Opened by
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE PHILIP,

on the

THE COVER depicts the cluster of concrete 'trees' designed to mark the entrance to the centre. Symbolising aspiration and growth the 'trees' design has been adopted as the Strathmont emblem and appears on stationery, plates, etc.

South Australian Government Project.

Designed by the Public Buildings Department for the Intellectually Retarded Services Division of the S.A. Mental Health Services.
Strathmont Centre has been built to provide accommodation for Intellectually Retarded people to live and develop as members of a normal family size group with all the elements necessary for the enjoyment of community living.

Designed as a village, with the Administration complex at its heart, a new standard has been established in the unique architectural features making this Centre one of the most modern and outstanding in the world.

Our thanks are due in particular to those who conceived the idea initially, to those who have continued with the designing and equipping and to those dedicated people who will endeavour to produce results through their time and untiring efforts.

A.J. Shand

Chief Secretary, Minister of Health, Honourable A.J. Shand, M.L.C.
The Aims of the Centre

The concept of Strathmont Centre is an exciting prospect. The architecture and design of the facilities provided will give tremendous scope to the imagination and initiative of all who work there and will equal the creative thought and effort that has gone into the buildings and facilities.

The aim of the Centre is to give each retarded trainee as happy and normal a home life as possible and also to help him develop to his full potential.

To achieve this, the kinds of staff employed are as essential as the bricks and mortar. In effect, the staff of Strathmont falls into three main groups: the Medical and Para-medical section, the nursing section and the Lay Administration. The first group is directly responsible to the Medical Superintendent, Dr. Norma Kent, the nursing group is responsible to the Superintendent of Nursing, Mr. P. McElwaine and the Lay Administration is responsible to the Lay Superintendent, Mr. J. Barnett. The responsibility for the Centre as a whole is under the Medical Superintendent.

The Medical section will initially have five doctors, with a total establishment of seven. Many of the retarded have a wide variety of associated physical handicaps which need investigation and treatment if the retarded is not to be even further handicapped. They need to consult with nearly every kind of medical and surgical specialist. Many of these specialists will regularly visit Strathmont on a consultant basis. The Physiotherapists are a major part of the para-medical team. Together with them will be psychologists, social workers, art therapists, dentists, a chiropodist, a speech therapist and an occupational therapist. The latter will also be responsible for the supervision of the handicraft instructors and instructesses as well as the industrial training workshop. There are several useful and interesting contracts which will be continued at Strathmont as soon as the trainees are transferred.

The nursing administration is responsible for the nurses and the home assistants. The activity supervisors who are responsible to a Supervisor of Activities, also work closely with the nursing section. The work of the latter extends beyond the Centre to the Pre-school centres and to home visits of parents who need advice on training of their children at home. Nearly eighty nurses who already have their certificates of Mental Deficiency Nursing applied to come to Strathmont from Hillcrest and Glenside which was a most gratifying response. Future trainee nurses will begin to get the benefit of improvements steadily being made in the course so that they will finally become highly qualified people with a wide general knowledge of Mental deficiency plus a variety of specialised skills. The nurses will go with their own group of trainees to whatever area of training is on their timetable throughout the day.

The Home assistants are a new category in the Mental Health Services who will work only at Strathmont Centre. It is intended that they remain in the villas to provide the home atmosphere which is so essential in a large institution. They will do the domestic work and assist the trainees in learning various self-help skills such as dressing and feeding. They will assist the nurses when required to do so. It is hoped to attract mature women to these positions, who have perhaps already raised families of their own. A course will be arranged for them, but no examinations are planned at this stage.

All the people concerned in training will have regular meetings of various kinds and suggestions from everyone will be most welcome.

The school is a vital adjunct to the other training facilities provided. It will be staffed and supervised by the Education Department, but through meetings with medical officers, remains in close touch with the home background of the villas.

The office of the Lay Superintendent is responsible for a wide range of activities and staff. Those concerned comprise a comprehensive array of employees who will play a very important role in the efficient and successful function of the services at the Centre and consist of the catering services, gardening, workshop, transport and delivery, stores, canteen, hairdressing, housekeeping, industrial therapy and occupational services.

