

Pratique

Friends of Woodman Point Recreation Camp

The Isolation Hospital, 74 O’Kane Court, Coogee WA 6166

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<http://www.woodmanpointquarantinstation.com>



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

AUTUMN 2024

RAISING THE PROFILE OF FRIENDS

Friends’ Strategic Plan outlines a range of goals that guide their efforts to promote community awareness of the former Woodman Point Quarantine Station and its amazing history.

High in its priorities has always been the need to actively seek new ways to promote the site and our tours, and over the past three months, there has been much positive publicity, and reinforcement of our efforts, to preserve and publicise the site.

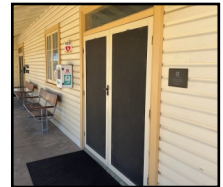
Heritage plaque installed

As a recognised heritage site on the State’s Heritage Register (we are registered site No. 499), the former Woodman Point Quarantine Station was



eligible to apply to the WA Heritage Council’s plaque program to commemorate its historic status.

The plaque was delivered to the site in late November 2023 and is now proudly on display on the outside wall of the Recreation Camp’s Office (the former Laundry Block) in a position where it is seen by everyone who visits the Office.



This recognition will soon be followed up with an addition to our website: a virtual plaque from the Heritage Council denoting the heritage status of the former Quarantine Station.

Recognition in *The West’s* Travel pages

A minor mention by reporter Mogens Johansen in late November in the Travel section of *The West Australian* on tourist attractions in the Coogee area peaked Mo’s interest in a location he had little knowledge of. Mo followed up with President Gary Marsh and in December, Gary and Jenni Carder hosted a more

extensive visit to the Station by Mo.

What followed was an amazing 2-page article published in *The West Australian* on 27 January 2024 which provided some fabulous publicity for our historic site. Mo, a renowned photographer, took a range of photos around the site, all of which gave a fresh perspective to our historic buildings.

If you missed the article, follow this link and enjoy the read.

<https://thewest.com.au/travel/woodman-point-quarantine-station-c-12726887>

Visit by local Cockburn MP

In January, we welcomed a visit from the Member for Cockburn, David Scaife MLA. David was shown the main historical features of the Station by Vice President Neil Wilson and was introduced to Camp Manager Ben Walton, who outlined the wide range of programs provided to school and community groups by WPRC.



With his mother having recently been a member of one of Friends' community tours, David eagerly anticipated seeing firsthand the history his mother had enjoyed. He was full of praise for the work Friends undertake to promote the site and undertook to encourage the Minister for Culture and the Arts; Sport

and Recreation; International Education; Heritage, the Hon David Templeman MLA to join him on a future visit to the site. David pledged his backing for our ongoing work, and encouraged Friends to contact him if there were issues the group believed may benefit from his support and direction. As a memento of his visit, David was presented with a copy of *Western Sentinel*.

Cemetery visit by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

In November, officers from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, based at Karrakatta Cemetery, requested to see the graves in the Woodman Point military cemetery. It is believed to be the first time this agency has visited the remaining graves in this little isolated cemetery, despite the exhumation, over the years, of the remains of many military service personnel who had lost their lives whilst in quarantine to diseases, such as Spanish influenza and smallpox.

Gary Marsh and Jenni Carder welcomed Elena and John to the Isolation Hospital and provided a tour of the building and its exhibits. This tour was followed by a visit to the military cemetery where they viewed the graves of Sr



Rosa O'Kane, nurse Hilda Williams and the crew from the *Suva* who died in 1943 following an outbreak of smallpox on their vessel.

REMEMBERING OUR HISTORY

Continuing an occasional series remembering moments in time that are close to the heart and soul of Woodman Point's long history.

Celebrating the centenary of its construction last year was the home of the officer-in-charge of the Quarantine Station. It still stands modestly behind the two pines trees planted in 1921 and the front half of the house remains little changed from its original build.



Described as a modest example of the Inter-War Californian Bungalow style, the three-bedroom home is built on wooden stumps and covers an area of about 130m². Its walls are of timber cladding on the lower wall portions and rendered asbestos cladding above and front and west-facing windows have projecting wooden awnings to provide shade from the sun.

A deep front and rear verandah was a feature of the house as was a beautiful stain glass window, now removed, on the front verandah allowing filtered light into the lounge room.

Inside, the rooms are of a generous size with high ceilings and a picture rail

running around the top of most rooms. Jarrah floors are a feature throughout the house and a long polished passageway runs from the front door to the back. Walls are plasterboard with jarrah wall lining boards to dado height, making the house quite dark inside.

