



Devoted to care: our nurses in World War One

Sept - Nov 2018

An exhibition curated by Emma Taylor
(WCHN History and Heritage Collection Volunteer)



Women's &
Children's Hospital
Foundation

It is not often that the stories of women serving in war time are featured at the forefront of documented history, but their experiences were as significant as those of the men.

To mark the 100th anniversary of the final year of World War One (1914–1918), this exhibition commemorates the contributions of nurses who trained and worked at the former Adelaide Children's Hospital and Queen's Home and went on to provide important medical assistance in the military hospitals abroad.

There was an initial reluctance to sign up our nurses. Experienced in working with children or birthing women, it was felt that they might not be able to cope with the work and stresses of war-time medical service, nor be sufficiently trained to deal with a patient population of adult men.

These misconceptions would not last. Their prior training at our hospitals set these nurses up to make outstanding contributions in key locations such as the Australian General Hospitals of Greece, Egypt and France.

In the context of incredibly difficult conditions, their dedication saved the lives of countless Australian wounded.

This exhibition highlights some nurses about whom we know a little more of their stories, or who made significant advancements in the treatment of infectious diseases.

It also acknowledges the sacrifices of not only those who left on ships to actively serve in the Great War, but the nurses who stayed behind to keep the Adelaide Children's Hospital 'ship' afloat in the face of a scarcity of supplies and trained staff.

These were nurses devoted to care.
Lest we forget.

Visit the exhibition in the:

Yellow Heart Gallery

Level 1 Zone F

past the Queen Victoria

Lecture Theatre towards

Women's Outpatients





This exhibition was planned and exhibited on the lands of the Kurna People, we pay our respects to the Kurna Elders past and present and to the Elders of the lands this brochure reaches.

The Curator wishes to thank: the WCHN History and Heritage Group; Jill Newman and Saskia Scott from the WCH Foundation; the WCH Foundation Gallery Management Committee members: Alison Russell, Lis Brittan and Jackie Barreau. A special thank you to Emily Collins, who guided this exhibition into existence.

History and Heritage Collection

The Women's and Children's Health Network has a collection of historical artefacts which is managed by the WCHN History and Heritage Group. This was originally formed as the ICONS Group in 1995 by retired Adelaide Children's Hospital Staff.

The WCHN History and Heritage Group aims to preserve, collect, collate, catalogue, store, display and interpret items of historical significance to the Women's and Children's Hospital and its predecessors the Adelaide Children's Hospital, the Queen Victoria Hospital and associated institutions.

Women's & Children's Hospital Foundation Arts in Health program

The WCH Foundation Arts in Health program coordinates five galleries in the Hospital, providing a space away from the stresses of treatment to distract, entertain and inspire, improving the visual environment.

The Arts in Health programs integrate art into the life of the Hospital to improve people's health and wellbeing. We try to make the environment more 'child-friendly', making it look better and helping to make the time spent in hospital 'feel better'. The Yellow Heart Gallery provides a platform to share the WCHN History and Heritage Collection with the Hospital community and explore the significant people and events that shaped the Hospital today.



For more information contact:

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