

Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett, JP
NAIDOC Week Flag Raising Address
Administration Building, City of Cockburn
Monday 8 July, 2019

Kia

Wanju, Wanju, Beeliar Boodja

Hello and welcome to the land of the Beeliar People.

I welcome you all to today's events that include a celebration of NAIDOC Week 2019 with a Flag Raising event, the unveiling of the City's most recent acquisition to its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Collection followed by a series of stories on the theme for NAIDOC Week being; 'Voice, Treaty, Truth'.

I thank Marie Taylor for her 'Welcome to Country' providing us with an insight into the Nyungar culture and dream time stories that reflect important aspects of the passing of knowledge down through the generations.

I acknowledge the Whadjuk People of the Nyungar Nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today and I pay respect to their Elders both past, present and emerging and extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here today and other First Nation people.

I acknowledge:

- Deputy Mayor Lee-Anne Smith OAM;
- Councillor Philip Eva, JP;
- Councillor Chontelle Sands;
Mr Daniel Arndt, A/Chief Executive Officer, City of Cockburn, other members of the Executive and staff members here today;
- Ms Gail Beck, Co-Chair, City of Cockburn Aboriginal Reference Group and other members here today;

- Ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys.

National NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia each July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The 2019 National NAIDOC Week theme is;

‘Voice, Treaty, Truth’.

We know that the Indigenous voice of this country is over 65,000 plus years old and that these were the first words spoken on this continent.

Languages, passed down lore, culture and knowledge for many thousands of years have culminated in a rich and diverse representation of our first nation people – all the more precious given the thirst for information and the move to preserve the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and dialects and in some cases re-vive them.

As we know, language connects people to country, gives an understanding of country and of a people who are the oldest continuing culture on the planet.

2019 is also the [United Nations International Year of Indigenous Languages](#) and with more than 250 Aboriginal languages across Australia, this is something for us to celebrate and be proud of.

In May 2017, around 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gathered at Uluru to hold an historic First Nations Convention.

A shared document named the **Uluru Statement from the Heart** was created to represent the unified position of First Nations Australians, with Voice, Treaty and Truth being of great significance.

Aboriginal Australians are requesting a formal Voice in Parliament and processes for a Treaty and Truth-telling.

The true stories of the history of colonisation in Australia have to be told, and heard, and acknowledged.

Hearing this history is necessary before we can come to true reconciliation, and genuine healing for all Australians.

Then we can move forward together, and work together for a shared future.

As NAIDOC Week unfolds take the time to absorb as much information as you can about the oldest surviving culture in the world – share the information with family and friends – create the conversation that needs to happen and join the chorus of music, song & dance, cultural experiences and a shared journey of re-conciliation together.

Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls
Welcome to today's unveiling of the City's latest acquisition to its
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Collection.

Before you is the amazing array of work depicting the vibrancy and diversity of a range of very talented artists who continue to engage the community with their artwork.

I am very pleased to unveil Tresa Mundraby's painting titled "Turtle Family" acquired by the City earlier this year, at Show Off 2019;

Tresa is a highly respected member of the Cockburn community whose personality shines through in all that she does in the community and of course with the artwork that she produces.

Congratulations Tresa once again.