

MS DAWN CASEY

Citation for the Conferral of Doctor of Arts (*honoris causa*)

Dawn Casey was born in Rockhampton in 1950, the third of seven children. Her Aboriginal parents were from Croydon in the Gulf of Carpentaria, North Queensland.

Dawn was raised in Cairns and attended school there till grade nine, when she left school following a bout of rheumatic fever. Several years later she attained a Diploma of Secretarial Studies at Cairns Business College, and later studied by correspondence to complete her Year 10 schooling. Dawn is married to Paul Groggin and between them they have seven children, and seven grandchildren.

Dawn's public service career started in 1974 with her appointment as a receptionist and typist with the Commonwealth Public Service. In the mid-eighties Dawn began working as the Senior Inspector Personnel with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in South Australia, and from 1988 to 1990, was Advisor to the Senior Advisor Mr Gerry Hand, who was Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, then Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.

Working for the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet during 1991 and 1992, Dawn was responsible for establishing the Social Policy Division of the Aboriginal Reconciliation Unit. During this time she also initiated the joint Commonwealth and State Government response to the Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Report and provided policy advice on a range of issues, including land rights, heritage and mining issues.

In 1992 Dawn was moved to Queensland where she created the Queensland Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. In her role as Assistant Divisional Head of the Department she implemented the state's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' Act, developed policy advice on associated land and natural resource management issues, and assisted with the development of fundamental legal principals regarding Aboriginal tradition and Islander custom, Native Title and Century Mine.

In 1994 Dawn rejoined the Commonwealth Public Service as Assistant Director General, AusAID, where she managed four sections including Multilateral Development Banks, United Nations and International Programs, Public Affairs and Statistical Analysis and Research. During this period Dawn represented Australia on the Development Board for Commonwealth Countries and on several overseas delegations, and led the development of the constituency grouping of Australia, Korea and New Zealand on the Global Environment Facility.

Dawn's association with the National Museum of Australia began in 1995 with her role as Assistant Secretary, Heritage Branch, with the Department of Communications and the Arts. It continued with her appointment in 1997 as Chief General Manager of the Construction Coordination Task Force, the body responsible for the construction of the new facilities for the National Museum of Australia and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Studies, on Acton Peninsula in Canberra. Dawn managed the interface between the various services contracted to construct the museum, the overall budget for which was \$152,000,000. In 1999 Dawn was appointed Director of the Museum.

Dawn has received several awards in recognition for her service to Australian society through her contribution to the welfare of Indigenous Australians and her role in the

successful development of the National Museum of Australia. Between 1985 and 1996 she received three Commonwealth Public Service Australia Day Medals and in 2002 was awarded the Clem Cummings Award from the ACT Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. Dawn also received a Centenary of the Australian Public Service Medal in 2002 and a Centenary Medal in 2003.

Today we recognise Dawn for all her achievements, including her contribution to the development of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, a joint venture between Charles Sturt University and the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn. The Centre aims to promote the study of diverse Christian traditions and expressions of faith in Australia and other aspects of Australian culture, encouraging dialogue between Christian denominations and between Christianity and other faiths in Australia, and supporting the exhibition and performance of the arts in their interaction with Christianity. Dawn was a member of the Foundation Board of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, and chaired the sub-committee that oversaw construction of Stage 1 of the Centre.

Chancellor, I present to you a woman who has contributed significantly to the welfare of Indigenous Australians, played an influential role in the development and management of the National Museum of Australia and the development of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, an on whom Charles Sturt University is proud to confer the award of Doctor of Arts (*honoris causa*), Dawn Casey.

Dated this Thirteenth Day of June Two Thousand and Three