

Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett, JP
‘Fasting in My Religion – Multifarious Faiths’
Ahmadiyya Muslim Association WA
Nasir Mosque
239 Barrington Street, Bibra Lake
Sunday, 16 March 2023

Kia (Hello)

Good afternoon – I am delighted to be here representing the City of Cockburn with my wife Patricia and members of staff; Barbara Freeman and Liz Vuchoco and Councillor Shen Sekhon from the City of Canning on the occasion of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association’s Fasting in My Religion – Multifarious Faiths’ event.

The progressive development of the mosque and its congregation augur well for the future and today’s interfaith gathering provides a further opportunity to share our thoughts on what it means to be a part of a multi-cultural community, how we can all learn from each other; and to be able to share our dreams and aspirations.

I acknowledge the Whadjup people of the Nyungar Nation the traditional custodians of the land on which we have gathered today and I pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to First Nation people here today.

I acknowledge:

- Imam Syed Wadood Janud;
- Mirza Yasser Ahmad, Secretary External Affairs;
- Anjum Qaisrani, President;
- Other distinguished guests;
- One and all.

The City of Cockburn has had a Reconciliation Action Plan since 2011.

As part of our Reconciliation Action Plan we focus on Respect for the local Nyungar people and for an understanding of the culture and history of the broader First Nations people.

I want you to take some time and think about how fortunate we are to be here today celebrating with family and friends in a diverse and multi-cultural community that embraces our First Nation people’s history, heritage and culture and that of those who have come here over time from the four corners of the Earth to make this, the place they call, home.

The Australia Day Council theme for 2023 is ‘Reflect, Respect, Celebrate’. Its’ website states:

The Story of Australia

“This is the Story of Australia – the story of an extraordinary nation.

The Story begins 60,000 years ago. New chapters are written every day.

On Australia Day, we reflect on our history, its highs and its lows.

We respect the stories of others.

And we celebrate our nation, its achievements and most of all, its people.

We're all part of the story.

So, today is an ideal time for everyone to join the conversation and reflect on our shared histories, contributions, and achievements as a tolerant and progressive society.

During my 49 years as a resident of Cockburn and serving as your Mayor for almost fourteen years, I have seen the rapid growth of our City from where it has a population of 120,000 and growing to 170,000 or more in coming years.

We are a progressive community that is taking steps to reconcile our past and to embrace our future for the benefit of all Australians.

Later this year the City will commence the construction of the Aboriginal Information and Visitors Centre at Bibra Lake thus creating a place of learning and inspiration for our community and beyond.

We have come a long way, and although there is still much to be done, we have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to moving forward and creating a place that people are proud to call home.

On Thursday, 26 January I welcomed 48 new citizens to our City. They each made a pledge to Australia and its people.

It is always a privilege to welcome new citizens into our community and seeing first-hand the pride it brings them to call Australia home and themselves becoming 'Australian' citizens.

Australia Day continues to be a day to reflect on our achievements and recommit to making this country a great place to live for many generations to come.

The recent announcement by the Federal Government to allow local governments to hold their citizenship ceremonies on a day other than 26th January (three days either side) will be explored by our Council in due course.

In closing, it is only by reflecting on life itself and how we can help others in need that we truly can truly create a place for all to prosper.

I look forward to hearing Imam Syed Wadood Janud and acknowledge his recent transfer from Melbourne to lead the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association WA.

Thank you.