



Suggestion 80

Way Back When Consulting Historians

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Submission re: 2020-2021 Redivision of Victoria's state electoral boundaries related to names of federal electoral divisions

We wish to put forward the name of **Margaret Tucker** for the new electorate which will be created in Victoria as part of the 2020-2021 federal redistribution. This name meets the AEC requirements for naming after a person, namely:

Divisions should be named after deceased Australians who have rendered outstanding service to their country.

Who was Margaret Tucker?

Margaret Tucker MBE has, without question, delivered outstanding service to her country. Margaret was an untiring activist for the cause of Aboriginal rights. As a young woman, she moved to Fitzroy in the late 1920s and help to establish it as a base of political and social action. She began advocating for Aboriginal rights alongside men such as William Cooper, Bill and Eric Onus and Sir Douglas Nicholls. She was a founding member of the Australian Aborigines League, one of the earliest Aboriginal-run organisations in Australia and one which campaigned for citizen rights for Aboriginal people. Margaret continued campaigning and in the 1960s was the first woman appointed to the Victorian Aborigines' Welfare Board and the first to join the Commonwealth's Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. She was a member of the Aboriginal Land Council of Victoria as well as the Victorian Government's Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee. Alongside her sister Geraldine Briggs, Margaret formed the Victorian Aboriginal and Islander Women's Council. Margaret was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire in 1968 for services to the Aboriginal community and in 2001 inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

This is just a fraction of the work Margaret Tucker achieved in her lifetime, but should highlight how important and influential she has been.

Why we need more electoral divisions named after women

Women make up 51 per cent of Australia's population, but only 11 per cent of the current electorates are named after women. Even fewer are named after First Nations people.

Names are powerful; that is why so many of the original Federation electoral division names remain. In selecting a new name, choosing a woman and a First Nations Australian is not just a symbolic gesture but it is a powerful one too. It shows that the AEC represents ALL Australians, not just 49 per cent.

This redistribution process is an opportunity for the AEC to show that it recognises the importance of names and the power they hold. This is a chance to recognise the previously unrecognised, to acknowledge the important role that women have played in shaping the Australia that we have today and to honour and respect the role that women played, equally, alongside men.

We hope that you take this nomination into consideration.

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Sources

<https://www.nma.gov.au/explore/features/indigenous-rights/people/margaret-tucker>
<https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/margaret-tucker-mbec>
<https://ia.anu.edu.au/biography/tucker-margaret-elizabeth-auntie-marge-1556>