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Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Library

Papers of Aden Ridgeway

MS 4375

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COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator:	Aden Ridgeway
Title:	Papers of Aden Ridgeway
Collection no:	MS 4375
Date range:	1971-2005 (bulk 1999-2005)
Extent:	0.36 metres (2 boxes) + poster in Manuscript Plan Cabinet
Repository	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

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CULTURAL SENSITIVITY STATEMENT

It is a condition of use of this finding aid, and of the collection described in it, that users ensure that any use of the information contained in it is sympathetic to the views and sensitivities of relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Deceased persons

Users of this finding aid should be aware that, in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, seeing images of deceased persons in photographs, film and books or hearing them in recordings etc. may cause sadness or distress and, in some cases, offend against strongly held cultural prohibitions.

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ACCESS TO COLLECTION

Access and use conditions

Open access reading, copying and quotation for material on *public record*, while the *Depositor's* permission is required for the copying or quotation of all other material. [Access code A1 B1 or B5]

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Preferred citation

Items from this collection should be cited as [Title or description of manuscript item], Papers of Aden Ridgeway, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS 4375, Series [no.], Folder or Item [no.]

Inter-Library Loan

Manuscripts are not available on Inter-Library loan.

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COLLECTION OVERVIEW

Scope and content note

This collection contains the files relating to Australian Indigenous affairs that were used by Aden Ridgeway while he was an Australian Democrats Senator for New South Wales in the Commonwealth of Australia Parliament from July 1999 to June 2005. Ridgeway was only the second Indigenous Australian to be elected to this Parliament.

The files include speeches by Ridgeway, parliamentary proceedings, correspondence and other papers relating to reconciliation, the apology and the stolen generations and mandatory sentencing. Files also relate to Noel Pearson's and Ridgeway's differing views on welfare for Australia's Indigenous people, Reconciliation Place in the Parliamentary Triangle in Canberra, ACT, the 1999 proposed Preamble to the Australian Constitution, Neville Bonner, the 'Native Title Amendment Bill 1996', dedicated Indigenous seats and other matters relating to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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Provenance

The collection was deposited in the Library by Aden Ridgeway in June 2005.

Material separated from collection

Twenty three video cassettes and four audio tapes, mainly off-air recordings by the Australian Parliamentary Library for Senator Aden Ridgeway, received with this deposit, were transferred to the Audiovisual Archive where some are held at V9023 - V9031.

For access to this material contact the [Audiovisual Archive](#).

Arrangement of collection

Most of the papers were received in a set of files. The Library has arranged the collection into series based on the Portfolio/Committee names of these files and the descriptions reflect the information given on the file covers. The order in which the papers were received within the files has been retained.

Related material

For a complete listing of works by and about Ridgeway that are held by the Library and for other related material consult [Mura®](#), [the AIATSIS catalogue](#).

For access to audiovisual material contact the [Audiovisual Archive](#).

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Aden Derek Ridgeway, a Gumbaynggir / Gumbainggirr man, was born in Macksville on the north coast of New South Wales in 1962. He spent his early years on the Bellwood Aboriginal Reserve in northern New South Wales before moving with his mother and a brother to Sydney where he lived mainly around the Redfern and Alexandria area. Ridgeway spent about five years at St. John's College (Woodlawn College), a boarding school in Woodlawn, Lismore, on an Aboriginal Study Grant.

Ridgeway's first job was, for a very short time, as a spot-welder but, at seventeen, he was employed as a technical assistant and later a ranger, with the National Parks and Wildlife Service of New South Wales, working in a number of national parks. After about five years Ridgeway moved to the New South Wales Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs as a Policy Officer. He later worked in various New South Wales public service positions including for the New South Wales Public Service Board, Corporate Services, Department of Administrative Services, Industrial Relations and Employment, and the Department of Minerals and Energy. He worked on various matters affecting Aboriginal people, access to land, cultural and heritage protection and environmental issues as well as in training, equal employment opportunity and human resource management and redeployment and skills retraining of redundant workers at the time of the closure of the Homebush Brickworks in Sydney, New South Wales.

