

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Organisation

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Women's Museum of Australia

(1994 -)

Born 19940101, Alice Springs Northern Territory Australia

Occupation Museum, Research Centre

Summary

Initially known as the National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame, the Women's Museum of Australia has been located on the site of the Old Alice Springs Gaol since 2007.

Details

In February 1993 a public meeting was called in Alice Springs to gauge the extent of community interest in establishing a project that commemorated the lives of the 'pioneer' women of Australia. There proved to be immense interest and a committee was formed to determine how best this aim could be achieved, and how funds might be raised in order to do so. Mrs Molly Clark, of Old Andado Station in Central Australia, contributed much of the early organisational drive as well as an important geographic focus for fundraising efforts. One of the key aims of the organising committee was to raise money to create a purpose-built museum, including an art gallery and research area in Alice Springs. 'Molly's Bash', the main annual fundraising event, was held on Mrs Clark's property from 1993.

In March 1994 the Northern Territory government, on behalf of the organisation, leased the Old Courthouse, a 1928 heritage-listed former government building located in Alice Springs' CBD. The organising committee successfully applied for funding to establish important on-line exhibitions. 'Women at the Heart', 'First in their Field' and 'Women's Work'. Since 2007, the Museum has been located on the site of the Old Alice Springs Gaol.

Although the concept was originally promoted as one that would, importantly, preserve and protect the stories of local women, the project quickly became national in scope. As the mission statement ('to educate, inspire and empower people by exploring the distinctive history and contributions of Australian women') suggests, it isn't only rural and regional women who are celebrated.

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