



# Pratique

Friends of Woodman Point Recreation Camp  
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**AUTUMN 2020**

## **REPLICA MODEL OF THE BOONAH ARRIVES AT THE ISOLATION HOSPITAL**

Following the century commemoration of the *Boonah* tragedy in December 1918, the *Boonah* Room was established in the former laboratory rooms of the Isolation Hospital to provide a context and commentary to this episode of Woodman Point's quarantine and military history. The acquisition of a replica model of the ship was proposed as a centrepiece for the room and this proposal was approved by the Friends' Committee in late 1918.

Mike Poore, the Committee Treasurer, offered to convene this project, and Mike immediately began seeking quotes and expressions of interest from national and local groups and businesses that would be able to build a scale replica of the *Boonah*. Following a successful heritage grant application to the City of Cockburn by our Secretary Ainslie Poore and ratification from the Friends' Committee to fund the remainder of the project's cost from revenue raised through heritage tours, Friends engaged the services of

NSW commercial model makers, Seacraft Gallery, in May 2019 to produce a 1200mm model of the vessel in a display cabinet. The replica was scheduled for completion and delivery by November 2019.

Despite limited archival photos of the *Boonah*'s wartime service and appearance, Trevor Churcher, Ian Darroch, Gary Marsh and Mike Poore spent many hours between July and November 2019 researching and validating the vessel's specifications, eventually supplying Seacraft Gallery with German schematic drawings of the vessel's specifications to ensure the accuracy of the model. This included reference documents on vessel layout, colour schemes and her duty commitments, including its range of guns, mortars and sea mine defences. Trevor's discovery of the vessel's differing colour schemes through her wartime service, including her newly introduced camouflage - razzle/dazzle livery - caused some concern in terms of the ultimate accuracy of the model, but these important details were fortunately discovered in time for their incorporation

into the model's final appearance by Seacraft Gallery.

In November 2019, the model of the *Boonah* and its display cabinet were delivered in a shipping flat pack/crate to the Isolation Hospital to an excited Jenni Carder and Mike Poore who had the final task of assembling the model for display on a magnificent oak table restored and donated for this purpose by Trevor Churcher.

It was with great pleasure and pride that the model was unveiled at the Association's AGM on 28 November 2019 by the Mayor of the City of Cockburn, Mr Logan Howlett.

Huge acknowledgement must go to all of our volunteers who took on this mammoth project so successfully and gave so much of their time and efforts to ensure the historical accuracy and details of this model, and to Seacraft Gallery for the intricate detail and fine workmanship they incorporated in the construction of this replica. It is a truly magnificent addition to the *Boonah* Room and pays further acknowledgment to this tragic, but important episode of Western Australia's quarantine history.



### DEATH OF PAST PRESIDENT

It was with deep regret that Friends learnt of the passing of past president, and Friends Life Member, Andrea Lyndon-James on 11 January 2020.

Andrea was president of Friends from August 2008 until March 2015 and together with her husband Tony, was a driving force behind the restoration and renovation of the Isolation Hospital from 2003.

President Gary Marsh and immediate Past President Jenni Carder and Howard Shepherd represented Friends at Andrea's funeral.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Andrea's family on her passing.

### FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY

*With thanks to Trevor Churcher for finding this interesting historical article.*

#### QUARANTINE PREPARATIONS BUILDINGS AT WOODMAN'S POINT

Woodman's Point, which, in ordinary circumstances, is a locality undisturbed by life and bustle, is at present a scene of considerable activity, the outbreak of the bubonic plague having roused the authorities to the necessity for increasing the accommodation afforded by the old quarantine station by putting up additional buildings for the reception of patients and persons who have come in contact with them.

In order to ascertain the amount of work that had been done in this direction since the commencement of the erection of the buildings on the 11th inst., a representative of *The Morning Herald* paid a visit to Woodman's Point yesterday

### A CONDENSED HISTORY OF *HMAT BOONAH*

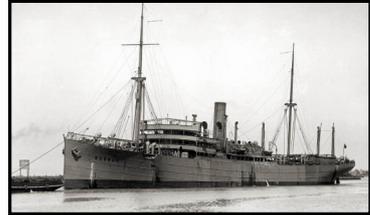
*HMAT Boonah* (A36) Built in 1911 by Flensburger Stiffs Gets., Flensburg, Hamburg, Germany as the *Melbourne*: for Deutsche – Australische Line as an Australian trading vessel.

#### Dimensions

Weight: 5926 gross tons. Length: 137.2 metres.

Width: 17.7 metres.

Steel single screw steamship with a triple expansion engine making 12.5 knots.



