Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE1170

Maris, Hyllus Noel

(1933 - 1986)

Born	19331225, Cummeragunja Station Victoria Australia
Died	19860804, Kew Victoria Australia
Occupation	Aboriginal rights activist, Community worker, Educator, Scriptwriter

Summary

Co-founder of the National Council of Aboriginal and Island Women in 1970, Hyllus Noel Maris co-wrote the award-winning *Women of the Sun*, which was later adapted as a screen production by the ABC.

Details

Hyllus Noel Maris, of Yorta Yorta and Wurundjeri (Woiwurrung) descent, was born in 1934 in Echuca, Victoria. She spent her early childhood at Cummeragunja, where her grandmother imparted to her a detailed knowledge of her culture and family relationships in Victoria. Her family took part in the Walk-off from Cummeragunja in 1939 and settled near Shepparton, where Maris attended school. She subsequently moved to Melbourne, where she helped found the National Council of Aboriginal and Island Women in 1970. From this body grew the Aboriginal medical and legal services in Fitzroy, of which Maris was a co-founder.

In the mid-1970s, she collaborated with the Austrian-born author, Sonia Borg, in writing *Women of the Sun*, a history of Australia over the previous 200 years, as seen through the experiences of a number of Aboriginal women. Adapted as an ABC television series in 1982, *Women of the Sun* won many awards, including the United Nations Media Peace Prize and the AWGIE award of the Australian Writers Guild. Maris was largely responsible for the establishment, in 1982, of Worawa College, Victoria’s first Aboriginal school.
She died of cancer in 1986, and was buried at Cummeragunja.

Events

2001 - 2001
Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Published resources

Edited Book
The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia : Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, society and culture, Horton, David, 1994

Book
Women of the sun, Maris, Hyllus and Sonia Borg, 1985

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

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