

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE1080

## Winch, Marie Joan

(1935 - 2022)

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**Born** 9 June, 1935, Fremantle Western Australia Australia

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**Died** 2 March, 2022, Fremantle Western Australia Australia

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**Occupation** Health worker, Midwife, Nurse

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### Summary

Joan Winch grew up in Fremantle, Western Australia. In 1977 she gained a Bachelor of Applied Science in Nursing at the Western Australian Institute of Technology (now Curtin University). She went on to study midwifery and child care, becoming a triple certificated sister.

From 1975 she was involved in the Perth Aboriginal Medical Service. In 1982 she started up a mobile unit, driving around the Swan Valley fringe dwellers' camps, servicing medical needs and assisting Nyungars to hospitals. In 1983 she founded the Aboriginal Health Workers Program, Marr Mooditj college, in Perth, integrating traditional Aboriginal approach to health and healing with western medicine.

Joan Winch was awarded her PhD in Aboriginal Studies from the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in May 2011. On the recommendation of each of her examiners, she also received a commendation from the Chancellor. Her PhD was executively approved on 11 May, four weeks before her 76th birthday. Her doctoral thesis presented a history of Marr Mooditj using an auto-ethnographic approach.

Dr Winch was named WA Citizen of the Year in 1986, State and National Aboriginal of the Year in 1987, and in the same year received the World Health Organisation Sasakawa Award for Primary Health Care Work on behalf of Marr Mooditj. She served as Director of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies between 1999 and 2001. In 2008 she received Curtin University's John Curtin Medal for her services to the community.

### Published resources

#### Edited Book

The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia : Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, society and culture, Horton, David, 1994

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

#### Author Details

Leonarda Kovacic

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