



THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP
Minister for the Environment and Energy

MEDIA RELEASE

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PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY AND INSTITUTIONS PRECINCT GAINS NATIONAL HERITAGE LISTING

The stories of tens of thousands of women and children institutionalised in Australia will be formally recognised with the inclusion of the Parramatta Female Factory and Institutions Precinct on the National Heritage List today.

For almost 200 years, the Precinct existed as a part of Australia's social welfare system, providing shelter for women and children. It was a place of work and punishment, a marriage bureau, a labour hire depot and a home for disadvantaged or 'wayward' women and children, often held there against their will.

The Precinct began in 1818 as Australia's first female convict site, the Parramatta Female Factory. This was the first destination for the majority of convict women sent to colonial Sydney and many Australians are descended from these resilient women.

After the Female Factory's closure, the Precinct housed a Roman Catholic Orphan School and then the Parramatta Industrial Girls School in various forms until 1974. The last institution on site, the Norma Parker Correctional Centre, closed its doors in 2008.

The buildings and grounds of the Precinct that remain today tell us much about attitudes to women in the past. The spaces the women inhabited and objects they used, including archaeological finds from the convict era, shed light on their day-to-day trials and tribulations.

When we reflect on our nation's heritage, it is important to remember many people have been affected by its darker chapters. The Precinct's Orphan and Girls School buildings are an important physical record for those many Australians and their families who have personal connections with institutional sites. The harm of institutionalisation and the trauma experienced by many residents is acknowledged as part of the site's heritage and visitors are encouraged to learn about its complex history.

"The Precinct is highly valued for its heritage importance by the local, state and national community and this National Heritage listing will allow the Australian community to stand witness to the lives and experiences of women and children who lived there," said the Minister for the Environment and Energy, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP.

"It will become Australia's 113th National Heritage place and share the status and protection of other National Heritage places in New South Wales which help define who we are as a nation, such the Old Government House and Government Domain, the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the North Head of Sydney Harbour."

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