

Item 3.3

Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Chains

File No: S051491

Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

On Thursday, Councillors received a motion by the Deputy Lord Mayor relating to the Deputy Lord Mayoral Chains. This motion notes that the Chains include an inscription: "I take but I surrender" together with the depiction of a scene between a mariner and a First Nations person.

Yesterday's Sun-Herald included an item about the Deputy Lord Mayoral Chains, and so I believe we must also deal tonight with the Lord Mayoral Chains, which contain a similar depiction of a mariner and First Nations person and inscription, although much less prominently.

The wearing of mayoral chains dates back to the 14th century and is still in use throughout the Commonwealth. These chains and other regalia were symbols of the office and the authority it contained, particularly when mayors were responsible for law and order in their civic area.

Every mayor or deputy mayor decides the extent to which they will wear the robes, chains or other regalia of office. I have chosen not to use the full extent of regalia available to the office. However, there is a community expectation that the Lord Mayoral Chains are worn on ceremonial and official occasions and during Council meetings.

The first coat of arms was designed by a member of staff in 1857, just 15 years after the council was founded and the design was formalised in 1908.

The motto 'I take but I surrender' was not explained in 1857. Some say it may have been a tacit acknowledgement of Aboriginal dispossession. But in the NSW Government Gazette No. 50, 30 December 1908, it is described as "The English naval landing party took possession from the Aborigine, and in turn surrendered it to that growing nationality of which the settlement of the City of Sydney was the foundation".

The coat of arms appear throughout the Town Hall, including:

- **External façade** – Carved in sandstone pediments facing north (Druitt Street), east (George Street) and south (Sydney Square).
- **Internal (with motto)** – Etched glass in the octagonal lobby entrance; bronze World War One and World War Two Honour Rolls in the main portico; bicentennial stained glass window, side entrance to Treasury; and mosaic details in Northern Crush Room.
- **Civic collection / movable heritage** – Historic seals, currently on display in a cabinet; depicted on the end of the Mace, currently on display in Druitt Street Foyer (does not have the motto); many historic objects and items in the civic collection bear the old coat of arms; the current seal may have the coat of arms, but is rarely used.

It is not proposed to remove these historical symbols throughout the city and Town Hall. However, we can address the symbols that are worn by officials during ceremonial and official occasions.

There are many features contained in the coat of arms and other symbols used by the City of Sydney that do not reflect today's values and standards.

The City recognises that its history, particularly in relation to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, includes events and attitudes that our current policies and initiatives seek to redress. For Sydney, this is particularly poignant because it is the original invasion site.

At my instigation, the City of Sydney has spoken the truth about this and replaced the word 'colonisation' with 'invasion' in our corporate plan since 2011.

We cannot erase history, and our policy has been to create a new and better future.

The City of Sydney acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of our land. The City is committed to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and celebrates their living culture through an extensive range of initiatives. These are important to highlight.

- We established the Koori Collection, housed in Waterloo and Glebe libraries, which contains over 2,000 books, DVDs, CDs and newspapers.
- We opened the Redfern Community Centre in 2003 for community gatherings, programs and children and youth services.
- The City established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel. First appointed in December 2008, it is made up of community and industry professionals, who live, work or study in the local area.

The Eora Journey is one of the most significant programs undertaken by Council, which includes public art projects, events, economic development and cultural heritage.

In 2012, Council unanimously endorsed The Eora Journey: Recognition in the Public Domain, which allocated \$5.15m to seven public art projects, including:

- *Welcome to Redfern* – a Street Art Project conceived by the Eora Journey Curatorial Advisor Hetti Perkins and created by experienced Aboriginal artist Reko Rennie who worked with local Aboriginal youth.
- *born in darkness before dawn* – from November 2013 – February 2014, the wall of the Australian Museum was transformed with this original film work by Sydney-based Wiradjuri artist Nicole Foreshew.
- *YININMADYEMI, Thou didst let fall* – a significant artwork by Aboriginal artist Tony Albert to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who served in the nation's military.
- *bara monument for the Eora* – by Aboriginal artist Judy Watson, this major new permanent artwork will take pride of place on the Tarpeian Precinct Lawn above Dubbagullee (Bennelong Point) to honour clans of the Eora Nation and Elders past and present.

