

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE1177

Mundja

(1930 -)

Born 1 January, 1930, Naaru Western Australia

Occupation Artist, Justice of the Peace, Traditional Aboriginal custodian

Summary

Mundja, of Kukatja descent, was born at Naaru in the Canning stock route area of the Great Sandy Desert in northern Western Australia. Her husband, a much older man, had several wives and caused her a leg injury which brought her ongoing trouble. In the 1940s her family moved out of the desert to Balgo.

Mundja spoke several languages from her area, and was a custodian of many songs, ceremonies and dances, especially women's. She was one of the two women leaders in the important, partly secret Djuluru Dreaming complex that travelled through the Kimberleys and the Northern Territory. She travelled widely to ceremonial gatherings at places such as Yuendumu, Kintore, Christmas Creek, Jigalong and Wiluna, and to Broome and Derby, to renew contacts with relatives and create new friendships. She acted as an adviser on Aboriginal traditions in the local school, and was nominated as a local Justice of the Peace. She was also engaged in the women's art movement at Balgo.

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

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