

Pratique

Friends of Woodman Point Recreation Camp
The Isolation Hospital, 74 O'Kane Court, Coogee WA 6166
Email: friends@woodmanpointquarantinationstation.com



<http://www.woodmanpointquarantinationstation.com>



<https://www.facebook.com/friendsofwoodmanpointrc/>

AUTUMN 2025

NEW DONATION TO THE ISOLATION HOSPITAL

A recent donation has added personal details and depth to the stories already told by our guides as they conduct their highly successful tours of the Isolation Hospital.

Renowned local military historian and researcher Sandra Playle recently presented a framed tribute to Sergeant Martin O'Meara who spent time in quarantine at Woodman Point during the Spanish flu pandemic in 1918. The framed tribute includes photos of Sgt O'Meara, his medals and his headstone at Karrakatta Cemetery.

Irish-born Martin O'Meara had enlisted in the AIF in 1915 and was assigned to the 16th AIF Battalion where he served as a scout, observer and sniper in France and Belgium. At Mouquet Farm in the Somme, during four days of heavy fighting in 1916, Sgt O'Meara repeatedly went into "no man's land", bringing back wounded soldiers under intense artillery and machine gun fire. He also volunteered



and carried ammunition and bombs through heavy barrage to a portion of the trenches that were being heavily shelled. Sgt O'Meara was himself wounded three times during his service in France and Belgium.

For his heroic efforts, Sgt O'Meara was

presented the Victoria Cross on 21 July 1917.

On 6 November 1918, Sgt O'Meara was quarantined at Woodman Point Quarantine Station with suspected Spanish influenza. Sadly 14 days later, he had a complete mental breakdown, diagnosed with "delusional insanity" and transferred to the 24th Australian Auxiliary Hospital Stromness. In January 1919, he was admitted to the Claremont Mental Hospital as an insane patient and it was here and at Lemnos Hospital that he spent the remainder of his life, passing away on 20 December 1935, aged 50.

Sandra has been a great supporter of our work at Woodman Point and of all things military for many years. She has devoted more than 25 years to the meticulous research of Australian, and particularly Western Australian, military history as well as international military history pertaining to Australia's role in world conflicts.

Sandra has been a proactive voice to ensure all aspects of Australian military history are remembered and publicly acknowledged. Her work has resulted in the enhancement of national records pertaining to deceased Australian soldiers, particularly those who served in WWI, and the establishment of military databases for use by Australian citizens interested in researching their own family connections.

One of Sandra's greatest achievements has been the compilation of the WA 1st AIF Enlistments database, containing more than 34 000 WA enlistees: another the recognition of Victoria Cross (VC) awardees' graves around the world. In particular, she holds dear her contribution

to the in-perpetuity care of the grave of WA VC winner Hugo Throssell at Karrakatta Cemetery.

Friends extend their sincere thanks to Sandra for her generous donation which is now beautifully displayed in the Nurses' Day Room at the Isolation Hospital.

INAUGURAL ISOLATION HOSPITAL OPEN DAY

The inaugural Isolation Hospital Open Day was held on Sunday 16 February 2025 and it proved to be a huge success. Twenty-one people visited the Hospital



over two sessions: one commencing at 9.00am and the other at 10.30am. This was not one of our regular tours and was advertised as visiting only the Isolation Hospital and not viewing either the Crematorium or the main station buildings.

Participants thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to read and browse the collection at their leisure and to ask questions of the two Friends guides who were in attendance, Jenni and Gary. With their browsing complete, participants were able to enjoy morning tea in the dining room where a Powerpoint display of old photos of the Quarantine Station

showed the evolution of the site over the past 139 years.

Interestingly, many participants were first-time visitors to Woodman Point and were so taken by the displays of history and artefacts that they have vowed to return to attend one of our Sunday public heritage tours.



Amongst those attending was Sandra Playle, who reminded us that this particular day marked the 83rd anniversary of the massacre of Australian nurses led by Sister Vivian Bullwinkel from the Australian vessel *SS Vyner Brooke* in the waters off Bangka Island in Indonesia. At a short commemorative ceremony, the A.A.N.S. *Pledge of Service* was displayed and flowers placed near a copy of the Pledge in memory of the 21 Australian nurses who lost their lives in this war-time tragedy.

Comments in the Visitors' Book attest to both people's enthusiasm in the IH and their amazement at the history held here. Comments such as: *What an amazing honouring of our history* and *Absolutely amazing experience and found the ties of Gary and Jenni to the site so interesting* reiterate the need for Friends to provide Open Days such as this on regular basis as part of our overall tour offerings.