The front garden was characterised by a circular garden bed of roses and dahlias surrounded by rabbit-proof fencing and a sweeping concrete pathway that led from the house, around the garden bed, to the front gate under the Norfolk pine trees.

This house was a very comfortable home for the quarantine staff members who lived in it, beginning with the Poore family in 1923. Its longest occupants, for 24 years from 1939 until 1963, were the McIntosh family and it was in this house that officer-in-charge Roy McIntosh's wife Pearl died in August 1960.

After a period of time providing respite accommodation to returned Vietnam Veterans in the 1980s when it was known as Cypress Cottage, the house was modernised to become the home to the recreation camp's manager, a role it still fulfills today, 100 years after its construction.

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.

Muriel Agnes 'Nessie' Adams is one of the lesser known patients who passed away at Woodman Point Quarantine Station. Thank you to Gail Dodd for her

research and the following article on the life and passing of Nessie Adams.

Muriel Agnes Adams 1903 - 1938

Thirty-five years old, Miss Muriel Agnes 'Nessie' Adams from Kerang, Victoria had been ill on the P&O ship, *Strathaird* when it landed in Fremantle on 22 March 1938. Miss Muriel Little nursed Nessie for two days, and subsequently caught that disease too, later diagnosed as smallpox.

Nessie died on admission to Woodman Point Quarantine Station on 24 March 1938. Her body and coffin were wrapped in heavily carbolised sheets until cremation on 26 March 1938. A personal friend, Rev Urquhart, was permitted to officiate at her cremation.

Born in 1903, Nessie was the daughter of Alfred Gaskin Adams and Agnes Maria (nee Dickson). Her remains were interred at Kerang Pioneer Cemetery on 4 April 1938 and four years later a family headstone was installed nearby commemorating in successive years, her parents and sisters, Evelyn Constance and Honor Isobel.

Since childhood, Nessie had been connected with the Baptist Church. She was an organist for the church and Sunday School, joint Superintendent of the Junior Endeavour Christian Society, Sunday School teacher, and member of church societies. She was actively interested in mission work in India, and it was this interest that took her to that country, where over five months, she visited various centres of the Baptist mission work in East Bengal.

On Saturday, 26 March 1938, the *Advertiser*, Adelaide reported more

details. Nessie, a tourist passenger from Bombay in the *Strathaird*, disembarked at Fremantle the previous Tuesday and showed signs of illness when she was examined on Thursday night by the Chief Quarantine Officer in Western Australia, Dr G.A. Murray. She was in a serious condition and was transferred to Woodman Point where she died soon after admission. The paper also states that the period of incubation for smallpox was 14 days and it was 12 days after the patient left Bombay that the disease was diagnosed.

After disembarking at Fremantle, Nessie had been staying at the home of Mr and Mrs Roy Birch in Clark Street, Nedlands. Roy and Winifred Birch were vaccinated and quarantined at Woodman Point for a fortnight: fortunately, they were unaffected and allowed to go home on 20 April.

Muriel Little (who nursed Nessie and contracted smallpox) was reported to be doing well. Muriel was Winifred Birch's sister.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

So another year has begun, and it looks like a busy year in front for Friends. Tour enquiries and bookings seem to be flooding in for the coming months and as usual, we have several projects in hand. On top of our regular monthly Sunday public tours, we have nine confirmed group bookings up to the middle of May at the time of writing this report.

We are often quite short of tour guides so if anyone would like to assist with this aspect of our work, please contact Jenni or myself.

Friends has also been hosting visits from a variety of local people. On 23 January, we had the pleasure of showing David Scaife MLA, Member for Cockburn, around the Quarantine Station. David was extremely impressed with all he saw and particularly enjoyed the displays in the Isolation Hospital.

The following week, on 27 January, following a personal visit to the Station by Mogens Johansen, one of the travel writers for *The West Australian*, we received some fabulous publicity through an article on Friends of Woodman Point Recreation Camp. Many thanks to Mogens for his visit and the wonderful article he wrote to recognise and promote our work.

In early February, three ladies from the City of Cockburn met with us to assist us in setting up our first strategic planning meeting for 2024. The date for this meeting has yet to be decided.

Projects in hand

Various other upgrades have also been occurring around the site. A heritage plaque, provided by the WA Heritage, has been mounted on the Woodman Point Recreation Camp Office building recognising our status as a state-listed heritage site. Many thanks to Neil for coordinating this initiative.

