

Speech by Logan K Howlett JP, Mayor, City of Cockburn

Salty Fest, Coogee Beach, Sunday, 26 February 2017

Thank you Nicki

Kaya, Wanju Wanju Beeliar Boodjar.

(Hello, Welcome to the land of the Beeliar people).

On behalf of Elected Members and staff of the City of Cockburn I welcome you to Salty Fest on a magnificent summer's day.

I thank the Reverend Sealin Garlett for his heartfelt 'Welcome to Country' and for providing us all with an amazing picture of Nyungar Culture and their respect for the land.

Sealin provides a range of services across Cockburn and further afield making a positive difference in whatever he does – never seeking recognition – just going about what he does best. Thank you Sealin.

I acknowledge the Whadjuk People of the Nyungar Nation who are the custodians of the land on which we meet today.

I pay respect to their Elders both past and present and extend that respect to Indigenous Australians who are with us today.

I acknowledge the presence of:

- The Reverend Sealin Garlett;;
- Deputy Mayor Carol Reeve-Fowkes and her husband Martin;
- Cr Bart Hoewen;
- My wife Patricia and our granddaughter Caitlin;
- Mr Chris Beaton, Vicki Harthill, Jenni Harrison, Claire Dunn and Julie Reidy, Linda Metz, Adam Harris, Melanie Bainbridge noting that Melanie has just been hospitalised for a few days after organising today's event;
- Mr Garry Trinder, LotteryWest Board Member;
- Mr Stuart Gardiner, Development Director, Fraser Property Australia;
- Mr Matt Allen, Managing Director, Subcon;
- Ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys.

The coastline we are standing by today has a long and interesting history dating back to the times where Aboriginal people used it for

hunting, fishing, collecting berries and other food and medicinal needs and shelter as they moved about in the six Nyungar seasons.

As we know European contact occurred sporadically along our coastline from at least 400 years ago with the establishment of the Swan River Colony in 1829 and also noting the Peel Settlement occurring in the lead up to the establishment of the colony down at Woodman Point.

Shipwrecks off the Western Australian coastline have and continue to create stories that are passed down through the generations including the historic Omeo shipwreck, lodged in shallow water 25m off Coogee Beach since 1905. As we can see it has evolved into a wonderful marine conservation and educational asset that forms an exciting part of the City's expanding trails network.

As part of the construction of Port Coogee, baseline surveys indicated that the area was relatively devoid of marine life.

In an attempt to attract our wonderful marine creatures back into the area, and to provide opportunities for education, research and conservation, the City partnered with a range of stakeholders and developed a new dive and snorkel trail around the wreck site, complete with artificial reefs and underwater artworks.

At 230m long and between 1-8m deep, the trail is perfect to snorkel and scuba dive as larger fish species are attracted to the 5m tall reef temple which includes a swim through section.

The fibre reinforced concrete modules, ranging in height from 1-5m tall, are designed by marine engineers and scientists to support fish, crays and molluscs.

Built by Subcon, the reef includes 33 individual reef structures of varying sizes and forms.

While it's early days yet the structures are expected to eventually offer a diverse range of habitats and protection for a range of plants and animals.

The University of WA has undertaken monitoring of the structures noting that several are already developing new marine growth and a number of new fish species have been noted.

Interpretive signage has been installed on the shore providing information about the Omeo wreck.

Underwater signage has also been installed providing information on the wreck as well as some of the marine creatures that might be seen.

The City acknowledges and thanks its project partners:

- The Western Australian Museum;
- University of Western Australia;
- Murdoch University;
- Perth Naturel Resource Management;
- Subcon;
- Frasers Property Australia; and of course our major sponsors:
- the Department of Sport and Recreation; and Lotterywest for their generous contribution of \$78,000 to the trail's development and for their continuing support for community projects in Cockburn and indeed across the entire State. Many of the City's projects would not have progressed without the support of Lotterywest.

The City's members of staff who have overseen this project with enthusiasm and great endeavour in particular Chris Beaton, Jenni Harrison, Vicky Hartill, Claire Dunn and Julie Reidy are to be congratulated' as is Melanie Bainbridge.

In closing, access to the trail is to my left, around 300 metres down the path past the park, where the dive and snorkel clubs are.

We ask everyone here today to be very safe, and NOT to climb over the rocks to access the dive trail.

Our friendly security guards will be keeping a keen eye out to make sure everyone is ensuring their own safety and that of others.

Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys I now officially declare the Coogee Maritime Trail open!

Please continue enjoy your day and remember to continue to visit this amazing facility that brings alive our history and the opportunities for the future.

Thank you.