It is intended that the trainees will be integrated into these services where possible on a similar basis as other areas where they may be skillfully employed.
1. The provision of treatment on an individual basis whereby the retarded child or adult receives, according to his/her particular needs and condition, such medical care, education, training, habilitation and guidance as required to develop the individual to his full potential and ability as a member of the community.

2. To create an environment within the centre, where the retarded person, no matter how severe his limitations, can live a happy, contented and useful life and where his right to human dignity is respected.

3. To endeavour by a consistent and active public relations policy to encourage and educate the community towards acceptance of the intellectually retarded as people who, though in need of extra support and guidance, are still entitled to participate in all aspects of community life according to ability and who are entitled to the respect of their fellow men.

4. To serve as a centre of education and training for nursing, teaching, medical and paramedical personnel.

5. To assist and encourage research into all aspects of retardation, including aetiology, training methods, nursing care and associated problems.
Design
The Site

The 115 acre site is six miles from the centre of Adelaide lying in the north-eastern suburbs.
Site Plan

Scale 1 in. represents 200 ft.
Development of The Centre

The design philosophy and form of the Strathmont Centre was conceived in 1962 by Professor W. A. Cramond, then Director of Mental Health Services. Development of the project continued with very close liaison between Professor Cramond and the succeeding Director, Dr. B. J. Shea, now Director General of Medical Services and Mr. J. A. L. Craig, Supervising Architect, Public Buildings Department.

Conceived as a village, the Centre has been planned with all the elements necessary for the enjoyment of normal community life. Adults live in villas surrounding the sports oval to the west of the central complex of buildings, and youngsters occupy the villas to the east, set around their own recreational area. The village centre comprises the 2-storeyed administration building, a multi-purpose hall, swimming pool, gymnasium, changing rooms, chapel, library, cafeteria and shops. An early decision placed the administration in this central position to bring all visitors right into the hub of the village and to avoid the undesirable consequences which can result from having ‘front’ and ‘back’ sections.

School and occupational therapy buildings are centrally located and convenient to the adolescents’ and children’s villas. Treatment and physiotherapy buildings are sited near to and linked by covered ways with the totally dependant’s villas. The industrial therapy workshop is sited in the adults’ area in a position where the inconvenience of delivery trucks is minimised.

Vehicular traffic routes have been planned for the maximum safety of pedestrian and only service vehicles enter the area within the perimeter road which encompasses the villas.

Service buildings are grouped outside and to the north of the perimeter road and include the main store/staff dining building, the sanitation centre/garage and linen handling/clothing store building. Also north of the perimeter road and to the east of the service buildings are the nurses’ training centre, the nurses’ home and the senior staff flats.

It is hoped that the multi-purpose hall and possibly other facilities can be made available to outside organisations thus promoting desirable contact between trainees and members of the general public.

Training programmes are designed for all age groups but emphasis will be placed on the training of children. The Centre is not intended as a long term residence except for those who are totally dependent.

The normal progression of a trainee is through pre-school kindergarten, special school, occupational therapy centre, sheltered workshop, to work in the outside community.
Administration Building

This has been designed as the 'heart' of the village and the inner brick paved courtyard with its central rock fountain is a pleasant meeting place for the residents and friends. The dispensary and hairdressing salon have full height windows to display goods and add interest. The large entrance foyer is used to exhibit the work of trainees. Full hairdressing facilities are available to male and female trainees.

Light meals, snacks, hot and cold drinks are available to residents and visitors at the cafeteria which also provides a banking service for trainees.

Wheel chair toilets are provided for both sexes in addition to the normal facilities.

Planning of this building allows each office to receive maximum natural light and occupants to enjoy the stimulating views across the Centre and surrounding country.

Conditioned air is supplied to the dispensary, hairdressing salon and cafeteria service area. All other work areas are mechanically ventilated. All offices, corridors, the cafeteria, reception and the display area are carpeted.
On the northern side of the courtyard is the multi-purpose hall named after Dr. J. S. Coverton, which caters for stage shows and films for the trainees and nursing staff.

The auditorium floor is part ramped. The flat area has a hardwood parquetry finish and seating is removable for dancing, parties, conference arrangements, etc. The ramped area is finished with sheet linoleum and has fixed seating.