We are therefore pleased to announce that the next Isolation Hospital Open Day will be held on Sunday 17 August 2025. Booking can be made through our usual

 **trybooking** site at a cost of \$10, including morning tea.

FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY

Continuing a series of articles recalling some of the patients who were nursed and cared for at the Woodman Point Quarantine Station.

William and Gilbert Mumford 1909/1911 - 1913

It is true to record that the majority of deaths that occurred at the Woodman Point Quarantine Station over its long history were of adults, but sadly, children also succumbed to death at the Station due to contagious disease. In total, nine children aged 16 years or under died at Woodman Point, the majority from measles contracted on the vessels on which they were travelling from the United Kingdom.

Of these nine deaths, there is none more heart-wrenching than the story of the Mumford brothers, William and his younger brother Gilbert, who died within hours of one another from a combination of measles and pneumonia.

William and Gilbert hailed from Somerset England. Along with their parents George and Lillie and sister Edna, they were passengers on the vessel *SS Ajana* which had been carrying a total of



513 immigrants to start a new life in Australia. Because of their close contact on the vessel, all members of the Mumford family, along with a further 60 other passengers, were quarantined at Woodman Point on 1 February 1913 following their arrival in Fremantle.

The Mumford boys, along with four other children, were seriously stricken with the disease and over a period of 10 days, their condition worsened. On 12 February 1913, the brothers passed away. Theirs was a cruel and painful death due to the complications brought about from the pneumonia they were also both suffering. To add further pathos to their story, their grieving parents were unable to touch or to see their little boys after death for fear of again contracting the disease.

On 13 February 1913, William aged 4 years, and Gilbert aged 2 were buried together in the Anglican section of the Fremantle Cemetery.

Following their release from quarantine, William and Lillie Mumford, together with Edna, made their way to Wagin where they settled. Here they lived, welcoming another son Stanley into their family in 1914. But sadly, tragedy struck the family yet again only two years later when, in 1916, William was struck down with a serious malady and after five months of suffering, he too passed away. William was buried in the Wagin Cemetery on 17 April 1916.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope everyone enjoyed a pleasant Christmas and had a Happy New Year.

It looks like 2025 will be another busy year with tours. So far, we have 17 tours planned to the end of May and several more groups have advised they will also be making bookings.

In addition, the introduction of our IH Open Mornings also looks to be a winner and filling a needed niche. The first Open Morning in February gave 21 people the opportunity to explore and read the stories in the IH at their leisure – something many people have been asking to do for some time. Indeed many of those attending were previous tour participants, eager to browse our history and coming back to learn more of our story. On the basis of this success, we intend holding these events twice a year: once in February and again in August. Bookings to attend can be made through our usual  [trybooking](#) site.

At Friend's January meeting, it was agreed that we would recommence Wednesday mornings as Friends Morning: a way to become a little more involved with Friends. Anyone can just turn up at Woodman Point between 9am and 12 noon and share activities with other members. So come and share a cuppa with us and if you want, provide some help with small jobs, archiving of documents, reading or just sharing stories. We have had three Wednesday mornings so far this year, each attended by a few members.

One job continuing on Wednesday mornings is the creation of a computerised inventory of our museum items and artefacts. This is being undertaken by Sara Dryden with help from Keith Dodd, who is photographing the items and artefacts to create a permanent record of them.

The job of replacing the running boards around the Isolation Hospital verandahs continues, thanks to Graeme Jeisman. Graeme has done a wonderful job so far and estimates he is about three quarters of the way around the building. Graeme has also completed the renovation of one of the old W/Cs in the Isolation Hospital. We will now use this space for storage.

The lawns around the Isolation Hospital are starting to benefit from the huge amount of work put into them, with new green growth starting to show. Thanks to Greg and Kath Ireland for their work on this project.

So all in all, the year has started in a busy note. I look forward to your interest and involvement as other projects start up during the course of 2025.

Gary Marsh
President

NEW LIFE MEMBER

At our Annual General Meeting last November, Neil Wilson, our dedicated Vice President, was awarded life membership in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Friends of Woodman Point Recreation Camp.

Neil's connection to Woodman Point runs deep, being the grandson of Roy and Pearl McIntosh - Roy served as Officer-in-Charge from 1939 to 1963.