After fourteen years in the New South Wales Public Service, Ridgeway moved to the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council becoming the Executive Director. Ridgeway had also worked part time as an Aboriginal Assessor in the Land Environment Court for about five years which involved, for example, conciliating disputes under the *Land Rights Act* when there were disputes in Land Councils of appeals against a decision of the Minister to refuse a land grant.

A foundation member of the Sydney Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) Regional Council, Ridgeway served on the Council for six years. He was a member of the National Indigenous Working Group on Native Title advising the Federal government on the Mabo judgement and the subsequent Wik legislation during this time. He was also a member of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (1991-2000) during its last two years.

From July 1999 to June 2005 Ridgeway was a New South Wales Senator in the Commonwealth of Australia Parliament, losing his seat in the October 9, 2004 federal election along with two other Australian Democrats Senators as the Party was in decline and received a very small percentage of the vote. Ridgeway was only the second Indigenous Australian to be elected to the Federal parliament.

Ridgeway joined the Australian Democrats party in 1990 and was their Deputy Leader from 2001 to 2002 and he was Spokesman on a range of portfolios during his term of office. These included Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs as well as Consumer Affairs, Arts and Sports, Forestry, Small Business and Tourism and Trade and Overseas Development. He also served on various Parliamentary Committees. Ridgeway's interest in politics was stimulated by the storytelling and talks of his grandmother, Phoebe Mumbler, and also by the career of Senator Neville Bonner, the first Indigenous Federal politician.

Ridgeway is the long time Chair of the Bangarra Dance Theatre, a former trustee of the Charles Perkins Children's Trust Fund and the Tikkun Australia Foundation. He continues as patron of the Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative. He was a Presenter on the ABC Television program 'Message Stick' for eighteen months until early 2008. On 26 June 2006 Ridgeway was appointed as chairman of the new advisory body [Indigenous Tourism Australia](#), a part of Tourism Australia.

In 2003 Ridgeway received the Centenary Medal. In 2004 he was named NAIDOC Person of the Year and he has been NAIDOC Chair since 2006.

References:

Australian Democrats website. Viewed 21 February 2008,
<http://www.democrats.org.au/people/?person_id=73&display=1&level=1>

Message Stick, 4 August 2006, ABC. Viewed 21 February 2008
<<http://www.abc.net.au/message/tv/ms/about.htm>>

Transcript of recorded interview with Aden Ridgeway recorded by the Oral History Section of the National Library of Australia as part of the Seven Years On Project. Interviewers Peter Read and Jackie Huggins, 30 November 1995. Unedited draft. ([MS 4375, Series 1](#)) and National Library of Australia catalogue entry for the interview. Viewed 14 February 2008. National Library of Australia Home Page <www.nla.gov.au>

Who's who 2008, p. 1794

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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series 1 Aden Ridgeway, 2000-01

This series mainly consists of the unedited draft transcript of the 'Recorded interview with Aden Ridgeway', which was recorded on 30 November 1995 by the Oral History Section of the National Library of Australia and a covering letter to Ridgeway from the National Library of Australia. The Interviewers were Peter Read and Jackie Huggins and the interview is part of the Seven Years On Project which aimed to interview members of the Indigenous community with a follow up interviews after seven years.

This interview is held at ORAL TRC 3391 and the second interview which was recorded in 2002 is held at ORAL TRC 4910 in the National Library of Australia's Oral History and Folklore Collection.

The following is the description of this interview found in the [National Library of Australia's](#) catalogue entry.

Ridgeway talks about his upbringing on the Bellwood Aboriginal Reserve in northern New South Wales; his move to Sydney with his mother and brother while still at primary school; his attendance at St. John's College in Lismore on an Aboriginal study grant; the influence of his Catholic education; early work experiences in a factory and in the National Parks and Wildlife Service; political influence of his grandmother Phoebe Mumbler; employment in the NSW public service in various departments; departure from public service to work for NSW Aboriginal Land Council; his view of the relationship between Aboriginal land issues and environmental groups and mining interests; the role of the NSW Land Council; land claims in NSW; Aboriginality and bi-culturalism; the Aboriginal Mediation course developed for the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre; native title; the NSW Geographical Names Board; the role of the

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission.

