

McBride Maternity Hospital

1914 – 1975

Other Names:

- McBride's Maternity Hospital
- McBride Lying in Home

Details

The McBride Maternity Hospital was opened by the Salvation Army in Medindie in 1914. It took over the work of the Adelaide Maternity Home and provided accommodation and maternity services for single mothers and their babies, as well as public maternity patients. Many babies were adopted out from the hospital. In 1974 McBride Maternity Hospital ceased to operate exclusively as a maternity hospital and in 1975 was renamed McBride Hospital.

The McBride Maternity Hospital was opened by the Salvation Army on 28 January 1914 in Briar Avenue in the suburb of Medindie. The centre took over the work of the city based Adelaide Maternity Home. It was named for Mr RJ McBride, a prosperous grazier with property at Koorunga, near Burra. He had contributed £3000 to assist in the purchase of the two-storey mansion known as The Briars. The size of the premises allowed the Salvation Army not only to provide accommodation and care for single mothers and their babies, but also to offer a private maternity hospital service to the general public. This additional service helped to raise well-needed funds allowing the Army to continue its care of the needy. The hospital was also recognised as a training centre for obstetric nursing. In 1919 the birth of quadruplets made the news and donations were collected through The Register newspaper for the three surviving babies.

Unmarried mothers who gave birth at McBride were expected to remain there for three months. During this time they received general antenatal and postnatal care as well as assistance in learning to care for their babies. It was an unwritten policy of the hospital that no woman was discharged from care until a home or 'situation' had been arranged for her and/or her baby. Many babies were adopted from McBride and shortly after the passing of a new Adoption Act in 1967, the hospital was registered as an official adoption agency. The Matron acted as the adoption officer.

With beds for fifty patients the hospital was often filled to capacity. However, by the 1970s alternative care was available for single pregnant women and demand decreased. In 1974 the hospital adapted to this new situation by also providing care for patients convalescing from surgery or major illness.

This new aspect of the institution's work became more and more important and, as the hospital was no longer exclusively a maternity hospital, in 1975 McBride Maternity Hospital changed its name to McBride Hospital.

McBride Maternity Hospital was mentioned in the *Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices* Report (2012) as an institution that was involved in forced adoption.

Gallery



McBride Hospital, Medindie

Description: The library description states: Opening of McBride Maternity Hospital, formerly "The Briars", home of George C. Hawker, view taken in January, 1914.

More info

Chronology

- Adelaide Maternity Home (1893 - 1914)
 - **McBride Maternity Hospital (1914 – 1975)**
 - McBride Hospital (1975 - 1986)

Related Entries

Run by

- [The Salvation Army, Australian Territory \(1880 - 1921\)](#)
- [The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory \(1921 - 2018\)](#)

Related Events

- [Inquiry into Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices, Commonwealth of Australia \(2011 - 2012\)](#)

McBride Maternity Hospital was mentioned in the *Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices* Report (2012) as an institution that was involved in forced adoption.

Related Legislation

- [Adoption of Children Act 1966-1967, South Australia \(1967 - 1989\)](#)

Related Concepts

- [Stolen Generations](#)

Resources

- Senate Community Affairs References Committee, [Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices](#), 29 February 2012
- Steer, Hedley, *Social Salvation, Early development of the Social Wing of The Salvation Army*, 1996
- Kirkham, John C, *Southern Soup-Soap-Salvation, a compendium of Salvation Army Social Services in the Australian Southern Territory*, 2003
- The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territorial Headquarters (Vic), [Submission No. 46 to the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care: Appendix A: Children's Homes - A list of openings, closings and function](#), July 2003

Records

For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

Records

- [Historical records and memorabilia of Salvation Army institutions, Southern Territory](#)
 - [Salvation Army Australia, Records of Homes in the former Southern Territory \(c. 1889 - c. 1988\)](#)
 - [Records of McBride Maternity Hospital, formerly Adelaide Maternity Home \(1893 - 1982\)](#)
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