

Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett, JP
City of Cockburn
on the occasion of the Karri – Wongin
a Community Celebration of the Spirit of the Lakes
Bibra Lake Foreshore
Sunday 15 May 2016

Good Afternoon

My wife Pat & I are delighted to be here today on the occasion of the Karri – Wongin, a community celebration of the Spirit of the Lakes.

I thank the Reverend Sealin Garlett for his truly amazing ‘Welcome to Country’ as he painted a picture that we could all see unfold before us – over 40,000 thousand years of history energised by the rich historical, cultural and diversity of the Aboriginal tribes that live throughout Australia – these stories are still unfolding – we are all on a journey of learning from each other as we walk together, shoulder to shoulder seeking better ways into the future.

I acknowledge the Wadjuk people of the Nyungar Nation who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we have gathered today and I pay respect to their Elders both past and present and extend that respect to Indigenous People who are with us on the shores of Bibra Lake.

I acknowledge:

The Reverend Sealin Garlett and other Aboriginal people here today;

Representatives from the Cockburn Community Wildlife Corridor Inc. and other community groups;

Ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys.

As we meet on the shores of Bibra Lake to share in a community celebration of the Spirits of the Lakes during the Djeran season of the Nyungar calendar we can all see and hear the beauty of nature around us. From the soft breeze, to the sound of birds in the trees around us, to the leaves moving in the trees and down to the lakeside where a ribbon of water awaits the winter rains

We know that we are also standing on sacred ground and that the wetlands and banksia woodlands that form the Beeliar Wetlands have provided a degree of

certainty for Aboriginal people for time immemorial; that is; until the establishment of the Swan River Colony in 1829.

Since that time we have seen a rapid deterioration of the environment and witnessed the decline in flora, fauna and birds to the point of extinction for some species.

We talk of climate change and the known impacts that we see and hear about every day – how we address impacts going forward will define us as a community and as a nation.

I am pleased to stand here with the Reverend Sealin Garlett and offer this gift designed and crafted by Holly Story as a symbol of healing between the Nyungar Community and the non-indigenous community.

Thank you.