

ADELAIDE HOUSE



STORIES OF HEALING

Celebrating 100 years
of healing and care,
mission and ministry

Adelaide House Hospital,
Hostel and Museum

1926-2026

Mparntwe, Alice Springs, Northern Territory

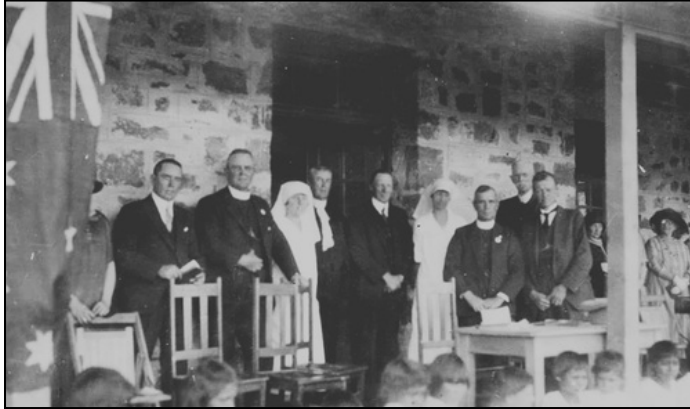
ADELAIDE HOUSE

1926 -

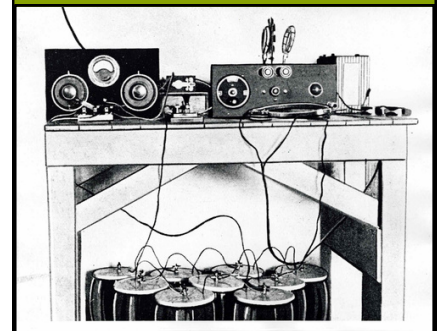
Thirteen years in planning and construction, Adelaide House features a unique cooling system in the cellar.



The official party on opening day,
26th June 1926



The first radio transmission
between Alice Springs and
Herrmannsberg Mission.

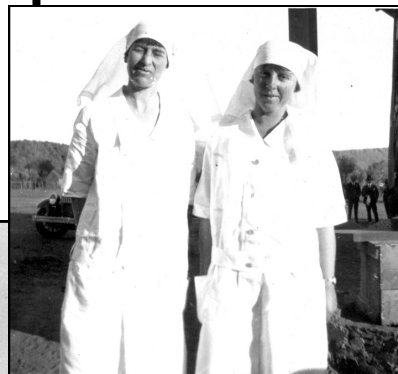


1925-1926

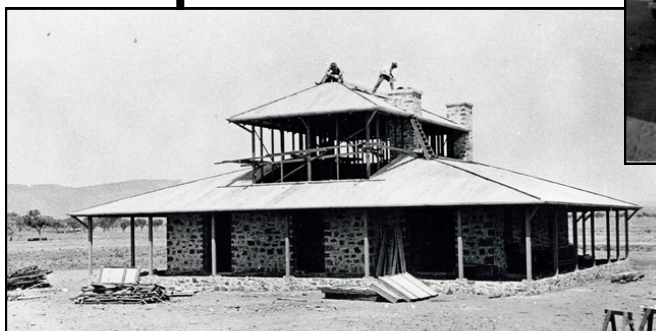
JUNE 1926

NOV 1926

First patient, William
Hayes, a cattleman,
became an ardent
supporter of the
hospital, following an
extended stay.



First Sisters



Tom Adamson was
the first boy born in
Adelaide House and
Ann Kerr the first girl
- both in 1927

