

# **FREMANTLE FORTRESS – ROTTNEST ISLAND WW2 COASTAL DEFENCE FACILITIES**

## **SPEECH NOTES FOR OWEN PEAKE**

- **Distinguished Guests, members of Engineers Australia, Ladies and Gentlemen**
- **It is with great pleasure that I accepted the invitation from Engineering Heritage WA to come across from Melbourne to take part in this commemoration ceremony for the award of an Engineering Heritage National Landmark to the Fremantle Fortress – Rottnest Island WW2 Coastal Defence Facilities.**
- **This ceremony is the 147<sup>th</sup> celebration of the Engineering Heritage Australia's Heritage Recognition Program. These ceremonies have occurred over a period of 26 years, commencing in 1984.**
- **The 147 sites recognised to date are located in every State and Territory and cover virtually all aspects of our engineering heritage including:**
  - **Bridges**
  - **Dams**
  - **Roadworks**
  - **Pipelines & Pumping Stations**
  - **Railways**
  - **Ports**
  - **Agricultural Machinery innovations**
  - **Computers**
  - **Industrial Plants**
  - **and many other categories of engineering achievement**
- **Each site is accompanied by a fascinating story (documented by the researchers of Engineering Heritage Australia) which fits into the patchwork of the broader history of this great country.**
- **In the last year alone this program has recognised the following important sites:**
  - **The Sale Swing Bridge built by the great engineer John Grainger to enable shipping to pass to and from the Port of Sale in Victoria**

- **The Port of Sale and the Sale Navigation Canal which was one of the largest civil engineering projects in Australia at a time when such works were carried out by armies of navvies using hand tool and wheel barrows.**
  - **Somerset Dam which not only provided a much needed permanent water supply for Brisbane but significantly mitigated the flood risk to Brisbane.**
  - **The Humphrey Pumps at Cobdogla in the South Australia Riverland which embodied the unique technology of an internal combustion engine driven pump with virtually no moving parts where the piston of the engine is a moving column of water.**
  - **Umberumberka Water Supply Scheme near Broken Hill which provided Broken Hill with the water it needed to thrive as one of our iconic mining cities.**
  - **Antenna DSS-46 at Tidbinbilla in the ACT. This was the antenna which brought down to earth the never-to-be-forgotten signals of the sights and sounds of Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the surface of the Moon.**
  - **The Silver Link Bridge over the mighty Burdekin River at Home Hill, south of Townsville, Queensland.**
- **Despite all these past achievements, and our presence here today on Rottnest Island - there is still much work to be done. We will not rest until we have recognised all the significant engineering heritage in Australia.**
  - **As many of you are aware Engineers Australia in 1996 awarded the Rottnest Island Lighthouse and Signal Station a Historic Engineering Marker, which was the former name for the Engineering Heritage Marker. Bruce James, who is here today, was Chairman of Engineering Heritage WA when the ceremony for that marker took place.**
  - **The nomination for the site which we are recognizing today was prepared from initial notes by Bruce James, and research and writing of the nomination document by Mark Bush and Don Young.**
  - **The committee of the Heritage Recognition Program unanimously awarded an Engineering Heritage National Landmark award to Fremantle Fortress - Rottnest Island WW2 Coastal Defence Facilities.**
  - **I understand that Engineers Australia received considerable assistance and encouragement from the Rottnest Island Authority in preparing the nomination and in particular I would like to acknowledge the contributions made by Harriet Wyatt and Patsy Vizents. Regrettably neither of these ladies are able to be here today.**

- **Thank you**

**CHANGE CONTROL**

VERSION 1 2 NOVEMBER 2010 Don Young

VERSION 2 6 NOVEMBER 2010 Additions and editing by OP 5.25 minutes