

LEIGHTON BATTERY, BUCKLAND HILL — HERITAGE TUNNELS

Statement by Member for Cottesloe

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [12.51 pm]: On Monday, 29 October, I was given a guided tour of the World War II Leighton Battery heritage site tunnels located at Buckland Hill, Mosman Park. I was guided by the president of the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society of WA, Mr David Carter. Leighton Battery was one of the key strategic defence lines in Western Australia during the Second World War and was a critical part of “Fortress Fremantle”, defending the strategically vital port of Fremantle and the associated allied submarine fleet. In the early 1900s, Buckland Hill was identified as a first class observation point for gun batteries. It provided a key vantage point for observation and signalling. In 1941, two weeks after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, an anti-aircraft site was commissioned at Buckland Hill. The site comprised over 300 metres of tunnels, which housed a variety of ammunition, communications, gun crew rest areas and observation posts. The site ultimately comprised three 5.25-inch dual-purpose coast artillery–anti-aircraft guns and a 3.7-inch anti-aircraft gun. The Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society of WA has a core of 30 active volunteers who run the site. Tours of the tunnels are run every Sunday from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm but you can visit the general area anytime. I encourage all members and their families to take advantage of touring the site.