NURSING
STAFF

1926-1928

Sr. E. Small
Sr. I. Pope

1928

Sr. C. M. Bayly

1928-1930

Sr. A. Inglis
Sr. J. Cavanagh

1930-1932

Sr. G. McCubben
Sr. F. Farmer

AS A HOSPITAL

- 1939

The railway is completed between
Oodnadatta and Alice Springs

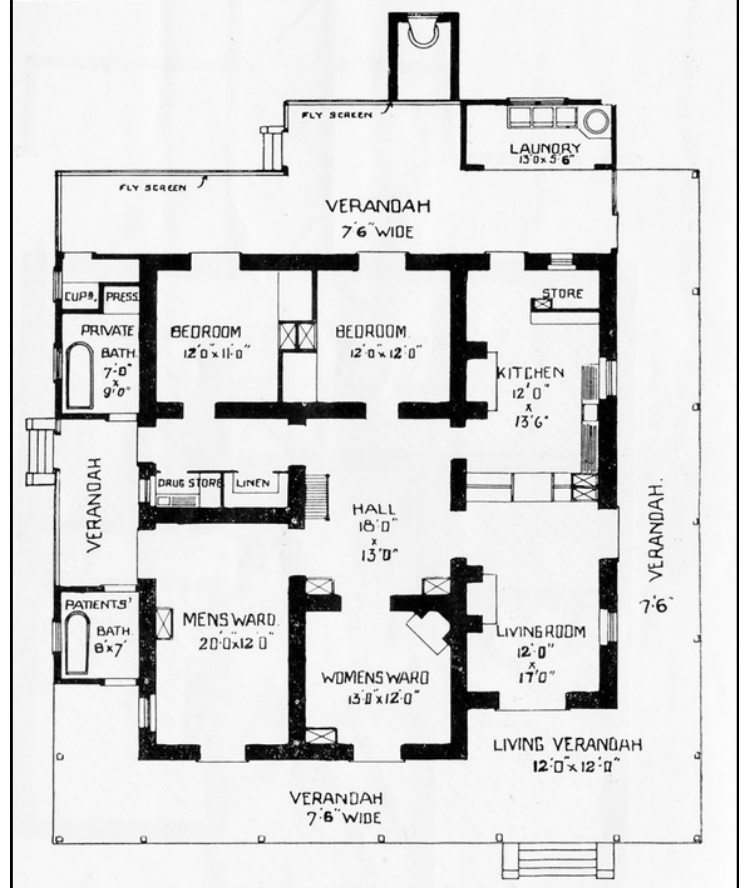


First aerial evacuation
from Alice Springs to
Adelaide

1929

1933

Ground floor plan



MARCH 1939



The first operation was on an
Aboriginal man with a cyst
on his neck. The operation
was performed by a visiting
doctor.

Some of the Nurses' tasks:

- ✓ Dressings
- ✓ Gunshot wounds
- ✓ Teeth extractions
- ✓ Attending births
- ✓ Cooking
- ✓ Accompanying evacuations
- ✓ Managing the diphtheria epidemic
- ✓ Setting broken limbs
- ✓ Sending flowers to isolated children
- ✓ Welfare and community work

Government
Hospital opens -
nursing work
transferred from
Adelaide House.



1932-1935

Sr. L Kelsall
Sr. I. Forsyth
Sr. H. M. Williams

1935-1936

Sr. L. Best
Sr. M. Leitch
Miss M. Best

1936-1938

Sr. D. J. McCrum
Sr. W. A. Jones

1938-1939

Sr. A. Inglis
Sr. E. Gibson
Sr. A. Jaffer

HOSTEL FOR 1939 -



Alice Springs, 1st December 1942. The commanding officer of 109 Australian General Hospital, Colonel H. H. Jamieson, dictates a letter to his secretary, Miss M. E. Hannon of the Voluntary Aid Detachment.

Photo courtesy of the Australian War Memorial

Amidst WWII Adelaide House was requisitioned to provide living quarters for army nurses.

Before the building was taken over, Rev. Kingsley Partridge, packed up the linen/blankets and sent them to Oodnadatta hospital where they were needed.

A.I.M. work temporarily suspended and Adelaide House used to accommodate Army Nurses

1942

1945

1939

DEC 1940

Sr. Inglis
1st Matron of Hostel



Convalescent and Rest Home
for Bush Mothers and families



Sr. Hatfield 1945-1949
and again 1954-1960

NURSING
STAFF

1939-1942

Sr. A. Inglis
(Welfare Officer)

1945-1949

Sr. M. Hatfield
Sr. M. A. Gordon
Sr. P. F. Becher

1949-1952

Sr. F. J. Holmes
Deaconess J. Houliston
Sr. D. N. Croft
Sr. N. M. Reeve

1952-1954

Miss G. Bramley
Mrs J. Flynn
Sr. M. McKay

INLAND MOTHERS

– 1961

“The doors were opened on Tuesday, 19th February, two Sisters admitted mothers with one child each, and two children, both very young, whose mother had gone into hospital the previous night. This, Sister says, shows how necessary the Home is. Owing to the non-arrival of equipment, there were only three pillows available, practically no crockery, and few cooking utensils, but everyone was prepared to make the best of things.”

The Frontier News April 1946

Adelaide House reopens as a convalescent home for the women of the inland.

19 FEB 1946

Tea in the garden



Sr. Hatfield “Hattie” reports, “The majority of children have been cared for during their mother’s stay in hospital. We also have a creche during Sunday Morning Service.”

A.I.M. Frontier News Sept 1959



1954-1959

Sr. M. Hatfield
Miss I. Acland
Sr. A. H. Gibson

1959-1960

Sr. A. Todd
Miss G. Cockrill

1960-1961

Sr. E. M. King
Miss M. Walton
Mrs A. J. Price
Miss M. Wood

A PLACE FOR PEOPLE



The work of the Hostel for Inland Mothers concluded in 1961. The house was then used variously as the residence for the ministers of the John Flynn Memorial Church, for Sunday School and as a meeting place for Alice Springs Senior Citizens.

