

From: Stewart, Craig
Sent: Wednesday, 12 August 2020 2:57 PM
To: Gabrielle Hall
Subject: HPRM: RE: Lady Lawley Cottage

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Hi Gabrielle

Thanks for your email.

Lady Lawley cottage is in the process of being closed by Red Cross with the expectation that this is completed fully by the end of this year. In a practical sense, with the exception of one long term client we have had no one physically using the facility since the advent of COVID in March of this year.

In May we announced to families and stakeholders that we would not be re-opening our services and have been working with families who had been using our service to transition them to other providers. This is our current focus.

At this juncture we have made no decision on the future of the Lady Lawley Cottage site and have no timeline as yet as to when a decision will be made. This is not our primary focus at this time.

As and when we do make a decision I am more than happy to communicate this.

Feel free to get back to me if you have any further queries.

Regards
Craig

From: Gabrielle Hall <eo@cottesloe.wa.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 12 August 2020 2:06 PM
To: Stewart, Craig
Cc: Shane Collie <mcs@cottlesloe.wa.gov.au>
Subject: Lady Lawley Cottage

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Good afternoon Craig,

I hope you've been well.

I am writing to you on behalf of the Town of Cottesloe as the Town recently received a petition regarding preservation of Lady Lawley Cottage and the legacy of Lady Annie Lawley.

Council have requested that Administration seek further information from Red Cross regarding this matter. Are you able to please provide any further details you may have regarding the closure and future of Lady Lawley Cottage. If not, are you able to provide a timeframe on when this information will be available?

I look forward to hearing from you.

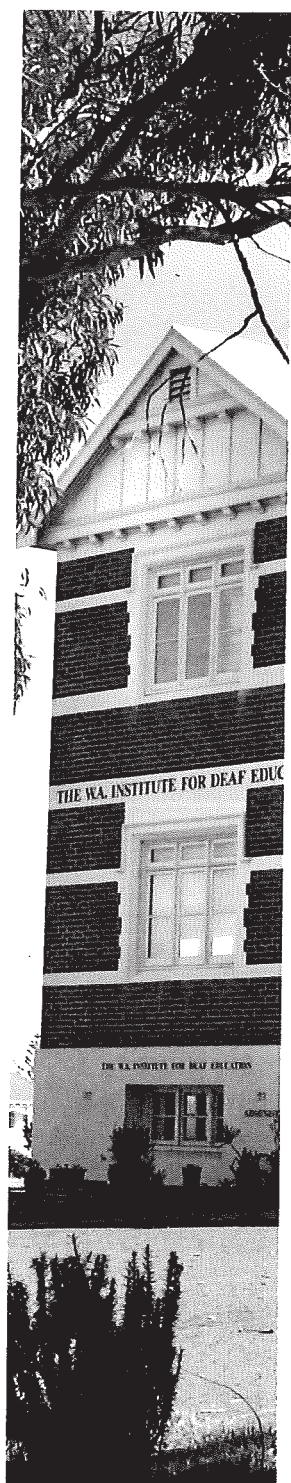
Kind regards,

Gabrielle Hall
Events Coordinator



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the role of superintendent of the hostel. The latter remained in charge of the hostel for nine years and during that time he generated social confidence and independence by encouraging the children to compete in open competitions at every opportunity. Some of the activities in which they participated were little athletics, football and basketball and, in 1971, two teenage teams gained a first and second place in the inter-schools team dancing. After Neville Green departed in 1979, Miss Isobel Stanners, who had been on the staff since 1963, became the hostel manager and secretary until 2001. Between them Miss Stanners and three teachers, May Wallace, Lillian Bucknall and Marie Kolinska, gave 154 years service to the school.²⁶

Today, hearing impaired children who would have once taken up residence in the original school have either been absorbed into mainstream schools with the support of a visiting teacher, or are daily attending special schools or the oral deaf units established in a number of high schools. In 2005 the Education Department, under the acronym WAIDE (WA Institute for Deaf Education), moved into the original building. The purpose of this body was to coordinate all aspects of education for every hearing impaired child.

