

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1967 REFERENDUM

MUCH ACHIEVED, STILL MUCH TO DO



LINDA TURNER
COMMUNITY LEADER

“ I was born in Renner Springs but I live in Tennant Creek. My people worked for rations in those days and didn’t say much about the referendum.

CELEBRATING

**50
YEARS**

May 27: the day two discriminatory sections in our Constitution were removed after a vote overwhelmingly in favour

Now I realise it was one of the most significant events for Aboriginal people since colonisation.

It led to the Land Rights Act and Mabo native title decision.

It seems strange that we needed a referendum to be recognised. But most Australians voted “yes”, which makes me feel that we’re a united country in some ways. Life has improved for Aboriginal people, but much more needs to be done. We still live below the poverty line and in Third World conditions.

Of course, the referendum gave us the right to drink alcohol. Our bodies just weren’t used to it. Grog has destroyed many Aboriginal lives and continues

to destroy families. That’s one of the most serious problems we have to overcome.

I would like young Aboriginal people to be more disciplined, to get up when they’re knocked down. I left school after grade 7 and got a university degree as a mature-aged student. The whole of Tennant Creek was proud of me. I want it to be normal for Aboriginal people to get degrees, not as a reason to say “wow!” ”

- Linda Turner