

McCall Gardens was formed in the early 1950's after parents with handicapped children had come together with a view to establish a suitable place for their children to live. In 1954 a founding member, Mrs Hazel Nelson, approached Sir William McCall (land owner of current Box Hill site and organisations name sake) to purchase the land at Box Hill, which he later donated to the association. The association then purchased additional acreages surrounding the site.

In the early days the families of children seeking admission had to work at the home and faced many challenges in preparation of its opening. They conducted raffles, fundraising and lobbied government to raise much needed funds to operate the facility. McCall Gardens home was officially opened on 27 September 1958 with 14 residents. In the early days the residents and staff farmed the land and also operated a small piggery. In 1965 a swimming pool was



added to the site to improve the boys' confidence and wellbeing. In 1969 the manager's cottage was completed, this building has more recently be used for Community Participation Programs.

In 1975 the original wood and fibro buildings were replaced by Ross House to house 44 residents and then further extensions were completed on the building in 1983 to allow for 73 residents. In the 1980's there were improvements made to the kitchen which remained in operation until mid-2018.

With the changes to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Large Residential Centre style facility was deemed illegal. This change meant that the current Ross House was no longer suitable as a government funded disability facility and all residents had to be moved into purpose built group homes. As a result, McCall Gardens now operates 10 homes in the local community.



McCall also used to operate an activity program for the men living at Ross

House, this program evolved over time as funding became available. Today many of the men still access the centre at Box Hill called CPP and participate in a range of leisure activities. The current building is ear marked as part of the Box Hill Master Plan with Hills Shire Council and needs to be relocated to a new facility to ensure we can continue to expand this style of support under the NDIS.

Unlike the previous style of block funding that was guaranteed by the state government for a minimum of 3 years, the funding under the NDIS must go through an annual review process for each person with a plan. This makes long term planning more challenging and the requirement for record keeping for each support more onerous for providers, not to mention for participants and their families.