

Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett JP
WA Tonga Day Festival 2025
Manning Park, Hamilton Hill
5 April 2025

Good morning, everyone.

I am delighted to be here this morning with my wife Patricia to share in the excitement of the WA Tonga Day Festival here in Manning Park, Hamilton Hill, often referred to as the Kings Park of the south.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Whadjuk Nyungar people, the Traditional Custodians of this land. I pay my respects to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all First Nations people here today.

I acknowledge the presence of:

- Mr Curtis Tui Halangingie – Acting Tonga High Commissioner to Australia;
- Other members of the Tonga community;
- Ms Sook Yee Lai, MLA, Member for Bibra Lake representing the Hon Roger Cook MLA Premier;
- And all of you gathered here today.

It is a true pleasure to be here at Manning Park in the City of Cockburn to celebrate the WA Tonga Festival.

Our city is home to people from over 150 cultural backgrounds.

This diversity is one of our greatest strengths, enriching our community in so many ways.

Festivals like today's remind us of the importance of celebrating our heritage, traditions, and shared humanity—not just on special occasions, but every day.

In March, during Harmony Week, we embraced the values of inclusiveness, respect, and belonging.

Today, we see these same values brought to life through the WA Tonga Festival—a time to proudly share the rich history, culture, and traditions of the Tongan people.

I was honoured to hear your traditional Tongan introduction, where respect and humility are at the heart of your greetings.

These values are truly inspiring and reflect the strong bonds within your community.

I am especially looking forward to the cultural performances, which I know will be a spectacular showcase of Tongan music, dance, and storytelling.

On behalf of the City of Cockburn, I thank you for sharing your culture with us today. We are proud to celebrate our vibrant Tongan community, and we look forward to many more events like this in the future.

Thank you.