



مستشفى الإرسالية الأمريكية American Mission Hospital

The Birthplace of Modern Healthcare in Bahrain and the Arabian Gulf

A legacy of Trusted Care | A Future of Boundless Possibilities

On 7 December 1892, Samuel Zwemer, the American missionary, stepped onto the shores of Bahrain. He rented a shop in Manama Souq and, from February 1893, started running a clinic and a bookstore.

From here, he administered medical care, sold books (both Christian and general), and had meaningful discussions with his visitors and patients.

With the intensive training in Arabic, which he had received in Beirut, Lebanon, before arriving in Bahrain, he was comfortable in conversing and engaging with the locals.

In 1895, on his visit to Baghdad, in Iraq (then called Mesopotamia) he met with an English-Australian Nurse, Amy Wilkes. Realizing she would be



Shaikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa
Hakim of Bahrain
1900

ideal for his Christian medical work, he proposed to her. After marrying her at the British consulate in Baghdad, he brought her to Bahrain.



Samuel Zwemer with his wife Amy Wilkes-Zwemer, and daughter Amy Katherina (1897).

In 1904, when Amy Katherina was seven, and her baby sister was Ruth, four, both children died due to a Cholera epidemic sweeping Bahrain, and are buried in the Manama Christian Cemetery.

The couple kept serving the people of Bahrain, from the Manama Clinic, and began requesting the 'Arabian Mission' in New York, to send well-trained professional medical doctors.

They had seen the growing need for modern medical care in Bahrain and in the surrounding regions of the Arabian Gulf, and felt that a hospital should be built.

'Arabian Mission' itself was co-founded by Samuel Zwemer with James Cantine, a few years earlier, in 1889, and these two were its first missionaries - associated with the Reformed Church in America (RCA).

Like an answer to the prayers of Zwemers, a doctor-couple Sharon Thoms and wife Marion Wells Thoms, both medical graduates from the University of Michigan, committed to join the mission.

And they too went to Beirut in Lebanon and Basra in Iraq, for training in the Arabic Language.

They then came to Bahrain and started serving here, from 1900, as Bahrain's first modern physicians.



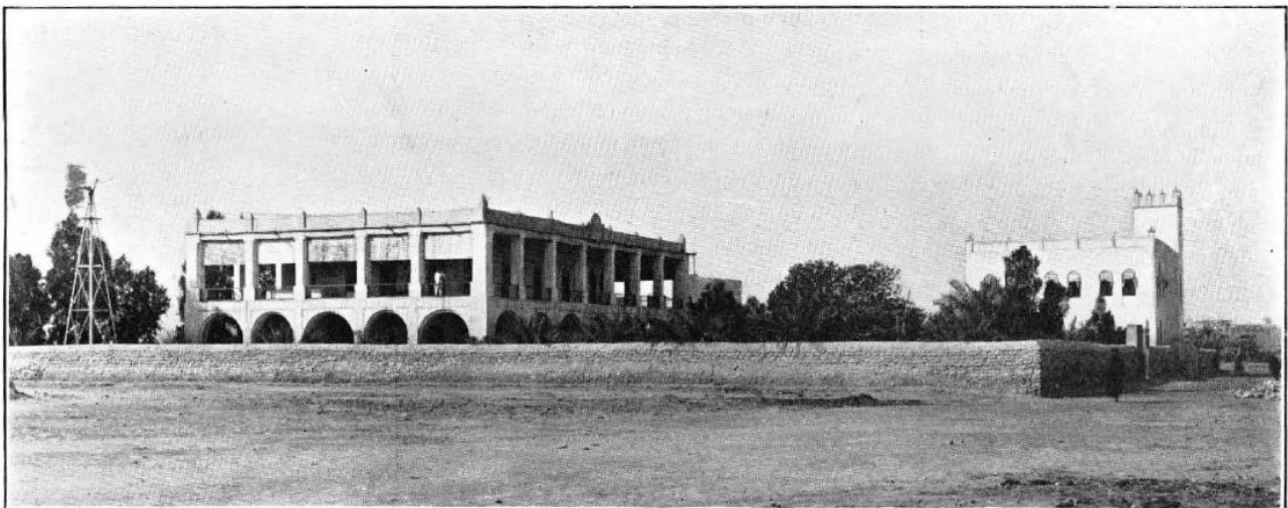
Dr. Sharon J Thoms



Dr. Marion Wells Thoms

After requesting the then ruler of Bahrain, **Shaikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa** for a place, to build a hospital, the mission received the land in Manama.

The American Mission Hospital, Manama, then called Mason Memorial Hospital, was built on that land, and opened on 26 Jan 1903. The church was constructed and opened on 6 June 1906.



MASON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AT BAHRAIN

In 1927, a Woman and Children's Hospital was built, and named Marion Wells Thoms Hospital. It was in honour of this first women physician of Bahrain who passed away due to typhoid, in Bahrain. She is buried in the Manama Cemetery.

During 1900s –1920s, American Mission Hospitals were begun in Basra, Kuwait, and Muscat too.

In 1962, with the support of **Shaikh Salman bin Hamad** and **Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa**, a new building block – current day Manama Reception - was constructed in Manama, replacing old buildings. The physicians from AMH supported the Awali hospital from its inception till the late 70's.

