

Family Statement

Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG **1 August 1932 – 4 February 2024**

Today we announce with great sadness and sorrow in our hearts, the passing of our dearly loved Aunty and Nana Lowitja.

Yankunytjatjara woman, Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG, aged 91, died peacefully on Sunday 4 February 2024 on Kurna Country in Adelaide, South Australia with her immediate family by her side.

Our Aunty and Nana was the Matriarch of our family, whom we have loved and looked up to our entire lives. We adored and admired her when we were young and have grown up full of never-ending pride as she became one of the most respected and influential Aboriginal leaders this country has ever known.

Aunty Lowitja dedicated her entire lifetime of work to the rights, health, and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We thank and honour her for all that she has done – for all the pathways she created, for all the doors she opened, for all the issues she tackled head-on, for all the tables she sat at and for all the arguments she fought and won.

We thank her for being a formidable leader who was never afraid to listen, speak and act.


Always with strength, determination, grace, and dignity.

She was admired and respected universally, sought after to meet with dignitaries of the highest standing from all over the world, whilst being equally as loved in her own nation.

We thank her for being a loving and devoted daughter, sister, Aunty and Nana to our families, always ensuring that we were looked after and cared for. As an Australian 'National Living Treasure', we shared her with admirers far and wide, but we always loved having her home close to us.

We ask that you continue to honour Aunty Lowitja's legacy through using your Voices to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to share the stories of her incredible life, which always had our First Peoples at the heart of all that she worked for and achieved.

Aunty Lowitja's legacy will continue through the work of the Lowitja O'Donoghue Foundation, which was established with her blessing on her 90th birthday in 2022.



It was her wish that future generations would learn and prosper from the pathways she had created, and that through the Foundation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples would be supported with strong impact through new opportunities and positive outcomes.

We acknowledge that many will feel a deep loss upon the news of her passing.

There will only ever be, one, Lowitja O'Donoghue. She who always believed that 'we shall overcome some day.'

Thank you Aunty, you are home now, eternally safe in the arms of your family and beloved husband Gordon, who have been waiting for you in Spirit. You are forever and always in our hearts.

We acknowledge and share our immense gratitude for the health professionals and care staff who have cared for and supported our Aunty in recent years.

At this time, we graciously ask for privacy for our family, whilst we make arrangements to honour Aunty Lowitja.

(Ms) Deb Edwards
Niece of Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue
Spokesperson for O'Donoghue Family / Lowitja O'Donoghue Foundation

4 February 2024

The Lowitja O'Donoghue Foundation was established in 2022 to mark Dr O'Donoghue's 90th birthday. In lieu of flowers, we ask people and organisations to please consider a donation to the Foundation in memory of Dr O'Donoghue.

www.lowitja.org.au/lowitja-foundation/donate

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Please formally address Lowitja O'Donoghue as Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG.

Please do not use the name Lois O'Donoghue in any manner of reference.

Please only use the images provided in the media release and use appropriate credits.

Please contact the Lowitja Institute for interviews/comments with spokespeople invited by the O'Donoghue Family to comment on their behalf.

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