Raised walkways with protective handrails on two sides provide for those in wheelchairs to attend stage or film shows. The walkways also serve as hot air heating ducts with continuous registers discharging warm air into the auditorium. A raked gallery with fixed seating is approached from an external staircase and balcony. The gallery has seating for 72 and the auditorium seats 291. Stage lighting and equipment will be suitable for a wide variety of productions and the projection room is equipped for showing 16 mm films.

Wheel chair toilets and a first aid room are among the amenities provided. A servery will cater for light refreshments to suit the occasion.
Adjacent to the Administration building and closing the west side of the main garden court is the indoor swimming pool. Provided for therapeutic and recreational use the heated pool varies in depth from 2'9" to 5'6". In summer month large sections of the glazed eastern wall can be opened up on to the court.

Pool water passes through pressure sand filters and chemical dosing is automatically controlled. For therapeutic treatment the pool can be heated to a temperature of 90 deg.

A terylene handrope is fixed around the pool, instead of the usual rigid grab rail to avoid arm or leg injuries.

Changing and shower rooms link the swimming pool with a large gymnasium which is completely equipped for gymnastic and activity therapy.
Chapel and Library

To the east of the garden court is sited the chapel, bell tower and library. The interior of the chapel has been designed with special thought to trainees. A quiet, pleasing atmosphere has been created with the use of bright red carpet, white walls, amber glass and natural timber finishes. The altar is off-form finished concrete. This and the Sanctuary cross are highlighted by the introduction of natural light overhead.

The chapel has been designed for inter-denominational use and regular services will be held for trainees and staff.

The library provides reading facilities for trainees and is also programmed for various purposes including quiet games, record sessions, etc. Three rooms entered from the main library provide offices for auxiliary organisations.

Chapel Sanctuary.
Library (left), Bell Tower and Chapel seen from the central garden court.
Villas
A standard plan form was developed for the villas designed to accommodate up to 32 trainees in four 8-person home units and this standard is modified to suit the special needs of particular groups. Adolescents and adults are accommodated in villas which have four single and two double bedrooms in each of the four home units. The total bed capacity for trainees at the Centre is 564, which includes 20 infirmary beds.

Every opportunity was taken to avoid the 'institutional' character. The aim has been to create a normal, comfortable domestic setting and although toilets are provided in excess of normal family requirements, these are planned in three separate areas to retain a domestic 'scale'. Each group of eight eat, sleep and enjoy leisure activities in their own home unit. When they call at other units in the same villa it will be as visitors. Bedrooms are carpeted and the dining and living areas are finished with a flexible sheet floor covering.

The four home units are joined by two 'common service' wings which include servery, clean and soiled linen rooms, launderette and stores on the one side and doctor/nurses staff rooms and engineering plant on the other.

For the children and toddlers the standard design is modified to allow for 2-bed and 3-bed room arrangements, considered to be more desirable for this age group. Other modifications include the provision of appropriate furniture, joinery fittings and toilet facilities.

In the nursery villa the home units are varied from standard to provide three 4-cot rooms in each. Other non-standard features include air conditioning, a nurses' station within each home unit and special toilet training facilities.

Two villas are designed for totally dependent persons, one of four 8-person units and the other of two 8-person units combined with two 10-person infirmary units. Although the totally dependent person requires the continuous attention of nursing staff the temptation to design primarily for staff convenience has been avoided. The bedroom arrangement is similar to that of a children's villa and all room finishes are standard. Only modifications considered essential for this physically handicapped group have been introduced. Bathrooms and toilets are specially designed and four of the six 'dependants' bathrooms include 'Thune Maskiner' hydraulic bath lifts. A nurses' station is included within each of the eight units in these two villas. Both villas are air conditioned.

An exciting use of colour throughout the project resulted from the inclusion of the interior designer as an important member of the design team.

Following the decision to take advantage of economies offered by standard planning, construction and detailing, the problem of ready identification by trainees was given close attention and the following methods adopted: distinctly different colour schemes for each of the four units in one villa with a solid identifying colour on the wall opposite the glazed entrance door of each unit; colour of the timber stain used externally on windows and doors is varied from villa to villa; external identification panels, one visible from the perimeter road, the other from the interior of the site. Designed and executed by the architectural staff, the sculptured panels are a combination of a visual symbol and aboriginal name, executed in fire-glazed clay brick and built into the wall. Television is provided in each home unit and it is hoped to utilise this service for training purposes.