LADY LAWLEY COTTAGE BY THE SEA

THE LADY LAWLEY Cottage by the Sea was named for the wife of West Australian Governor Sir Arthur Lawley, who assumed office on 1 May 1901. Annie Lawley, the daughter of Sir Edward Cunard of the Cunard Line Shipping Company, displayed a keen interest in the welfare of children and also encouraged her two daughters, Cecilia and Ursula, to get involved in charitable works. The family were all noted for their friendly approach and the females were excellent horsewomen who frequently went out riding.

Prior to the Lawley's departure from Western Australia in 1902, a group of women, involved in community-based organisations, decided that they would like to acknowledge Lady Lawley's humanitarian work whilst in Perth. On being presented with a sum of money, collected to recognise the part she played in promoting so many worthwhile societies, the governor's wife graciously accepted the thoughtful gesture, but was quick to offer a more practical suggestion. Lady Lawley expressed the wish that she would like nothing better than for the money be used to establish a seaside convalescent home for goldfields children under twelve. The opportunity to offer assistance to young patients in need of recuperation was enthusiastically embraced and plans were swiftly put in place to investigate the possibility of opening such a home.

A block of land was purchased in Gibney Street, Cottesloe, and on this site it was the group's intention to erect a cottage large enough to accommodate a total of 16 children. As there was determination not to financially burden the families involved, support for the project was expected to come partly from public subscription and partly from parents, with the government of the day subsidising the venture pound for pound, up to two hundred and fifty pounds.²⁷ Like many non-government charitable institutions in those days, the Lady Lawley Cottage was organised by caring women, ably assisted by



prominent men who generously accepted positions as board members.

The cottage was officially opened by Lady Bedford on 18 March 1903 and the committee immediately began to fulfil the wishes of its namesake, Lady Lawley. Up until the home was fully operational, the number of staff was limited to a matron, a general servant and a handyman. To send their children to the home, non-subscribers were expected to pay the full weekly charge of 15 shillings. In contrast to this amount a subscriber's fee cost only seven shillings and sixpence per week. According to E. Riley of 'Bishop's House', Perth, the project was indeed successful with 16 children being cared for at the Lady Lawley Cottage in 1906, and 'three more applicants expected any day'.²⁸ Six years later, a new milestone was reached when patients at the Children's Hospital [Princess Margaret], who had reached the convalescent stage, were also sent to Cottesloe for a fortnight's holiday to recuperate by the sea.

Sir Arthur became the Governor of the Transvaal after the Boer War but the family always maintained a keen interest in the Lady Lawley Cottage at Cottesloe. Shortly before Sir Arthur died he and his wife revisited Western Australia and were delighted with the work being done for Perth's younger generation. In 1942, when invasion fears were uppermost in the minds of authorities, the children being cared for were evacuated and, shortly afterwards, the cottage was administered by the Red Cross Society. Renamed the John Nicholson Convalescent Home, the building accommodated servicewomen in need of convalescence. An offer was made to exchange the freehold and assets of the premises and an undertaking was also given by the new administrators to reopen the home for its original purpose after the war. This proposal was accepted

LEFT: Lady Lawley Cottage.
Courtesy Lady Lawley Cottage,
Red Cross Australia (WA).

ABOVE: Lady Lawley with her
daughters Cecilia and Ursula.
Courtesy Lady Lawley Cottage,
Red Cross Australia (WA).

and in 1946 the Red Cross Society established a convalescent home for physically disabled children.

The Lady Lawley Cottage was registered as a 'C' Class Hospital and 36 afflicted children were accepted to receive medical care, special nursing and remedial treatment. A high standard of education was offered and during the building's lengthy existence various additions were incorporated to accommodate the changing health and community needs of the time.

The greatest crisis occurred in 1948 when a poliomyelitis epidemic swept the metropolitan area, leaving an unfortunate legacy among many West Australian children. Necessary changes have been made since the home was founded more than a century ago but the Lady Lawley Cottage by the Sea continues to be identified with the seaside suburb. Keeping abreast with the times the home was substantially refurbished after 2001 and extended for the use of severely disabled children.