Ridgeway discusses the need for agreements to be reviewed; reconciliation; joint management issues; cultural appropriation; the Murray-Darling Basin Commission; water; Mabo legislation; his admiration for Neville Bonner; Aboriginal leadership in the 1990s compared to the 1970s; sovereignty; personal qualities and life and his desire to reintroduce the Gumbaynggir language. He also speculates about his position, and that of the Land Council, in seven years' time.'

Also, a small number of papers were found loose with the collection rather than being included in files. These include a questionnaire completed by Ridgeway for a booklet about Ridgeway in the Aussie Stars series by Grant McCallum. There is also related correspondence. The booklets are simplified biographies and promote the achievements of high profile Indigenous Australians for children in the 10 to 14 years age group.

Other loose papers are 'Senator Aden Ridgeway', which appears to be a short speech by Ridgeway about his life and career (two copies); 'Aboriginal People and Australian politics', about Ridgeway's life, career and views; an email response by Ridgeway to a student's questions about himself; and 'Aden Ridgeway for Deputy Leader' which seeks support to continue as Deputy Leader of the Australian Democrats (no date).

Reference

1. National Library of Australia catalogue entry for the interview. Viewed 14 February 2008. National Library of Australia Home Page www.nla.gov.au

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Series 2 Reconciliation – Speeches, 1999-2002

The papers in this series relate to Ridgeway's public engagements and statements. Included are 'Address to the Hakoah Club' (25 November 2002); 'Reconciliation and national well-being', Mulanggarri lecture no. 2, University of Canberra, 28 June 1999; 'Accommodating cultural diversity and human rights' (no place or date); Millennium dreaming: Indigenous peoples in Australia in the era of reconciliation – how far have we come? – how far have we to go?', Murdoch memorial lecture, 17 November 1999; 'Vision for Reconciliation' (no place or date); Address to the Young Aboriginal Achievers Awards Dinner, Taree, 9 June 2000; Speech at the opening of the Moree Croc Eisteddfod, 8 September 1999 [also held in [Series 15, Item 2](#)]; Australia Day address, Dubbo, NSW, 24 January 2000; speech to the International Council for Social Services, Sydney, NSW, 16 September 1999 and other speeches and addresses.

Also includes speaking notes, briefing notes, media releases, handwritten notes, speeches at book launches, photocopies of newspaper clippings, letters to the Editor, and edited speeches.

One folder

Series 3 Reconciliation – Apology, 1997-99

On 13 February 2008 the new Labor Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, moved a motion in the Federal Parliament's House of Representatives offering an apology to Australia's Indigenous people. The Prime Minister's speech included

'To the stolen generations, I say the following: as Prime Minister of Australia, I am sorry.

On behalf of the Government of Australia, I am sorry.

On behalf of the Parliament of Australia, I am sorry.

I offer you this apology without qualification.'

The motion received bipartisan support and was one of the first parliamentary actions of the incoming Labor government. Compensation was not offered as part of the apology.

The apology was a key recommendation of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families in the [Bringing them home](#) report. Although the state and territory parliaments apologised to those affected by the policies of separation, the Commonwealth Parliament did not agree to apologise, instead expressing 'deep and sincere regret' for 'past injustices' as part of a 'Motion of Reconciliation' on 26 August 1999. Ridgeway co-sponsored this motion in the Senate.

The lack of an apology was regarded as 'unfinished business' until the apology was made by the Rudd Labor Government.

