

## YOUR VIRTUAL DISCOVERY VISIT - 6 TO THE DEFENCE HERITAGE STORIES OF ROTTNEST ISLAND



*Rottnest Island is open again and ready for your visit. Unfortunately, the Museum and West End remain closed due to ongoing renovation and construction. Tours have not yet recommenced at Oliver Hill or the Lighthouse while COVID-19 safety protocols are finalised for these sites*

*In the meantime, to help you maintain contact with your favourite Island, the Defence Heritage Committee will continue to present a weekly photo and tell a related story from its collections and archives.*

*Stay safe and we hope to see you soon.*

### PHOTOGRAPH – SUBMARINE CABLE LAYING 1935



In Fremantle port, 10 ½ miles of submarine cable for the new Postmaster General telephone link to Rottnest are being loaded into a barge from the Cable Ship Faraday on 18 December 1935. This cable replaced the original cable laid in 1902 which, in turn had superseded the previous heliograph link.

## HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The arrival of the cable ship Faraday and all aspects of the preparation and laying of the cable was extensively reported in local media. Search using terms like: Rottneest,Cable and Faraday

[https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/85746740?searchTerm=Rottneest%20cable%20AND%20\(cable%3B%20OR%20submarine%3B%20OR%20PMG\)&searchLimits=exactPhrase|||anyWords=cable%3B+++submarine%3B+PMG|||notWords|||requestHandler|||dateFrom=1935-07-01|||dateTo=1936-03-01|||l-advstate=Western+Australia|||l-advcategory=Article|||l-word=\\*ignore\\*%7C\\*ignore\\*|||l-illustrated=\\*ignore\\*%7C\\*ignore\\*|||sortby](https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/85746740?searchTerm=Rottneest%20cable%20AND%20(cable%3B%20OR%20submarine%3B%20OR%20PMG)&searchLimits=exactPhrase|||anyWords=cable%3B+++submarine%3B+PMG|||notWords|||requestHandler|||dateFrom=1935-07-01|||dateTo=1936-03-01|||l-advstate=Western+Australia|||l-advcategory=Article|||l-word=*ignore*%7C*ignore*|||l-illustrated=*ignore*%7C*ignore*|||sortby)

Tucked away between these articles was the following note of a significant development relevant to Australian culture:

*Travellers returning to Australia from the United States bring news and samples of America's latest novelty — canned beer. Canned beer, it is stated, has almost supplanted the bottled product in the United States and is being sold in large quantities. With a can of beer, the purchaser is given a can opener which makes a hole beneath the top. Generally, the beer is drunk from the can.*

The newly laid cable also played a part in the unveiling of the Vlamingh Memorial as reported:

*Next Monday the first wireless broad cast ever made from Rottneest Island will take place, when National Station 6WF will put over the air a description of the ceremony of unveiling the cairn on Vlamingh Head, which commemorates the first landing upon the island by the discoverers Willem de Vlamingh and his crew. Today the manager of National Station 6WF said that the broadcast was made possible by the co-operation of the Postmaster-General's Department and the installation of a new cable to the mainland, thus the most modern means of communication would be used to commemorate one of the earliest events associated with the history of Australia.*

## LINKS FOR FURTHER ENJOYMENT

History of the cable ship Faraday

<https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?10357>

History of Western Australia telecommunications

<https://oldaustraliantelephones.weebly.com/western-australian-colonial-telecommunications.html>

Remnants of historic undersea cables visible near Cottesloe Beach

<https://fremantlebiz.livejournal.com/503785.html>





Public telephones by the Salt Store, Thomson Bay Settlement



Official opening of the Vlamingh Memorial. The official party was headed by the Lieutenant Governor, Sir James Mitchell, although the flag flying is the undifferenced Union flag and not the Governor's standard of the era.