The IOOF Orphans' Home
(later Wanslea).
Courtesy Dr N. Green.



planes were 6000 pounds over the guaranteed weight, they needed the full length of Melville Water to lift off before they reached Freshwater Bay and 'the looming cliffs of Bindaring Parade'. The former airman described 'how with engines screaming at full power, the pilots picked the saddle between Claremont and Cottesloe, just clearing the trees and houses'.⁷

As a safety precaution in 1942, many school and institutionalised children living near the coast were evacuated to country centres and, from among the families that remained, there was no lack of female volunteers working in munition factories, the Land Army and acting as social hostesses at dances arranged for servicemen on leave. Casualties of war were losses shared by the entire community and most neighbours, when aware of other's pain, rose to the occasion. Former surf club member, Nessie Ogg, drew attention to a kindly gesture made by a group of Americans stationed in Perth during the war years, when they donated money to send young Betty Brazier to the Eastern States for an operation, after the child suffered severe burns from a celluloid doll that caught fire.

Children from the Lady Lawley Cottage were sent inland and the building, temporarily renamed the John Nicholson Convalescent Home, was used by the Red Cross to accommodate servicewomen from 1944 until 1946. Similarly, children from the Salvation Army Girls' Home were evacuated to Kellerberrin, after the Australian Army requisitioned the building on the corner of Broome and Princes Street. In 1942 the military also took over the Ministering League Convalescent Home in Warton Street and, as earlier mentioned, the premises were used for wartime purposes until the authorities returned the property to the League in 1945. Wanslea, another Cottesloe institution, was likewise commandeered during the early 1940s when the Department of Defence took over the large building in Railway Street and used it as the Lady Mitchell Convalescent Home to accommodate repatriated servicemen.

The safety of school children during those anxious years gave a new dimension to teaching and those in charge were expected to accept extra responsibilities as guidelines, sent by the Education Department on 9 March 1942, to the North Cottesloe headmistress, Miss Anderson, testify: The instructions suggested that:

- 1 32 foot trenches be dug.
- 2 windows and fanlights on the inner wall be removed and the glass panels on the doors be boarded up on each side.
- 3 glass shutters be strengthened by muslin.
- 4 all pictures and ornaments be removed from walls.
- 5 a fully equipped medicine and First Aid chest be prepared.
- 6 fire buckets and sandbags be at the ready.⁸

School-aged children, who continued to live in the metropolitan area during the war years, recall that, with fewer teachers available and a depleted number of pupils, two classrooms were sometimes combined under one teacher. No one was exempt from taking part in the war effort and pupils enthusiastically played an important role in



22 May 2020

Dear Neil

Future of Lady Lawley Cottage

We're writing to you because the Town of Cottesloe is an important part of our Lady Lawley Cottage community and we want to share the news with you that we will be closing this service by the end of 2020.

Late last year, the Australian Red Cross Board made a decision to focus our work in a smaller number of key areas where we can have the greatest impact. As Red Cross is not a specialist disability support provider, we are not able to have the greatest impact in this area and we were preparing to close Lady Lawley by 2023. Recently we have faced challenges, most significantly the impact of COVID-19, and this has brought the closure forward the end of 2020.

From the end of May, Red Cross will support all our Lady Lawley Cottage clients and families to transition to new providers. Lady Lawley Cottage clients of paused services (those where no clients are actively accessing the service) will transition by end June 2020; for clients currently accessing services, transition will occur by end August 2020; and our High Needs Unit will transition by December 2020. Lady Lawley Cottage will then close by the end of 2020.

In making this decision Red Cross acknowledges 117 years of providing important services. The decision to transition our clients is not a reflection of the amazing work at Lady Lawley Cottage over the decades, and the ongoing spirit and dedication of all involved.

There are many other excellent service providers in the region whose core business is high quality care for children with disabilities, and children with disabilities transitioning to adulthood. We feel confident closing Lady Lawley Cottage because of the strong sector, and we will work closely with others in the region to support these transitions.

Red Cross is absolutely committed to maintaining the quality of services for clients up to transition. We acknowledge that the transition marks the end of a significant legacy, but we make the decision knowing that our clients will continue to be well cared for by other providers and that Red Cross can focus our efforts on the work we are best placed to do.

Please keep an eye out for a commemoration and celebration we are planning for Lady Lawley Cottage. Amongst all this change, we want to make sure that the long, important history, legacy and people of Lady Lawley Cottage are acknowledged.

We will be in contact with all our partners, funders, contractors and supporters over the coming weeks to discuss what this means specifically for you. In the meantime, please direct questions to the Senior Manager (Claire Lovegrove) or WA Director for Australian Red Cross (Craig Stewart)

Craig Stewart

Director, WA

Australian Red Cross