
CROWS NEST CAMP ANTI AIRCRAFT GUN EMPLACEMENT

Location

THE ESPLANADE QUEENSCLIFF, QUEENSCLIFFE BOROUGH

Municipality

QUEENSCLIFFE BOROUGH

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7821-0085

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 31, 2005

Part of the WWII defences/landscapes of Queenscliff and Port Phillip. Installed during WWII after aerial warfare became a threat (after Pearl Harbour Attacks) and submarines were sighted in the area. Important component of the military landscape of this area. Possibel State Level Significance as part of the WWII defence landscape

Interpretation of Site Probably the 4.7" quick firing gun mount installed during WWII

Other Names CROWS NEST CAMP 4.7" GUN,

Hermes Number 13766

Property Number

History

In 1890, the Defence department purchased (from Travers Adamson) the two story waterfront building known as Maytone. From 1910 – 1947, it was used predominantly as an officer mess, except for a short period where it became the Commanding Officers Quarters for three years from 1916 (Tate, 1982: 75, 109). In 1946, Maytone was used converted to a married quarters for officers of the Australian Staff College (Tate, 1982: 104).

The attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941 saw the realisation of the potential of air power for long distance attacks. Anti-aircraft guns were installed in the local football field, along with a 4 inch gun near Crows Nest Camp to combat this threat.

With the threat of war so close to home during WWII, proposal were made towards the end of the war for dual purpose lightweight guns for anti aircraft and small vessel deterrence, which were installed at the football ground and near Crows Nest. The operations at the Heads were scaled down by the end of the war, and Pt Nepean defences were declared redundant. In 1946 the guns were removed from Fort Queenscliff and it was converted to the Australian Staff College (Noble, 1979: 109; Perry, 1973:49; Hunt, 1999:24).

In 1942, two 4.7 quick firing guns were mounted at Crows Nest Battery. Both sets of guns had rear protection shields. In that same year, a sentry at Crows Nest was killed by an unknown person, who later fired on other soldiers. The threat of war appeared closer to home around this time, when enemy submarine and aircraft were sighted in the area (Tate, 1982: 97- 99,114,121).

There was a big gun emplacement behind Maytone (Guesthouse) during WWII (Werry, pers comms)

A cannon was still present in Crows Nest in the 1950s or 60s. The army moved it into the fort later on (Don Love).

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>