

Pioneer's Luncheon 2015

Good afternoon.

On behalf of the Elected Members I welcome you all to the City of Cockburn's 2015 Pioneer's Luncheon.

I thank Marie Taylor for her delightful Welcome to Country.

Marie it is always good to see you and to hear the way you weave your story telling into your Welcome to Country addresses.

Our City is truly blessed with people such as yourself who work tirelessly in the community for the betterment of others.

Ladies & gentlemen please join with me in thanking Marie Taylor.

As you know our Pioneers Lunch is held at this time of the year leading up to what is now referred to as WA Day.

It is an occasion for the City to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution made by long term residents to the growth, development and status of our City; one of the most progressive local governments in Australia.

I acknowledge the Nyungar people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we have gathered today and I pay respect to the Elders of the Nyungar Nation, both past and present and acknowledge indigenous Australians who are present.

I acknowledge the presence of:

- The Honourable Melissa Parke, MP, Federal Member for Fremantle;
- The Honourable Francis Logan, MLA, Member for Cockburn;
- Mr Don Miguel OAM JP Freeman and his wife June.

Councillors of the City of Cockburn:

- Deputy Mayor Carol Reeve-Fowkes and her husband Martin;
- Councillor Steve Portelli and his partner Sharon;
- my wife Patricia;

The City's Executive Group

- Mr Stephen Cain, Chief Executive Officer;
- Mr Don Green, Director Governance & Community; (Julie).
- Mr Daniel Arndt, Director Planning and Development;
- Mr Stuart Downing, Director Finance & Corporate Services;
- Mr Charles Sullivan, Director Engineering & Works; and

- Ms Gail Bowman, Manager Human Services.
- Former Councillors of our City of which there are a number here today – I would ask them to stand together with former Chief Executive Officers Mr Tony Armarego and Mr Rod Brown.

Today's event has been co-ordinated by Ms Jodie Behan and I would ask that you join with me in acknowledging Jodie's great work and the presentation of the venue today.

Thank you Jodie.

Can we also thank the volunteers in the kitchen and those who are waiting on the tables today for the effort they have gone to to ensure we will enjoy ourselves today?

The Pioneers Luncheons were introduced by former President of the then Shire of Cockburn, Councillor Alan Thomas in 1971.

Since then the descendants of pioneering families of the district have come together on this very special day to reflect on days gone by, to share a story or two, to foster lifelong friendships and to remember our 'absent' friends since we last met.

The values of hard work, honesty, mateship and commitment are those that have made Cockburn such a great places to live, to raise a family, to work, to operate a small business and to those seeking to invest in our community.

These values are considered when the announcement of the Cockburn Citizen of the Year Award is made each year.

Last year, we announced Mrs Frances Bucat as the recipient of this award.

The announcement of the 2015 recipient will be made later this afternoon.

On behalf of elected members, staff and the Cockburn community, I thank you for your contribution to ensuring that

Cockburn continues to grow in a sustainable manner and that it maintains its position at the forefront of local government in Western Australia.

We know that at this time last year the City was facing the prospect of being 'carved up' by the Barnett Government.

In the end people power prevailed and the five local governments that had the opportunity for a poll clearly sent shock waves through the Barnett Government when a resounding NO vote was recorded.

The back-down by the Barnett Government and the resultant raising of the 'white flag' will go down in local government history as one of the most costly and disruptive (to staff and the community) processes of all time.

Today I acknowledge the outstanding contribution made in particular, by the Hon Francis Logan, MLA Member for Cockburn.

When the going got tough Fran applied the blow torch on the steps of Parliament House more than once and also within the Parliament on behalf of his constituents.

Thank you Fran for your undying support for Cockburn.

My thanks to our Council's Elected Members for their efforts to keep the pressure on the Barnett Government and to respond to a myriad of challenges over what turned out to be a six year roller coaster ride.

Our Executive and staff worked tirelessly to provide the necessary reports and to progress the administrative matters with our neighbouring local governments.

Our community stood tall and I thank each and every one of you for the good work you did to save Cockburn.

It is indeed a great outcome for local governments across the Perth metropolitan area and for our country

cousins who were also looking down the barrel of reform.

In closing, I thank each and every one of you for being here today and wish you good health and happiness for the future.

Thank you.

Today we have a number of special announcements:

Special Announcements

- Katy (Katica) Roglich – 88th Birthday on 1st June
- Bill & Karen Davey – in October they will be celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They have lived together in Hamilton Hill, having bought Karen's grandparents' house that was built in 1914.
- Mr Higgs turned 80 on 10th May.
- Charlie and Shirley Grida celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on 20th May.

- Dino & Mrs Deborah Elpitelli will be celebrating their 40th Wedding Anniversary on the 7th June
- George Higgs turns 86 tomorrow
- Jack Bavich turns 93 in August. Jack was born in Gerald Street and has lived his entire life in Gerald Street.

His Father came to Gerald Street in 1915 and of course the family is celebrating 100 years in Spearwood.

Jack has been coming to the Pioneers Luncheons since their inception in 1971.

Well done Jack.

On a sad note we said farewell to a number of our community members during the year.

As we remember them and their contribution to Cockburn can I ask you to observe one minute's silence please?

May they rest in peace?

Ladies and Gentlemen

I have great pleasure in announcing the 2015 Cockburn Citizen of the Year Award.

The recipient joins a distinguished list of people from across our community who have made a significant contribution to ensuring that Cockburn is such a great place to live, work, visit and invest.

Please join with me in welcoming Mrs Nola Waters to the stage.

Nola Waters was the first woman elected as a Councillor with the City of Cockburn and served the Cockburn community as a Councillor from 1976 to 1990, 1992 to 1999 and from 2000 to 2003.

Nola was and still is an excellent role model for women in Local Government, the school community (in which she worked), and the broader community.

As a volunteer or Councillor Nola attended many community association meetings, committee meetings and events in order to represent the community's voice and interests.

Nola was also actively involved as a member of the WA Local Government Association Library Board which provided a platform for her passion and experience in Education and Local Government.

Nola also served on the Fremantle Cemetery Board as a member and a Chairman.

Following her retirement as an Elected Member Nola has maintained her active citizenship in community life as she recently re-joined the Old Jandakot School Committee, is involved in the Naval Base Shacks group, and many projects related to the Coolbellup revitalisation strategy including membership on the Coolbellup Former School Sites Re-development Project Group and is a member of the Historical Society of Cockburn.

Nola is known for her wonderful community spirit which is shown through her continued volunteering across our community.

Nola is an asset to Cockburn and we thank Nola for being such a valuable citizen of the City of Cockburn.

Congratulations once again Nola.

Lady and gentlemen, as in past years I ask those of you who were at the inaugural Pioneers lunch in 1971 to come forward for a photograph?

Ladies and gentlemen that concludes the formalities; please enjoy the remainder of the afternoon.