



Speech By
Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Iselin, Ms M

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (2.06 pm): I rise to inform the House of the recent passing of a wonderful, passionate and remarkably inspiring woman, Aunty Margaret Iselin. Born on the Myora Mission in 1930, Aunty Margaret Cecilia Iselin was first and foremost a dedicated wife to the late Uncle Pat Iselin, with whom she made an incredible team in championing for their people, and a loving mother to Christine, Patsy, twins Brian and Mary, and Darryl, who tragically passed away as the result of an accident. Aunty Margaret's family will tell you that she was the proud and devoted grandmother to 23 grandchildren and the adored 'Old Nan' to 31 great-grandchildren.

Aunty Margaret was also an outstanding community worker who over a great many years played a major part in shaping Straddie's future and opportunities for its people. Her knowledge of the island and its Indigenous history was extraordinary. She had grown up there and attended school at Myora. It was a very special part of her life. Aunty Marg's strong leadership qualities saw her take on the role of chairwoman of the Minjerribah Moorgumpin Elders in Council on North Stradbroke Island. She published an Indigenous dictionary, pioneered education programs for youth in the criminal justice system and co-authored several books on the native flora and bush tucker of the island. Aunty Marg also took part in negotiations to bring about the first agreement between an Australian local government authority and a native title claimant. A dream for Aunty Marg and the elders came to fruition in 2006 with the opening of Terra Bulla Leumeah on the site of the Myora Mission. Through her work she achieved so much in bringing about change and enlightening people from all walks of life about historical Aboriginal knowledge and culture.

Aunty Marg received many accolades and awards for her work, including a tourism award for her cultural and heritage talks in 1998 and a Commonwealth medal as part of the centenary of Federation celebrations in 2000. Appropriately, she was named the inaugural Grand View Living Treasure. She received a citizenship award at council's Australia Day ceremony in 2002. She was also honoured with a community safety award in 2010 for the vital contribution she made to closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage. I was extremely honoured to nominate Aunty Marg and to accompany her to the Speaker's breakfast at Parliament House when she received a Queensland Inspiring Women Award in 2013. Witnessing her accept her award was a memorable occasion and one that was celebrated within her community in recognition of the true inspiration that she was.

Aunty Marg poured her heart and soul into serving the Indigenous community of North Stradbroke Island. Her invaluable wisdom and knowledge was matched by her gentleness and unique ability to connect with us all. Whilst she will be sadly missed, her legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of all those who knew her and those whose lives will be enriched by her work for generations to come.