

Pratique

Friends of Woodman Point Recreation Camp
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<http://www.woodmanpointquarantinationstation.com>



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

SPRING 2025

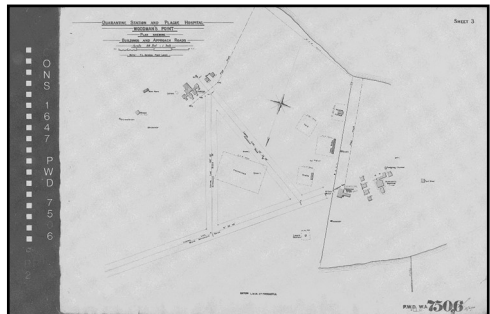
DISCOVERY OF NEW WOODMAN POINT DOCUMENTS AND MAPS

A recent visit to the State Archives by vice president Neil Wilson uncovered some previously unseen documents relating to the Woodman Point Quarantine Station. Whilst Friends has regularly and exhaustively scoured the collection of historical documents held by the National Archives of Australia for the post-Federation period, we had not systematically checked the collections at the State Archives, which holds documents pertaining to the colonial (pre-Federation) period of our State's history.

Although there was not an abundance of documents, those discovered were more than revealing. For the first time we were able to determine the exact location of the original Station jetty, built circa 1886, and the pathway of the tramline running from the jetty into the Doctors' Precinct.

Little is known about this jetty, but we now know that it was located to the north north-west of what is now the Bertie Poore Room within the Doctors' Precinct.

Based on the scale of the map, it is estimated that the jetty was a mere 200 feet (60m) long. Furthermore, based on the dates of the maps, it appears that this original jetty was still in existence when the second jetty (1901 -1979) was constructed.



Further research since has not uncovered more information about this first jetty. It seems that no specific tender was called for its construction, and it was not listed as part of the usual tender process called in *The West Australian* on 28 March 1885 for the construction of quarantine station buildings.

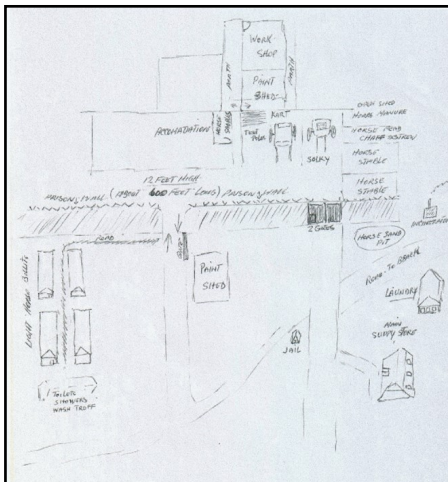
The location and titles of a range of other quarantine buildings were also clearly

visible on the maps. These included wards adjacent to the Plague Hospital, a disinfecting house, the isolation cottage, the leper's hut, several latrines, the cattle and horse stables and the two original tramlines running into the quarantine precinct from both the first and second jetties. Even the location of the Station's sole telephone box was clearly marked.

In addition, we have been able to access three sketches drawn by Jim Poore (1926 - 2018), son of Quarantine Station nurse Bertie and Babs Poore from his recollections when living and growing up at Woodman Point. They are very detailed and extensively annotated, providing a valuable insight into the location of sites and precincts within the Quarantine Station that may not be in existence today.

Jim's sketches cover three main areas:

- the area to the east of the officer-in-charge's house;
- the central precinct of the Quarantine Station; and
- the jetty precinct and adjoining buildings.



Jim Poore's sketch of the central quarantine precinct

Details such as the location of the tramline running the entire length of the jetty and the existence of stables, carriage sheds, incinerators and even the old jail are clearly identified on the sketches.

These documents have provided a wealth of detail and information to further our historic interpretation of the site and Friends are very grateful for the assistance from the State Archives and the family of Jim Poore for providing access to these documents. They will no doubt be immensely helpful as Friends begins preparations for the special project, planned for unveiling as part of their 25th anniversary celebrations in 2026.

THE PASSING OF SANDRA PLAYLE

One of Friends' great supporters and one of Australia's foremost authorities on local military history, Sandra Playle, sadly passed away on 10 August 2025.

Sandra has long been a great supporter of our interpretative work at Woodman Point and of all things military. She was a



regular visitor to the Isolation Hospital and reveled in the growth and development of our group's efforts to honour and preserve the history of the Quarantine Station and especially, to tell the stories of the site's involvement in Australia's military history. It was only earlier this year that Sandra presented Friends with 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, on display in the Nurses' Day Room, included photos of Sgt O'Meara, his medals and his headstone at Karrakatta Cemetery.

