

# Pratique

Friends of Woodman Point Recreation Camp

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

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**SUMMER 2022**

## RECOGNISING THE SACRIFICE OF CONSTABLE RICHARD HUGHES

For several years, President Gary Marsh lobbied the WA Police Department for official recognition of the death of Constable Richard Hughes from smallpox in 1901 as a police death in the line of duty in WA.



This recognition was finally acknowledged earlier this year and on 29 September, Gary was honoured to attend the first Police Remembrance Day ceremony at the WA Police Academy in Joondalup following Constable Hughes official recognition.

In a very moving ceremony, WA Police

Commissioner Col Blanch, together with WA Police Minister Paul Papalia, led speeches and a wreath-laying ceremony at the event to remember the 87 officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice to protect and serve the WA community.

Friends consider the recognition of all aspects of history emanating from the former Woodman Point Quarantine Station as a special aspect of their charter

### **Pratique** - just what does it mean?

Pratique is the license given to a ship to enter port on assurance from the captain to convince the authorities that she is free from contagious disease. The clearance granted is commonly referred to as *free pratique*.

A ship can signal a request for *pratique* by flying a solid yellow square-shaped flag. This yellow flag is the **Q** flag in the set of international maritime signal flags.



From *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

so Gary's research, lobbying and attendance at this ceremony marked yet another worthy milestone for our Association.



Friends look forward to an ongoing attendance at this important ceremony in the years to come.

### FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY

*Concluding this series of articles of sites at Woodman Point that may no longer exist or may have faded from our memory.*

### The Leper Huts

Over the years, the Woodman Point Quarantine Station has cared for many patients with a variety of contagious diseases. Perhaps its most controversial disease and certainly the one with the least number of infectious patients was leprosy, a disease which first made its presence known at the Station in 1889.

In December 1889, it was reported in *The West Australian* that a tender of £175 had been accepted for the erection of an isolated house to accommodate a lone patient suffering from leprosy. The leper house, known as a lazaretto (a building used for detention in quarantine), was built within the confines and surprisingly close to the then entrance of the quarantine station, next to the limestone isolation wall which marked the boundary of the Station.

Located in the centre of a sandy patch of land surrounded on three sides by a high galvanised iron wall about 98 yards square, and on the fourth side by the stone wall of the quarantine station, the small two-roomed hut had a galvanised iron lean-to about 10ft. long by 8ft. wide, with a tiny veranda in front, and with a back blocks open fireplace of galvanised iron and a small window. Food was brought in by a station orderly and this was essentially the only contact the patient would have with another human being. A ladder gave access to the roof, which the patient would be permitted to climb on to so that he could survey the world around him. If there was no one in quarantine, he was permitted to walk about the station within certain bounds, otherwise he was restricted to the confines of the yard.



The leper hut was initially built to house a Chinese national Ah Lee who had been working as a labourer on a farm near Spencer's Brook. With no known cure and acting under the mistaken belief at the time that the disease was highly contagious, it was believed that this was the best means of containing the spread of the disease.

Condemned to a life of isolation, Ah Lee lived in very basic conditions within the confines of the Station for nearly 10 years. Following his death at the age of thirty-five on 28 July 1898, his body was

cremated on quarantine premises, using local bush wood to fuel his open funeral pyre.

In August 1902, a further case of leprosy was detected in the community. With public controversy regarding the availability of suitable accommodation for this new patient, John Higgins, it was announced that a structure known as the "Store Room" on the east side of the main building at Woodman Point and distant from it by some sixty yards, (54m.) had been set apart for the reception and medical treatment of lepers. For John Higgins, these refurbished quarters were his home until his untimely death in 1906.

The foundations are all that now remain of the leper hut, located next to the isolation wall about a metre beneath the surface of the ground.

### **FROM THE PRESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE AGM**

Once again, Friends have had a wonderfully successful year despite the presence of COVID 19 within the community and the many restrictions it brought upon us all.