Reference

Australia. Parliament. Parliamentary Library. Background note: "Sorry" the unfinished business of the *Bringing Them Home* report, by Carol Dow, 4 February 2008. Viewed 14 February 2008 <<http://www.aph.gov.au/library/Pubs/BN/2007-08/BringingThemHomeReport.htm>>

Australia. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Speech by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to the Parliament, 13 February 2008. Viewed 14 February 2008. <http://www.dfat.gov.au/indigenous_background/rudd_speech.html>

Folder

- 1 Speech on motion of reconciliation, 1999. Includes collection of documents and covering letter sent by Ridgeway to the Indigenous Media Sector; *Hansard* report of the Motion of Reconciliation moved by Senator Hill and co-sponsored by Ridgeway on 26 August 1999 and the following debate, including the speech by Ridgeway; various versions of 'Possible draft motion', and handwritten notes. Also Australian Parliament Senate *Notice Paper* no. 102, 28 May 1997 containing a notice of a motion by Senator Faulkner (Leader of the Opposition in the Senate) regarding an apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, compensation and restitution and other matters; copies of speeches by Senators Reynolds and Woodley on 'Matters of Public Importance: Australian reconciliation', from *Senate Hansard*, 26 May 1999, pp. 5480 and 5476; statements by ATSIC Chairman Gatjil Djerrkura, Lowitja O'Donoghue, and Evelyn Scott; handwritten notes and other papers
- 2-3 Newspaper clippings, 1997-99 (bulk 1999) mainly regarding the apology to the Stolen Generations. Also copy of 'Motion of Reconciliation' issued by the Prime Minister (26 August 1999), an ALP amendment issued by the Leader of the Opposition and other media releases; a copy of a letter to the Editor from Ridgeway; a Channel 7 Sunday Sunrise interview with Senator John Herron, Aboriginal Affairs Minister, 29 August 1999 and a Rehome media transcript of an interview with the Federal Shadow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Minister Daryl Melham on Network Ten's Meet the Press Program on 29 August 1999

Series 4 Reconciliation – Mandatory sentencing, 2000

This series consists of papers on the subject of mandatory sentencing in Western Australia and the Northern Territory and the question of Australian Government intervention to prevent it. Included are a table of the mandatory sentencing provisions in the Northern Territory and Western Australia; a table of key dates and documents from 'Internet resource guide: criminal law resources' from 1901 - April 15 2000 produced by the Australian Parliamentary Library [an updated chronology (1901-2002) is available in the publications section of the [Parliament Of Australia Website](#).]

Also the Australian Senate's Legal and Constitutional References Committee 'Inquiry into the Human Rights (Mandatory Sentencing of Juvenile Offenders) Bill, 1999' (March 2000), list of speakers, including Ridgeway, in the debate on the Bill and copies of Ridgeway's speech (13 March 2000); notes for motion, 7th March 2000 and a copy of the motion regarding the Prime Minister's failure to show positive national leadership on Aboriginal reconciliation; newspaper clippings and examples of complaints and information for indictable offences.

One folder

Series 5 Reconciliation – Stolen generations, 1999-2001

'Stolen Generations' or 'Stolen Generation' are the terms used to describe Indigenous children who, 'by compulsion, duress or undue influence' (1), were removed from their families under past government policies commencing as early as 1885 in some states and still in operation in some cases up to 1970.

Reference

1. National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families. *Bringing them Home: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families* (1997). Viewed 14 February 2008 <<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/IndigLRes/stolen/>>

Folder

- 1 Papers relating to Urgency Motion, 4 April 2000, moved by Ridgeway relating to the existence of the stolen generations and the need for the Government to ease the 'hurt and trauma that many Indigenous people continue to feel'. Also response by Ridgeway to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Senator Herron's, answer to a question by Ridgeway on the 'stolen generation issue'
- 2 Papers relating to censure motion, on 10 April 2000, moved by Ridgeway as a result of the lack of action by Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Senator Herron on the urgency motion of 4 April 2000 (see [Folder 1](#))
- 3 Inquiry establishment, 1999-2000. Contains papers relating to the establishment of the Senate Committee of Inquiry into the Stolen Generation including copies of motions and speeches in the Senate that lead to its establishment. Ridgeway spoke in support of the Australian Labor Party motions regarding the stolen generations
- 4-5 Inquiry transcripts and questions, mostly handwritten, including a series of typed questions for Sir Ronald Wilson (author of the *Bringing them home report*) in his private capacity, and Commonwealth of Australia 'Proof Committee *Hansard* for the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee, reference Stolen generation' for 4 September and 9, 11 and 12 August 2000
- 6 Papers relating to the 'Reconciliation Bill 2001', a private members Bill introduced into

