

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0305

Bourke, Eleanor

(1943 -)

Born 19430329, Hamilton Victoria Australia

Occupation Academic, Welfare worker

Summary

A descendant of the Wergaia and Wamba Wamba people of western Victoria, Eleanor Bourke, née Anderson, formerly Koumalatsos, married Colin Bourke and had two children: Sia and Kelly. Eleanor and her family moved to Murraydale, near Swan Hill, Victoria in 1945. She attended primary and high school in rural Victoria and was awarded the degrees Dip Arts Journalism (RMIT), BA Writing (CCAIE), and MEdStud (Adelaide).

Eleanor's work includes policy concerning Aboriginal people in both the Victorian and Commonwealth governments and academia. Positions held include: Associate Professor in Indigenous Affairs and the Director of the Aboriginal Research Institute, Faculty of the Aboriginal and Islander Studies, University of South Australia; Professor of Aboriginal and Islander Studies and Director of Aboriginal Programs at Monash University; member of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Family Law Council and the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee; Fellow of the Australian College of Education; and Chair of the Yoorrook Justice Commission. She was a Co-Chair of Reconciliation Victoria for three years, Board Member for the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council for twelve years and a Board Member of Native Title Services Victoria. Her membership of community-based organisations include the Victorian Aboriginal Advancement League, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and Camp Jungai Cooperative Ltd.

Eleanor Bourke was inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll for Women in 2010 and the Victorian Aboriginal Honour Roll in 2019 and was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2022 for significant service to Indigenous heritage, to justice, and to education.

(Sources: *Aboriginal Women by Degrees* Mary Ann Bin-Sallik, ed. University of Queensland Press, 2000.)

Events

2010 - 2010

Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Published resources

Book

Contemporary Australian Women 1996/97, 1996

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Author Details

Mary Sexton

Created 20 February 2002

Last modified 11 April 2025