- 1914 Seized at Sydney Harbour by Australian Government on announcement of World War I and converted to His Majesty's Australian Transport (*HMAT Boonah* (A36).
- 21 Jan 1916 Embarked Brisbane carrying the AIF 9th Battalion: 21st Reinforcements.
- 22 Jan 1916 Embarked Sydney carrying the AIF 9th Battalion: 13th Reinforcements.
- 21 Oct 1916 Embarked Hamilton Wharf, Brisbane carrying reinforcements for the AIF 15th Battalion, 25th Battalion, 26th Battalion, 31st Battalion, 41st Battalion, 42nd Battalion and medical officers for the Western Front.
- 10 Mar 1917 *HMAT Boonah* sank a German U- Boat off the west coast of Africa.
- 23 July 1918 Another U-Boat (UB-64) encounter. *HMAT Boonah* was being escorted by British auxiliary cruiser *Marmora* in the Irish Sea when UB-64 fired a torpedo, missing the bow of the *Boonah* by 3ft. It continued to travel and struck the cruiser *Marmora* sinking her.
- 22 Oct 1918 Embarked Adelaide with New South Wales Reinforcements 21, 5th South Australian reinforcements, 6th General Services Reinforcements, 14th General (Victorian) Reinforcements, 15th General (Victorian) Reinforcements, and medical officers.
- 29 Oct 1918 Embarked Fremantle for the Western Front carrying AIF 3rd Reinforcement and medical officers.
- Nov, Dec, Jan 1918 Infamous Spanish Flu incident.
- 1919 Continued repatriation duties of Australian Armed Forces after WWI.
- 1925 *Boonah* sold to German shipping company North German Lloyd Line, renamed *S.S Witram* and returned to service as a cargo freighter.
- 1937 Commandeered by the German Navy for use as a German transport and renamed *Buenos Aires*.
- May 1940 *Buenos Aires*, formerly *HMAT Boonah*, was torpedoed and sunk by the British submarine *HMS Narwhal* (N45) between Denmark and Sweden.

afternoon. A glance was sufficient to show that a great deal of progress had been made. About 60 workmen, including tradesmen of various kinds, were busily engaged, and the place presented the appearance of an embryo bush settlement.

The most important building is the plague hospital. This may be considered as practically completed. It occupies a healthy position about 300 yards from the old quarantine station, and is so situated as to catch the sea breezes from the south and west. To patients the benefit of this position cannot be over-estimated. The building is a commodious one, and is made of galvanised iron and pine-wood floorings.

What is termed the 'administrative block' of the hospital will serve as quarters for the doctors and nurses, who will have eight rooms, with a kitchen, etc, for their convenience. Outside and inside the walls are lined with corrugated iron, between which are layers of felt, placed there with the object of securing coolness.

Separated from the administrative section by a corridor is the hospital proper, consisting of four large wards, each measuring 20ft. by 20ft., and 12ft. in height. Each ward is capable of holding four beds. These apartments are lined outside and inside with corrugated iron, between which are layers of silicate of cotton to ensure coolness in the summer and warmth in the winter, and to prevent the accumulation of disease. An ingenious arrangement has been made to secure perfect ventilation. From outside the lower portion of the building

the atmosphere enters by means of 'air inlets' which are situated lower than the beds, so that the air fills the rooms without putting the patients to the danger of encountering draughts. The foul air from the rooms is conveyed outside through the medium of an exhaust cowl, running from the ceiling through the roof. By this arrangement the air in the sick rooms is kept perfectly pure. Other conveniences in each ward are heating stoves and flues, protected by casing to prevent the fumes from affecting the patients.

The floor of each apartment is covered with linoleum, the object of which is to stop the germs of disease from finding their way into the crevices of the woodwork. At each end of the corridor is a nurse's room, so constructed as to command a view of two wards. In close proximity to each ward is a bathroom, the water being laid on from storage tanks. The whole building is raised on blocks to a height of 18in., in order to secure proper ventilation. Arrangements are being made for the conveyance of the bath and waste waters to the sea by means of iron pipes to a main drain, which will flow through a septic tank. All the pipes will be trapped, and ventilated on the most modern plans.

The attendants' Quarters consist of several rooms, each 10ft. by 10ft., and 12ft. in height. They contain all the latest conveniences, and are connected with the main drain.

Among other buildings in the immediate vicinity of the plague hospital are the morgue, Mr. J. J. Harwood's patent incinerator for burning night-soil, and the crematorium. The incinerator is

constructed of brick on a simple plan, measuring about 6ft. square; and being the same height. The flues of the incinerator are constructed in such a fashion that the fumes are rendered harmless before passing into the air. The crematorium, which will be finished in about a week, is also made of brick, and its principle is the same as that of the incinerator. The fumes, before reaching the outer air, have to pass through two fires, and their deleterious effects are destroyed.

