



**FACET**

Forum Advocating Cultural &  
Eco-Tourism Inc



# FACET News

Winter 2014 - Volume 19, Issue 1

## 2014 FACET Forums & Events

### FACET CONFERENCE 2014

Creating Connections - Interpretation Practice, Principles and Tools

9 - 12 June 2014

Swan Valley, Guildford, and Perth

### BREATHING LIFE INTO THE CITY

Breakfast with the Rt Hon Lord Mayor Lisa Scaffidi

Thursday, 16 October 2014

Matilda Bay Restaurant

*Check our website for updates*

[www.facet.asn.au](http://www.facet.asn.au)

to **inspire** and **promote** the responsible community use of Western  
Australia's **cultural** and **natural heritage** through **tourism**

## The Story Continues - Interpretation Shaping Rottnest Island

Located approximately 19 kilometres west of Fremantle, Rottnest Island is one of Western Australia's favourite holiday destinations and a place that holds great significance to people for different reasons.

In 1917 Rottnest Island was formally recognised through its designation as a 'A Class Reserve' for its high conservation and recreational values. This is the highest level of protection classification for crown land in Western Australia.

The last 12 months on Rottnest Island has seen many exciting interpretation products come into fruition, some of which have been in conception for over 10 years. Grants and support from our strategic partner the *Rottnest Foundation* (RF) as well as other community groups and the not-for-profit group *Conservation Volunteers Australia* have enabled the Rottnest Island Authority (RIA) to deliver these projects interpreting place, people and heritage.

The Rottnest Foundation is an independent not-for-profit volunteer organisation that aims to 'Conserve the essence of Rottnest' by raising public awareness of the Island's fragile environment and seeking community funding to assist in the conservation and preservation of the Island's natural and cultural assets. [www.rottnestfoundation.org.au](http://www.rottnestfoundation.org.au)

### Wadjemup Walk Trail

The New Year brought with it the opening of the first section of the Rottnest Island Wadjemup Walk Trail. The Wadjemup Walk Trail is intended to be a vehicle by which visitors are exposed to the multiple histories of the Island. It allows visitors to explore the Island and appreciate its beautiful landscapes, layered history and cultural significance in an environmentally sustainable manner. The integration of interpretive signs and installations communicate the diverse values of the Island to ensure visitors continue to respect and protect the Island.

Over the next 5 years the RIA, in collaboration with its strategic partner the Rottnest Foundation and other affiliated volunteer groups, will be constructing 50km of walking trails throughout the reserve. These trails will allow the visitor to leave the bitumen roads and experience the unique natural beauty of Rottnest Island. The first section of five, the Bickley Bay section was completed in December 2013. This 9.4km section traverses the south east corner of the Island from Thomson Bay to Oliver Hill. Along this Class 3 section of the Wadjemup Walk Trail the walker discovers and explores many military sites, which are remnants from Coastal Defence installations designed to protect Fremantle Port and greater Perth during World War II. The interpretation along the trail aims to connect the walker with the isolation and solitude service personnel would have experienced during this time and to marvel at the engineering feats of many military installations.

The interpretation plan for the Wadjemup Walk Trail suggests several mediums to communicate with the walker. These mediums include:

- Static signage and installations to communicate key concepts
- Multimedia to layer information
- Functional and public art to develop visual representations of the natural habitat, in particular of areas that the public do not have access to.

Over the summer 2013-2014 a pilot Artist in Residence (AIR) programme was conducted, on Rottnest Island. The programme saw local artist Fleur Marron, exhibit her works

"towards west end" in the Salt Store over the peak period. Along with the exhibition, interactive workshops were delivered, which were aimed at children. In exchange for in-kind support Fleur, designed and installed a sculpture in the outer reserve as part of the Bickley Bay section of the Rottnest Island Wadjemup Walk Trail Interpretation plan.

With waste management in mind and the need to empower guests with an understanding of management issues faced by the Rottnest Island Authority, a requirement was imposed on the artist that being that the sculpture was to be made from 80% recycled materials sourced from the Island.

