

A FEW WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the Sister Cities Australia Newsletter.



Hello again my fellow Sister Cities friends. It has been quite some time since I last penned a message to you and for this I apologize. In all we do there is always a constant reminder that the most important possession we may own, is good health. This is followed closely by family and friends and if we hold all these in good stead we should enjoy a happy life.

I, along with everyone else, find it difficult to accept the fact that another year has nearly passed us by. OH WHAT A YEAR IT HAS BEEN. Fire and floods and then the worldwide Pandemic have all gone down to make this last year one of struggle but also one of mutual cooperation and friendship coming to the fore to assist everyone through these disasters. They have touched so many and created hardship in a myriad of ways, however the Australian Tru Blu Spirit has lifted us above and beyond.

For me personally it has been one filled with numerous challenges not the least of which has been my health. Family sickness, job loss and the lack of being able to travel and assist have all added to make the year one which I trust will never be repeated. I do need to say a big thank you to those

who have cared and have kept in touch. You are truly my friends.

In the World of Sister Cities there has not been too much to report on with our activities being severely curtailed. We were looking forward to our next Forum in Darwin and to the holding of our AGM. The latter of course being held successfully via Zoom. Thanks to Sec. Mike for arranging, VP Christina for chairing and for other Exec Members for taking part.

It is envisaged that hopefully with borders reopening that SCA will be able to resume business as usual in the early part of 2021. We will be looking to continue with either a Forum or Conference at a yet to be determined venue.

The Federal Government are currently working through the Foreign Relations Bill. We shall have to wait until decisions have been made surrounding this and then determine what impact it may have on our International relationships. Your Exec will discuss this at an upcoming meeting and report back with our findings. In the meantime please discuss the Bill with your local Federal Members.

For all of you who are involved in Sister City relations, whether large or small, may I take this opportunity, on behalf of myself and all your Executive, to wish you a Very Happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

May your God go with you and may you live in a world of Peace.

Yours in Sister Cities,
Bill Wilson, President
Sister Cities Australia

What's new in this issue?

- ✓ [2020 AGM Review](#)
- ✓ [Tree Planting Ceremony - The Gingko Story](#)
- ✓ [Tree Planting Ceremony, Cockburn, WA](#)
- ✓ [Tree Planting Ceremony, Rockingham, WA](#)

2020 AGM REVIEW

The 2020 AGM, November 20, evaluation.

The Sister Cities Australia Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held via a Zoom videoconference on

Friday 20 November, 2020 with 18 people logging in to attend the meeting. Unfortunately our

President, Bill Wilson, was unable to attend so the AGM was presided over by Vice President Christina Despoteris.

Christina welcomed all and provided an overview of activities from the past year. The Treasurer, Gordon Allen, then provided his annual report on our finances and presented the audited accounts for acceptance. SCA Life member Peter Filmer, Blacktown, thanked the SCA Committee for their

hard work and maintaining the association through these current difficult times.

There was a little general discussion before the AGM was formally closed by Christina. Should any members like access to the video recording of the AGM, which last for 27 minutes, please email the Secretary Mike for the link, email address below.

Mike Jakins
SCA National Secretary
mike.jakins@sistercitiesaustralia.com

MAYORS FOR PEACE - SPECIAL ARTICLES

Mayors for Peace - Ginkgo Tree Planting Initiative

A Tale of Seven (South West Western Australian) Cities.

Hundreds of people in the South West of Western Australia have been inspired by the stories from Hibakuju moku - second-generation A-bomb trees - grown from seeds brought to Fremantle in 2014. Now healthy vibrant saplings, eleven of the Ginkgo biloba trees were honoured and planted in seven South West cities' parks, with formal ceremonies and plaque unveilings held on Hiroshima Day, Nagasaki Day, and International Peace Day 2020. Various wonderful events were attended by mayors and dignitaries, staff and school children, and many locals, including Indigenous elders who bestowed welcomes and blessings, all of which attracted plenty of local media coverage.

These ginkgo trees actually originate from the Jurassic era, the time of the dinosaurs. And they almost went extinct when the Earth was in its last Ice Age. But somehow this ginkgo species survived in a few places in China. And in ancient times the ginkgo tree was taken to Japan and plant-ed, and where it was much admired.