Within the area in which is situated the old quarantine station a galvanised iron building has been erected for the preliminary reception of "contacts". It is 56ft. by 22ft., and 12ft. high. The 'contacts' will be compelled to go through an elaborate operation to guard against the possibility of the spread of disease. They will have to divest themselves of the clothing which they wore when they were isolated, take a bath, and don fresh attire, and comfortable rooms have been set apart for all these purposes. Having performed these duties, the 'contacts' will go to the Quarantine Station, while their discarded garments will be put through a steam fumigator, stationed on the premises. After having been fumigated, the clothes will be dried by a patent process. In the quarantine area, pavilions, each 30ft. by 20ft and each capable of holding eight beds, have been erected to meet the probable demand for extra accommodation.

A tramline, leading from the jetty at Woodman's Point to the quarantine area, has been laid since the outbreak of the plague, and other improvements are to be made to assist the authorities in carrying on their work.

The whole of the work at Woodman's Point is being carried out under the direction of the chief inspector of works (Mr. J. J. Harwood), who designed the buildings, and who has displayed a considerable amount of energy in attending to the arrangements. Credit is also due to Mr. J. Lillington, the foreman of the works.

*From Inquirer and Commercial News*  
1 June 1900, page 7

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

2020 has started off as a very busy year for Friends. We have already hosted a couple of informal tours with descendants of quarantine patients as well as well as two night heritage tours. With much regret however, due to the coronavirus situation, Friends have decided to suspend all heritage tours until further notice. Hopefully this will only be for a short period.

In January, we launched a new-look website, thanks to the efforts of Andy Marr from Mantaray Design and Technology, and our secretary Ainslie Poore. Please visit the site and have a look at what it has to offer.

This is being followed up with a multimedia tour of the Quarantine Station that has been initiated by Michelle Young from the camp staff. Its purpose is to introduce our historical site, directed especially at schools. It will be narrated by some of our tour guides and will be a valuable preparatory tool for groups visiting the Quarantine Station on our tours or staying at the Recreation Camp.

In March Friends held a Busy Bee to

spruce up the Isolation Hospital, Regional Park grave site and paint the crematorium door. Thanks to all members who turned up to help, the site is now looking spick and span.

On 12 March, Friends hosted a lecture, by Sister Eugenia of the Order of St. John of God, to commemorate the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passing of Sister Barbara from smallpox at Woodman Point Quarantine Station. A report on this event will be in the next edition of **Pratique**.

Gary Marsh  
President

**LATEST NEWS FROM FRIENDS**

- ❖ A very special occasion was held at the Isolation Hospital on 22 December 2019 when Friends Treasurer Michael Poore and his lovely bride Deb were married on the beach in front of Woodman Point Recreation Camp.



It was a beautiful ceremony watched by their family and many friends with a reception following later at the Isolation Hospital.

Congratulations to Michael and Deb. The Friends of Woodman Point wish you a lifetime of love and happiness.

- ❖ In January, Friends made a \$500 donation to the national Red Cross

Fire Relief Appeal.

- ❖ The *Boonah* Memorial was recently enhanced by the erection of a limestone spire atop the memorial base. Many thanks to Down to Line Earthworks and Stone who kindly supplied the limestone for this project.



- ❖ A new modern headstone, funded by proceeds from Friends' heritage tours has recently been erected over the grave of Nurse Hilda Williams.



The original wooden cross previously on the grave will be placed in the *Boonah* Room at the Isolation Hospital.

Many thanks to Forever Shining for their work on providing this new headstone.

**NEW MEMBERS**

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

- Geoff McIntosh from Rathmines, NSW

## 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



Chris



Ian



Karen



Suzie



Gary



Neil

We also acknowledge Daniel and the staff of Accolade Catering who provide the delicious lunches enjoyed by our tour participants.

**In light of the COVID-19 alerts, the following heritage tours have been suspended until further notice.**

### April 2020

1 April Rockingham Autumn Club  
6 April Club 55  
8 April City of Wanneroo Seniors  
24 April School Nurses Association  
29 April City of Wanneroo

### May 2020

5 May Dalkeith/Nedlands Probus  
13 May Kingsway Seniors  
18 May Alexander Heights Seniors

COMMITTEE 2019 – 2020

**PRESIDENT**  
Gary Marsh



**TREASURER**  
Mike Poore



**PAST PRESIDENT**  
Jenni Carder



**SECRETARY/**  
Ainslie Poore



**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Neil Wilson



**MEMBERSHIP**  
Ainslie Poore



**EX-OFFICIO COMMITTEE MEMBER**  
Matt Hayes



MEMBER SERVICES

**HERITAGE TOUR BOOKINGS**  
Jenni Carder



**PRATIQUE**  
Neil Wilson



WEBSITE MAINTENANCE AND DESIGN

