

# The Australian Women's Register

---

**Entry type:** Person

**Entry ID:** AWE0113

## Holt, Lillian Rose

(1945 - 2020)

---

**Born** 17 February, 1945, Cherbourg Aboriginal Settlement Queensland Australia

---

**Died** 17 February, 2020, Adelaide South Australia Australia

---

**Occupation** Educator

---

### Summary

Lillian Holt was a member of the first generation of Aboriginal high school and university graduates and had an impressive track record of full time work, study and concomitant achievements. She traversed new terrain in order that younger ones might follow.

Lillian worked or studied full time since the age of 17. She worked as an educator in Aboriginal affairs and education “25 hours a day, eight days a week”! She was appointed as a University of Melbourne Fellow in 2003 -2005, prior to that she was Director of the Centre for Indigenous Education, University of Melbourne.

Lillian Holt passed away on her birthday in February 2020, at the age of 75.

## Details

In 1960, at a time when Aboriginal students rarely attended secondary school, Lillian was among the first dozen Aboriginal students to go to Murgon High School, Queensland, following her sister's entry to the school the previous year. There she studied for her junior certificate (year 10).

In the early 60's Lillian became secretary of the Opal Younger Set, Opal, Brisbane. Opal held monthly dances for the Aboriginal community and Lillian was instrumental in organising family occasions for the Aboriginal community in Brisbane.

In 1967 she returned to study for her senior (year 12) matriculation in order to enter university, as there was no special entry nor mature age entry in those days. Hence, she competed openly in the mainstream and gained her matriculation in one year studying at Hubbard Academy in Brisbane.

In 1977 Lillian completed a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Queensland, with majors in English and Journalism. She was awarded her Master of Arts by the University of Northern Colorado in 1980, and by 2000 had enrolled as a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne.

Lillian is the first Aboriginal person to have worked for the Australian Broadcasting Commission (now Corporation) in Queensland. Her four years at Brisbane (1962-1966) were followed by a further four working in administration for Sydney's ABC. She was the first Aboriginal Executive Officer for the National Aboriginal Education Committee, Canberra (a federal advisory body to the Commonwealth government) in 1978; and the first Aboriginal principal at Tauondi, Port Adelaide (an adult Aboriginal community college) from 1990-1996. She worked for sixteen years (1980-1996) at Tauondi, firstly as teacher, then deputy principal, then principal.

Lillian has been a public speaker for the past twenty years; her vast number of speaking engagements include the UN (Millennium Forum) New York (2000), the Sambell Oration for the Brotherhood of St Laurence (1993); and the Anglican National Conference (1995) entitled 'Towards the end of the century: What does it mean to be human?'. Her work has been published in a number of journals, magazines, and anthologies. Her speaking engagements have taken her around the world, to England, Kenya, Tanzania, Sweden, Ireland, New Zealand, Canada, the USA, Brazil, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, Papua New Guinea, Spain, Guatemala, India, Egypt, South Africa, Morocco, Hong Kong, Japan, the Czech Republic, France, and Greece.

Lillian's committee membership has included International Council of Adult Education, Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (Sri Lanka), and the Australian Association of Adult and Community Education, Canberra. She has also served on the Port Adelaide Centre Ministerial Advisory Committee, the Catholic Education Commission – Aboriginal Consultative Group, the South Australian Aboriginal Education Training Advisory Committee – Ministerial Appointment, the Board of Management, Tandanya (National Aboriginal Cultural Institute) – Ministerial Appointment, the Brotherhood of St Laurence – Melbourne – 'Future of Work' Project – Patron, and the Labour and Employment Aboriginal Reference Group – Warren Snowden Committee.

## Published resources

### Journal Article

One Aboriginal woman's identity: walking in both worlds, Holt, Lillian, 1993

The traps that come with the trappings, a conversation with Lillian Holt. -Interview conducted by Tapping, Carmel-, Tapping, Carmel, 1992

Aboriginal justice, democracy and adult education, Lillian Holt, 1991

### Book

Work : an Aboriginal perspective : the twelfth Sambell memorial oration, Lillian Holt, 1993

### Newspaper Article

Challenging outcomes, Condie, Todd, 1996

### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

## Author Details

Clare Land

**Created** 30 August 2001

**Last modified** 15 July 2020

## Digital resources



**Title:** Lillian Holt  
**Type:** Image  
**Date:** 3 May, 2023



**Title:** Lillian Holt  
**Type:** Image  
**Date:** 3 May, 2023



**Title:** Lillian Holt  
**Type:** Image  
**Date:** 3 May, 2023



**Title:** AWE0113gd  
**Type:** Image  
**Date:** 3 May, 2023

**Title:** AWE0113ge  
**Type:** Image  
**Date:** 3 May, 2023