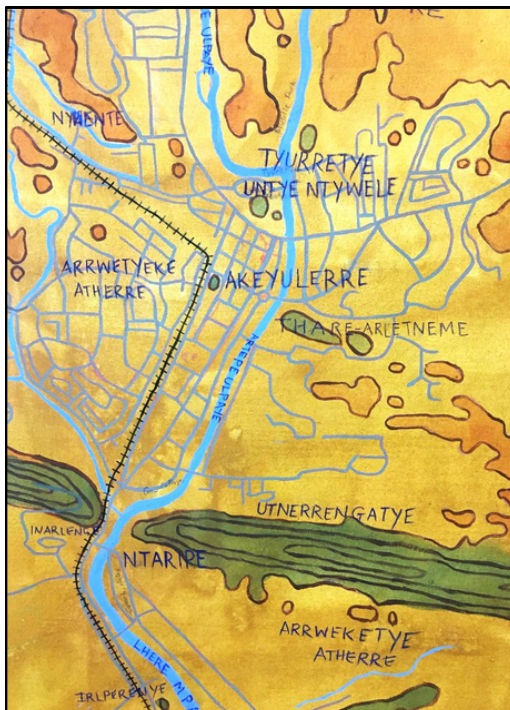


In 1980, Adelaide House was declared as a Museum and was restored to its original condition. It is listed on the Register of the National Estate.

1961

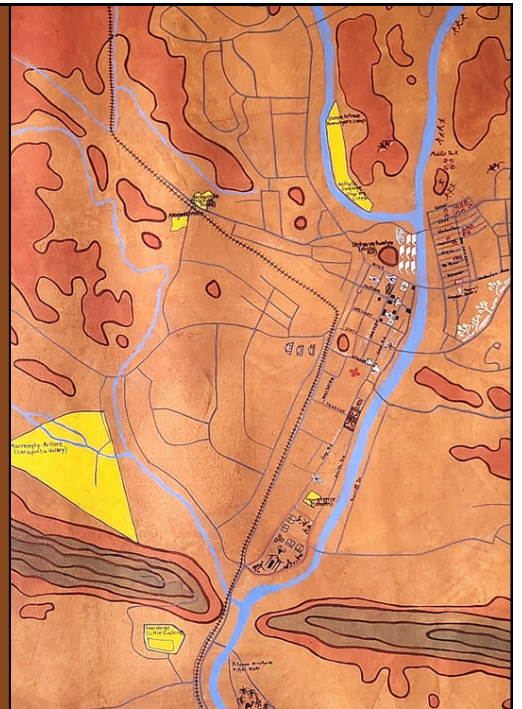
1980

1985



Now in 2026, the precinct continues to exhibit the living history of life in Central Australia - always a place for people.

And Adelaide House is now proud to celebrate the connections between the church and the Arrernte people, traditional owners of the land on which Adelaide House and the John Flynn Memorial Church stand.



The Mapping Project consists of two large maps, one which names the ranges, hills, river systems and more, with Arrernte names ascended from the earth given through Altyerre (the Creation).

The second map zooms in on the town of Mparntwe/Alice Springs. It depicts the places that have been significant to Arrernte people. Some of these places are no longer there, so the map reflects on both the past and the present.

FROM A.I.M. TO FRONTIER SERVICES



Rev. John Flynn founded the Australian Inland Mission in 1912, with a vision to bring practical care and spiritual support to people living in the vast, isolated heart of Australia. His motto-"a mantle of safety over the inland".

The AIM established nursing hostels, bush hospitals and patrol padres to serve people hundreds of miles from the nearest towns – lifelines for medical care, companionship and community connection.

In 1977 the new name of Frontier Services reflected the Uniting Church's continuing commitment to serve those living in the most remote parts of Australia. The work of Frontier Services Bush Chaplains embodies the spirit of care, compassion, and resilience that defines life in the bush. They continue to provide that 'mantle of safety' that reaches even the most isolated corners of Australia



Current Central Australian Bush Chaplains. Frontier Services, sharing ministry with the Northern Regional Council of UAICC, Pilgrim Presbytery of Northern Australia, the Northern Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia and UAICC South Australia.



Pastor Julia
Lennon,
based in
Oodnadatta



Pastor Jill
Doolan
Finke Remote
Area Ministry



Pastor
Benjamin
Quilliam
Centralian
Remote Area
Ministry



Pastor Darrien
(Yanima)
Bryant
APY Lands
(Kalka and
Wingellina



Rev. Nigel
Hawken
Tennant Barkly
Remote Area
Ministry

ADELAIDE HOUSE CONTINUES AS A CENTRAL PART OF ALICE SPRINGS HISTORY



ADELAIDE HOUSE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY:

- ~ Alice Springs Town Council
- ~ John Flynn Memorial Church congregation
- ~ Volunteers and Supporters of Adelaide House
- ~ Rotary Club Alice Springs
- ~ Frontier Services
- ~ Uniting Church in Australia, National Assembly
- ~ Uniting Church in Australia, Northern Synod
- ~ Pilgrim Presbytery of Northern Australia

Text and images from various sources including:
Flynn's Mantle of Safety: The Story of Adelaide House by Graeme Bucknall 1982;
Rev John Lamont; National Library of Australia; UCA Assembly Archives;
The Australian War Memorial