

Media Statement

Klynton Wanganeen
Commissioner for
Aboriginal Engagement

21 January 2011

PASSING OF ELAINE NEWCHURCH (LAINEY)

Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement, Klynton Wanganeen joined Aboriginal Communities to farewell Narrungga elder and leader Elaine Newchurch (Lainey).

Aunty Lainey was born at Point Pearce in February 1934 and spent most of her life advocating on behalf of her people and teaching them about their history.

She was a long standing board member on the Aboriginal Lands Trust as well as being on a number of committees including the South Australian Aboriginal Heritage Committee and the Point Pearce Aboriginal Community Council.

Aunty Lainey was also a key player in the establishment of the Point Pearce Housing Association and the TAFE campus on Point Pearce.

A long standing supporter and attendee of the Point Pearce Church, she was instrumental in negotiating Indigenous Land Use Agreements on behalf of her people.

“She held her own with Ministers and Chief Executives throughout her life and had a sharp eye for holding government processes to account,” said Mr Wanganeen.

“I knew her all my life and I will always remember that when Lainey was having her say, everyone knew they had to listen.”

“She was a true icon with her own unique style that engaged and challenged everyone she met.”

“She will be remembered as a strong leader who was very passionate about protecting her Aboriginal heritage and has touched the lives of many South Australians. She left a lasting impression on all of us and she will be sadly missed.”

Aunty Lainey was laid to rest at Point Pearce Cemetery yesterday.