Sandgate Group Quarterly Report March 2025

The Sandgate Group, now consisting of about 13 members, including two who joined after attending the 2024 tour. So we have an excellent range of experience in the group.

We are actively involved in the planning of tours, is currently working on the 2025 annual tour. It will focus on the Honeysuckle reburials in the Presbyterian portion of the cemetery and the War Memorial (commonly known as the Currie-Jeffries wall) and will take place on Saturday 18 October.

We are in contact with Peter Owens of the Friends of Sandgate Group with a view to understanding each other's roles and work in relation to the cemetery and in our relationship with MMP. We believe that this is important because two groups are involved in the only cemetery under MMP's jurisdiction which is outside the Sydney Metropolitan area. The connection developed after both Peter and I participated in a recent 'Meet the New Staff' meeting with MMP (via ZOOM) and recognised the need.

On Monday 31 March a senior MMP staff member is meeting, in Newcastle with the Friends group. Peter has invited our group to that meeting and so Bert and Margaret will attend.

The following month, on Wednesday 9 April, some other MMP staff members will meet with us at the cemetery. We hope to walk them through last year's tour to give them a good sense of what we do, then take them to the Honeysuckle area to show them our 2025 plans. We will impress upon them the need for improved signage there, replacing the almost illegible water-stained sign that is currently there. Peter Owens will be invited to attend that as well.

This year we will again print the souvenir booklet and related material in-house, with MMP financing the work, under the MOU signed last year.

We have also been discussing the need for a 'succession plan' in some of the roles, resulting in Ros Cheetham volunteering to work with me on the printed material, with a view to being able to take it over in the future.

Margaret Ashford
Sandgate Group Coordinator