When the ginkgo is fully grown, it has bright green foliage, which turns a gorgeous golden colour in autumn. It leaves a beautiful skirt of yellow beneath it. And the ginkgo biloba has a special genome or DNA. It seems that ginkgo trees don't show the effects of ageing. Ginkgo nuts are given out at weddings. They are trees with a strong desire to live and grow. And their message to us is to do the same - remember they have grown from seeds that came from one of those ginkgo trees in Hiroshima, a ginkgo tree that went through an atom-blast, one that killed 140,000 civilians.



Fremantle planting on Hiroshima Day, 2020



Fremantle International Day of Peace unveiling

In Japan, every ginkgo tree that survived the A-bomb has been given a special name and it has a plaque to help us all remember the wonder of this tree, and the willingness of life to emerge from the worst kind of war ever.

The ginkgo trees are a bearer of hope but they are also a warning. They are a reminder of the terrible destruction of nuclear weapons, which have been recreated as one hundred times more powerful than that dropped on Hiroshima. And there are now around 14000 of these terrible nuclear weapons in the world.

Mayors for Peace is active in ~8,000 cities around the world, and Fremantle took on Regional Lead

City and Executive roles in recent years, as part of the fitting focus on building cultures of peace in our communities alongside the imperative of removing the threat of nuclear weapons. The organisation started in Japan, arising from their first hand experiences of the only war usage of nuclear weapons and ongoing aftermath.

Ceremonies this year where the trees and their meaning were honoured:-

- August 6 - Hiroshima Day - City of Fremantle planted two saplings grown from the seeds. (Also South Perth planted a sapling. Though not yet a member of Mayors for Peace, their nursery grew half of the 20 seeds sent from Hiroshima.) Also on this day the City of Cockburn had their regular event to honour Hiroshima Day, the 35th year of planting commemorative trees in many parks which thereby become 'peace parks'.



Fremantle Nagasaki Day planting

- August 9 - Nagasaki Day - City of Fremantle planted two more of the Gingko saplings.
- September 21 - International Day of Peace - City of Fremantle, had an unveiling ceremony of the Gingko's commemorative plaque, inviting notable dignitaries Melissa Parke (ICAN Ambassador and member of UN Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen), and MP Josh Wilson (Federal Member for Fremantle) to address the audience alongside Mayor Brad Pettitt. As well, on this day the Cities of Cockburn, Rockingham, Busselton, Albany and Subiaco held events to honour their remarkable second-generation a-bombed Gingko saplings.

Other affiliated events included the remarkable Mayors for Peace poster competition and display in the City of Busselton, seen by myriad visitors of all ages.

Conversations continue to grow understanding of the plantings' themes of peace, resilience, and preparing celebrations for the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons coming into force on January 22, 2021.

So drop by one of these planting spaces over the next decades (and centuries, as these trees are ancient survivors!) to contemplate the peaceful connections that grow and flourish through our net-works.

Elizabeth PO' and Adrian Glamorgan
Mayors for Peace Ambassadors
City of Fremantle, WA

Ginkgo Tree Planting Ceremony, Cockburn, WA



Six-year-old Ginkgo biloba saplings will be planted in their new home as the City of Cockburn hosts its first United Nations International Day of Peace event on 21 September.

The trees, raised from a seed harvested from a Ginkgo biloba that survived the WW2 bombing of Hiroshima 75 years ago, will be planted by Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett, at a public event attended by local school students at Yandi Park, Cockburn Central at 2pm.

The parent Ginkgo biloba was 500m from the blast epicentre in Hiroshima. That tree was destroyed 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 trees commonly known as the Maidenhair tree due to its fern-like leaves, were donated to Cockburn by fellow Mayors for Peace member the City of Fremantle which was gifted

several seeds by the Hiroshima chapter of Mayors for Peace in 2014.

The UN General Assembly established International Day of Peace in 1981, and in 2001 unanimously voted to designate the day 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.

In 2011, Cockburn Council endorsed Mayor Howlett's request to join the Mayors for Peace organisation, with its membership pledge stating the City's support for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Last year Mayor Howlett signed the ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) Cities Appeal on behalf of the City of Cockburn.

