

**CITY OF COCKBURN**  
**MAYOR LOGAN HOWLETT**  
**SPEECH**

**BACK TO COUNTRY: CELEBRATING OUR  
HISTORY**

1.45pm – 2.00pm  
Sunday 05 June 2016

## GENERAL WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Good afternoon and welcome to today's event, sponsored by the City of Cockburn. Today's event is a partnership between the active Hamilton Hill Community Group, Randwick Stables Community Group and the Friends of Clontarf Hill. The idea was conceived over conversations to bring together community to celebrate and preserve Hamilton Hill's history and to further explore ideas for a community hub for Hamilton Hill.
- Thanks to the efforts of these groups led by Maureen Fisher-Sim, Alison Bolas and Christine Duckham, along with their respective teams, we have such a fantastic free program. Please join with me in thanking the organisers.
- I would like to start by acknowledging the Nyungar people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we have gathered today. I pay respect to the Elders of the Nyungar Nation, both past and present and acknowledge indigenous Australians who are present. Thank you too to Reverend Sealin Garlett for this morning's Welcome to Country ceremony.
- I welcome and acknowledge:
  - Councillors of the City of Cockburn
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  - And of course all members of the Hamilton Hill community and indeed all residents of our great City.

## TODAY'S THEME

- The theme of today's event is *Back to Country: Celebrating Our History*. Indeed, it is a long history that dates back further than the beautiful and heritage listed Ranwick Stables.
- I am told that the Nyungar people used to not only walk through, but also meet at this very area where we are standing today as a community. How appropriate it is then that Hamilton Hill's community should gather here, at a spot that has for thousands of years been the meeting point of community.
- In reflecting on today's theme, I remembered a quote from the famous historian, George Macaulay Trevelyan. He wrote,
  - *"The poetry of history lies in the quasi-miraculous fact that once, on this familiar spot of ground, walked other men and women, as actual as we are today, thinking their own thoughts, swayed by their own passion, but now all gone, one generation vanishing after another, gone as utterly as we ourselves shall shortly be gone..."*
- Today we are here to celebrate both our past and our present. We meet in a historical place because meeting places are central to our community. They are the places where we discover that the threads of history tie us ever closer to each other in the present.
- Our community of Hamilton Hill is tightknit. In recent memory, I recall the coming together of our community as part of the *I Heart Hammy Hill* campaign to keep Hamilton Hill as part of our City of Cockburn. I personally spoke with passionate members of our community, some of whom are here today. They said to me that it mattered that Hamilton Hill was part of Cockburn because our City shares the values of our residents. We were threatened with division. We retaliated with unity. Now we stand stronger as a community.
- Our community of Hamilton Hill values community spirit, the environment, and inclusive families. We value the arts, music and history. You can see evidence of that all around you today. You'll also discover what we value most of all: we value the time we spend together as a community. That is why the City of Cockburn sponsors

community-led and organised events just like the one we are enjoying today.

## **EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS HAPPENING TODAY**

- Our community has outdone itself today. As I walked around today, I was impressed to see all aspects of our history on display. I have had the pleasure of listening to some live music from John Reed and the Hill Trones, Helen Townsend and Ceri McPhillips. I would encourage each of you to walk around and see what our community has put on display here today. Some of today's workshops have included:
  - Nesting boxes
  - Gardening with local resources with Peg Davies
  - Aboriginal history with Marissa Verna (TBC)
  - Waterwise garden with Beyond Gardens
  - Percussion instrument making with Junkadelic Brass Band; and
  - Basket Weaving with Sharyn Egan.
- Following my address today, there will be some live music from Peter Bibby and you can try your luck at part two of the Chocolate wheel raffle.
- There much happening today. Aside from the workshops I have already mentioned, there are:
  - Pony rides
  - Petting Farm
  - Face painting
  - Ploughing demonstration

- Wagon rides
- Vintage tractors
- Farm machinery
- Harness club horses
- Cultural walks
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- [ ].

- I understand that today the Hamilton Hill Community Group also wants to hear your ideas about what a dedicated community space in Hamilton Hill would look like. I encourage you to speak to members of the Hamilton Hill Community Group about this and give them your thoughts, as members of our community and residents in our City.

