

**Planting & Dedication Ceremony**  
**to**  
**Commemorate the occasion of**  
**Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's**  
**Diamond Jubilee Accession to the Throne**  
**by**  
**Logan K Howlett, JP**  
**Mayor, City of Cockburn**  
**Monday 6 February 2012**  
**at**  
**Manning Park, Hamilton Hill**

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Good afternoon and welcome to today's Diamond Jubilee celebration of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne 60 years ago today.

It is only the second diamond jubilee in one thousand years of monarchs, the other occasion being Queen Elizabeth II's great, great grandmother, Queen Victoria who reigned from 1837 to 1901, a period of almost 64 years.

I acknowledge and thank the Reverend Sealin Garlett for his 'Welcome to Country'.

Sealin is highly respected and together with his wife Marilyn they continue to provide an invaluable service to the people of our community and wider afield.

I acknowledge the Noongar people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we are meeting today.

I pay respect to the Elders both past and present of the Noongar Nation and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians who may be present today.

I acknowledge the presence of:

Mr Don Miguel OAM JP& Freeman of our City and his wife June;

Councillor Carol Reeve-Fowkes;

Councillor Lee-Anne Smith;

My wife Patricia and our granddaughter Caitlin Evans;

Mr Stephen Cain, Chief Executive Officer, City of Cockburn;

Members of the City's Executive Group;

Ms Cassandra Cooper, Cultural Development Coordinator, City of Cockburn and other City of Cockburn staff;

Mr Alex Campbell, President, Historical Society of Cockburn Inc. and his wife Millie;

Life Members and Members of the Historical Society of Cockburn;

Mr Bill Wallington, President Cockburn Community & Cultural Council and his wife Maxine;

Mrs Eunice Mitussis, President, Artzplace Inc. and members of Artzplace Inc;

Mr Tony Armarego, former Town Clerk/City Manager, City of Cockburn and his wife Elsie;

Mr Rod Brown, former City Manager/Chief Executive Officer, City of Cockburn;

Ms Elizabeth Manning, representing the Manning family;

Mrs Athalie Isted and other members of the Isted family;

Members of the RSL – City of Cockburn Sub Branch;

Members of the Rotary Club of Cockburn Inc;

Other distinguished guests, one and all.

Before moving to the tree dedication ceremony in honour of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee I want to bring to everyone's attention the fact that in the rose bed across from us an English Oak tree stands proudly before us and recount the story associated with it.

An English Oak tree was planted in honour of the Coronation of King George VI in 1937 in the then garden area of the City's Old Council Chambers on the corner of Rockingham and Forrest Roads, Hamilton Hill.

Then Councillor Alfred (Fred) Isted, Fremantle and Districts Roads Board, a professional gardener by occupation had acquired the English Oak tree and on 7 May 1937 his granddaughter Dorothy Gibson planted the tree in a ceremony attended by dignitaries from near and far.

Fred Isted went on to become the longest serving member of the then Fremantle & Districts Roads Board. He also served as its Chairman in 1945/46.

The tree remained in that location until the early 1990's when a decision was made to re-locate it to the grounds of Manning Park – just behind the Azelia Ley Homestead Museum.

A 're-planting' ceremony was held at the Museum site.

Everyone crossed their fingers hoping that the tree would survive – however that was not to be the case – the tree died shortly thereafter.

However there is an interesting twist to the story. The late Mr Ray Higgs, former President of the Historical Society of Cockburn (HSC) and its inaugural life member (his wife Peggy, also a life member of the HSC is here today) had travelled to Donnybrook to collect firewood for his Perth based business and decided to stop at the English Oak tree alongside the railway station and pick up a few acorns.

Peggy had been born in Donnybrook and her family had lived just down the road in Wilgan.

On his return home Ray and Peggy planted the acorns into pots and it wasn't long before they struck – however several died and Peggy decided to pass the remaining pots on to Dorothy Willis, the wife of the Azelia Ley Homestead Museum's inaugural curator, Harry Willis.

With nurturing the Oak tree reached a size where Dorothy thought it was ready to be planted out to the location we see today.

