

## YOUR VIRTUAL DISCOVERY VISIT – 27 TO THE DEFENCE HERITAGE STORIES OF ROTTNEST ISLAND



*The Virtual Visit series was initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic when Rottnest Island was closed to the public due to social distancing restrictions and periods of use for quarantine from March to June 2020. The intent was to maintain a connection to the Island by exploring stories of interest and offering links for self discovery.*

*Now that the Island is once again open to visitors and guiding services are being gradually re-established, these Virtual Visits have been retained as part of an archival record*

*for future*

### A CRAYFISH, A CRAB AND A DOLPHIN



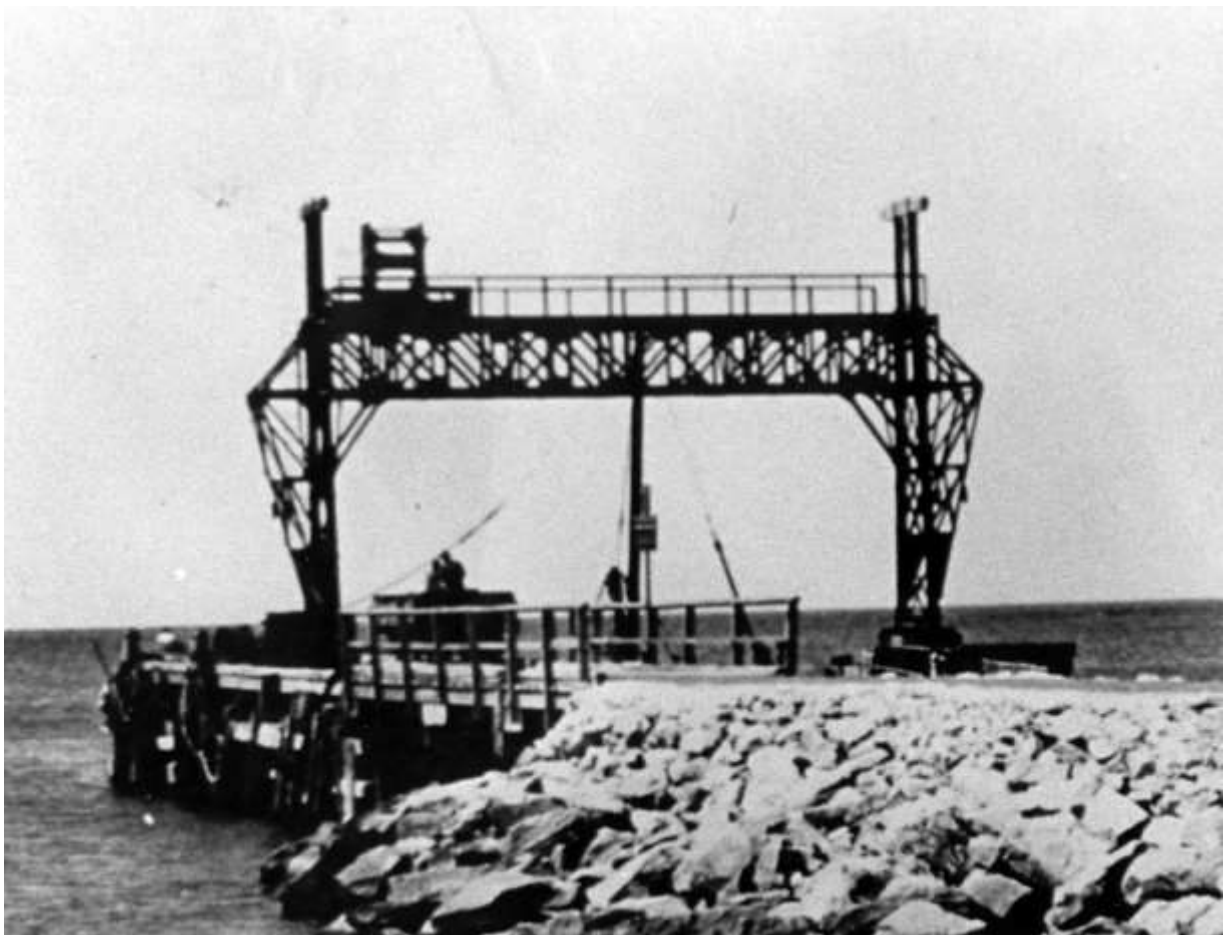
A **dolphin** is a man-made marine structure that extends above the water level and is not connected to shore. Dolphins are usually installed to provide a fixed structure when it would be impractical to extend the shore to provide a dry-access facility, Dolphins typically consist of a number of piles driven into the seabed and connected above the water level to provide a platform or fixing point. A dolphin formed part of the construction works undertaken to install the coast defence batteries at Bickley and Oliver Hill.

To facilitate the landing and unloading of the weapon components from barges at Rottnest, the existing pile jetty had to be lengthened and a pile dolphin placed alongside. These two structures would provide the base for an overhead gantry crane

to lift barrels and major components from barges to rail. The jetty and dolphin works were designed and constructed by the Western Australian Public Works Department.



*The jetty extended and the dolphin nearing completion. Construction had to be scheduled to avoid interference with ferry arrivals and departures.*



*The completed gantry crane*

Although the works associated with the extension of the jetty, construction of the dolphin and installation of the gantry crane proceeded without major difficulties there were some disconnects. When the winch slings to lift the 9.2 inch barrels and the winch arrived from England, it was discovered that the eyes of the slings did not fit the winch hook. The WA Government Railway Workshops completed a rush order for a custom shackle which was flown to the Island.

Future Virtual Visits will cover other design and construction features but there is just enough time and space to introduce the *Crayfish* and the *Crab*.



*MILITARY RAILWAY - **Crayfish** – 1937. A working party being transported to the 9.2 inch gun Battery from the Barracks sometime in 1937 by locomotive "Crayfish". Engineering personnel are on the locomotive; artillery personnel on the railway truck*



*MILITARY RAILWAY – **Crab** - date unknown. Photo of Crab (transverse mounted engine) towing wagon No 1 and "Curly" Masters (driver). The locomotive Crab (so*

*called because the Fordson engine was fitted transversely) was operated by 5  
Fortress Engineer Company, RAE.*