



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA



The University of Queensland
**ROTARY
PEACE CENTRE**

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE BRISBANE

CELEBRATING BRISBANE AGENTS OF PEACE 2023

Aunty Flo Watson OAM



Aunty Flo to many, is an Elder, traditional owner and proud descendant of the Ghunghanghi People of Yarrabah, North Queensland. She also has a traditional affiliation with both the Kuku-yelangi people of Laura/Maytown, Palmer River area which is west of Cooktown and the Gurambilbarra Wulgurukaba people of Magnetic Island and Townsville.

Aunty Flo grew up in the Yarrabah Aboriginal Community, which was established under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protection Act 1897. Aunty Flo, was also part of the Stolen Generation when she was separated from her family and sent to boarding school in Charters Towers under duress. She was then subsequently sent to Brisbane in the early 70's to attend teacher's college. She is featured in the Brisbane City Council's book "Brisbane Blacks".

In 1973 Aunty Flo commenced work in the Australian Public Service and worked throughout Australia in a number of different roles before going out on her own to start her consultancy business.

During this time, she became an original and founding member of Reconciliation Qld Inc. appointed to various Boards, and is active across many community organisations.

Aunty Flo is the Chair of the Teralba Park Stolen Generations Support Group Inc, in Brisbane. With this group she works with the Brisbane community in the areas of storytelling at schools, acknowledgement/welcome to country for many events including reconciliation/NAIDOC events for the Australian Defence Force (Army), hosting and organising refugees from the Romero Centre to be welcomed by Indigenous Elders and community members into the Australian community. Aunty Flo is also an Elder with the Brisbane Lord Mayor's group.

Aunty Flo was appointed by the Qld Premier as the first Patron of the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts (ACPA), a position she still currently holds. Students from around Australia attend ACPA to complete studies in music, acting and dancing.

Aunty Flo has set up Elders groups throughout Qld to be viable businesses in particular the Yarrabah Elders Group Inc.

In 2015 Aunty Flo received an OAM- Order of Australia medal, for her service to the Indigenous communities of Queensland. Aunty Flo continues to work hard in the communities across Queensland with many government and non-government organisations helping to bring change and improving the lives of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.