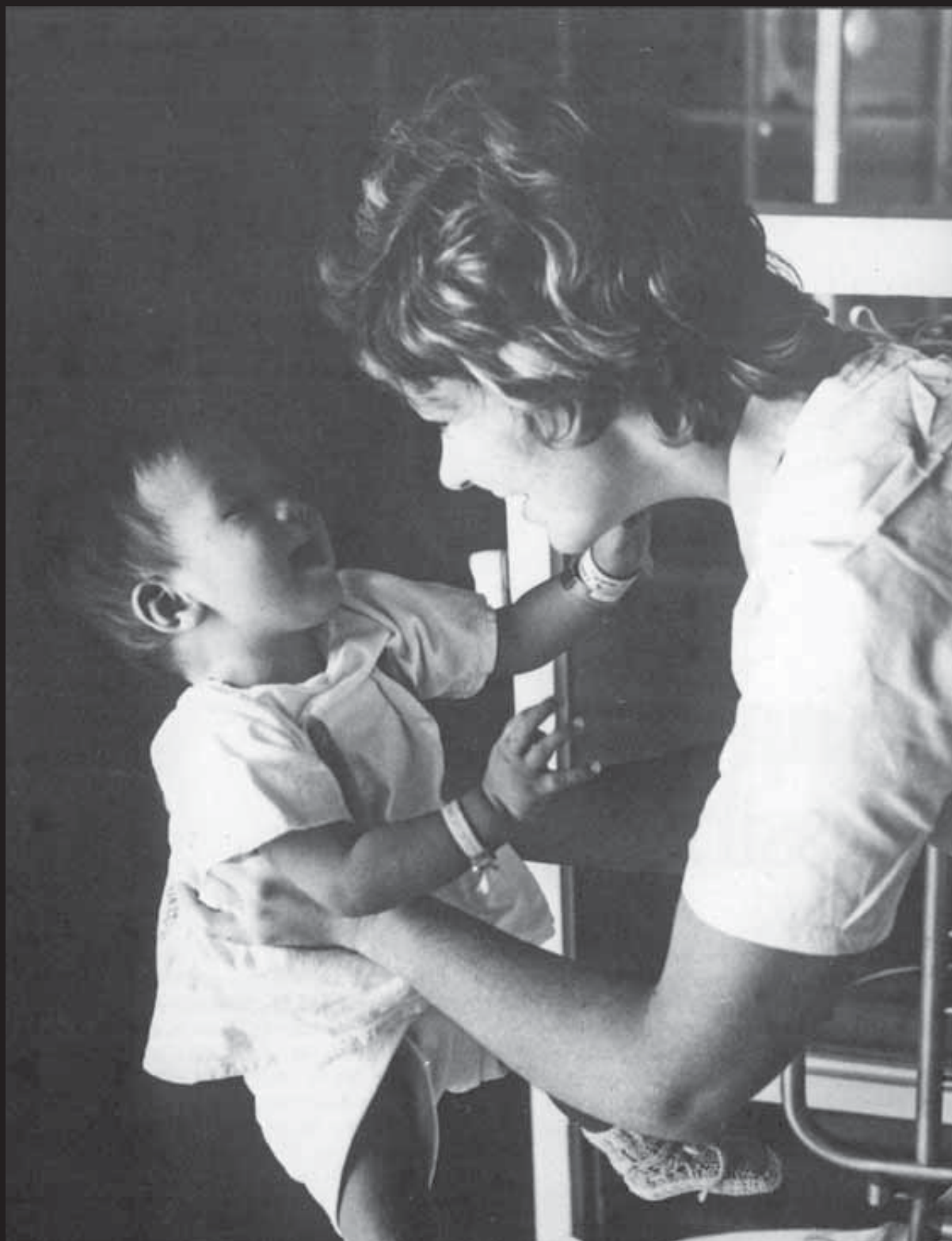
Money was raised and given in all manner of ways. The alphabetical honour of heading the first list goes to Mrs Anthony with two guineas in 1878, while in the Centenary Year, 1977, the last contributor on the list is Yarra Park Primary School, with a donation of twenty-five dollars.

In the 1877-8 financial year the amount raised by public subscription was £1,738.79. In 1977 the amount was \$45,281 in contributions and there was also the Government allowance. The sources have always been wide and varied.

There have been yearly subscriptions and spasmodic donations, fund raising by Auxiliaries and organisations, bequests, trusts, industries and schools, councils, shires, Country Women's Associations and groups, The Lord Mayor's Fund, Cork Clubs, Lions Clubs, Uncle Bobs, Football and Cricket Clubs and Berry Street Grannies; all have contributed at different times and with different sums, but all with the same spirit.

It is impossible to name them all, but each donation played its part in helping to maintain the Home. Some were added to a special purpose fund as requested, or as directed by law.





*Berry Street nurse  
and Vietnamese baby.*

It is said that 'Money does not grow on trees', but it did on one occasion. A Christmas Tree was delivered, sprouting fresh one-dollar notes: five hundred of them. This was a gift from a cleaning firm (see illustration on p. 38)—a highly original and, to the children, an exciting way of making a donation.

Over the years the Press has also played a helpful and important part in the acquisition of funds, and the anti-football League, the brain child of Douglas Wilkie and Keith Dunstan of the *Sun News Pictorial* was a very rewarding idea. After being bombarded with football talk, and many letters from long suffering women and men who were *not* interested in Australian Rules Football, Douglas Wilkie said 'Surely there should be an organisation to protect the suffering minority who cannot abide the game'. Keith Dunstan included a small item in his daily column suggesting an Anti-Football League. The result was overwhelming. A badge was designed and sold to aid the babies at Berry Street. Later, car stickers and cuff links were made available. One gimmick was the sale of seats for a non-game at a well known cricket ground. Each seat was numbered and the lucky holder of a certain numbered seat won a very worthwhile prize. Then the Wilkie Medal was instituted and presented to the man or woman who had done the *least* for Australian Rules Football in the *unfairest* manner. A well-known citizen, who was considered to deserve the title, received the

medal each year. In 1977, the Centenary Year, it went, for the first time, to a woman.