I would firstly like to acknowledge our committee for the great job done throughout the past 12 months. To Greg, Ainslie, Neil and Jenny, and those who have supported them in their roles, my sincere thanks.

In March we farewelled our past Treasurer. Mike Poore left WA for Cairns where he and his wife Deb are setting up a new life. Mike's dedication and

commitment to Friends will be greatly missed as he was always on hand to assist with maintenance and other jobs around the Isolation Hospital, as well as running a tight ship when it came to the group's finances. Mike continues to keep in touch with the activities of Friends from afar and we wish he and Deb all the best in their new ventures. Greg Ireland, another grandson of Bertie Poore, has taken over the role of our new treasurer.

Around the same time, we farewelled Matt Hayes from his role as camp manager following a promotion within the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. Matt has been a long-time supporter of Friends and we must acknowledge the huge efforts he has made over a period of more than 10 years to help, guide and advance the cause of Friends. And whilst we lost Matt as an ex-officio member of our committee, we welcomed him back when he joined Friends as a general member.

Ben Walton has taken over in the role of acting manager for the Camp and we are already working closely with Ben to progress and finalise several initiatives that were in the pipeline. Already we are seeing some major infrastructure works occurring around the site, including the upgrade of lighting along the roadways, maintenance and painting of several buildings including the dining hall and the completion of the restoration and refurbishment of the Doctors' Precinct. It is excellent to finally see this historic building restored and brought back to life, albeit in a different role as a centre for camp leaders. Ben is working closely with Greg and Friends to create an ongoing listing of maintenance required around the Isolation Hospital and we

hope that the camp will find further funds to help to repair, paint and maintain other buildings around the site also.

In June, Friends were honoured by a visit from Ms Lanie Chopping, the Director General of the Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries. Lanie was extremely impressed with our facilities and the work that Friends are doing to preserve the history and heritage of Woodman Point. We look forward to Lanie's continued interest and support for our group in the coming years.

Friends held several busy bees throughout the year, and I am grateful to all who came along and helped to spruce up the Isolation Hospital. Projects included the archiving of many files and historical documentation, the cleaning and reorganisation of storerooms.

In April, Friends invested \$10 000 on maintenance and repair at the Isolation Hospital. The 30 outside windows of the Isolation Hospital, all of which were showing signs of their exposure to the elements over many years, required urgent repairs before the winter set in, and we thank Calibre Coatings for their professional job in carrying out this task.

The next project is currently underway: the replacement of the rusting tek screws on the outside cladding of the Isolation Hospital. Thanks to those who have helped in this task so far. We only have about 100,000 more screws to replace, so if anyone can help it would be appreciated.

Tree maintenance around the Crematorium this year was undertaken by Parks and Wildlife following damage to

the roof by a fallen limb. Our thanks to Lyall Woods for organising this.

Our presence within the community this year has been enhanced as word of our heritage tours continue to spread. Group tours are beginning to return to their pre-COVID levels and our monthly Sunday heritage tours continue to be extremely well patronised. This year, our tour prices were increased for the first time in many years: the revenue from these tours continues to be solid source of income for our group.

Book sales have also been on the rise this year to the extent that we have underwritten further print runs of 200 copies of both *The Boonah Tragedy* and *Western Sentinel*. This supply should last us for some years into the future.



And once again, our presence at the Cockburn Rotary Spring Fair on 30 October 2022 at Manning Park was well received by members of the community attending. A lot of interest was shown by the public who attended and we handed out over eight hundred

brochures.

In addition, we raffled two double tickets for our Sunday heritage tours as we had done last year. This year’s lucky winners were:

- Adriana Kurd, and
- Katrina Forrest.

Thanks to Suzy for co-ordinating with Rotary and thanks to her, Chris, Ainslie, Sara, and Graeme for their time manning our stall.



2021/2022 has been a highly successful year for our small group and once again, I sincerely thank everyone who helped and gave support to Friends in one way or another during the year.

With festive season drawing near, I extend seasons greetings to all our members and their families, and wish you all the very best for the coming year.

