

# DEMOCRACY - BURRINJA

Reporting the passing of community activist and artist Lin Onus. Lin's Yorta Yorta name was 'burrinja', taken by the cultural centre in his memory.

Wednesday November 6, 1996

# Free Press

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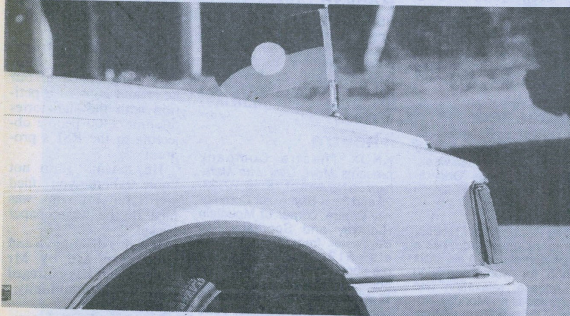
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Indigenous role model: Mr Onus' received much recognition for his contribution to the Aboriginal community.



Farewell to a tireless worker: CFA officials turned out in droves to pay their respects.

## Road lined in silent salute

by GREG RUSSO

MORE than 150 people converged on the Upwey fire station last Thursday to pay tribute to hills identity Lin Onus, who died on October 24. A guard of honor comprising CFA firefighters and residents was formed as the cortege left for a special memorial service at the Aborigines Advancement League in Thornbury.

Dozens more people attended the service, and another at the Fawkner Crematorium, which was followed by a ceremony at Barmah in New South Wales, where Mr Onus painted much of his award-winning work.

Mr Onus, 47, a father of three, died after a heart attack. He was an internationally renowned artist and sculptor whose works can be found in collections locally and overseas. He was made a member of the Order of Australia in 1993 for services to art and the Aboriginal Artists Council.

Tributes after Mr Onus' death poured in from across Victoria and interstate from government ministers as well as the Aboriginal and arts communities.

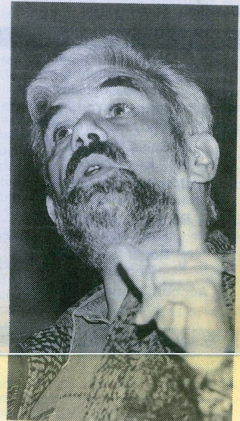
The federal Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Senator John Herron, said Mr Onus' life and work would stand as an inspiration to all Australians.

"He was a role model for all Australians, particularly indigenous Australians, and will be remembered for his outstanding contribution to the culture of this country." From 1988 to 1992, Mr Onus was chairman of the Australia Council's Aboriginal Arts Board.

He received several awards for his art work, including the National Aboriginal Art Award and in 1994 was awarded first prize in the Australian Heritage Commission's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Awards for his work, *Barmah Forest*. Last year he received the Natural Aboriginal Heritage Award.

Mr Onus was a volunteer firefighter with the Upwey CFA and most recently was president of the United Neighbourhood Organisation of the Hills group.

Hills residents described him as a gentleman and a tireless community worker who devoted much of his life to helping others.



Lin Onus: died on October 24.



Guard of honor: residents and CFA officials gave a strong display of their gratitude to Mr Onus. Pictures: MICHELLE KELCEY