In the ten years of helping Berry Street, over \$30,000 was raised.

Money sometimes came from unexpected sources. The unadorned statue (replica) of The Boy David was on exhibition at Myers Emporium in Melbourne. There was a curious reaction from the public. Coins were thrown at the feet of the statue. The management of Myers were somewhat embarrassed by this and wondered what to do with the money. The problem was soon solved. It was sent to Berry Street. Michelangelo could never have guessed that 500 years later his sculpture would give financial aid to children of a country not even known to exist in his lifetime.

It was not only money that helped the Home. For some time vegetables and fruit were delivered regularly by a group of men in that trade. Other foods, clothing, toys and all manner of furnishings and equipment have been donated over the years. The most beautiful layettes for the new babies, and knitted wear of all kinds have delighted the nurses who enjoyed dressing their charges in warm and attractive clothes.

A member of the Committee said that a visitor had commented on the fact that the babies and children at Berry Street were very well dressed, implying that they should not have been.



*Money well spent*





*Couple being interviewed  
with baby*



# Adoptions

Adoption has always played an important part in the work done at Berry Street. Since the first baby was given to a childless couple in 1878, the members of the Committee of Management have personally concerned themselves in finding welcoming and loving homes for foundlings, orphans and unwanted infants. They have interviewed prospective parents, made sure they were mature and responsible, visited their houses to ensure that these were suitable, selected babies and checked placements to see that the child was well looked after and the adoptive parents happy.

After the legal adoption the Committee members had no rights or access to the child unless by invitation. This was frequently given, especially to attend birthdays and christenings.

In the very early days of the Home, adoption was not looked upon favourably by the public. Many were against taking an unknown child, and it was not easy

to find a suitable home for children who were spoken of as 'little bastards' or 'children of sin'.

Boys were especially difficult to place, as many men did not want to give the family name to an illegitimate child. On the other hand, a girl would only carry the name until she married and would not pass it on to her own children.

There was much criticism of the ladies of the Committee for caring for unmarried mothers and pregnant girls. It was considered that the girls were being encouraged in their sinful ways.

Babies of these mothers were suspect. It was thought they might be diseased, be retarded or mentally defective, and would be expected as adults to have inherited and would propagate criminal tendencies and low moral values.

Owing to this attitude there were more babies to adopt than childless couples willing to take them. If a



home was available, an infant was placed without regard to matching in colouring, build, or background. Today more information is expected from the girl giving up her baby, and compatibility is worked out from family background.

It was not until 1923, forty-five years after the first adoption by Berry Street, that the Adoption of Children act was gazetted.

When the baby bonus became available, many maternity hospitals came into being. Babies became a commercial commodity. Adoption could be arranged by anyone. Matrons of maternity hospitals and doctors could always help a girl willing to give up her baby in exchange for hospital expenses and something to 'tide her over'. Fewer girls applied to Berry Street for help.

In 1953, Miss Primrose, the Secretary of the Home, wrote:

The Foundling Home is a permanent link between the parents, the child and the new parents. It offers at all times a base to which either may return for re-assurance and help.

The frequency with which all take advantage provides an invaluable guide to the placing of children.

Future legislation in connection with the Adoption Act might well give careful consideration to the desirability of having all children for adoption pass through such institutions. It would ensure that no child be placed hastily of necessity, proper supervision during the *de facto* adoption period and over all it would be a permanent link as mentioned.

The hoped for future legislation did not eventuate until 1966 when the Adoption of Children Act of 1964 was brought into force by the Social Welfare Department.

One result was that only registered agencies with trained helpers could arrange adoptions.

Although they had many years of experience, members of the Committee at Berry Street had no formal training in the placing of children. It was decided, therefore, to take advantage of the adoption training course offered by the Social Welfare Department, so that the work could still be carried on at the Home without the employment of a social worker.

Those members of the Committee who were involved in the adoption work attended the course and were registered as trained adoption helpers, with Mrs

John Carlson, then the President of the Home, as the Principal Officer.

On the 4th February 1966, Mr A. Booth Director of Family Welfare, notified the Committee that Berry Street had been approved as a private adoption agency. Notification of this and Mrs Carlson's appointment appeared in the Government Gazette, 19th February 1966.

The duties of the Principal Officer were to select trained helpers, accept responsibility for the babies, ensure that all legal work was in order before being presented to the Court, where the Judge made the final decision in the adoption.

Mrs Carlson agreed to undertake this demanding and voluntary position, despite the fact that she had to promise to hold it for five years. It was a challenge accepted readily and graciously, although there was a great deal of time and responsibility involved. Mrs Carlson held the position until 1975, when the adoption agency at Berry Street closed because there were not enough babies for adoption.

There were many sad and even tragic stories connected with adoptions, as well as many of great joy, happiness and satisfaction.

Girls who have given up their babies at birth sometimes come back years later in an attempt to get them back. This was not possible, but now an association has been formed to try to help those parents wanting to get in touch with children they have signed away, and children who have been adopted who later want to find out about their real parents.

There is much discussion on the merits of this course. It depends a great deal on the characters of those involved, but it seems very sad for the adopting parents who look on these children as their own yet the need of the adopted child to know its true background can be understood.

