



Media Release

6 August 2021

Cockburn hosts 36th Hiroshima Day tree planting in the name of peace

More than 140,000 lives were lost due to the atomic bomb that destroyed the Japanese city of Hiroshima on 6 August 1945.

For the 36th consecutive year, the City of Cockburn today hosted a tree planting in the name of peace, attended by more than 40 students from 10 local schools.

Bishop Park gained 20 new trees – *Agonis flexuosa* (WA peppermint), *Eucalyptus sideroxylon rosea* (red flowering ironbark), *Corymbia maculata* (spotted gum), and *Eucalyptus leucoxylon rosea* (pink flowered yellow gum) – which will eventually provide shade to the playground and paths at the popular Spearwood park.

They join the hundreds of trees planted over the years throughout Cockburn for this annual event which began with the planting of Japanese cherry blossom trees near Peace Park on the corner of Adela Place and Spearwood Avenue, also known as Friendship Way, in Spearwood.

This year's ceremony began with a symbolic release of white doves by City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett and Consulate-General of Japan in Perth Mr Toru Suzuki before joining local students for the planting.

The two white doves flew above proceedings before turning east and back into the arms of their owner, registered homing pigeon breeder Ray Johnson of Maddington, a member of the Armadale-Kelmscott Pigeon Racing Club.

Also in attendance was former Cockburn councillor and Deputy Mayor Nola Waters, who with the late Don Miguel OAM - Freeman of the City and former Cockburn Mayor - were the driving force behind the 1 July, 1986 Cockburn Council decision to begin an annual commemoration of Hiroshima Day.

Following the tree-planting, the City held a morning tea for students who enjoyed a reading of Eleanor Coerr's historical novel *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Spearwood Alternative School students.



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With the help of Melanie Gray from 22 Folds, students also learned how to make origami paper cranes, or Orizuru as they are called in Japanese.

Mayor Howlett said the hundreds of trees planted across the City over the past 36 years continued to flourish.

“They symbolise the strength of our friendship with Japan and its people and reflect the nature of our growing relationship as we reach out in terms of trade, education, tourism and cultural exchange,” Mayor Howlett said.

“They are also a fitting tribute to the ‘hibakusha’, the surviving victims of the atomic bombs which fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

“The hibakusha survived the immediate effects of the devastating bombs, but suffered from the effects of radiation sickness, loss of family and friends, and discrimination.”

The event was also attended by Hyogo Centre Director Matt Onishi and Deputy Director Melissa Luyke, Elizabeth Po and Adrian Glamorgan from Mayors for Peace and former City of Cockburn councillor Loris Argentino.

ENDS

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