



Madge Bowen

Born: 14/06/1944
Clan: Bulgan Warra
Language: Guugu Yimithirr
Kuku Yalanji
Totem: Mirrgi (Night Owl)



Biography:

Madge was born in Yarrabah in 1944. Her mother was part of the Stolen Generation who were taken away as children and sent to the Yarrabah Mission.

Madge's totem is the Mirrgi (Night Owl).

Madge moved to Hope Vale from Yarrabah with her brother in 1950. She was a young girl who had tragically lost her mother in a car accident. The Lutheran Church missionaries took Madge and placed her in the Hope Vale Girl's dormitory.

In her memoir, Madge describes life in the dormitory, explaining how difficult it was being taken away from her family and living under extremely controlling and oppressive rules.

In her late teens, Madge was sent away to by the missionaries to work on a dairy farm. She recalls a happy time, escaping mission life and that she'd been lucky to be sent to a loving and kind family.

Madge married Edward Bowen in 1967 and had six children. She now has twenty-two grandchildren and great grandchildren.

She worked at the Hope Vale School as a teacher's aide for 20 years, retiring in 2007.

Madge paints her traditional homeland, Bulgan (Kings Plains). Her richly painted landscapes convey her deep connection to Bulgan and special sites surrounding the area.

Madge belongs to the *Gamba Gamba* group (senior women) at the art centre. Artworks by the Gamba draw on traditional Guugu Yimithirr Warra culture and contemporary and mission time histories. The women hold deep cultural knowledge of family kinship systems, sacred sites, esoteric characters and totems and are passionate about recording language and traditional stories to preserve and hand down to the younger generations.

Madge has been a director and long term staff member of Hopevale Arts & Cultural Centre. She was honoured as a life member of the organisation in 2012.

Madge completed her Diploma of Visual Arts through TAFE in Cairns in 2013.

Group Exhibitions

- 2020** **Endeavour Voyage: The Untold Stories of Cook and the First Australians** - National Museum of Australia, Canberra ACT
- 2019** **ARTNOW FNQ 2019** - Cairns Art Gallery, Cairns QLD
- 2019** **Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 2019** - Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal, Cairns QLD
- 2018** **PSBA & QPS NAIDOC Art 2018 Exhibition** - Brisbane, QLD
- 2016** **Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 2016** - Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal, Cairns QLD
- 2015** **Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 2015** - Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal, Cairns QLD
- 2014** **Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 2014** - Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal, Cairns QLD

- 2013** **Gamba Gamba - Hopevale Artists** - Tali Gallery, Sydney NSW
- 2013** **Kinship** - The Tanks Art Centre, Cairns QLD
- 2012** **Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 2012** - Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal, Cairns QLD
- 2012** **Hopevale Arts Group Exhibition** - Natures Powerhouse Gallery & Interpretive Centre, Cooktown QLD
- 2012** **Cooktown School of Art Society Annual Exhibition** - Cooktown School of Art Society Inc, Cooktown QLD
- 2012** **The Bag: Object or Obsession - Women in the Arts 2012 (International Womens Day)** - Knock Knock Contemporary Artists' Initiative - Contemporary Artspace, Cairns QLD
- 2011** **Cairns Indigenous Art Fair 2011** - Cairns Cruise Liner Terminal, Cairns QLD

Themes

Bulgan

Captain Cook's 48 days in ,Wabalumbaal

Hope Vale Mission History