

The Italian Home for Children

Christopher F. Small

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Christopher F. Small : The Italian Home for Children before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Italian Home for Children:

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By NonaI do a lot of genealogy and this is nice to add to my collection of books to visually see what some of the records show. When you work with records, you imagine what it was like, this gives an insight what some may have had to live through.
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By broodgeI used to work here and Chris has done a nice job of covering the history. It has evolved with the needs of the times from orphanage to an effective treatment center.

As it ravaged the world, the influenza epidemic of 1918 devastated Boston's congested North End and left hundreds of orphans in its wake. Touched by this crisis, a Roman Catholic priest and a group of Italian Americans founded the first home for Italian children in Massachusetts. Franciscan Sisters devoted 24 hours a day to providing the children with a

safe, loving, and spiritual environment. In addition, the home provided educational support for its residents. Over time, the changing needs of children mandated that the agency change the nature of its services from custodial care to treatment. In 1974, in response to the changing political and social climate, the agency became the Italian Home for Children. Today, it is a nonprofit, nonsectarian residential treatment facility with a capacity for 61 children of all races, nationalities, and religions. The images in *The Italian Home for Children* document milestones in the organization's history: the devastating influenza epidemic, the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Christmas plays, a visit from Joe DiMaggio, trips to Canobie Lake Park in the summer, the Tony Martin benefit performance at Boston Garden, and the home as it is today--a refuge for children in the most severe crises.

About the Author Christopher F. Small has been the executive director of the Italian Home for Children since 1984. A Massachusetts native, he has devoted his life to children and, today, still maintains contact with many of those who previously lived at the home.