Folder

the Senate by Ridgeway. Includes copies of the Bill; Ridgeway's second reading speech introducing the Bill; an explanatory memorandum on the Bill, staff advice regarding its introduction, comments from the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Inc. on the Bill, a party room briefing; 'Briefing note: Reconciliation Bill – role of ATSIC'; media releases; and other papers

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Series 6 Reconciliation – United Nations, 2001

Papers relating to the Indigenous Peoples and Racism Regional Meeting for the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, University of Sydney, Australia, 20-22 February, 2001. Contains program and abstracts of papers and handwritten notes on 'Exploring racial prejudice in society: racism in South Africa and Australia', by Father Nolan.

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Series 7 Reconciliation – Inventing the wheel, 2000

Papers relating to comments made by Mr Ruddock, the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Reconciliation to the newspapers *La Monde* and the *Washington Post* linking Aboriginal disadvantage with the fact that Australia's Indigenous people did not develop the chariot or the wheel. The Democrats, the Australian Labor Party and the Australian Greens regarding the remarks as a set back to reconciliation, called for the sacking of Ruddock. The papers include media releases, a copy of Senate questions without notice, a Matter of Urgency and Matter of Public Importance speeches by Ridgeway, correspondence with constituents, letters to the editor, newspaper articles and other papers.

Also a transcript of a tape recording, probably from an ABC program, on a House of Representatives motion seeking to acknowledge the stolen generations report and to apologise for the practice of removing Aboriginal children from their parents, 28 May 1997.

One folder

Series 8 Reconciliation – Noel Pearson/Welfare, 1999-2001

Newspaper clippings on Noel Pearson's views, mainly on welfare dependency and the problems of drug and alcohol addiction, and Ridgeway's dissenting views. Includes 'Beware of Pearson's Trojan Horse: opinion piece on dealing with Indigenous rights' by Ridgeway and a briefing note 'Reconciliation: critique of Pearson's third way'. Also an email to colleague Senator John Woodley.

One folder

Series 9 Reconciliation – Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR), 1999-2003

Ridgeway was a member, during its final two years, of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR) which was established by the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, with unanimous cross-party support, as a statutory body under the *Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act 1991* to steer a decade-long process aimed at building bridges between Indigenous and other Australians. The establishment of a formal and ongoing reconciliation process was the final recommendation of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. A sunset clause in the legislation stipulated that the Council would end its term on 1 January 2001, the centenary of Australian federation.

This series contains media releases from Ridgeway for the Australian Democrats, and from CAR, Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), photocopies of newspaper clippings, and some speaking notes for Council members.

One folder

Series 10 Reconciliation – Reconciliation Place, 2001

Reconciliation Place is a symbol of Reconciliation located in the heart of the Parliamentary Triangle in Canberra, the Australian capital. It forms a pathway which links the High Court of Australia and the National Library of Australia.

This series contains handwritten notes, and typed notes for Ridgeway's speech in the Senate on concerns that he had regarding the consultation process for the works for Reconciliation Place and a 'Statement in support of the Reconciliation Place Protest 15 December 2001' by Ridgeway.

In addition there is a *Hansard* transcript of a speech in the House of Representatives by Mr McMullan, Shadow Indigenous Affairs Minister, about the Opposition's concern about the 'nature and detail' of proposals for the design and content of slivers for Reconciliation Place and the 'processes by which they have been finalised' on 27 September 2001. There is also the transcript of a brief speech, on the same day, by Mr Albanese in support of McMullan.

