

Remembering where the residential program began

The Family Resource and Residential Program initially started in 1972 when a group of students moved into the white house, 'Casa Maria', on the Mater Dei property. This proved to be a very successful first venture into residential accommodation. However, it was identified that the house was isolated from the local community. The Sisters decided to move the students off the property and immerse them within the local community of Camden. This is when the first house was purchased in Camden South.

The house at Camden South was very successful at providing students with the opportunity to become active members of the local community and be involved in the day to day running of a household. The Sisters then decided that the program could be expanded so they purchased three more properties, another at Camden South, one at Elderslie and the other at Leumeah. The Sisters also purchased land at Narellan to purpose build a house. They had initial concerns about its placement at Narellan because it was amongst farm land and did not have any close neighbours. This is the same house that we use today. It is located on the very busy Richardson Road and does not have any farms around it now!

Today the program still enables the students at Mater Dei to develop valuable domestic education and community participation skills to prepare them to become valued members of their chosen communities.



Sr Julianna Scott with some of the first students in the residential program.