

Media Statement

Klynton Wanganeen
Commissioner for
Aboriginal Engagement

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PASSING OF UNCLE GARNETT WILSON OAM

Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement, Klynton Wanganeen joined Aboriginal Communities in South Australia to farewell Ngarrindjeri/Kaurna elder and leader, Uncle Garnett Wilson OAM.

Born at Raukkan in South Australia in 1928, Mr Wilson turned his focus towards a lifetime of achievement and service, inspiring many of his people along the way.

Mr Wanganeen met Uncle Garnett in the 1970's when he worked under him in the Point Pearce Woolshed and has maintained a long association with him throughout his life.

Mr Wanganeen said Mr Wilson was a true pioneer.

"He was the first Aboriginal wool classer in South Australia and the first Aboriginal person in the state to receive a higher education qualification," said Mr Wanganeen.

"He was also the first Chairperson of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry.

"He was an inaugural member and long-standing chair of the first Aboriginal land-holding body in Australia, the State's Aboriginal Lands Trust.

"In fact he chaired so many other committees - including the South Australian Aboriginal Heritage Committee - that he came to be known as "The Chairman"," said Mr Wanganeen.

His funeral mass will be conducted at St Francis Xavier Cathedral today at 2pm and he will be laid to rest at the Raukkan Cemetery tomorrow.