

Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett, JP

United Nations International Day of Peace Tree Planting Event

Yandi Park, Cockburn Central West

Monday 21 September 2020

Good afternoon one and all.

Welcome to the City of Cockburn's International Day of Peace Tree planting event in Yandi Park, Cockburn Central West.

I acknowledge and thank Marie Taylor for the 'Welcome to Country' presented today which informs all present of the rich culture and history that the Wadjuk people of the Nyungar Nation continue to share and inform what is a very multi-cultural community that we live in today.

Marie is a great friend of our community and it is always pleasing to see her out and about whether it is at events like today, citizenship ceremonies, community events and the like.

I acknowledge the Wadjuk people of the Nyungar nation and I pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging and I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are with us today.

I acknowledge the presence of:

- Mr Josh Wilson, MP Federal Member for Fremantle;
- Mr Yaz Mubarakai MLA State member for Jandakot;
- Deputy Mayor Lara Kirkwood;
- Councillor Philip Eva JP;
- Cr Chontelle Stone;
- Cr Phoebe Corke;
- Mrs Nola Waters (former councillor and deputy mayor, City of Cockburn;)
- Mr Daniel Arndt, A/CEO City of Cockburn and members of the Executive Team;
- Ms. Sandra Edgar, Events Officer and other members of staff;
- Parks staff from the City of Cockburn and the City of Fremantle;

- Dr Brad Pettitt, Mayor, City of Fremantle;
- Mr Adrian Glamorgan,- Mayors for Peace;
- Ms Elizabeth Po,- Mayors for Peace;

Schools Principals, teachers and students from:

- Emmanuel Catholic College
- Newton Primary School
- Southwell Primary School
- Success Primary School
- Harmony Primary School
- Southwell Primary School
- St Jerome's Primary School and
- Hammond Park Primary School

Ladies and gentlemen, one and all.

Today is the United Nations International Day of Peace – the 2020 theme is 'Shaping Peace Together'.

It is a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fires where countries are at war.

Of course the entire world is at war at this very time in our lives. It is a time where we are fighting an invisible enemy – the coronavirus, the worst public health crisis in 100 years.

The City of Cockburn is hosting its first United Nations International Day of Peace and to commemorate the occasion we will be planting two Ginko biloba saplings.

The trees have been raised from a seed harvested from a Ginko biloba that survived the WW2 bombing of Hiroshima 75 years ago.

That tree was severely impacted but it regrew and seeds have been collected from it ever since for global distribution for occasions such as these.

Raised by the City of South Perth at its nursery, the deciduous tree commonly known as the Maidenhair tree due to its fern-like leaves, was donated to Cockburn by fellow Mayors for Peace members the City of Fremantle which was gifted several seeds by the Hiroshima chapter of Mayors for Peace in 2014.

To the students here today, it will your opportunity to get involved in planting the trees and importantly having your photograph taken alongside the tree so that in time you can return and compare your growth to that of the tree.

In the case of the Ginkgo tree, they are a very slow growing species; so it may well be that several years will have passed before you notice a discernible difference.

By way of background, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly established International Day of Peace in 1981. In 2001 it unanimously voted to designate the day as a period of non-violence and cease-fire, devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace.

This year, the UN will celebrate the day by spreading compassion, kindness and hope in the face of the pandemic, and by standing together against attempts to use the virus to promote discrimination or hatred.

The City of Cockburn became a member of the Mayors for Peace organisation in 2011, with its membership pledge stating the City's support for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Last year the City signed the ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) Cities Appeal.

This was a global call from cities and towns in support of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons adopted by the UN in 2017, and other supportive cities include Sydney, Melbourne, Paris, Washington DC and Berlin.

Thank you.