

Narellan House.

When Narellan House, Canberra was demolished in May 1992, the last historic link with Narellan Military Camp near Sydney was severed. Narellan House had stood since 1947 in a tranquil setting in Canberra, just across from Glebe Park near Civic Centre.

If the walls of Narellan House could have spoken, what a story they would have told, not only as a government hostel that housed forty-nine guests and a staff of eight, but as part of a vast military camp near Camden during the days of the Second World War. Narellan Military Camp was built beside State Route No.69, the Northern Road, running from Narellan, NSW, to Richmond. It was established at the turn-off to Cobbitty, although that slumbering village would have been missed in the 1940s when the sign posts were removed for security reasons. The only reminders of the camp at the site today are a few partly hidden slabs of concrete.

At the end of the war the army huts of Narellan were a blot on good dairy grazing land. At a cost of £4,203.18.6 (\$8,407.85) the Chifley Government brought the huts, asbestos and all, on five semi-trailers for storage in Canberra.

Narellan House thus became one of the Government Hostels in Canberra. At Narellan it was ladies in the north wing and gents in the south. It survived all of the other hostels, then became a residence for tertiary students before being re-developed as an apartment complex on Coranderrk Street, Reid. These apartments are now Monterey apartments.