

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION — 'HALL OF FAME' — MEMBERSHIP

6344. Hon Shelley Archer to the Minister for Local Government representing the Minister for Education and Training

- (1) Which Ministry of Education Officers have been elected to the Aboriginal Education 'Hall of Fame' and when were they elected?
- (2) What significant achievements did each attain in Aboriginal education?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

- (1) 1997 Lynda and Bernie Ryder
2001 Irene McNamara
2003 Geoffrey Penny
2005 Robert Somerville AM
2006 Kevin O'Keefe
2007 Carol Garlett

- (2) Bernie and Lynda Ryder were acknowledged for their outstanding work on the development and leadership of the Aboriginal Studies Primary and Secondary Curriculum which was published and distributed to all schools. Both Bernie and Lynda worked as teachers for a long time in Carnarvon and later in the Pilbara district.

Irene McNamara was acknowledged for her long career in education particularly Early Childhood Education. She was involved in the training of Aboriginal Early Childhood Education Assistants over a long period and the development of the Aboriginal kindergartens which are still in place today. Irene later worked as an Aboriginal Liaison Officer in the Canning District Education Office prior to her retirement.

Geoffrey (Ted) Penny was recognised as one of the first Aboriginal people, to qualify as a teacher. He acted as an inspiration for young Aboriginal people who would never have considered teaching as a career. Ted graduated as a teacher in 1959 and taught for over twenty years. He has always worked tirelessly for his people, ensuring the appropriate development of teaching staff and educational support structures so that all Aboriginal children are able to access supportive school environments. He has contributed to the education of Aboriginal students in a range of key advisory and leadership roles in central and district offices. In 2000, he was appointed as the inaugural principal of Moortitj Noongar Community College.

Robert Somerville was recognised for his long career in education and his ongoing passion to achieve equity in learning for Aboriginal students. He began in 1978 and in 1990 he was the youngest person to move to a position of Superintendent of Education. He has been the Principal of Cygnet Bay Remote School and Tardun Remote Aboriginal School. He has been a Superintendent in the Kimberley, Goldfields and metropolitan Districts. He has been a leader in his roles as Director of Systemic Aboriginal Schools Program and as the Director of Aboriginal Education and Training. Robert received the Order of Australia Medal in 2004 for his services to education and the Defence Force.

Kevin O'Keefe was recognised for his long career in education which included being the first Aboriginal person to be awarded a degree in Western Australia and the first Aboriginal person to be appointed as a principal of a Western Australian secondary school. Kevin has taken part in several study tours through the US, Canada, the UK and Europe, and was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 1998. His areas of interest include the teaching of English and the work of teachers. He was a senior officer in the Department, in the position of Executive Director, Schools.

Carol Garlett was recognised for her long career in education and her commitment to ensuring that Aboriginal voices are represented in matters concerning the education and aspirations of Aboriginal people. Carol was the only Aboriginal student at the Claremont Teachers College when she enrolled in 1970. She graduated and had an extensive teaching career spanning twenty two years in locations from Marble Bar to the Wheatbelt and the Perth metropolitan area. While teaching full time she completed a Bachelor of Education from Edith Cowan University. Carol has worked in Central Office in the staffing area and the Aboriginal Education Directorate and was promoted to Director of the Kimberley Education District in 2003. Carol has consulted widely with the Aboriginal community through her work with the Western Australian Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, and currently, through her role as Chair of the Aboriginal Education and Training Council.