## **THE HISTORY OF HAMILTON HILL**

- Hamilton Hill has had a rich history.
- As I have already mentioned, Nyungar people were meeting here for thousands of years before the Hamilton Hill Homestead was built around this spot in circa 1830. I encourage you to have a read of the Aboriginal history of this area, displayed here today. Please make your way around and have a read about our rich Aboriginal history, colonial and post-colonial history.
- If we turn to our built surroundings, we can see the historical value of this place. Only last month, an archaeologist identified the location of the original Hamilton Hill Homestead. In fact, the location of the historical Homestead is over there, in the fenced paddock, exactly where the pony rides are occurring today.

- The cottage and the stables operated here in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. From around 1901 to the 1950s, this area played an important role in producing milk for the Fremantle and Cockburn areas. Close by, market gardens would become the breadbasket for surrounding suburbs. It is no surprise then that here today we are showcasing some of our history including cow and goat milking demonstrations.
- As you know, our history of food production continues, as the Randwick Stables Community Gardens continue to provide our community with sustenance with everything from celery, English spinach, basil, rocket, lettuce, tomato and it seems almost any vegetable that fertile soil could produce.
- But the history of this area has not just had an impact on food production. The history of the stables has also impacted our sporting history. In fact, later this year when Australians celebrate our nation's Melbourne Cup, we can reflect that at this very place is where our State's horse racing industry took shape. It was indeed not too far from here that the Swan River Colony held its first ever horse races in the year 1883. Horses have been an important part of the stables and of our history. The Heritage Council estimates that around 400 horses were stabled in this area.
- I was just reminded of another special feature on display here today. If you make your way to the heritage stables, you will see a World War One Anvil on display. This anvil was taken to the Palestine Battle of Beersheba. It belong to A K Brown, a member of a pioneering smith and horsing family who lived in Bibra Lake. I encourage you to go to and see it.
- Just after the great war, at around the 1920s, the Hamilton Hill area began to modernise. Domestic electricity was connected in 1926, greatly improving quality of life and productivity.

## **HAMILTON HILL TODAY**

- The bustling hub of Hammy Hill has come a long way from its long history. Busses, roads, and libraries connect us to each other. Our community is rich in diversity. People from all corners of the world have come to call this patch of Australia their home.

- It is hard to believe that we are only 22 minutes away from the centre of our State's Capital. Our Hamilton Hill has gone from strength to strength. Through the Hamilton Hill Revitalisation Strategy released in 2012, we have:
  - Planted over \$110,000 worth of trees on Forrest Road and Healy Road. In fact, we have planted hundreds of other street trees in parks, verges and medians including Jean Street, Clontarf Road, Bourbon Street, Grandpre Street, Quickly Crescent, Southwell Street and more;
  - Upgraded the Davilak Oval facilities;
  - Upgraded club rooms or facilities' at Bakers Square Netball Club, Goodchild Reserve and Walley Hagen Basketball Stadium;
  - Built the Manning Park Stairs; and
  - Undergrounded power lines in East Hamilton Hill to make our Hammy Hill more beautiful.
- We didn't invent these ideas. You were the leaders responsible for the great changes of our Hamilton Hill. Around 130 Hamilton Hill residents attended community visioning forums where the City of Cockburn asked residents to shape their community.
- As I have already mentioned, the Hamilton Hill Community Group today wants to hear your ideas about what a dedicated community space in Hamilton Hill would look like. I encourage you to speak to members of the Hamilton Hill Community Group about this and give them your thoughts, as members of our community and residents in our City.
- The Hamilton Hill Community Group is stronger than ever. We can thank the hard working members of the Hamilton Hill Community Group for today's event and for raising the standards of our beloved Hammy Hill. Obviously the fruits of that strength are for all of us to enjoy. After all, what is community if not the enjoyment of each other's company?

## **THANK YOU**

- I wish to thank each of you for coming out to celebrate our shared history. I encourage you to share your photos on the City of Cockburn's facebook page.
- Thank you to to the efforts of the Hamilton Hill Community Group, Randwick Stables Community Group and the Friends of Clontarf Hill. These groups led by Maureen Fisher-Sim, Alison Bolas and Christine Duckham, along with their respective teams, have worked so hard for us to be able to enjoy this beautiful day.

**END**