

Fremantle Fortress - Rottnest Island WW2 Coastal Defence Facilities
Engineering Heritage National Landmark
Final Report

In November 2008 Engineering Heritage WA (EHWA) submitted a successful **Proposal to Nominate** the Rottnest Island WW2 Coastal Defence Facilities for an award under Engineering Heritage Australia's Heritage Recognition Program.

Subsequently, in July 2010, with the assistance and approval of the Owner, the Rottnest Island Authority, EHWA submitted a detailed nomination for an award. EHA's Heritage Recognition Committee requested renaming the project the Fremantle Fortress – Rottnest Island WW2 Coastal Defence Facilities, and subsequently judged the renamed nomination to be worthy of a Engineering Heritage National Landmark (EHNL). The nomination was prepared by EHWA members Mark Bush and Don Young.

With the generous assistance of the Rottnest Island Authority and Engineering Heritage Australia, Engineers Australia WA Division organised a commemoration ceremony which took place on the island on Thursday, November 10, 2010. Forty guests made the trip by ferry to and from Fremantle. Among the guests were relatives of the late Captain (later Brigadier) B F (Frank) Hussey, who was the Royal Australian Engineers Engineer in Charge of construction of the facilities in the second half the 1930s.

Colonel Michael Page, Assistant Commander of the 13th Brigade, Australian Army, and Mr Laurie O'Meara, AM, Chairman, Rottnest Island Authority, jointly unveiled the EHNL marker presented by Engineering Heritage Australia. Mr Owen Peake, Chairman, Engineering Heritage Australia, travelled across from Victoria for the ceremony. The marker was later installed in the Crew Shelter at the Oliver Hill H1 9.2 inch gun battery site, together with a brief explanatory panel. Rottnest Island Authority does not give permission for other organisations to place interpretation panels on the island which would have been the case if EHA heritage recognition program guidelines had been followed.

After the ceremony the guests were taken in a special train to the Oliver Hill site and shown around the facilities by members of the Rottnest Volunteer Guides Association.

A notable consequence of the research into locating relatives of key people involved in the design and construction of the facilities was to make contact with Mrs Rae Hussey, 100 year old widow of Captain Hussey. A copy of an interview with Mrs Hussey is one of the attachments to this report.

D Young May 2011