Some couples are prepared to take a child with disabilities, to give it love and care and to adopt it. One couple adopted a little girl of eighteen months, who had a heart condition and a life expectancy of four years. She was never considered for adoption and was very much loved and indulged by the nurses and staff at Berry Street. Circumstances arose that brought her into contact with a family with one young boy. The mother could not have any more children and wanted a daughter. They fell in love with Susie (not her real name). They offered to adopt her, knowing her medical history, saying that if they could make her happy and give her a normal home life for the time she had left, they were prepared to cope with the heartache that would follow. When last seen by a member of the Committee, she was a healthy schoolgirl of eight years. Her life expectancy was then considered quite good.



Several children who were considered backward were adopted by unselfish and understanding people who only wanted the child's comfort and happiness. With love and care and the security of a normal home and parents, these disadvantaged children responded and developed into normal happy youngsters.

One little boy was adopted when he was four years old. He had lived all his life in institutions and had never been in a private home. It was heart rending to see how proudly he left Berry Street, accepting wholeheartedly and without question, his newly acquired parents.

A little girl of three with some aboriginal background had been twice adopted through unauthorised channels, and twice rejected, before arriving at Berry Street, unwanted, nervous and terrified. A new mother and father were found for her, and when later she visited the Home, she was happy and secure with her new parents.

It was the policy at Berry Street to build families, and the staff were always delighted when parents adopted a second or even a third child and would bring in the other children to collect their new brother or sister. If these were still toddlers, dolls dressed as

babies were usually given to them so that they, too, collected a new baby.

It was of especial interest when the new mother or father had themselves been adopted from Berry Street and they returned to seek aid in creating their own family.

When a couple have been fortunate in their application for a child, the most rewarding time for those concerned in the placement, is when the little one is brought to them. There are tears of happiness, words of thanks and a tiny child, denied the right to grow up in the family into which it has been born goes to a loving and secure home, and a greater chance in life.

Attitudes have changed regarding adoption, and are more enlightened. There are now fewer babies and older children being offered for adoption and more childless couples eager to adopt them.

One day the need for an adoption agency might rise again; Berry Street will be ready. There are now social workers employed to take over the work that for years had been the satisfaction and pleasure of the Committee.



*The Wendy House. A Centenary Gift to the children at Berry Street from the boys of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.*





*Top:  
Sir Henry Winneke, Governor of  
Victoria unveiling the  
commemorative plaque, given by  
the State Government to mark  
one hundred years of service to  
the community.*

*Bottom Left:  
Sir Henry Winneke, Governor of  
Victoria helping the children at  
Berry Street cut their Centenary  
Birthday cake.*

*Bottom Right:  
Lady Winneke, wife of the  
Governor of Victoria and  
Patroness of Berry Street Child  
and Family Care, cutting the  
Birthday cake at the Centenary  
Luncheon at Berry Street.*



# The Centenary year

One hundred years of service to the community. That is what 1977 meant to Berry Street. As for those women who met in Hanover Street in 1877, how proud and delighted would they be if they returned today and saw what has grown from such small beginnings!

Achievement is a word to be proud of when earned. Berry Street has earned it in the fight against infanticide, neglect and cruelty to children and more compassionate conditions for girls in trouble.

The women and men who have followed on in the work started have always endeavoured to keep the original policy before them, yet to modify it to the demands of the period. Training in Mothercraft and Infant Welfare, keeping families together, helping needy fathers as well as the mothers are additional services from those early days.

It was fitting that the Centenary should be marked by the completion of the re-building and development programme.

Two modern family homes have been built on the site of the old Berry Street. These are used as emergency units and can accommodate families in emergency situations. They are named 'Tandarra' after the old Tandarra, and 'Birrahlees', an aboriginal word for babies or children.

The administration building is next door and connected to the Day Care Centre.

In the grounds is a delightful two-story wooden 'Cubby House' built as a project by students of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and given as a centenary gift to the children of Berry Street.

This complex was officially opened by Lady Winneke, Patroness of Berry Street Child and Family



Care, and wife of the Governor of Victoria on 9th November 1976. The many guests who were also invited to inspect the new buildings included representatives from the Government, kindred organisations and contributors.

The Past Nurses Association held their own Centenary Celebration Luncheon at the Hilton Hotel in East Melbourne on the 26th March 1977. Past Nurses came from country districts and inter-state to attend this important event.

Reminiscences and laughter with many 'Do you remember?' questions made it a gay and happy affair. Many of the guests had been taking care of children in years when the Home was struggling to survive, and there were few amenities or comforts. The President of the Committee of Management, Mrs I. G. Phillipps, other Committee members, and some members of staff were also present at the luncheon.

It was interesting and fitting that on this very special occasion the President of the Past Nurses Association, who chaired the luncheon, was herself a 'Berry Street Baby'. She had been left at the Home when two weeks old, and had been cared for until she was old enough to make a choice of a career. She trained at Berry Street as a Mothercraft Nurse, and later became an active member of the Past Nurses Association, and finally the President.

The Management of the Hilton Hotel honoured the occasion by sending in a huge concoction and confection of a cake on which one hundred candles glowed.

The official celebration of the Centenary was a basket luncheon, held on 15th June, 1977, one hundred years to the day when charitable women met and formed the organisation now known as 'Berry Street'. Five hundred guests accepted the invitation, and it was only possible to entertain so many by using a huge marquee.

Through the courtesy and co-operation of the City Council, the lane between the two properties in Vale and Berry Streets was partially closed and the parking space behind the emergency homes included, so that it was possible to erect the marquee. The ground was covered in matting, potted plants and greenery placed around, white-clothed tables set about, and the whole section miraculously transformed into a blue-ceilinged, attractive and comfortable large assembly area.

Gas heaters were installed as a precaution, but although it was mid-winter, the weather stayed fine.

Mrs I. G. Phillipps welcomed the Governor of Victoria Sir Henry Winneke, and Lady Winneke, together with Sir John Holland, Chairman of the History Advisory Council, and representatives from many organisations, and special guests who had been

associated with the Home over a great many years. Some had been children at Berry Street and had, in turn, adopted children from the Home.