Villa central court. (Photo page 17.)
Above is the architect’s drawn southern elevation of a villa and below is a photograph of the completed building.
For convenience of presentation this page shows three villa types and does not portray an actual arrangement of buildings on the site.
LEFT: Handwashing in the mud room.

TOP RIGHT: Typical day area in a villa home unit.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Villa single bedroom.
School Buildings

With a designed capacity for 160 pupils the school is fully equipped for the education of intellectually retarded children and includes a kindergarten section for pre-school training primarily devoted to toilet training. The school is staffed by Education Department teachers specially trained and experienced in this particular field of work. If places are available, non-resident children may attend as day students.

Classrooms are clustered around a central court to create a strong sense of ‘place’ and to reduce walking distances. The scale of all buildings in this group and their relationship to one another have been carefully designed to satisfy the children using the complex. There is a clear definition of different building functions, i.e. staff building, hall, kindergarten, craft and study classrooms. Classroom buildings are designed for even natural daylight level across the width of the rooms.

That the classroom cluster planning form adopted lends itself to expansion has already been demonstrated by the addition of the southernmost 4-classroom unit which was not originally included.
Covered way connecting the Treatment (left) and Physiotherapy buildings.
Physiotherapy and Treatment

Both buildings are situated to the south-east of the administrative complex.

The Physiotherapy unit is designed for both children and adults in one gymnasium space, which can be subdivided with a folding partition and is equipped for remedial exercises.

This air-conditioned building is sited in close proximity to the totally dependants' villas for the convenience of those who must travel by wheelchair or barouche. A hydraulic bath lift is installed with the hydrotherapy bath.

The Treatment building is planned around a paved garden court for the greater interest of trainees during waiting periods. The building is air-conditioned and fully equipped for the services provided by resident and visiting specialists, including those of dentistry, physiotherapy, speechtherapy and chiropody.

Diagnostic services are provided at the Adelaide Children's Hospital, but parent counselling and trainee reassessment is a function of the Treatment building.
Occupational Therapy

This building is sited south-east of the administrative complex and north of the School.

Four classrooms in this building are designed for a uniform distribution of natural light and equipped for various crafts. This being the next training stage up from school work, the supervision arrangements are designed to approximate the workshop situation.

*Occupational Therapy building—east entrance.*
Nurses Training Centre.

North of the Administrative complex is the Nurses' Training Centre, which is planned around a central courtyard to reduce walking distances, unify the school and to create an atmosphere conducive to study. On the southern side of the court are three classrooms which can be opened up to form one large room for the purposes of assemblies, lectures and films. The north wing consists of a library, demonstration ward and tutors' rooms, while the west contains the staff room and offices for the senior tutor and secretary.

This school provides staff training facilities for Strathmont and the nearby Hillcrest Psychiatric Hospital and is fully equipped for the teaching of the skills required in these two special fields of nursing.

The demonstration ward will enable the nurses to obtain practical experience in support of theory presented in the classroom. The room is designed and equipped to cater for the full range of procedures encountered in the real life situation.

Nurses Home.

To the north of the Nurses' Training Centre is sited the three storeyed Nurses' Home designed to accommodate twenty female nurses. Ten study-bedrooms, a laundrette and 'snacks' kitchen are provided on each of the two upper floors. Bedrooms are fully furnished and equipped with a handbasin. Located at ground level is the common room, quiet room, T.V. room, visitors' lounge, non-resident staff change room and another small kitchen. A goods hoist caters for the vertical movement of linen and other supplies.

Constructed of load-bearing brickwork, the building has an off-form concrete fire escape at the eastern end.

Staff Flats

North of the Nurses Training Centre and east of the Nurses Home are five flats designed for senior staff and visiting V.I.P.s. All flats are identical with a bedroom, living room with meals bar, alcove kitchen, bathroom and store. Clerestory windows in the living room and a view to the north through full length windows provide a feeling of spaciousness, although these single person flats are only 620 square feet in area.

Each flat is set back from its neighbour following the contour of the site and by so doing a complete sense of privacy is achieved.