There was no pomp and ceremony, the young tree was planted and left to send it roots down to water.

It wasn't until more recent months that the tree suddenly decided to indicate that it would actually survive – perhaps it had inkling to get itself right for today's event.

It appears that that acorn from the Donnybrook English Oak tree has gained further heritage significance.

The English Oak tree planted at Donnybrook in 1890 (or perhaps earlier) has formally been recognized as the largest tree of its type in Australia and is on the National Register of Big Trees.

The English Oak or Royal Oak as it became known has its origins in the oak tree at Boscobel House, England where the future King Charles II hid from his Parliamentary pursuers in 1650 during the English Civil War.

At that time Charles II had made an attempt to regain the throne from the parliamentary forces controlled by Oliver Cromwell. However, the final conflict of this Civil War at Worcester saw Charles defeated and forced to flee for his life.

Cromwell's patrols scoured the countryside for Charles II and he sought refuge at Boscobel House. He hid in a nearby oak tree from where he could see the patrols searching for him. The tree famously became known as 'The Royal Oak'.

My wife's great grandfather came out to Australia from Shropshire, England in 1888 and having made his fortune in the Kalgoorlie Goldrush he built a home in Mt Lawley and purchased acreage in Belmont for what he referred to as his 'country estate'.

He named that country estate; 'Boscobel' after the location in England where he had lived and worked.

He was born in 1870 and passed away in 1955 aged 85 years. During his lifetime 6 Monarchs reigned:

Queen Victoria 1837 to 1901  
Edward VII 1901 to 1910  
George V 1910 to 1936  
Edward VIII abdicated 1936  
George VI 1936 to 1952  
Elizabeth II 1952 .....

Certainly it will be different for most people today in terms of the number of Monarchs reigning in their lifetime.

Personally, I have been privileged to live for almost the entire reign of Queen Elizabeth II and look forward to her continuing in her role until she determines otherwise.

Now, turning our attention to today's dedication ceremony in recognition of the diamond jubilee celebration of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne.

Long told has been the story that on 6 February 1952 she was the young woman who went up a giant fig tree in Kenya's Aberdare National Park as a Princess and came down a Queen.

Upon her Coronation in 1953 Queen Elizabeth II made the following statement:

*"Throughout all my life and with all my heart I shall strive to be worthy of your trust."*

This statement personifies the way her Majesty has fulfilled the role and responsibility as Head of the Commonwealth and I am indeed honoured to conduct this ceremony in recognition of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee.

There is no doubt that the Royal Visit by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh to Australia last year for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) captured the Australian community's imagination just as it has on each and every occasion there has been a member of the Royal Family visit our shores.

The events I have referred to earlier in my speech have to some extent helped link today's event from a historic and heritage perspective.

I now dedicate this Royal Oak to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

May it grow into a strong and healthy tree alongside the English Oak Tree planted adjacent to it in honour of the Coronation ceremony of Her Majesty's Father, King George VI?

As I shovel the sand around the tree I will be using an old spade from the historic Jandakot Hotel.

< shovel sand and create a watering well >

I now call forward Mr Alex Campbell, President of the Historical Society of Cockburn.

Alex, on behalf of the City I am pleased to present to the Society a 2012, 1oz silver proof coin minted by the Perth Mint to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Her

Majesty's accession to the throne. It is one of a limited edition 7,500 coins issued worldwide.

< present the coin >

Ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys I thank you for being here today to share in the occasion of the planting and dedication of this English Oak Tree to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne.

The location of Manning Park - often referred to as the Kings Park of the south is certainly one of a historical nature with the Azelia Ley Homestead Museum, the nearby ruins of Davilak House and the lake itself.

We have been privileged to have members of the Manning and Isted families here today and I thank them for sharing in this very special celebration.

Before closing, I wish to thank Cassandra Cooper, Dale Smith, Glen Williamson, Michael Brown and other members of the City of Cockburn staff for ensuring the success of this ceremony.

I now invite you to enjoy the hospitality of the City of Cockburn.

There is tea and coffee, soft drinks and water available. For those of you who plan to consume alcohol I remind you to observe the drink drive laws.

Thank you!