

# The Australian Women's Register

---

**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE6412

## Mabo, Bonita

(1943 - 2018)

<b>Born</b>	1 January, 1943, Ingham Queensland Australia
<b>Died</b>	26 November, 2018, Brisbane Queensland Australia
<b>Occupation</b>	Aboriginal rights activist, Human rights activist

### Summary

Bonita Mabo was a prominent Indigenous and South Sea Islander activist. She was the wife of land rights campaigner Eddie Mabo.

### Details

Bonita Neehow married Eddie Mabo in 1959 and together they had ten children. In 1973 she set up Australia's first Aboriginal community school in Townsville and there she worked as a teacher's aide.

In 2013 Bonita was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia 'for distinguished service to the Indigenous community and to human rights as an advocate for the Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islander peoples.'

Bonita Mabo passed away just days after she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from James Cook University for her contribution to social justice and human rights, particularly for Indigenous Australians and South Sea Islanders.

### Archival resources

**National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection**  
[Bonita Mabo interviewed by Doreen Mellor \[sound recording\]](#)

**National Library of Australia**  
[\[Biographical cuttings on Bonita Mabo, wife of former Eddie Mabo, political pariah, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals\]](#)

**Author Details**  
Alannah Croom

**Created** 17 August 2024  
**Last modified** 17 August 2024