



Media Release

28 March 2019

City of Cockburn born to be alive in its 40th year

When Cockburn graduated from a shire to a City 40 years ago this October, the hit No.1 song in Australia was 'Born to Be Alive' – a title that would later echo Cockburn's survival against attempts to dissolve it completely or absorb its suburbs into neighbouring council areas.

In the past four decades our City has fought off two attempts at killing off the wetlands to waves local government area, once due to an unsuccessful State Government attempt at metropolitan local government reform and secondly by an ill-fated resident-led campaign to snaffle parts of Hamilton Hill and North Coogee for the City of Fremantle, which was rejected by the Minister for Local Government in 2017.

But as early as 1968, the Shire of Cockburn's existence was threatened by a proposal that it be absorbed into the neighbouring City of Fremantle to the north and the Shire of Kwinana to the south, with Cockburn's lucrative undeveloped land a potential rates boon.

True to the song's lyrics (performed and penned by French singer Patrick Hernandez), Cockburn was 'born to be alive' and will celebrate its 40th anniversary and spirit of survival throughout 2019.

In February, the City launched a new history website where you can delve back to the early days of settlement including information about the area's ancient cultural ties with local Aboriginal residents, the Beeliam Nyungar, which continues today.

The website also details Cockburn's wartime, industrial, migration and sporting history via new research, photographs, oral histories, videos and documents, including the earliest issues of Cockburn Soundings.

The site also welcomes submissions from members of the public to continue building a picture of the district's colourful past. Visit it at history.cockburn.wa.gov.au

Mayor Logan Howlett, the council's fifth mayor, said Cockburn had irrevocably changed from the 30,000-resident shire it was in 1979, to a vibrant, expanding, sought-after



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central location to live, visit and work.

“Forty years ago in 1979, Cockburn was on the cusp of a wonderful coming of age. Just two years later, Kwinana Freeway started being built through Cockburn and three years later North Lake Road was built,” said Mayor Howlett, who this year celebrates a decade in the role.

“The coastline was still dominated by heavy industry, with the power station closing down in 1985 and the Robb Jetty Abattoir in 1992.

“We have seen amazing changes during that time – the population has grown to 110,000 and the infrastructure has grown with it including more recent projects like Cockburn ARC, Cockburn Health and Community facility and Coogee Beach Surf Life Saving Club.

“But time does not stop still and this year the City will undertake many projects. In March major widening works on Spearwood Avenue were completed, with significant upgrades to Jandakot Road underway and work starting on improvements to the Cockburn Wetlands precinct.

“It is an exciting time to be 40 and I encourage the community to celebrate how far we’ve come by getting involved in their neighbourhood by making new friends and volunteering time to help our City reach its full potential.”

Memorable milestones:

2018 – \$9m Cockburn Bowling & Rec Centre opened at Visko Park, Yangebup; Cockburn Community Mens Shed opened; \$2m Walliabup Skate & Rec Park opened in Bibra Lake; 20th anniversary of sister city relationship with Split, Croatia; 20th anniversary of sister city relationship with Yueyang, China.

2017 – Local Government Minister rules parts of Hamilton Hill & North Coogee will stay within the City of Cockburn and not be absorbed into the City of Fremantle; Aubin Grove train station opened; \$109m Cockburn ARC opened; \$8.8m Jandakot Rd/Berrigan Dve intersection improvements plus new Pilatus St completed; \$11.5m Operations Centre and Animal Management Facility opened



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2016 – Suburb of Treeby created; \$3.4m Bibra Lake Regional Playground opened

2015 – Local Government Reform process abandoned enabling the City of Cockburn to continue operation

2014 – \$42m Cockburn Integrated Health Facility opens

2013 – Cockburn's population reaches 100,000

2012 – \$10m Coogee Beach Surf Life Saving Club opens

2011 – Cockburn is the first metropolitan council to adopt a Reconciliation Action Plan (the City adopted its third RAP in 2018)

2010 – The new seniors centre opened; Cockburn Central train station opened

2009 – Watsonia closed down in Spearwood; first residents move into Port Coogee

2008 – \$6m Cockburn Youth Centre opened

2006 – Suburb of Cockburn Central created

2002/2003 – Suburbs of Hammond Park and Aubin Grove created

1992 – South Lake Leisure Centre opened; Robb Jetty Abattoir closed

1990 – The Australian Marine Complex in Henderson opened; Henderson Waste Recovery Park opened after Bibra Lake landfill site closed

1986 – Cable Water Ski Park opened in Spearwood

1983 – Azelia Ley museum opened

1982 – Suburb of South Lake created; Adventure World opened



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