We have also refreshed our display boards in the meeting room during one of our weekly Wednesday morning get-togethers, thanks to the work of our volunteers, Sara and Frankie. The displays there are now looking fabulous again.

We have also been looking at various

ways to complete the replacement of the tek screws on the higher parts of the Isolation Hospital's exterior walls. We have applied to have this work funded through a local grant and Friends have obtained quotes to have this work completed by local companies. This will be discussed at our next meeting and hopefully, the work will be finished before the onset of winter.

A busy bee will be held at the Isolation Hospital on Sunday 10 March starting at 9am. We hope to tackle a variety of jobs, including the painting of verandah poles, railings, windows and shirting around Isolation Hospital, as well as some general cleaning and gardening. If you are able to assist, please come along and lend a hand. Morning tea is provided.

Thanks to applications by Gail Dodd and supported by the City of Cockburn, Friends have been nominated for the Volunteer Group of the Year Award, in separate competitions run by the City of Cockburn and Volunteering WA. The City of Cockburn nomination has been accepted so we will keep our fingers crossed that our hard work will be competitive alongside other volunteer groups across the State.

As President, I have also applied to Volunteers WA for a grant to recognise and reward our volunteers and supporters during Heritage Week. If successful with this application, Friends will host a lunch on Sunday 26 May.

As always, I am looking forward to another very successful year for Friends in 2024.

Gary Marsh
President

UPDATE FROM THE CAMP

The staff of the Woodman Point Recreation Camp are sharing the opportunity to write the quarterly camp report for *Pratique* and I am grateful for the opportunity to write this report.

I have been the substantive Program Coordinator since May 2022, specialising in the roping components within the CUBE facility and I also work training and assessing our internal roping courses. Prior to working at Woodman Point, I worked at the Point Walter Recreation and Conference Centre, located in Bicton, which was first established as a migrant camp in 1948, as a “gateway to new life”. In 1986, during a redevelopment, the remaining migrant hostel buildings were demolished, and the site was officially re-opened as a recreation camp on 26 September 1986, first hosting the members of the Costa Smerelda Yacht Club – the Italian syndicate that challenged for the America’s Cup held in Fremantle.

I recently had the pleasure of bringing my family and attending a Friends of Woodman Point (FOWP) tour, hosted by Jenni Carder and Neil Wilson. The tour was incredibly informative, and it was truly inspiring to see the passion that both Jenni and Neil share towards the history of the camp, especially with their ancestral ties to the site.

Woodman Point has once again boasted a very busy Term 1, seeing 5,816 bednights and 12,306 program participations across 62 events from that period, making it one of the most highly utilised recreation camps in WA. There has also been progress made with the removal of the sacrificial render around the Doctor’s Precinct Block.

Congratulations go to our work colleague Ryan Austin as the successful candidate for the Operations Manager role, taking over from Kym Lawrence. The current role of Senior Facilities Officer has been approved for advertising as an Operations Officer role. This will see the role take a more collaborative approach with the current office staff and bring Woodman Point staff up to seven full-time employees. This will bring some much-needed stability back to our team.

The Woodman Point Draft Conservation Plan has now progressed to phase 5. This phase will look at the implementation of the plan and in particular the recommended conservation works and maintenance schedule for the site. The staff of the Woodman Point Recreation Camp would like to thank Friends for their assistance and ongoing support throughout phase 4 of the conservation plan development which examined a total of 146 policies.

James Olton
Program Coordinator

LATEST NEWS FROM FRIENDS

- ❖ The next meeting of Friends will be held at the Isolation Hospital on Wednesday 20 March 2024 commencing at 6.30pm. All members are welcome to attend.

NEW MEMBERS

Friends welcome the following people who have recently joined our group.

- Joanne Sterkenburg from Beaconsfield
- Peter Black from Ferndale
- Stephen and Carolyn Olton from UK

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



Kay



Chris



Bernadette



Suzie



Gary



Neil

UPCOMING HERITAGE TOURS

March/April 2024

17 Mar Monthly public tour
 21 Mar Cockburn Seniors
 28 Mar Silver Chain
 4 Apr Cockburn Seniors
 14 Apr Caravan Club

April/May 2024

21 Apr Monthly public tour
 26 Apr History group
 29 Apr U3A group
 3 May Red Hatters
 7 May Church group
 19 May Monthly public tour

COMMITTEE 2023 – 2024

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