- *Redfern Tour* – proposed as a series of walking tours from the Redfern Terrace to tell the Aboriginal histories of Redfern and the block.
- *Eora Journey Walking Trail* – the final project for the program envisaged a series of artworks linking the Harbour, the site of first contact with Redfern, the home of Aboriginal activism.
- *Harbour Walk – Cultural Ribbon*: this strategy presents a vision for a 9km harbour foreshore walk to celebrate and connect Sydney’s significant cultural institutions, landmarks, places and landscapes.

The City provides support for a range of events through the Eora Journey, such as:

- We are a major sponsor of Yabun, the largest one day Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander gathering in Australia.
- For seven years the City has worked with Indigenous businesses to host NAIDOC in the City. We also provide grants to local organisations to hold NAIDOC community celebrations. In 2018, the National NAIDOC Awards ceremony was in Sydney. We provided \$40,000 in cash sponsorship.
- Each year we support the Redfern Aboriginal Anzac Day commemorations hosted by Babana Aboriginal Men’s group.

The City consulted widely on developing an economic development plan through Eora Journey, which was adopted by Council in 2016 and has four themes: create an economic hub, maximise employment outcomes, enhance tertiary education opportunities and grow sectors of the economy.

The Eora Journey has also supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. The City purchased the Redfern Post Office in 2018 for \$5.3 million, to be a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural hub. The City has budgeted approximately \$1 million for future work to the building.

In June 2011, the City published a free booklet – Barani Barrabugu (Yesterday Tomorrow) – a historical walking tour that takes in more than 50 sites around Sydney significant to Aboriginal people.

The Sydney Culture Walks app features self-guided Barani walks for Redfern and Sydney Cove/Warrane.

In 2012, the City adopted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols, which acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of this place, and references Welcome to Country, Acknowledgement of Country, Smoking Ceremonies, Elders and how the City will engage with the Indigenous community.

In June 2015, the City adopted our first Reconciliation Action Plan. Highlights include:

- The launch in Redfern Park in 2016.
- From 2015 to 2018, we partnered with 36 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.
- The City's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory panel meets six times per year to advise and influence significant projects.
- Ninety-three City staff have completed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural respect training since 2015.
- The Koori Collection features over 2,000 items and continues to grow.
- Over 20,000 Barani Barrabugu booklets were distributed in three years.
- At June 2018, there are 40 City staff who identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Grants and sponsorships awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recipients over the last three years totalled \$179,195 in 2015/16, \$267,999 in 2016/17 and \$239,124 in 2017/18.
- From 2015 to 2018, the total procurement spend with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses was over \$1.6 million. In 2017/18, this included 133 contracts to 52 different suppliers.

Since 2015, the City's park signage has included an Acknowledgement of Country on entry signage, using Gadigal language words for good day – 'bujari gamarruwa' and the words 'You are on Gadigal country.'

The City's pedestrian wayfinding signage acknowledges our Aboriginal culture by using dual naming on signage destinations, addressing and maps, as recognised by the National Names Board. Examples include Dawes Point / Tar-Ra, Potts Point / Derrawunn and Sydney Cove / Warrane.

The Busking and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Practice Policy was adopted in 2019. It means Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people practising cultural heritage in public spaces managed by the City of Sydney no longer need to apply for a busking permit.

The City of Sydney will continue to prioritise real action and outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and ensure that they have a prominent and effective voice in our future.

Recommendation

It is resolved that the Chief Executive Officer be requested to obtain a quotation on design options for new and / or simplified Lord Mayoral and Deputy Lord Mayoral chains that better reflect the current values of the City, at the most reasonable cost.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE

Lord Mayor