One folder

Series 11 Republic – Preamble, 1999

On 6 November 1999 an Australian referendum was held with two questions. The first question asked whether Australia should become a Republic with a president appointed by the Commonwealth Parliament. The second question asked if the Australian constitution should be amended to include a Preamble.

The proposed Preamble read

With hope in God, the Commonwealth of Australia is constituted as a democracy with a federal system of government to serve the common good.

We the Australian people commit ourselves to this Constitution:

- proud that our national unity has been forged by Australians from many ancestries;
- never forgetting the sacrifices of all who defended our country and our liberty in time of war;

- upholding freedom, tolerance, individual dignity and the rule of law;
- honouring Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, the nation's first people, for their deep kinship with their lands and for their ancient and continuing cultures which enrich the life of our country;
- recognising the nation-building contribution of generations of immigrants;
- mindful of our responsibility to protect our unique natural environment;
- supportive of achievement as well as equality of opportunity for all;
- and valuing independence as dearly as the national spirit which binds us together in both adversity and success. (1)

Ridgeway, the Australian Democrats Reconciliation spokesman and the Australian Democrats Leader Senator Meg Lees were involved with the Prime Minister John Howard in the drafting of the final version of the Preamble and Ridgeway authorized the argument in favour of the 'yes' vote. There was concern about the level of consultation regarding the wording of the Preamble and it came under fire from both the opposition Australian Labor Party and from Indigenous leaders. Neither of the two referendum questions received a 'yes' vote.

This series contains papers relating to Ridgeway's support for the Preamble.

Reference

1. Constitutional Centenary Foundation site archived on PANDORA by the National Library of Australia. Viewed 26 February 2008 <<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/nph-arch/1999/O1999-Dec-15/http://www.centenary.org.au/preamble/new.html>>

Folder

- 1 Speech, 12 August 1999. Includes 'The case for voting 'Yes': a proposed law to alter the Constitution to insert a Preamble', authorized by Ridgeway; a speech supporting the 'yes' vote given at Norwood Town Hall, Adelaide (15 October 1999); *Hansard* report of 12 August 1999 speech by Ridgeway in the Senate which supported the recognition of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders through the proposed constitutional changes and *Hansard* for debate on the Preamble, 11 August 1999; papers, including newspaper reports, relating to the wording of the questions and the negotiations involving the Australian Democrats; 'Speaking notes for Senators on the Preamble debate'; Australian Democrat media releases; letter to members from Ridgeway on 'The successful negotiation of an inclusive Preamble for the Constitution' (11 August 1999); handwritten notes on speeches in the Senate; 'Constitution alteration (Preamble) 1999 ... a Bill for an Act to alter the Constitution to insert a Preamble'; 'Speaking notes for Senator Aden Ridgeway: issue, recognition of First Nations people in constitutional Preamble' (12 August 1999) and other papers
- 2 Australian Democrat media releases, 1999. Includes letters to the Editor by Ridgeway
- 3-4 Newspaper clippings and transcripts of tape recordings of media interviews, 1999. Includes two letters to Kim Beazley, Leader of the Opposition and media releases

Series 12 Neville Bonner, 1971-2000

Neville Bonner (1922-99) was a Federal Liberal Senator for Queensland for twelve years from 1971 and was the first Indigenous Australian to be elected to the Federal Parliament. In 1974 he put to the Senate that Indigenous people were the prior owners of the land and that Parliament should legislate to compensate for dispossession, he crossed the floor on a number of occasions to vote with the Labor Opposition on Indigenous issues, he fought within his party for the protection of the Aurukun lands from bauxite mining and he served as Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. He also called for an independent inquiry into East Timor.

This series includes a tribute from Ridgeway at a tribute dinner honouring Bonner held in 2000; newspaper clippings, a transcript of an interview conducted by Robin Hughes for Film Australia and published in 1996, a selection of the condolence motions given in the Senate on 15 February 1999 and the House of Representatives on 8 February 1999, and a copy of Bonner's maiden speech in the Senate.