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

The compilation of the WA First AIF Enlistments database, containing more than 34 000 WA enlistees, was one of Sandra's greatest achievements. She conceptualised the project and the methodology for both researching and presenting the data and led a team of more than 20 people who compiled, edited and proofed the information. This work was the basis for ensuring the accuracy of data held by preeminent agencies such as the Australian War Memorial and the Army Museum of WA. Both institutions consulted Sandra over aspects of their records and acknowledged her meticulous research by making changes and alterations to the biographical and military data they hold.

An author and co-author of several military history books, Sandra also

compiled military personnel databases for townships such as Albany, Broomehill, Mandurah, Meekatharra, Pinjarra, Sandstone and Tambellup. These databases, like all of Sandra's research, were made freely available to the general public.

Sandra was the proactive voice that ensured all aspects of Australian military history was remembered and publicly acknowledged. She never shirked a "fight" and doggedly pursued any cause she believed in. Sandra's efforts, as a result of her liaison with the British-based Victoria Cross Trust Organisation, saw recognition of VC graves around the world. But in particular, she held most dear the in-perpetuity care of the grave of WA VC winner Hugo Throssell at Karrakatta Cemetery, the direct result of Sandra's intervention and dogged pursuit of bureaucracy.

As a result of her work, Sandra was nominated for a *Pride of Australia* award in 2013, was chosen as an Ambassador for *Fallen Diggers* 2013 – 2014 and was a committee member for Friends of Anzac Cottage for a period of six years.

Save the Date

Sunday 9 August 2026

Join us next year at the Isolation
Hospital for celebrations to mark the
25th anniversary of the formation of
Friends of Woodman Point
Recreation Camp Inc.

More details to come as plans for the
celebration are finalised.

Sandra was driven to not only ensure that our military history was remembered by future generations, but that it was both correct and complete. To this end, Sandra's driven nature and meticulous research were her greatest strengths. She thought nothing to drive around the State at her own expense to research firsthand some minor aspect of military history that she believed to be incorrect, or to be the guest speaker at a local school to ensure "the story and the legend" lived on.

Sandra Playle exemplified the quiet Australian who loved her country, took pride in its history and wanted to share this history with her fellow Australians ... but only if it was correct and complete.

Only time will truly reveal the huge debt that our community owes Sandra Playle. Friends is honoured to count Sandra as "our friend" and to acknowledge her outstanding contributions to our local and national history.

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.

Albert Wonesford Ding 1876 - 1918

A chance comment in a recent email received by Friends has connected our group to yet another descendant of a soldier from HMAT *Boonah*. Pam Waterhouse from Grafton NSW was on a holiday visiting WA and wanting to learn more about her late grandfather, Albert Ding who had returned to Australia on HMAT *Boonah* in December 1918.

Born in Goolwa SA on 7 March 1876, Albert was one of four children born to

William Ding and his wife Mary Catherine Ding nee Sweetman. Albert had shifted to Western Australia where he had married Wilhelmina Annie Gramkie in East Fremantle in 1904 and went on to have three children.

When World War I broke out, the family were living in Beverley where Albert was working as a commission agent, having never previously served in the armed forces. Obviously drawn by the nation's needs for reinforcements towards the end of the war, Albert enlisted to serve his country in April 1918 and joined the Western Australian 3rd Reinforcement on 17 July 1918, aged 42 years. His unit embarked from Fremantle on board HMAT *Boonah* on 29 October 1918, bound for the Western Front.

With the end of the war and the Armistice on 11 November 1918, the need to continue to Europe no longer existed and, after its arrival in Durban South Africa, the *Boonah* was instructed to reprovision and return to Australia. Sadly, during the soldiers' furlough in Durban and the reprovisioning of the vessel, pneumonic influenza or, as it was more commonly known: Spanish flu, was taken onboard the *Boonah* and, in the close quarters on the ship, spread rapidly during the return voyage to Fremantle.

On its arrival on 11 December 1918, Albert was one of the unit's troops inflicted with the disease. He was quarantined at Woodman Point on 12 December 1918 and sadly passed away the following day. His remains were buried at the East Rockingham Cemetery on 14 December, but were reinterred in January 1920 at the Karrakatta Cemetery.

When tour coordinator Jenni Carder realised that Pam was descended from a

Boonah soldier, she made arrangements for a private visit to Woodman Point and the Isolation Hospital. For Pam, it was all a moving experience, especially when she came across Albert's name and service record on display. We were delighted to receive a painting of Albert Ding for our photographic collection from Pam and even more thrilled when Pam announced she would like to become a member of Friends. And so, in this edition of *Pratique*, Friends honour the service of Albert Wonesford Ding.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

I have recently returned from my annual migration to Exmouth and would like to extend my sincere thanks to Neil for stepping in during my absence. His support ensured that operations for Friends continued smoothly, and I'm grateful for his dedication.