Neil joined the Friends in 2012 and has been an invaluable member ever since. His leadership as Vice President since November 2019 has been instrumental in our growth and success. As the editor of

our newsletter, *Pratique*, since December 2019, Neil has produced 21 editions to date and he has indexed and digitised all pre-2019 editions, ensuring they are preserved in both the National and State Library's digital collections.

Beyond his editorial work, Neil has been a passionate heritage tour guide since 2019, sharing the rich history of the Station with countless visitors. He has also represented the Friends group as a key speaker at various events and organisations, including the National Archives, City of Melville, Melville View Club and Karrakatta Club, and conducts history tours of the Station for students attending recreation camps.



Neil's dedication to preserving our history is evident in his meticulous indexing of the WPQS Admissions Registers from 1901 to 1979 and his efforts to digitise building plans and other relevant documents held at the National Archives. His innovative spirit has modernised our operations, introducing electronic booking for tours through Trybooking in June 2021 and electronic payments via the Square reader platform

in June 2022.

Neil Wilson's tireless efforts and unwavering commitment have left an indelible mark on our group. We are proud to honour him with life membership and look forward to his continued contributions to the Friends of Woodman Point Recreation Camp.

Matt Hayes

UPDATE FROM THE CAMP

Following on from the 2024 Christmas break, the Woodman Point team have been busy preparing the site for what is looking to be a very positive year ahead for the camp.

Over the quieter January period, the team was focused on ensuring that everything is in tip-top shape for the busy months ahead. Tidying up common areas, freshening up accommodation spaces and having a healthy maintenance schedule in place for our grassed areas ensures that we continue to deliver excellent experiences for all of our visitors.

Some key upgrades for our clients over summer included two new washing machines for our client laundry, installation of internal and external wireless access points at the Jervoise dormitory and Wi-Fi installation at the Isolation Hospital. Site works continue over the hotter months as part of bushfire mitigation and DFES, through the Cockburn Fire and Emergency Services, attended site to complete a site inspection. The Emergency Response Procedures have recently been updated and are available on the Department of

Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) website.

Many Woodman Point staff have completed a range of training over summer, including Chief Warden and Warden Training. Some staff have also attended roping and water specialised training, conducted by DLGSC to ensure that our staff running programs are suitably qualified.

While talking about our people, we'd like to congratulate Scott Price, who has been a member of our Woodman Point team since 2015. Scott was recently offered an opportunity to be the Assistant Manager at Bickley Outdoor Recreation Camp for Terms 1 and 2.



With all that said, it's been a busy start to the year and we are looking forward to an exciting 2025.

Ben Walton
Camp Manager

LATEST NEWS FROM FRIENDS

- ❖ The next meeting of Friends will be held at the Isolation Hospital on Wednesday 14 May 2025 commencing at 6.30pm. All members are welcome to attend.

NEW MEMBERS

No new members have been welcomed this quarter.

HERITAGE TOURS

Friends of Woodman Point Recreational Camp operate regular heritage tours of the former Quarantine Station and the Isolation Hospital Museum for community groups.

Morning tea is included in all tours, and if required, lunch can be provided at an additional cost.

Periodic open weekends provide tours for members of the public to visit the site and to learn about this important Western Australian heritage site.

We acknowledge the contribution of our valued volunteer tour guides who lead heritage tours of the former Quarantine Station.



Jenni



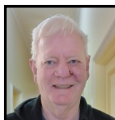
Chris



Bernadette



Gary



Keith



Neil

UPCOMING HERITAGE TOURS

March/April 2025

14 Mar Scarlet Belles Red Hatters
 16 Mar Monthly public tour
 18 Mar WA Retirees
 19 Mar Melville View Club
 24 Mar Everlastings
 26 Mar Rod's Day Tours
 1 Apr Sara's church group
 6 Apr Chris' breakfast group
 7 Apr Autumn Club

April/May 2025

20 Apr Monthly public tour
 5 May Parramatta Club
 12 May Club 55
 13 May Club 55
 18 May Monthly public tour
 19 May Club 55
 20 May Club 55
 29 May National Seniors

COMMITTEE 2024 – 2025

PRESIDENT
Gary Marsh



TREASURER
Greg Ireland



PAST PRESIDENT
Jenni Carder



**SECRETARY/
MEMBERSHIP**
Ainslie Poore



VICE PRESIDENT
Neil Wilson



EX-OFFICIO COMMITTEE MEMBER
Ben Walton



MEMBER SERVICES

HERITAGE TOUR BOOKINGS
Jenni Carder



PRATIQUE
Neil Wilson



WEBSITE MAINTENANCE AND DESIGN

