

## **Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**

**From:** Dr Wally Franklin

**Dated:** 29 November 2022

**Submission:**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

My name is Dr Wally Franklin. Between 1984 and 1988, I was the Executive Director of the First Fleet Re-enactment Company, which organised the successful 1988 Bicentennial event of the re-enactment of the European fleet which arrived in Sydney on 26th January 1788 and which directly led to the near genocide of first Nations Peoples across the width and breadth of the Australian continent!

Attached is a pdf copy of a speech given by Dr Trish Franklin and Myself in the Sydney Town Hall in May 2016, which sets out clearly why Trish and I became involved in the re-enactment project. In essence we saw the event, although painful for First Nations Peoples, as a vital truth-telling which, together with 'Voice' and 'Treaty' are the essential elements of bringing our Nation together towards full and lasting reconciliation and 'wholeness'.

Also attached is a pdf of 'Ebenezer - A New Song', by Dr Trish Franklin which investigates 'Cultural interaction in the Wimmera between the Wotjobaluk Nation and early Europeans, with particular reference to the Ebenezer Mission Station 1842 - 1886'. Wotjobaluk descendant Danny Marks, attracted Dr Trish Franklin to the Wimmera District, and encouraged Trish to do the research on his ancestors. Regrettably, subsequently, Trish was unable to make contact with Danny or any of his relatives, to pass along the outcome of her research, which challenged the current historical views of the day, see e.g., page 57, in 'Conclusions' which follows:

"Changing European and Aboriginal attitudes are evident throughout the period studied and it does seem that the Aborigines, like the ancient Greeks, were more open to integrating attractive elements of alien cultures into their own belief systems, and as well, adapting to changes within their environment. The Aborigines at Ebenezer not only learnt the European value in money terms of a man's labour, but also learnt how to manipulate the European bureaucratic system to further their needs. Therefore, contrary to the general view that the Aborigines were the passive victims of European invasion, the Aborigines at Ebenezer demonstrated a spirited participation in the cultural interaction that took place in the Wimmera. The descendants of the Ebenezer mission station, are still actively participating in the continual process of cultural interaction, and like many other modern-day Aborigines, are still trying to break through the web of European preconceptions and prejudices".

I sincerely commend the work of the 'Yoorrook Justice Commission' which is facilitating truth-telling and the assembling vital evidence towards 'Voice' and 'Treaty'.

Dr Trish Franklin, passed on September 6th 2021. By marriage to an Australian Man born on the land of 'The Gadigal of the Eora Nation' in Annandale, Sydney, Trish

became a permanent resident of Australia. However She never sought 'Citizenship', but preferred to wait until reconciliation, when she could truly become a Citizen' of a real 'Australian Nation'.

My hope in making this submission is two-fold, to firstly show how Dr Trish Franklin was committed to truth-telling as a step towards reconciliation and also in the hope that Trish's work for the Wotjobaluk Peoples may find its way into the hands of Danny Marks, Wotjobaluk descendants!

Thank you for considering this submission,

Dr Wally Franklin, 30th November 2022.