Nurses' Home lounge.
The plan form of this building is dictated by its functions. Physical separation of the two workshops is designed to permit the concentration of noisy work in one area. Each workshop can be subdivided into three smaller areas by use of movable screens as an aid to concentration or to separate operations when desirable.

Contract work will be carried out in these workshops and power is available from overhead at any point in the room allowing for complete flexibility in setting up production lines.
Full laundry services are provided to this linen store by the South Australian Government Group Laundry and the Linen Store in turn provides the service to all the Centre buildings. Clothing facilities for residents are incorporated in this building and include the sewing room and tailors' shop. A display area with service counters and fitting rooms is designed to accustom trainees to the normal experience of shopping in a departmental store.

The Linen Store is sited in juxtaposition with the Central Servery and Bulk Store to restrict the movement of heavy vehicles within the site.

LEFT: Linen delivery bay at western end of Linen and Clothing store. Staff Dining Room in background.
Strathmont is the first large residential centre in Australia to introduce a full scale frozen food catering service. This results from investigations and studies carried out over several years by Architects and Engineers of the Department and Catering Officers of the Mental Health Services. Among the advantages of the frozen food service in this particular application are the following: the increasing problem of finding suitably qualified staff to operate a large conventional kitchen is avoided; accurate portion control can be achieved and wastage greatly reduced over conventional methods: the frozen food service is ideally suited to serve the large number of widely dispersed small dining rooms—re-heating is carried out at each villa servery and the residents of each home unit can therefore arrange meal times to suit themselves—a complete reversal of the traditional food service situation: a complete choice of menu can be available at all times of day and night, if desired; nutritional values and hygienic standards can be controlled at higher levels than possible with conventional container transported meal services.

All cooked meals will be prepared, preplated, snap frozen and held in deep freeze storage pending delivery to Strathmont, and these operations will be carried out at the existing kitchen of a large psychiatric hospital in the City. Comparatively minor additions were required to render the kitchen capable of producing the additional 2,000 frozen meals per day.

Storage capacity for a two weeks supply of frozen meals is provided at Strathmont.

From these stores (at -10 deg F.) meals are delivered daily direct to each villa or to the staff dining room servery where frozen meals are thawed out in
refrigerators to a temperature of 38 deg. F. The meals are then reheated to serving temperature in microwave ovens within minutes.

About 25% of all meals, or components, are non-frozen and the staff servery design caters for the storage, preparation and serving of these items. A close study of the sequence of operations involved in the handling of frozen and non-frozen items has resulted in a servery layout which enables time and motion factors to be reduced to minimum.

The staff dining room seats 132 diners per sitting and the internal sculpture court provides a pleasant focal point to the room.

This building has a ducted warm air system which has been designed for easy conversion to air conditioning if the need be proved.

The bulk store for the more items for the convenience of transfer of certain items to the servery and to concentrate the movement of delivery vehicles within the site.
Site Features and Landscaping

With the low rainfall in South Australia conservation of water is very important. The project includes the construction of a reservoir into which all stormwater is drained from the site and adjacent areas. This water is subsequently pumped back to the site for irrigation of all grassed and planted areas. The total annual requirement for irrigation is calculated at 4.58 million gallons and the capacity of the reservoir is 8 million gallons.

An automatically controlled lawn watering service is installed which can deliver water at predetermined rates and to a pre-set programme of up to 14 days’ duration. Areas served by this system include the oval, the children’s play area and the 60 ft. diameter circular lawns—one per home unit.

The central part of the site has been densely planted with trees and a large paved area for wet weather recreation is located in this region. A children’s playground constructed mainly of standard concrete products is designed to stimulate imaginative activity. Non-grassed areas within the perimeter road are treated with rolled quarry rubble, gravel or mulch and have been planted with hardy trees, shrubs and ground cover plants. Facilities for barbecue picnics are provided in a clearing adjacent to the oval.

Two fountains of simple design are included in the project, one in the Administration building courtyard, the other in the larger court and these will make a significant contribution to the designed environment.

Each villa has a central court with gravelled areas, paving slabs, groups of boulders, small planted areas, trees and a trellis for grape vines and two outer courts which are paved around brick planting boxes and seats. Sand pits are included in the outer courts of the children’s villas. A 35 foot diameter concrete paved area with a central seat and tree is also provided for each home unit.