On arrival, Sir Henry and Lady Winneke were conducted through the Day Care Centre where they were greeted happily and very informally by the children. The Administration Block and Emergency Homes were also visited before they mingled with the guests at the informal luncheon.

In his speech of congratulation to one hundred years of service to the community, Sir Henry outlined the history of Berry Street Child and Family Care, then unveiled the commemorative plaque given by the Victorian Government to mark the Centenary.

Sir John Holland spoke of the significance of the day and the interest of the Government in such historical occasions.

It had been a fitting and memorable day, and the President and staff were warmly congratulated on the excellent arrangements made under difficult conditions.

The children had their own celebrations as can be seen in the photograph on page 46, cutting the Centenary Birthday cake.

More formally, the One Hundredth Annual Meeting was held in the Day Care Centre of the Appleton Wing at 8 p.m. on 19th September 1977. This important meeting was chaired by the President, Mrs I. G. Phillipps, who outlined the year's work in her report and also the revision of the services that are now necessary to cater for the changing needs of the community.

Under Sister Carol Jack's direction, and with a trained and semi-trained staff, and voluntary helpers, the Day Care Centre was operating to capacity and there was a considerable waiting list. From the centre the Social Workers provided a service to help mothers with problems. This was a small beginning to that which it is believed will become a much wider service reaching out into the community.

The Guest Speaker, the Reverend I. Ellis, Director of St John's Homes, told of the great need for family counselling and supportive help to prevent the breakdown of family life and of the need and use of preventive services also.

Life Governor Certificates were presented to:

Mrs I. G. Phillipps  
Mrs J. Uglow  
Mr T. J. Dwyer  
Mr A. Berry

Over supper, there was much talk about the year's Celebration and the achievement of the 100 years. There was a great deal of surmise as to what would be the needs of the community in the next hundred and of how Berry Street would be able to cope with them. As always, the Committee had to be anticipating the future.

OFFICE-BEARERS AND COMMITTEE FOR THE CENTENARY YEAR 1977

**OFFICE-BEARERS AND BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Patroness:</b>                        | Lady WINNEKE  |
| <b>President:</b>                        | Mrs I. G. PHILLIPPS   |
| <b>Vice-Presidents:</b>                  | Mrs E. W. PEATT<br>Mrs G. I. HOLYMAN  |
| <b>Hon. Treasurer:</b>                   | B. FORDHAM, F.C.A.  |
| <b>Publicity Liaison:<br/>Committee:</b> | Mrs H. M. PENWILL<br>A. A. GIBBS, F.C.A.<br>Mrs P. HOLDENSON<br>MRS R. KELLY (Elected<br>22/6/77)<br>Mrs I. MACKINNON<br>Mrs T. H. STEEL<br>Mrs K. SYME<br>G. P. MACKENZIE<br>(resigned 8/9/76)<br>Mrs B. MATEAR<br>(resigned 16/6/77)<br>Mrs M. ROBINSON<br>(resigned 10/2/77) |
| <b>Honorary Financial<br/>Advisers:</b>  | G. S. LANG<br>B. MATEAR<br>IAN MACKINNON  |
| <b>Honorary Solicitors:</b>              | Messrs HEDDERWICK,<br>FOOKES AND ALSTON   |
| <b>Auditors:</b>                         | Messrs RUNTING AND<br>McDONALD,<br>Chartered Accountants  |
| <b>Bankers:</b>                          | Bank of New South<br>Wales  |
| <b>Director:</b>                         | R. S. ELLIOTT   |
| <b>Social Workers:</b>                   | Miss L. K. PITMAN<br>Mrs J. KEIR  |
| <b>Public Relations<br/>Officer:</b>     | JOHN F. GREEN   |
| <b>Administration<br/>Officer:</b>       | G. WITHERS  |
| <b>Sister-In-Charge of<br/>Day Care:</b> | SISTER C. JACK, T.C.  |





## THE LOLLY MEN

*The lolly men as the children call them still bring sweets to the children and carry on a tradition started by Mr Douglas Robertson of North Coburg and his mates on the City Council Garbage truck in the early fifties.*

*Every time they called they brought bags of sweets for the children, who eagerly awaited their arrival.*

*On his retirement, the Past Nurses Association presented Mr Robertson, with a Pewter Tankard with the inscription...*

*TO THE LOLLY MAN WITH LOVE FROM  
TWENTY-SIX YEARS OF NURSES AND CHILDREN.*





## What of the future

What of the future of Berry Street? Members of the Committee of Management now have one hundred years of endeavour and experience to call upon.

The continuity of experience on the Committee is often forgotten or taken for granted—as in most voluntary associations. Over the years the Committee Members have not only been able to attract people of like spirit and attitudes, but also, as situations became more complex, those with specialised knowledge such as Solicitors, Accountants and such professionals. All give of their time generously.

Over the years, as retirement or death occurred within the Committee, other ladies with the same ideals would be nominated, and the same spirit carried on, though policies might be altered at times to suit the changing pattern of life and needs of the community.

Perhaps one indication of how much this voluntary service is appreciated by the community at large is shown by the fact that, as readers may have noticed, successive Governor's Ladies have, without exception, served as Patroness to the Home, and all have taken a keen and detailed interest in its progress.

Members of the Committee met every fortnight. They made sure the policy of the Home was maintained, checked the food supply and kitchens, inspected the buildings for cleanliness and necessary repairs, interviewed prospective adopting parents, and placed children to the best advantage.

The Committee now have adequate buildings and trained staff, with which to start the planned extended services. They have Government help in finance and a public who are much more tolerant of human weaknesses than in 1877.



## LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

The permissive society and the change in moral standards and attitudes, have, however, created new issues. Drugs, in a variety of forms, bring attendant personal problems. Unmarried mothers strive to keep their children with government assistance, rear them alone or in a *de facto* marital relationship. Ignorance or inability in homemaking, parental control and good family relationships means uncared-for children.

The fact that social welfare is traded upon by many, and that charitable help is always in demand, is now much debated. The question has often arisen as to whether voluntary and charitable services are necessary now that most people are covered by other forms of welfare and professional services.

In the press of 3rd October 1977, Mr Hamer, Premier of Victoria, is quoted as saying:

A proposed Victorian Family and Community services programme was the spearhead of social change.

The new welfare service would encourage voluntary and self help activity, and the Government was convinced that this was the most efficient way of getting best value for the welfare dollar.

. . . it will make more personal and more acceptable the welfare services available to some of the most helpless and pathetic groups in our community.

Under the scheme, Committees will be formed in each of Victoria's regions, served by elected members of voluntary welfare agencies.

It would seem from this that Government recognises that there is still need and a place in the social welfare pattern for the charitable services and Berry Street is well aware of the claims on time, love, and care of the many disadvantaged children.

When the Infant Asylum began, the fight was against infanticide, neglect, ignorance and poverty, illness and death, want and despair. Today it is not enough just to feed and clothe children, they must be encouraged to develop their full potential, and enjoy a happy family life. Today, the United Nations Declaration of Rights of the Child states:

The Child must be given the means requisite for its normal development, both materially and spiritually.

In the early days there were no social services, welfare benefits or Government payments to deserted wives, widows, or unmarried mothers. This created amongst the working classes a poverty that was harsher, crueller and more debasing than the poverty of this age.

Now, an enlightened public has made sure the under-privileged do not starve, though many still have to rely on some form of charitable help.

The extended services plan for Berry Street means going out into the community, and finding those in need; there are many whose pride will not allow them to seek assistance.

It is anticipated that an ordinary house will be obtained, probably in Richmond, to be used as a centre where women may get together for a cup of coffee and a chat, to fight the loneliness of which many complain, and where older children, locked out of homes until parents return from work, might find shelter and security.

Social workers at the Administration Centre at Berry Street assist those who come for help and the emergency homes are open to children or families who require emergency and temporary housing.

The family-group homes in the suburbs are giving disadvantaged children a new look at life.

The parents of children in day care are encouraged to meet, and a room is provided at Berry Street where they can gather to talk or discuss any subjects they like to suggest and, where they can participate in lessons in sewing, knitting and other home-making skills, if they so wish.

After one century of service to the community, Berry Street has confidently started the next.



# Appendices





Joyce Fletcher was a member of the staff at Berry Street from 1955 until 1975. Her love for the children and their love for her made the Toddlers Wing a happy home. She says . . .

I spent twenty happy years at Berry Street, but not without its ups and downs, tears, frustrations, happiness and love.

What I am today was given me by my experiences at Berry Street and I have a deep sense of gratitude for these years, and thank God for the privilege of sharing with others for the caring for so many children.

In the beginning I was really a raw recruit as a substitute mother, and felt I failed badly in so many ways, having not been a mother and having very little experience with children, in any way before.

Children can in so many ways teach us the essentials of Christian living, such as the importance and necessity of love, trust, friendship, forgiveness and acceptance of each other.

These children taught me that life really was uncomplicated and it is only ourselves who make it so. I often feel if we had the minds of children we would be much happier people.

I saw many changes during those twenty years aimed at better care both physically and mentally.

When I first went to Berry Street, clothing was communal, so that it was a case of, if it fitted, good luck, if not, nothing could be done about it. This was soon changed to each child being fitted out with his or her own wardrobe.

There was so little they could call their own so this was, to me, a great milestone.

When finances would permit there were many changes in improving old buildings and building new ones, to add to

## Some Recollections

their comfort and brighten the surroundings. When possible outings were arranged to such places as the Zoo and Botanical gardens.

I was amazed at the public awareness of Berry Street children and the help given by so many people in so many ways. Some of the people I will never forget for their years of faithfulness. The 'Lolly Men' who manned the garbage truck brought lollies twice a week when on their rounds. Somehow they always seemed to come at the children's lunch time, which caused chaos, as they would stop eating and rush to the window when they heard the truck coming. Lunch would not be resumed until the 'lolly men' had come in and received many kisses, and they were sure the lollies had been left.

The tremendous help and generosity of the Past Nurses Association had to be experienced. Many times I would only have to mention that I wished for something for the children and before long it would be supplied.

I made many friends from the Elliot Memorial Lodge. Every year I spent at Berry Street, these generous people gave a Christmas party to our children. A great deal of thought and effort went into each toy, so that it would be suitable for that particular child. I know many other people gave and still give but to these people I was personally involved.

Berry Street has changed in its type of care since I left but I feel these changes are always aimed at better care for the children.

One incident that happened gave me food for thought. We had a little boy admitted, and after a few days he said to

me 'Don't you have any Dads here, there seems to be an awful lot of Mums'.

When I first went to Berry Street I found I became very personally involved with some children, when they left I felt really broken hearted. I guess we have to learn some things the hard way. I had to look beyond myself and put the child first. I wondered also to what extent this involvement could make it difficult for the child. I soon learned that we all need to love and be loved, but it needs to be shared with more than one person.

The trainee nurses were tremendous people, although most of them were teenagers.

Each of these girls devoted time off duty, and days off in taking the children out, and into their own family. Not only their off duty time but also their pay packets were spent on special clothing, outings, and birthday and Christmas presents.

It was not only the pretty and appealing children who had substitute mothers. Some girls accepted the challenge of loving and caring for the children who had physical and mental handicaps or personality problems.

The change in a child when it accepted such love had to be seen to be believed.

I will always look back and remember my twenty years of experience at Berry Street as the most educating, rewarding, and satisfying years of my life.