Also 'Neville Thomas Bonner, AO, 28 March 1922 – 5 February 1999: biographical information' compiled by the Department of the Parliamentary Library Information and Research Service, 8 February 1999. This consists mainly of newspaper clippings (1971-99) but also contains biographical information, obituaries and tributes, Bonner's speech to the Constitutional Convention, 4 February 1998 and significant speeches by Bonner in the Senate.

One folder

Series 13 'Native Title Amendment Bill 1996

Correspondence from the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council to Senator Nick Minchin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister regarding proposed amendments to the *Native Title Act 1993* through the proposed 'Native Title Amendment Bill 1996'. Ridgeway was Executive Director of the Council at this time.

The Howard Government's stated aim for this Bill was to make the *Native Title Act 1993* more workable. The Bill attracted considerable criticism from Indigenous groups and the debate heated up considerably after the December 1996 Wik case decision. The 'Native Title Amendment Bill 1997' was finally passed in 1998 after being substantially amended by the Senate.

One folder

Series 14 Dedicated Indigenous seats, 2001

Handwritten notes headed 'Participation in govt. and decision-making' attached to typed 'Reasons to improve Aboriginal representation in Parliament?', and 'Other ways to improve Aboriginal representation'.

The papers give a series of points with a brief explanation of them.

One folder

Series 15 Speeches, 1999-2005

The speeches in this series were found loose with the collection rather than in the files which constituted the bulk of the collection.

Item

- 1 'First speech of Senator Aden Ridgeway, delivered to the Senate on August 25 1999'.
- 2 'Opening of Moree Croc Eisteddfod', 8 September 1999 {Also held in [Series 2](#)}
- 3 'Black Diggers' speech for Black Diggers Day at Coffs Harbour High School on 5 May 2000, including handwritten points and edited draft of speech. Also program for the Day and copies of the speech by the School Captain (Male), a list of New South Wales Aboriginal soldiers who served in World War 1 and poems to be read by students, together with a copy of photograph and details of Corporal Harry Thorpe, representing Black Diggers, from the Australian War Memorial Photograph Database and an extract on 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the armed forces from *The Oxford companion to Australian military history*', pp.12-15.

[The photograph of Thorpe can be found on the [Australian War Memorial](#) Photograph database, viewed 27 February 2008 <<http://www.awm.gov.au/database/collection.asp>>
- 4 'Valedictory speech' given in the Senate on 22 June 2005 printed from the Australian Democrats web site [where other speeches by Ridgeway for the Australian Democrats can also be found. Viewed 25 February 2008
<<http://www.democrats.org.au/speeches/index.htm?request=speech+search+results&speaker=73%7CSenator+Aden+Ridgeway>>]

Series 16 *Message stick, 2001-05*

Message Stick: the Official Newsletter of Senator Aden Ridgeway, September 2001, November 2002, June, Spring and Summer 2003, Autumn and Winter 2004, and April 2005.

The newsletters cover issues of concern to the Australian Democrats, including reconciliation and the stolen generations, Ridgeway's activities, his parliamentary work, office contacts and upcoming events.

Message Stick issues are also held by the Library in its Rare Serials Collection at RS 25.2/7.

One folder

Series 17 *Miscellaneous*

These papers were found loose with the collection.

Advertising card for Aden Ridgeway as a supporter of reconciliation (9 copies) and advertising leaflet headed 'This NAIDOC Week, support the Federal Government's "Quiet Revolution" in Indigenous Affairs by wearing Vanstone ear muffs. Say goodbye to hearing any criticisms of mainstreaming, mutual obligation...'. Senator Amanda Vanstone was Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Reconciliation from October 2003 until January 2006.

Also an election poster 'Its as simple as black & white: Democrats or One Nation. You hold the balance of power...' advertising 'Vote 1 Australian Democrats' and 'Aden Ridgeway for Senate'

One folder plus one poster held in the Manuscript Plan Cabinet

BOX LIST

Series	Box
1-5	1
6-16	2
17	2 + poster in Manuscript Plan Cabinet

Finding aid compiled by J. Churches, February, 2008

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