



Media Release

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Memorial Hall centenary celebrations kick-off to mark 100th anniversary of iconic 1925 community project

The handsome art deco limestone and red brick hall that dominates the hilltop junction of Rockingham Road and Carrington Street in Hamilton Hill is 100.

Memorial Hall celebrates its centenary in 2025, with a raft of activities planned to celebrate its birth from humble but determined beginnings with the laying of foundation stones at the former lime kiln site on 21 March 1925.

The ceremony 100 years ago was the culmination of five years fundraising and lobbying, with the fledgling Cockburn community gathering to witness local project stalwart Maud Mary Winfield and State Governor Sir William Campion lay separate foundation stones still visible at the hall today.

In a miraculous effort typical of the times, the hall was finished four months later at a cost of 2,360 pounds, opened with a grand ceremony on 19 July 1925 and fully paid off just 13 years later.

The City has several events planned to mark the significant occasion throughout the year, starting with throwing open the hall's doors for birthday celebrations on 21 and 22 March.

City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett said the hall was built as a place for the close-knit Cockburn community to gather, to memorialise and honour the local men and women sent overseas to serve in WWI.

"In those days, the community was much smaller and disparate and everyone felt the loss of people very deeply, so they sought ways to support each other. Building a community hall was the answer," Mayor Howlett said.

"The hall's 100-year history has since been characterised by countless dances, fancy dress balls, movie nights, weddings, carnivals, fundraisers, meetings, infant health



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support afternoons, political addresses, theatrical productions, art exhibitions and so much more.

“In 2008 the City invested more than \$4m to restore the hall, removing unsympathetic additions and layers of white paint to revive its original design and reveal coursed smooth faced limestone and quoined brickwork.”

City of Cockburn Art and Culture Coordinator Cassandra Cooper said the centenary would be celebrated in a multitude of ways across the next 12 months, including the longstanding Show Off Art Exhibition in April and announcing the City’s inaugural Arts Hall of Fame inductees as part of the Makuru Festival in June.

“Nominations are open until 14 March and we know there is a wealth of talent in Cockburn deserving of recognition, reaching back many decades across all major art forms,” Ms Cooper said.

“As a focal point of the community, Memorial Hall is certainly no stranger to the arts and was reputed to have the ‘best floors’ in WA, making it a popular location for regular dances.”

Following management by a local association for many years, the hall came under the control and management of Cockburn Shire Council in 1963.

From 6.30pm on 21 March, the community is invited to enjoy a night of food, music and dance with local Pear Tree Café pizza and paella. It will be served to the soulful sounds and rhythms of Maatakitj, a Noongar desert blues and dance songmaker from the south of WA, and festive Cuba De Son sets of sweet lounge Latin jazz and energetic salsa. \$5 tickets are available from 1 March.

On Saturday 22 March a free portrait photography exhibition featuring 11 images of ‘Local Cockburn Wisdom Keepers’ by Nic Duncan, a charcoal portrait drawing workshop with Jo Bowman and history talks by the City’s Local History Officer Denise Cook and friends will be held 10am-3pm.

Monitor the City’s social media for more details.



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