(Signed) Joyce Fletcher.

Miss A. Bouchaud of North Balwyn who has been a subscriber for many years writes . . .

We lived most of our early years in Punt Road Richmond quite close to Berry Street Babies' Home, and I was always interested as I passed walking with my Father and his dog.

Sometimes all was quiet and sometimes the small inmates were exercising their lungs, adding to my mind to the general interest.

From time to time we heard of Babies being left on the doorstep and according to the press the baby had been named either by the staff or the Matron. They seemed to be adept at choosing names that suited admirably.

Although we lived close, we never realised the need for practical help, until the early days of the Radio. In the women's section an appeal was made for woollies and jams.

Mother began making jam in the fruit season and both my sister and myself have had the pleasure of keeping this up over the years. We are still using the large and original two gallon stone jars which were bought for the purpose.

Later, through a young man who supplied eggs in the district, we were able to obtain pullets eggs (just the right size for babies) at 6 dozen for five shillings. It was my job after school to take the basket of eggs across to Berry Street. At the outbreak of the second world war this was discontinued.

Another recollection of those days was when milk was served in billycans so that the quantity of milk had to be measured out. Our milkman served the home. One morning he reported that he had just dropped a large can, making a terrific clatter. He reckoned that every baby in the home woke up crying. He thought Matron was after him. He was terrified of her.



LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

## From the Press

### Foundlings

From a report in *The Melbourne Herald*. 7/9/49

Two City Council sweepers, about six a.m. today, heard what they thought was a mewling kitten in a rubbish tin in a lane off Collins Street, between Collins and Flinders Streets.

They pulled rubbish from the top of the tin and half way down found a newly born baby girl wrapped in newspaper and brown paper.

The baby, surrounded by hot water bags for warmth is now doing well at Berry Street Foundling Home, East Melbourne.

The Matron said the baby would not have been more than two or three hours old when found, and could have been born within minutes of her discovery.

Apart from being very cold the baby is normal and is now doing well.

From *The Herald* 28/11/1923

### CATHEDRAL CHRISTENING FOR FOUNDLING BABY

A few days ago a baby was found by a visitor to St Pauls Cathedral.

The baby boy was taken to the Foundling home, nameless and unidentified.

The infant is going to be fathered by the church to which his Mother consigned him.

He has been invited to the Cathedral to be christened.

The grey building where he was found will be his God-Father to the extent of lending the waif its name, little PAUL FLINDERS, as he is named will be honoured as few children of pomp and position are.

The Archbishop himself will perform the ceremony.



*The New Favourite at Berry Street Foundling Home.*

*He was found, unclothed and partly hidden, under a sheet of corrugated iron on a vacant allotment.*

*By courtesy of The Argus.*

## HONORARY MEDICAL STAFF from 1877 to 1977

No exact records of medical staff can be traced, and the dates and names shown have been taken from the Annual reports.

|                       |      |    |      |                            |      |      |
|-----------------------|------|----|------|----------------------------|------|------|
| Dr Motherwell         | 1878 | to | 1881 | Dr C. K. Churches          | 1946 | 1952 |
| Dr Shields            | 1878 |    | 1881 | Dr Grantley Shelton        | 1952 | 1975 |
| Dr Youl               | 1878 |    | 1896 | Dr F. Douglas Stevens      | 1952 | 1969 |
| Dr Dowling            | 1880 |    | 1889 | Dr A. W. Venables (acting) | 1952 |      |
| Dr Casey              | 1880 |    | 1886 | Dr P. Blaubaum             | 1952 |      |
| Dr Cooke              | 1880 |    | 1888 | Dr B. S. Vanrenan          | 1954 | 1975 |
| Dr O'Hara             | 1880 |    | 1886 | Dr Hewitt (acting)         | 1954 |      |
| Dr McInerney          | 1880 |    | 1889 | Dr W. D. Counsell          | 1956 | 1975 |
| Dr Serrell            | 1880 |    | 1886 | Dr Neal                    | 1959 | 1963 |
| Dr Haig               | 1880 |    | 1891 | Dr Kiepert                 | 1964 | 1969 |
| Dr Rowan              | 1882 |    | 1883 | Dr W. W. Lempriere         | 1964 | 1975 |
| Dr Stirling           | 1887 |    | 1889 | Dr Roy Cash                | 1964 | 1968 |
| Dr Webb               | 1887 |    | 1888 | Dr A. R. Woolcott          | 1968 | 1975 |
| Dr Ryan               | 1888 |    | 1889 |                            |      |      |
| Mr Moore              | 1889 |    | 1891 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Wight              | 1889 |    | 1891 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Malcolmson         | 1889 |    | 1891 |                            |      |      |
| Dr H. St Hohn Mitchel | 1889 |    | 1892 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Maudsley           | 1890 |    | 1891 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Ramsey             | 1890 |    | 1891 |                            |      |      |
| Dr F. H. Baker        | 1894 |    | 1944 |                            |      |      |
| Dr F. S. Webster      | 1898 |    | 1927 |                            |      |      |
| Dr A. Jeffrey Wood    | 1891 |    | 1914 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Ronald             | 1893 |    | 1896 |                            |      |      |
| Dr R. M. Morrison     | 1896 |    | 1910 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Weigall            | 1900 |    | 1902 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Douglas Stevens    | 1907 |    | 1952 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Lionel Hood        | 1909 |    | 1935 |                            |      |      |
| Dr A. E. Rowden White | 1910 |    | 1930 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Ferguson           | 1909 |    | 1940 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Dunbar Hooper      | 1910 |    | 1925 |                            |      |      |
| Dr J. Wootton         | 1913 |    | 1930 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Percy Longmore     | 1914 |    | 1946 |                            |      |      |
| Dr C. A. Griffiths    | 1919 |    | 1939 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Mark Gardiner      | 1928 |    | 1949 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Lawrence Stokes    | 1930 |    | 1970 |                            |      |      |
| Dr E. R. White        | 1925 |    | 1931 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Vivian F. Ebbott   | 1933 |    | 1941 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Ian Wood           | 1935 |    | 1940 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Stanley Williams   | 1938 |    | 1961 |                            |      |      |
|                       | 1972 |    | 1975 |                            |      |      |
| Dr R. Worcester       | 1938 |    | 1954 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Henry Sinn         | 1939 |    | 1946 |                            |      |      |
| Dr Leonard Longmore   | 1940 |    | 1952 |                            |      |      |
| Dr. G. Bearham        | 1941 |    |      |                            |      |      |
| Dr Hilda Kincaid      | 1940 |    |      |                            |      |      |
| Dr Tullock            | 1945 |    | 1951 |                            |      |      |

