The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE2236

Thomas, Faith

(1933 - 2023)

Born	19330222, Nepabunna Aboriginal Mission South Australia Australia
Died	20230415
Occupation	Cricketer, Nurse

Summary

Faith Thomas was the first Aboriginal woman to play international cricket for Australia; indeed, she was the first indigenous woman to be selected to play any sport for Australia. In 2004, she was still the only Aboriginal woman to represent Australia in cricket.

Thomas played cricket, along with hockey and squash, while training in Adelaide to be a nurse. (She was one of the first Aboriginal nurses to graduate from the Royal Adelaide Hospital; she went on to be the first to *run* a hospital.) Thomas was selected into the South Australian cricket team after playing only two grade games and was selected for the Australian team in 1958. She recalls receiving a fair deal of publicity at the time. ‘I was a bit of a curiosity,’ she said in an interview in 2004. ‘It was a “native nurse”, this. You know, I wasn’t a cricketer, I was a native nurse cricketer, You know?’

Thomas also played hockey for the Northern Territory and admits that hockey was always more important to her than cricket. She was a member of the Aboriginal Sports Foundation, patron of the Prime Minister’s XI versus the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) Chairman’s XI.

Events

2019 - 2019
Member of the Order of Australia (AM): For significant service to cricket, and to the Indigenous community.

Published resources

Resource
Faith Thomas, Maza, Rachel (presenter) and Martin, Kelrick (story producer), 2004, http://www.abc.net.au/message/tv/ms/s1161638.htm

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Site Exhibition
She's Game: Women Making Australian Sporting History, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2007, http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/sg/sport-home.html

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection
Interview with Faith Thomas (sound recording) / Interviewer: Gordon Briscoe

[Interview with Faith Thomas, Aboriginal woman, cricketer and outback nurse] [sound recording] / [Interviewer: Ray Aitchison]

Author Details
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