

Uncle George Tongerie AM honoured

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The Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement Khatija Thomas, joins the Aboriginal community of South Australia to farewell Aboriginal Elder Uncle George Tongerie AM, JP who passed away on Wednesday, August 21 at age 88. Uncle George Tongerie AM, JP was born in Oodnadatta and grew to be an inspiring leader throughout his career.

He volunteered at a young age to serve Australia during the Second World War and on his return worked his way towards creating a better life for his people.

As a member of the Stolen Generation, Uncle George achieved so much in his life really emphasising his true character,' Ms Thomas said.

He was a man who worked hard and always strove for the best for our people.

His passion and commitment to making his ancestral place a better place for his community to live was demonstrated when he returned to his community in 1980 as the Community Development Officer with his wife Aunty Maude.

He managed the Oodnadatta General Store and was also elected Chairman of Directors of the Oodnadatta Aboriginal Community Enterprises for the period 1987-2002.

Uncle George's long term aspirations to strengthen the well-being of the community of Oodnadatta were a credit to him and Aunty Maude who were both praised by the community.

Aboriginal Lands Trust chairperson Hayden Davey said Uncle George AM, JP would be missed.

His vast contribution to the establishment of the Aboriginal Lands Trust alongside the late Garnett Wilson OAM and his commitment to the Aboriginal Community at large in

his position with the Parole Board was, and will continue to be, appreciated and remembered by all,' Mr Davey said.

The Aboriginal Lands Trust and the Aboriginal Lands Trust communities across the state pass our condolences to Uncle George's family.

Uncle George Tongerie AM, JP held a number of positions throughout his extensive career, notably he became one of the first Aboriginal Justices of the Peace, was a member of the South Australian Parole Board, held the position of Aboriginal Ombudsman and was involved with the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

Uncle George was a strong advocate of the recognition of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as equals in Australia. Ms Thomas said.

He has played an important and everlasting role in our history and future.

He was a gentle caring human being who always carried himself with dignity and was admired and respected by all.

My condolences go to his wife, Aunty Maude and all the Tongerie family and the wider community who I know will miss the presence of Uncle George in their lives.