The reason for the longer list of Doctors in 1880, is that they were Suburban and Country Physicians who took care of the women and children boarded out.

## MATRONS DURING 1877 to 1977

|                                |      |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Mrs Naughton                   | 1885 |
| Mrs King                       | 1896 |
| Mrs McIver                     | 1898 |
| Mrs McLaughlan                 | 1899 |
| Mrs Edwards                    | 1900 |
| Miss Connolly                  | 1907 |
| Miss Ilam Toomath              | 1909 |
| Miss Jean Beaumont             | 1912 |
| Miss Ethel Hart                | 1913 |
| Miss A. Mowbry Flack           | 1916 |
| Mrs H. V. McGain               | 1929 |
| Miss M. E. Fry                 | 1944 |
| Miss E. Baker                  | 1952 |
| Miss Cecele Truscott           | 1953 |
| Miss Elaine Orr                | 1955 |
| Miss E. Crothers               | 1957 |
| Miss Wilks                     | 1960 |
| Miss M. Birks                  | 1965 |
| Miss R. E. Cole                | 1970 |
| Mrs M. Grigg                   | 1972 |
| Miss J. Fletcher Deputy Matron | 1975 |



## EXTRACTS FROM THE ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE VICTORIAN INFANT ASYLUM

**1884:** The Committee cannot conclude this report without alluding to the loss it has sustained by the death of the Hon. J. Francis as it was through his exertions that the Committee was able to secure the present fine site of the Asylum.

The resignation of the President Mrs J. G. Francis on her leaving the Colony is subject to much regret to the Committee, as she was one of the Founders of the Asylum and its first President.

**1885:** The healthy and vigorous and happy appearance of the children (who in all probability have been rescued from death or lives of neglect and disease) speaks well for the care and management of Superintendent and the Matron.

**1886:** The Inspector of Charities has just made his yearly visit. He says 'I found the establishment in a satisfactory condition. The Institution was established chiefly for the purpose of reducing Infanticide . . . it would be a matter of much public interest to know how far success has attended this object.

**1888:** Occasionally a young woman, who has been an inmate of the Institution and has no home, returns for a short time when she is out of a place or in bad health, thus showing that she values protection and friendship of the authorities in her time of need.

**1890:** It affords the Committee much pleasure to report that the Countess of Hopeton has kindly consented to become Patroness of the Institution in place of Lady Loch.

**1892:** The Committee would again impress on the Public and friends of the Institution the fact that, owing to the present depression, funds are sadly needed, not only to make additional accommodation but to carry on the maintenance of the Institution in its present form.

**1894:** When the Infant Asylum was first started, the attempt was made to rear infants by hand, but in the large majority of cases this was found to be a failure, and then the rule was made that the Mother must come in with her child and remain until the infant is weaned.

**1901:** During the last two years we have had thirty children who have been bottle fed, and of that number we only lost seven.

**1902:** During the quarter century of existence has sheltered 762 Mothers and 943 Babies.

**1904:** The Committee has regretfully been compelled to refuse admission to many infants, owing to lack of space and proper accommodation through the case of sickness.

**1905:** Through the generosity of the Trustees of Edward Wilson, Felton and Summer bequests, Mrs Audrey Bowes and other kind friends, sufficient money has been given to the Building Fund to justify a new Foundling Ward and day nurseries.

**1906:** Since the last Annual meeting the new Foundling Ward has been opened and the extra accommodation both to day and night nurseries is greatly appreciated.

**1908:** Year after Year when the Inspector of Charities visits the Institution, he reports it is well and carefully managed, and that the Charity is an excellent one and deserves far greater support.

**1911:** The Boarding out system is ever on the increase, owing to the fact that the Hon Medical Officers consider this method the best approach to a natural home life of the child.

**1912:** For the most part the children are boarded out after twelve months old at a payment of five shillings per week, but in cases of peculiar delicacy a reliable Foster Parent is given charge of one or two infants, only a few weeks old and received ten shillings weekly for each.

**1914:** During the two months residence in the Home (Beaconsfield) the health of the children has been very good, the result of fresh mountain air and fresh milk now available twice daily.

**1915:** The work of the Institution is primarily the saving of infant life, and the most gratifying results are shown during the past year, when among 142 babies only three have died.



**1917:** It is noted that the number of admissions is considerably lower than of former years, which have been at least 50% higher. This may be accounted for by the fact that there seems an increasing objection to remaining for six months after the birth of the baby.

**1919:** The long felt need for isolation quarters is about to be fulfilled through the generosity of Mr Fred Knight in donating £1,000. The Isolation ward will be called the Emilie Knight Isolation Ward.

**1920:** Vice-Regal Visit. The Institution was honoured on the 12th February 1920 by a visit from Her Excellency Lady Helen Munro Ferguson. Her Excellency expressed herself as being deeply interested in the methods adopted here of saving infant life.