Gary Marsh  
President

**UPDATE FROM THE CAMP**

With the easing of COVID restrictions, Woodman Point has recorded its largest

first quarter (July to September) with 6,314 bed nights and 15,131 participations on programs across 102 client groups. The site is buzzing with children at the moment and we welcome seeing Neil Wilson being inducted as a history instructor on some of the finer programs the site has to offer.

During Term 4, the site has been at almost maximum booking capacity during Monday to Friday. This continues until 16 December when Woodman Point will be hosting the annual DLGSC Recreation and Camps Seminar for instructor from all other camp sites - another chance to show-off our fantastic site.

Activity down the beach has increased due to the warmer weather and there has been some much-needed bush clearing along the path after the removal of six large dugite snakes.

Woodman Point’s bush fire preparedness has ramped up with works being completed on firebreaks, slashing of bushes and weed control around

buildings as well as four of our staff completing Chief Fire Warden Training.

The 20m x 10m marquee that provided an extra dining and breakaway space during the COVID restrictions is finally being removed after its installation in August



2020. A consolidated hard structure replacement will be considered for the site when the development of the 2022 Conservation Plan is being considered.

There have been several emergency repairs occurring around the site, especially at the Owen ablutions. The high lime content in the brickwork is eating away at the copper piping that supplies water to the showers and basins and as a result, a plastic poly pipe is being used to replace the copper. The hot water units that supply the Owen ablutions will also be replaced in the new year.

We have had some delightful news that our former Camp Manager Graham Sharpe has had a beautiful little boy Lachlan James Sharpe with wife Leanna and Reece Barrell Smith, our current Camps Event Coordinator, has had a little sweetheart, Eva Jane Barrell-Smith with wife Ashlea. Our congratulations to both families on their new arrivals.

Woodman Point also welcomes James Olton to the family as the new Program Co-ordinator and Scott Price as the Senior Program Coordinator. My face will also be around Woodman Point more often in the future after I was the successful candidate in the recent Manager recruitment program. I certainly look forward to continuing the legacy at Woodman Point.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and festive Christmas period and look forward to working with you all in 2023.

Ben Walton  
Camp Manager

## LATEST NEWS FROM FRIENDS

- ❖ Congratulations to Ben Walton who was successful in the recent selection process to appoint a new permanent camp manager for the Woodman Point Recreation Camp. We look forward to continuing to work closely with you and your team.
- ❖ There seems to be a baby boom happening at the Recreation Camp at the moment. Congratulations from Friends to:
  - ◆ Reece Barrell-Smith and his wife Ash on the recent birth of their little daughter Eva; and to
  - ◆ Graham and Leanna Sharpe, our congratulations on the recent arrival of their little son Lachlan.
- ❖ The next meeting of Friends will be held at the Isolation Hospital on Wednesday 21 January 2023 commencing at 6.30pm. All members are welcome to attend.

## NEW MEMBERS

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

- Peter Bennett from Dewsbury UK
- Nikki Ryde from Byford
- Marissa Piercy from Baldivis

## 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 our heritage tours of the former Quarantine Station.



Jenni



Kay



Chris



Bernadette



Suzie



Gary



Neil

## UPCOMING HERITAGE TOURS

December 2022

11 Dec Monthly public tour  
16 Dec Perth Children's Hospital

January/February 2023

15 Jan Monthly public tour  
19 Feb Monthly public tour

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COMMITTEE 2022 – 2023

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**PRESIDENT**  
Gary Marsh



**TREASURER**  
Greg Ireland



**PAST PRESIDENT**  
Jenni Carder



**SECRETARY/  
MEMBERSHIP**  
Ainslie Poore



**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Neil Wilson



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**EX-OFFICIO COMMITTEE MEMBER**  
Ben Walton



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MEMBER SERVICES

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**HERITAGE TOUR BOOKINGS**  
Jenni Carder



**PRATIQUE**  
Neil Wilson



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WEBSITE MAINTENANCE AND DESIGN

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