Areas outside the ring road have been left in the natural state although some sections are densely planted with trees and shrubs to enhance the landscape.
ENGINEERING SERVICES

An underground reticulated high temperature hot water system is designed to cater for the requirements of space heating and ablutions. Steam generated at the nearby Hillcrest Hospital boilerhouse provides the power source for this service.

Automatic fire sprinkler systems are incorporated in the nursery and dependents' villas. Each system is equipped with an 'Audio' alarm and a direct alarm to the S.A. Fire Brigade.

Intercommunication throughout the Centre is based on a voice switched loud speaker system, incorporating a separate station to receive fire calls from any other station. Provision is made for group paging, public address, time signal transmission for meal times, training sessions, etc., if required. Each villa has its own intercommunication system serving its four home units and nurses station.

A radio paging service for up to fifty channels is installed.
To the north of the Administrative complex and west of the Central Serv-ery and Dining Room is sited the Sanitation Centre and Garage. The Sanitation Centre is a new concept in that it provides a well equipped centre of operations at/or from which all sanitary procedures can be controlled by a suitably qualified Supervisor. Such operations include the collection of 'garbage' containing food and other wastes from throughout the Centre for disposal by incineration or mechanical destructor; the steam cleaning of all vehicles or other equipment used to transport foodstuffs.

Garaging and minor maintenance facilities for all Centre transports, tractors etc., are incorporated in this unit.

The maintenance of the entire Centre is the responsibility of the Public Buildings Department. The main workshops are located at Hillcrest Hospital with a small workshop in operation at Strathmont.

The Garage showing the Centre’s 41-seater bus.
Costs
The estimated final cost of the Strathmont project is $6.5 million which includes for all buildings, furniture, equipment, engineering services and siteworks. The cost per bed based on total project cost is $11,000 and, based on the cost of villas only, is $4,500.

Construction Time
Construction work commenced in March 1968 and a programme of occupation commenced in February 1971.
1 Foyer
2 Display
3 Reception
4 Corridor
5 Garden Court
6 Inner Court
7 Covered Way
8 Waiting
9 Balcony
10 Wheelchair Bay
11 Pram Bay
12 Barouche Bay
13 Ward Office
14 Nurses Station
15 Toilets
16 Toilet Training
17 One bed room
18 Two bed room
19 Three bed room
20 Four cot nursery
21 Bath room
22 Change room
23 Day area
24 Dining area
25 Mud room
26 Utility
27 Villa-sub-store
28 Store
29 Staff room
30 Training Officers
31 Classroom
32 Tea room
33 Training flat
34 Office
35 General office
36 Library
37 Projection room
38 Psychologist
39 Physiotherapist
40 Speechtherapist
41 Chiropodist
42 Consultants
43 Surgery (Dental)
44 Recovery
45 X-ray development
46 Adults' Gymnasium
47 Children's Gymnasium
48 Hydrotherapy bath
49 Treatment cubicle
50 Plaster room
51 First-Aid room
52 Dispensary
53 Hair Salon
54 Record storage
55 Rest room
56 Gymnasium
57 Demonstration ward
58 Lecture room
59 Nave
60 Sanctuary
61 Vestry
62 Lobby
63 Tutor
64 Playground
65 Quiet room
66 Common room
67 Lounge/T.V. room
68 Laundry
69 Goods receipt
70 Storekeeper
71 Goods despatch
72 Cold Room
73 Deep Freeze (-10 deg. F.)
74 Micro-wave ovens
75 Food Preparation/Kitchen
76a Soup Preparation
76b Dish Washing
77 Sorvery
78 Pantry
79 Bulk store
80 Drink bar/Canteen
81 Soiled linen store
82 Tailors' shop
83 Clothing store
84 Clothing racks
85 Clean linen sorting
86 Sewing room
87 Clothing display
88 Sanitation unit
89 Vehicle wash
90 Oil store
91 Fuel pump
92 Garage
93 Garden equipment
94 Concourse
95 Swimming Pool
96 Stage
97 Gallery
98 Hall
99 Workshop
100 Plant room
101 Loading bay/ramp
102 Circulation apron
103 Service yard
104 Cleaner
105 Showers/washroom

→ Entrance

Printed by D.J. Woolmen, Government Printer, South Australia.