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

The Treaty has the support of 122 countries, but Australia has not yet joined the Treaty.

<https://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/City-and-Council/Events-and-News/Latest-News/Rare-Ginkgo-tree-planting-for-peace>

SCA would like to thank the City of Cockburn for permission to share their story and the use of the photographs.



Mayors for Peace Elizabeth Po and Adrian Glamorgan and Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett

Ginkgo Tree Planting Ceremony, Rockingham, WA

As part of its involvement in the Mayors for Peace Program, the City of Rockingham has planted a ginkgo biloba tree at City Park to recognise International Peace Day 2020 and to commemorate 75 years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan.

Mayor's for Peace is an international organisation of cities from around the world dedicated to the promotion of peace. The City joined the Mayor's for Peace program in August 2018 through its Global Friendship Committee.

The ginkgo biloba tree planted in Rockingham is a direct descendent of a 200 year old tree that survived the Hiroshima atomic bomb blast in 1945. Those seeds were initially presented to the City of Fremantle by Hiroshima Mayor, Tadatoshi Akiba. The seeds were then passed on to the City of South



Junior Councillors Romeo Zver, Sophie Gray, Tahana McDonald (l to r) and Mayor Barry Sammels plant the tree.



(Front Row, Left to Right) Tahana McDonald, Romeo Zver, Sophie Gray
(Back Row, Left to Right) Masataka Onishi, Ms Madeleine King MP, Cr Hayley Edwards, Mayor Barry Sammels, Deputy Mayor Deborah Hamblin, Mr Reece Whitby MLA, Cr Joy Stewart, Cr Lorna Buchan, Mrs Ruth Boylan, Mr Ged Boylan

Perth Nursery where they were nurtured into small trees.

The six trees which grew from these seedlings are being planted across Western Australia, one in the City of Rockingham, and the others in the Cities of South Perth, Fremantle, Subiaco, Albany and Cockburn.

"More than 60 cities in 18 countries have received seeds as part of this International Peace Day initiative, and the City is proud to be a part of it by planting a ginkgo biloba tree in the heart of Rockingham," City of Rockingham Mayor Barry Sammels said.

"With only two ginkgo trees surviving the Hiroshima blast in 1945, the City is very privileged to have a living piece of history growing in the centre of our community."

SCA would like to thank the City of Rockingham for permission to share their story and the use of the photographs.

More Media Links on Individual Council's Plantings

Thanks to the Mayors for Peace ambassadors, Elizabeth and Adrian, for the following links which provide additional information about some of the Ginkgo tree plantings that took place in WA in September.

I hope you enjoy reading them and seeing the commitment made by many WA councils to the Mayors for Peace program – and not all of them have sister city relationships.

City of Fremantle – Mayor Brad Pettitt's blog
<https://cofremantle.wordpress.com/2020/09/23/the-hiroshima-ginkgo-biloba-and-its-message-of-peace/>

City of Busselton
<https://thewest.com.au/news/busselton-dunsborough-times/message-of-peace-grows-ng-b881672243z>

City of Subiaco
<https://www.subiaco.wa.gov.au/Your-council/News-and-media/News/2020/September/City-plants-special-tree-to-mark-International-Day>

City of Albany

<https://thewest.com.au/news/albany-advertiser/ginkgo-tree-planted-in-albany-spreads-global-message-of-peace-75-years-on-from-hiroshima-bombing-ng-b881670848z>

City of Rockingham

<https://rockingham.wa.gov.au/your-city/news/2020/september/city-supports-international-peace-day-efforts>

City of Cockburn

<https://www.perthnow.com.au/community-news/cockburn-gazette/trees-bearing-hiroshima-connection-planted-in-cockburn-for-international-day-of-peace-c-1320247>

City of South Perth

<https://www.johnmcgrath.net.au/ginkgo-hiroshima-peace/>

Mayors for Peace Activation Team on

Understorey

<https://rtrfm.com.au/story/understorey-planting-gingkos-for-peace/>

SCA's Presence on Facebook

The OFFICIAL SCA Facebook Page

SCA has had a web presence on Facebook for a while now. The original Facebook Page had been left as the current committee had been unable to access it for updating. Well, now we can and we have updated it to allow us all to share our stories and articles on all things sister city related.