**1921:** Only one real Foundling was admitted. A fragile Baby Boy. He is doing well at Beaconsfield.

**1922:** Three little Foundlings were admitted this year. Two Baby boys brought in by the police, and one little girl left on the doorstep in March, and therefore named 'Dora March'.

**1923:** Six real Foundlings were admitted this year. Three Baby Boys and one Baby girl having been brought in by Police, and one baby boy and one girl brought in by the residents of East Melbourne on whose veranda's these babies were discovered.

**1927:** Lady Somers in moving the adoption of the report said 'It seems to me the Committee of this Institution have reduced the administration to a fine art especially in the low death rate'.

**1928:** The sewing party meets fortnightly at the Institution. It includes members of the Committee and friends. These ladies complete a large number of garments each year and therefore render valuable assistance to the home.

**1930:** To Mrs J. W. Robertson is due the credit of forming the first auxiliary for the hospital. It is known as No. 1 Branch and already has proved a great help.

**1931:** An Association of Past Trainees was formed during the year and the first re-union was held at the Hospital in May. Members donated the first years membership fees to the hospital.

**1934:** Seven boys and fourteen girls have been adopted directly from the nurseries during this year. Most of the children were under twelve months of age but one girl was nine years old and two others (twins) five years old.

**1935:** BEACONSFIELD. The serious storm and floods which occurred in the summer affected the Country home very considerably. The land was under water. Fruit crops were ruined and vegetable crops were mostly washed out of the ground.

**1937:** Mrs Montague Cohen has been associated with the Berry Street Foundling Hospital for forty years and has been President of the Committee of Management for the past seventeen years. She has given her service wholeheartedly and with unflagging enthusiasm. The Committee are most appreciative of Mrs Cohen's work and elect her as President for the eighteenth year.

**1939:** Two shadows dominate the latter months. The first cast by the passing of our highly esteemed President, the late Mrs Montague Cohen . . . her presence is very much missed but the example of her years of serving lives to inspire all who will carry forward her work and ideals of the home.

**1941:** Never before has the work of the Foundling Hospital been of such national importance. Australia needs every one of her babies.

**1944:** Only this week a man came in who was adopted by the home, forty-eight years ago. The records show he was a foundling baby. Now he is married with two sons in the R.A.A.F.

**1945:** The older children attend the local school and caused much excitement when, at last term our infants brought home first and second place in their group. Matron said they rushed home bursting with pride.

**1949:** Lady Herring opened the Toddlers Wing (Tandarra) on 1st April 1949. The total cost of building, furnishing and equipment will be in the vicinity of £15,000.



## LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

**1952:** A gratifying achievement this year was the adoption of several children from the toddlers wing. In each case these had been delicate or retarded babies and their ultimate adoption was complete justification for the establishment of the toddlers wing.

**1953:** This year for the first time in the seventy-six years of its history, the home has no children boarded out in Foster homes . . . the fact that we have not placed a child in a Foster home in the last ten years is evidence of the growing popularity of adoption.

**1960** In common with many institutions built some years ago, modern trends in medicine and nursing demand facilities not easily provided in old buildings.

**1962:** The Committee has under consideration the future development, and hopes shortly to be in a position to announce what is proposed in this matter. Some of the facilities in Berry Street are considered inadequate and improvements called for.

**1963:** We are reluctantly compelled to refuse many requests from parents that we care for their children. This is due to the fact that we have neither staff nor accommodation to cope with more children.

**1964:** The babies' playroom sponsored by the Marrang Auxiliary, was completed during the year, and is proving to be of great value.

**1965:** What we have in mind is the staged demolition of existing buildings, and their replacement by buildings which by being designed for the use to which they will be put, should be more convenient and comfortable.

**1966:** Confidential counselling is offered to unwed parents and a home provided for the Mother. The aim of the Hospital is to help each girl to make sound plans for her later adjustment to normal community life and a wise decision for the future of her baby.

**1967:** We are indebted to the countless people who knit and make clothes and make toys for the children, who make jam and marmalade which is enjoyed by the staff.

**1968:** It is with great regret that we have received Dr Lawrence Stokes resignation as our Senior Honorary Physician. After 39 years of love and care he has given to the children, it won't be the same without him.

**1969:** The Committee has been forward looking in examining the situation of one parent families . . . there is a growing need of day care for children and much thought has been given to this aspect of child welfare.

**1970:** Without the good friends listed in this report and those who work behind the scenes, The Hon Medical staff, Hon Solicitors, Finance Advisory Board, Social Welfare Department, Hospital and Charities Commission, Press Radio and television and the generosity of the Public, the work of Berry Street could not continue.

**1971:** The Nursing staff are very proud of their new Home and all its modern appointments and what they appreciate most of all is having single rooms instead of shared accommodation.

**1972:** We live in a time of searching enquiry and rapid change, and this trend has been a striking feature in the development of Children's Welfare Services over the past year.

**1974:** We do appreciate the continued interest and support of young people such as High School students, Girl Guides and Brownie groups who help so much with donations of clothing as well as other gifts.

**1975:** Charitable contributions continued to play a very important part in our finances, enabling us to wipe out an accumulated deficit, enter the year with a small maintenance surplus, and consolidate our reserve funds which will be required for our re-development plan.

**1976:** It has been a difficult year. It has also been an exciting one. We have watched our planning for wider supportive services to children taking shape and now that our new buildings are almost completed, we can look forward to the next stage of our re-development programme.

It is appropriate that approaching our Centenary Year we are about to embark on a fresh approach to child care to meet the present day needs of the community.

**1977:** To expand the service now being provided by our Social Workers to a small group of Mothers, we are considering a family aide service to assist disfunctioning families in the community. These aides with the Social Workers could provide a supportive and preventive service to families 'at risk', hopefully preventing family breakdown and the admission of children to State Wardship.