Interest in our tours has remained strong, with a steady stream of bookings already secured for the remainder of the year. Our second Isolation Hospital Open Day was held in August and it once again attracted considerable interest from those wanting to have a more leisurely look and read of the artefacts and photos on display. Its popularity obviously fills a need for our tour participants so it will become a regular feature of our tour program twice a year, once in February and again in August.

This continued enthusiasm for our tours highlights the value of our work and the

public's appreciation for the history and preservation of Woodman Point. Thanks to Jenni and our tour guides for their fabulous work. They have been receiving some fairly amazing accolades from tour participants.

Our 25th anniversary celebration sub-committee has been making excellent progress in planning what is shaping up to be a truly memorable event. This milestone offers us a chance to:

- reflect on our collective achievements;
- acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our volunteers;
- celebrate the ongoing preservation efforts at Woodman Point.

We look forward to sharing this special occasion with all who have supported our journey. Again, remember: **Save the Date** as it is now a little under a year away. **Sunday 9 August 2026.**

Gary Marsh
President

UPDATE FROM THE CAMP

It's fair to say there's been some changes across the public sector since our last update and Woodman Point has been part of that journey.

As part of the Western Australian Government's public sector reform, several agencies realigned, including ours. July saw us become the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS) with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) no more.

We said farewell to Lanie Chopping, our Director General, who's now leading the Department of Local Government,

Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS). We wish Lanie well in her new role and know her drive will only lead to positive results across local government, and the racing and gaming industry.

Our new Director General at CITS is Chad Anderson, who brings more than 22 years of public service experience, arriving from Queensland after serving as Deputy Director General of Tourism. We're excited to welcome Chad and look forward to hosting him at Woodman Point in the near future.

Here at camp, our incredible team continues to make Woodman Point a place where West Aussies of all ages can enjoy unique outdoor experiences. In the 2024/2025 financial year, we hosted more than 350 events, delivered 26,500 bed nights and welcomed 50,000 participations on our programs. With 25 varying programs on offer under the guidance of 42 outdoor leaders, it's no surprise favourites like the flying fox and archery continue to be crowd-pleasers.

Behind the scenes, our casual cleaning crew of 9 have worked tirelessly, clocking up more than 2,400 hours to keep our facilities spotless and welcoming for every visitor.

The 25th anniversary of the Friends of Woodman Point in August 2026 will be a wonderful opportunity to recognise the committee and volunteers who've given so much over the years. Keeping on the celebration theme, the Recreation Camp has started planning for another major milestone: Woodman Point's 140-year anniversary, so watch this space.

To Friends, thank you for your ongoing support. Your dedication helps our purpose to foster a cohesive, prosperous,

vibrant and healthy Western Australian community.

Ben Walton
Camp Manager

LATEST NEWS FROM FRIENDS

- ❖ Friends welcomes the appointment of Chad Anderson as Director General of the recently formed Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS) and look forward to continuing our close working relationship with his department.
- ❖ It was with sadness that Friends learnt of the recent passing of Sr. Philomena Butler of the Sisters of St John of God Convent. Sr Philomena, originally hailing from Co Kilkenny Ireland, passed away on 8 July 2025 at the Convent in Subiaco and was one of the diminishing band of Sisters from that order who regularly visit Woodman Point to commemorate the life, mission and passing of their fellow Sister, Sr Barbara, from smallpox in 1930. We extend our thoughts and sympathy to her fellow Sisters in Subiaco.
- ❖ The next meeting of Friends will be held at the Isolation Hospital on Wednesday 17 September 2025 commencing at 6.30pm. All members are welcome to attend.

NEW MEMBERS

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

- Nick Beeching from Claremont
- Alyson Ehlers from Mt Nasura
- Kurt Senior from Madora Bay
- Pam Waterhouse from Grafton NSW

HERITAGE TOURS

Friends of Woodman Point Recreational Camp operate regular heritage tours of the former Quarantine Station and the Isolation Hospital Museum on week days for community groups. Morning tea is included in all tours.

Regular Sunday heritage tours, conducted on the third Sunday of each month, provide tours for members of the public to visit the former Quarantine Station and to learn about this important Western Australian heritage site.

The Isolation Hospital Museum is also open twice a year, on the third Sunday in February and in August, for members of the public to browse the Isolation Hospital's historical collection at their leisure.

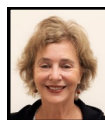
We acknowledge the contribution of our valued volunteer tour guides who lead heritage tours of the former Quarantine Station.



Jenni



Bernadette



Chris



Jo



Gary



Keith



Neil

UPCOMING HERITAGE TOURS

September 2025

October/November 2025

14 Sept WA History Conference
17 Sept Byford Probus Club
21 Sept Monthly public tour
25 Sept Kalamunda Probus Club
28 Sept Vintage Car Club

16 Oct Dianella U3A
19 Oct Monthly public tour
21 Oct Club 55
24 Oct Cockburn U3A
16 Nov Monthly public tour

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

