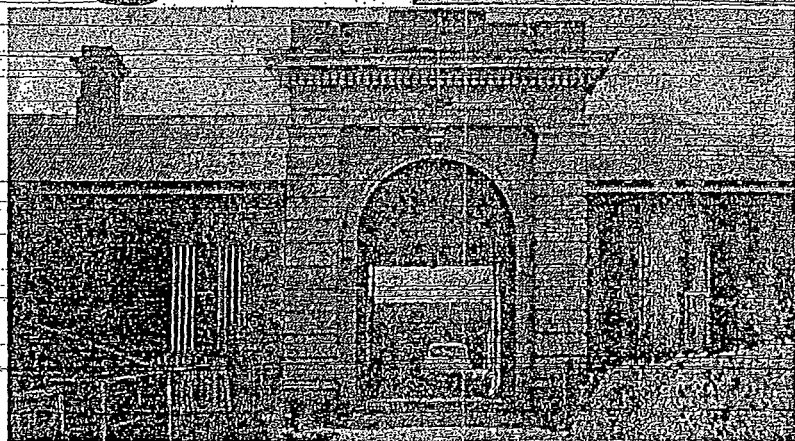


Toughest girls tamed in old gaol

NO RIOTS

"The Sun-Herald" today reveals a bold, successful experiment to rehabilitate "hard-core" delinquents.



TODAY - A view of the front of the remodeled Hay Gaol.

Trouble-makers at the Parramatta Girls' Home have been sent to a new total security institution in a former country gaol.

This is part of a bold new plan aimed at taking the "glamour" out of trouble-making. Strict discipline imposed at the country institution includes cutting the hair short, a ban on provocative dress-styles and rigid supervision of talk, radio programs and reading.

Remodelled
Instead of becoming heroines by going to Long Bay Gaol, ringleaders of trouble at Parramatta are now whisked away by car and train at night to the south-western town of Hay, 450 miles away. At present nine girls and 13 staff are in the old Hay Gaol, which was remodelled

Rigid rules work

into a girls' institution for about £10,000.

Child Welfare Department officials last week outlined the Hay project to "The Sun-Herald."

They said it had been one of the main factors in ending rioting and other troubles at Parramatta.

The Parramatta home is the corrective institution for the most "difficult" delinquent girls.

The officials said the Hay institution was a "vital experiment" which had brought amazing changes in

rebellious girls' mental outlook and physical condition. One official said, "The girls who go to Hay are real little toughs."

"The way they get themselves up they could be taken as being anything from 15 years old to 50."

"But, after a few months there they have rosy cheeks and they have lost a lot of their fat."

"They are transformed into nice, healthy-looking schoolgirls."

Most of the girls sent to Hay were "underground organisers," the official said.

"The fact that these girls can be put away gives greater respect to the authorities at Parramatta," he said.

"The ringleaders are also stopped from infesting the other girls with hysterical outbursts."

No whispers

Describing the discipline at Hay, the official said, "Girls are not allowed to sit and talk idly among themselves at any stage of the day."

"Any conversation they have must be loud enough for the officers to hear — there are no subtle whispers."

"Their talk must be of the approved kind; no mention of their exploits outside."

"They lose points by trying to bring in messages to the girls who have been there for some time."

"Parramatta is not even discussed."



A YEAR AGO - A rebellious girl is hustled into a police van after appearing in Court following an outbreak at Parramatta Girls' Home.

Tally of bad marks

The official explained that to be sent to Hay a girl had to build up a tally of bad marks — against herself — at Parramatta.

And to be sent back to Parramatta she had to build up a score of good marks.

But, only in rare cases were the girls kept at Hay for longer than three months.

Girls under 15 were not sent there.

"Every girl who goes to Hay is sent to a psychiatrist to see if she can stand up to the strain," the official said.

Training

"We have to see that we don't break their spirit. Each week the girls are also seen by a doctor, and clergymen visit them."

The training program at the institution was designed to help each girl accept her role in life as a normal citizen, not a belligerent anti-

social person, the official said.

"With Hay we have a deterrent within our own organisation," he said.

"If they were taken to Long Bay they were regarded as heroines among their friends."

"Now, without any quibble, they disappear overnight."

"When they come back the other girls can see that they are completely changed."

"The first two contingents of girls have been to Hay and come back."

"With one girl who has stepped out of the lately, it has only been necessary to mention Hay to make her behave."

The official said that when he had gone to Hay, he had been astounded by the change in girls who at Parramatta had "lacked all the social graces."

portant could laugh at their own stupidity," he said.

The official said that if a girl addressed an officer incorrectly she spent the morning rest period practising speaking correctly.

"They must hold their head up and speak correctly," the official said.

"Perfection"

"There must be no snarling, sneering or speaking out of the corner of the mouth."

"It's perfection we are after."

The conversion of Hay Gaol to a girls' institution was a "crash program."

The girls who went there first cleaned down the walls of the cells and painted them in colours of their own choice.

The cells are now furnished with cabinets for the maintenance of the institution and gardening are part of the daily work.

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