

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE1217

## Stainton, Irene

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**Occupation** Administrator, Child welfare worker, Cultural advisor

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### Summary

Alongside her work in Aboriginal child welfare, Irene Stainton has long been an advocate for Aboriginal cultural heritage, holding a series of advisory positions at state and national levels.

### Details

Following her father, who was Manager of the Aboriginal Advancement Council in Perth, Irene Stainton became deeply involved in indigenous affairs. She worked in child welfare for many years with the Yorganop Aboriginal Child Care Agency in Perth, becoming secretary of the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care.

Stainton's interest in Aboriginal culture was deep-seated and twice she presented discussion papers to the United Nations (Geneva, 1994; Switzerland, 1995). She was the Registrar of Aboriginal sites before being appointed Chairperson of the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee in the Aboriginal Affairs Department. In this capacity she presented a paper for the Indigenous Heritage Workshop of the National Trust's State Heritage Convention in Western Australia in 1999. Stainton served as a board member for both the Western Australian Museum (Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee) and the Berndt Museum of Anthropology at the University of Western Australia. She was an Aboriginal Council member for the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families.

She was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 2023 for distinguished service to the Indigenous community through cultural heritage leadership, and through health and social welfare organisations.

### Published resources

#### Report

Western Australian Aboriginal Affairs Dept., Annual Report, Stainton, Irene, 2000

#### Book

The Black Grapevine: Aboriginal Activism and the Stolen Generations, Briskman, Linda, 2003

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Author Details

Leonarda Kovacic and Barbara Lemon

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