The OFFICIAL SCA Facebook Group

The Facebook Group will still remain as this is where we are able to share files, such as our quarterly newsletter, online – we can't do this on the Facebook Page. Please **FOLLOW** us, **LIKE** us, **SHARE** us and also we'd love to see your contributions.

Mike Jakins
National Secretary

SCA Affiliation Directory and Links Update



2020 DIRECTORY OF AUSTRALIAN SISTER CITY AND FRIENDSHIP CITY AFFILIATIONS

UPDATED: 24/9/2019 with data supplied by CLAIR for all Australia-Japan relationships
10/1/2020 with data supplied from survey to all Local Govt. Authorities

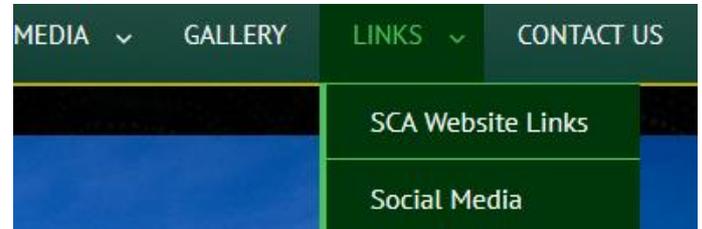
DISCLAIMER: Sister Cities Australia does not accept any liability or responsibility for the accuracy of the information contained in this directory. The directory has been faithfully compiled from the data provided, some of which has been substantiated however much of it has not. Persons or organisations using the data contained within the directory should follow-up with their own research to verify the accuracy of that data.

www.sistercitiesaustralia.com

Have you checked out the Affiliation Directory? Is there information missing? Is there incorrect data?

This Directory is the definitive document on Australian Sister City and Friendship City links and your help is needed to ensure that it remains as up-to-date and accurate as possible.

Click [HERE](#) if you would like to download the latest version of the Affiliation Directory. Please send me an email if you find any errors or omissions – thank you in anticipation.



Does your Sister City Association or Committee have a webpage?

Do you have a Facebook Page?

Do you have a presence on Social Media?

Would you like to share those links with SCA members and friends?

If you would like your website, Facebook page, LinkedIn page, Instagram account, or other social media pages added to the list please let me know by clicking on the link below. Thank you for your help and support with this SCA initiative, which I hope will be a useful resource for all.

Click [HERE](#) to send your link details to SCA.

Mike Jakins,
National Secretary

LOOKING FOR, OR TO BECOME, A SISTER CITY?

Check out the SCA website where there is a list of cities actively looking for affiliations. There are cities in China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Uganda, Kenya, USA and Ghana waiting – and more to come.

Are you seeking an Australian sister city? Fill out the details on the request form and return to SCA as per the contact information at the end of the document, [click here](#).

STAY IN TOUCH WITH SCA

Your SCA Committee

President – Bill Wilson

Mobile: 0491 118 779

Email: [Click here to email Bill](#)

Vice President - Christina Despoteris

Mobile: 0426 682 682

Email: [Click here to email Christina](#)

National Treasurer – Gordon Allen

Mobile: 0412 278 646

Email: [Click here to email Gordon](#)

National Secretary - Mike Jakins

Mobile: 0417 176 568

Email: [Click here to email Mike](#)

Executive Member - Sim Hayward

Mobile: 0417 784 341

Email: [Click here to email Sim](#)

Executive Member – Ben Stennett

Mobile: 0415 931 761

Email: [Click here to email Ben](#)

Full contact details for any of the above are available on the SCA website on the Administration page.

SCA has a website – www.sistercitiesaustralia.com



Visit the association's website for: information about us; what activities we are involved with; any events that are of interest; all the details on the annual awards; access to our publications and images; and how to contact us.

If you notice any changes that need to be made to the website, or if you have any suggestions for improving the site please let us know. Send an email to the [Website Editor](#) (click on this link) with your comments and/or your suggestions.

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Please forward this newsletter on to interested colleagues and friends, thank you.