### Artist Statement- The Beachcomber



*Rottnest Island brings with it a change of pace and an escape back to simple pleasures. The 'Beachcomber' installation captures this simplicity, and is inspired by the Rottnest Island resident Ospreys and their stacks (nests). What we see within the stack is a reflection on the community in which the Osprey lives. The installation brings light*

*to waste management issues relevant to the Island, and prompts us to be mindful that what we leave behind impacts on the Island's unique and fragile ecosystems.*

Keep an eye out for the next intriguing instalment at the Lakes section which is scheduled to open in winter 2014. The Rottnest Foundation received a grant from the Department of Sport and Recreation, supported by Lotterywest which has enabled the development of the Lakes walk section. This 11km section will take the walker on a journey through the unique Salt Lakes exploring the flora, fauna and geology of these areas as well as the recently mapped microbialite communities which are listed as priority ecological communities.

Be sure to pack your walking shoes for your next trip to Rottnest Island as the Wadjemup Walk Trail will keep you on the move for hours.



### Settlement Harvest

A new orchard has been planted behind Lomas Cottage in the main settlement area. This 1920s orchard was born from the Rottnest Island Museum redevelopment and interpretation plan of which the central theme is "your living museum".

The species selected for Lomas Cottage Orchard were based on evidence from early Settlement Plans and plant remnants on Garden Lake. The shoreline of Garden Lake is where the Boys Reformatory and Aboriginal Prisoners once cultivated the land during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Interpretation signs at the site create a feel for the 1920s with old fruit boxes and ladders intergraded into the sign structures. After a close call with some quokkas, the orchard is thriving; most of the plants are already bearing fruit. It is hoped locals and visitors alike will enjoy fruit from the garden for many years to come.

The Rottnest Island Museum itself has been a hive of activity with several exhibitions being redeveloped and several new ones created. With more and more donations and artefacts finding their way to the RIA collection, the museum will continue to be a hub for new interpretation on the Island.

### A Call to Arms

November 2013 marked the 75th anniversary of the proofing of the 9.2 inch guns at Oliver Hill and with it brought a renewed interest in coastal defences on Rottnest Island.

Oliver Hill is the most intact 9.2 inch gun emplacement left in Australia. As such the guns at Oliver Hill are now an icon of the home defence of Australia during WWII, when there was a strong possibility of attack and invasion. The RIA is committed to keeping our nation's heritage alive and continually undertakes conservation works at these historic military sites, to ensure it is preserved for future generations.

Interpretation at Oliver Hill was refreshed and aligned with the "Rottnest Island WWII Coastal Defence Heritage, Interpretation Plan 2009". Working closely with Creative Spaces the RIA redeveloped and redesigned all signage and installations at the site, some of which dated back to the 1980s, when the site was first opened as a guided experience. The RIA also produced a short film to be shown in the Crew Shelter to cater for those not wishing to explore the tunnels, not only bringing the site into the multimedia world but also making the site and stories more accessible for all.

Bickley Battery and Jubilee Observation Post also saw a facelift. Jubilees' 360 degree views offered an excellent opportunity to point out all other military installations on the Island as well as the sites which these coastal defences were to protect during WWII.

Both sites now form nodes within the Wadjemup Walk Trail and offer an interesting insight.

The Kingstown Precinct also saw a new interpretive trail developed as part of the "your community heritage" grant program. An interactive trail highlights the past uses of the buildings surrounding the parade ground offering the visitor a glimpse into personnel life stationed on Rottnest during WWII. QR codes link to short films created using historic images from the 1940s and archived oral histories from the early 1980s, transporting the visitor back in time. The use of digital media has allowed the visitor to discover parts of the RIA collection few see.

On your next visit to Rottnest Island be sure to discover the military past and explore some of the many installations along the Rottnest Island Wadjemup Walk Trail.

*Prepared by Teagan Goolmeer on behalf of the Rottnest Island Authority*