In 1988 due to financial pressures the hospital was threatened to close but the intervention of **Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa** led to a society being established to provide governance for the hospital. 1997, under the patronage of His Majesty King Hamad, the then Crown Prince, an AMH Annual Golf Tournament begins -- as a fundraiser to support the hospital's purchase of essential medical and surgical equipment and to expand.

In 2000 a new building was constructed and a bridge to connect the two buildings on either side of - the Isa Al Kabeer Road was built, thanks to the funds that came up through the fund raisers.

The hospital celebrated 100 years, or its centenary, on 26 January 2003.



The American Mission Hospital then saw rapid expansion after 2009. Under the leadership of the new CEO and CMO, Dr George Cheriyan, a new facility in Amwaj, a largely expanded Medical Centre in Saar, and a Medical Centre and Wellness Clinic, in Riffa, were all opened.

In 2019, a new staff accommodation for staff was built on Zubara Avenue in Manama.

The same year, in 1919, the hospital leadership met with His **Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa** who approved the building of a new hospital in A'Ali. This was built under tough circumstances of the global Covid pandemic and supply disruptions.



In 2023, along with the 120th anniversary, the hospital celebrated the opening of the large state of the art facility, the King Hamad American Mission Hospital on 26 January 2023.

HRH Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister opened the new facility, on behalf of His Majesty King Hamad.



A major two-day conference, *C3 Summit - Davos of Healthcare*, was organised in Bahrain during 21-22 April 2024, by the hospital and C3 International, New York.

Organized in collaboration with Bahrain’s Ministry of Health, EDB (Economic Development Board) and Tamkeen, this summit had had several global corporate leaders speaking in it, in person. They included the global CEO of Mayo Clinic as well as the Board Member and former CEO of Cleveland Clinic, which are rated as the world’s No. 1 and No. 2 hospitals. The Chairman of Bahrain’s Supreme Council of Health, and the Minister of Health were the chief guests.

Among the organisations whose leaders spoke at the hospital’s event were: Harvard Medical School, Mount Sinai, Mubadala Healthcare, Weill Cornell Medicine, Amana Healthcare, NBB, WHO, NHRA, Dana Faber Harvard Cancer Centre, King Hamad University Hospital, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Axumedge Global Healthcare etc.



On December 10, in 2024, the hospital became a *Mayo Clinic Care Network (MCCN)* member. This appointment, as an MCCN member, once again, became credible proof of the hospital’s world class standards in continuing its mission of providing high-quality healthcare at an

affordable cost based on the biblical principles of compassion, grace, and love and its role as a non-profit healthcare organization helping to transform the healthcare in Bahrain and beyond.

American Mission Hospital, Bahrain - History Timeline

1888 – Three students of the New Brunswick Seminary in New Jersey, USA, meet as a Bible Study group. After many meetings, they express to their teacher Lansing that they wish to go to Arabia and serve – in healthcare, education and religion.

1888 – Reformed Church in American (RCA) says it has no funds for their desire for mission work in Arabia.

1889 – ‘Arabian Mission’ is then formed as an interdenominational protestant missionary organization. Formal Articles of Association are signed and an office is established in New York. Two of the three students, James Cantine and Samuel Zwemer, are the co-founders of the organization.

1890 – James Cantine leaves the United States and goes to study Arabic at Beirut, Lebanon

1891 – Samuel Zwemer also follows him, and joins him in Beirut

1892 – Samuel Zwemer arrives in Bahrain

1893 - While Zwemer begins a clinic and bookstore in Basra, Iraq (then called Mesopotamia) James Cantine starts work in Basra, Iraq (then called Mesopotamia)

1899 – Amy Wilkes starts the Acorn School. Today, it is called the ‘Al Raja School’

1901 – With Shaikh Isa bin Ali’s approval, land is purchased in Manama, and a hospital construction is planned.

1903 - *Mason Memorial Hospital* opens on 26 January. Today, it is called the ‘*American Mission Hospital*’.

1905 – On 25 December, the church-school building’s corner stone is laid

1906 – The church-school building opens on 6 June.

1911 – A public clock – the first in Bahrain – is fixed on the church-school building, on Dec 20.

1927 – Marion Wells Thoms Hospital for Women and Children opens in a new building.

1962 – New Manama Hospital buildings are opened by Shaikh Isa bin Salman, the Amir of Bahrain

1968 - Church of Christ in Bahrain officially becomes the National Evangelical Church (NEC)

1969 - The pastors and church leaders meet the ruler of Bahrain, Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, to show him the plans and the model for the proposed new church building. The Amir asks why the clock is not in the model. He asks for a clock to be added to the church tower, as the church was always known by the clock. The church committee agrees and redesigns by putting a clock on it.

1971 – Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, Amir of Bahrain opens the new church building on 3 June

1997 – The annual AMH Annual Golf Tournament begins with the patronage of His Majesty King Hamad, the then Crown Prince.

2000- Opening of the new Building with the bridge connecting the 1960 and 2000 building.

2003 - The hospital celebrates its Centenary or the 100th Anniversary

2012 –2019 - Hospital expands with new facilities in Amwaj, Saar, and Riffa. And new Staff accommodation on Zubara Avenue in Manama.

2023 - The hospital celebrates the 120th Anniversary by opening the King Hamad American Mission Hospital in A’Ali

2024 – The hospital becomes the first hospital in Bahrain to become a Mayo Clinic Care Network member