

HILLCREST MATERNITY HOSPITAL

- *Harvest Rd, North Fremantle, Western Australia 1922 - 1974*

Although Hillcrest Maternity Hospital was officially opened on 5 April 1922, The Salvation Army in Perth had undertaken work for unmarried mothers for some 24 years. The work originally commenced in 1898 at Graceville, then moved to the Open Door in North Fremantle in 1903 for a short time until it moved to Hopetoun, near Hillcrest from later in 1903 until 1922.



Hillcrest Maternity Hospital was previously the home of a Mr. & Mrs. Pearse, and was donated to The Salvation Army by the Pearse family in appreciation of their parent's services to the needy. A nurse's training school was commenced, and a new wing was added to the hospital in 1934.

During World War 2 the hospital, in conjunction with other Salvation Army homes in Western Australia, was requisitioned for wartime use by the defence forces. Hillcrest Hospital therefore had a temporary address for a period in King's Park Road, near Perth.

An important milestone was reached in May 1958, when a new extension was opened which virtually amounted to a new hospital, with the latest in modern facilities. The hospital's quality and care was such that although the hospital was

³¹ *The War Cry*, 11 November 1899, p.10.

originally for unmarried mothers, many married mothers by that time elected to have their babies born at Hillcrest.

Not only was an adoption programme an integral part of Hillcrest's programme, but a comprehensive rehabilitation programme was also available to the girls. This included learning typing and other skills, which assisted many girls to make a new start in society on their discharge.

By the late 1960s, a change had been evidenced in society in Western Australia as elsewhere, relating to single motherhood. This resulted in a decrease in the number of girls coming to Hillcrest.

Faced with the need to further upgrade the hospital, a decision was taken by the Army to conclude its maternity programme at Hillcrest.

The hospital was finally phased out in 1974.