

Fran Moser



Tamborine Q 4270

To Co-Design Body

Co-design process: Submission for Fran Moser

My story comes from long lines of strong, resilient, and hard-working men and women, of Polish and Swiss heritage on my mother's side and English, Scottish and Irish heritage on my father's. I was born in Tasmania and grew up most of my life on the Gold Coast. I now live in the beautiful area of Tamborine, at the base of the mountain on Wangerriburra Country with my husband and two children.

I have always been drawn to the questions, where have I come from? And where do my roots lie? About 2 and half years ago, whilst outside amongst the big grey gum trees at our home, a series of songs came up through me, wanting to be told with such urgency. It wasn't long before I knew, a story was emerging. The melodies of my ancestral lineage of my father.

During the process of writing these song stories, there was a point where something was missing, something big. It was a sense of deep grief, but I couldn't articulate it. Until, I got a phone call from my husband who was working interstate. At the time he was reading the book *Castaway*, by Australian author Robert Macklin, and I remember so clearly, the sadness in his voice when he had to ring me and share the horrific truths of our untold dark history- the Frontier Wars, the brutality, the trickery, the robbery, the rape, the kidnapping, the murder experienced by our First Nations people. They were poisoned, tortured, enslaved and driven off cliffs. I had never been told the real truth. The details. The facts. I was grief stricken and I was angry. I still am.

So my story, HERE ,in Australia began in 1859, when my great-great-great parents arrived from Fife, Scotland in search of a New Great Promise, the promise of a better life to raise a family, the promise of Ballarat gold. The promise was short-lived, and the goldrush concluded. Opportunity for my family took a new form; the Regional Land grab. Around 1868, Andrew and Martha, with now five young children in toe, moved from Joyces Creek, south of Ballarat and settled in the area of Boho, outside of Violet Town.

However, this new opportunity for my family, this new life, was built on a largely unspoken part of our history, the slaughter of the Aboriginal people. Between 1838 -1842, the Aboriginal people of this area, Taungurung Country, were chased and killed from their lands shattering their long history, their deep spiritual union with their land, their traditions, customs and their homes. Twenty years later, this would be the land where my family, moved in, to lay their roots.

On stolen Land.

The recording of our family songs and the formation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, seems timely. I must have felt it's birthing back in 2017. The truth seeking and telling that has

and continues to happen within my family and local community, of the untold criminal acts against our First Nations people, is proving to be a process that is of extreme importance, and part of a collective acknowledgment and healing.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart, I believe will be one of the most important pieces of political writing in Australia, that I will see produced in my lifetime. I fully support what has been asked of all Australians in this document. It has been asked with love and respect and I accept the invitation to find the heart of our Nation – together. In line with and in complete support of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, my key points are:

### *Sovereignty*

I want all people who live on this beautiful continent, we call Australia, to acknowledge that First Nations people were the first sovereign nations, with over 65,000 years of living on and connection to this Land. This sovereignty was never surrendered, meaning that it co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown. This needs to be nationally acknowledged.

### *Treaty*

Australia is the only Commonwealth country without a treaty with its Indigenous peoples. We need this treaty process to think through what healing and reparation means.

### *Truth telling*

The Statement asks for truth telling. I want the full extent of the past injustices experienced by Aboriginal people to be told. To fully name the brutal history that this country was built on – the Frontier Wars that is written down in history books but not spoken of. The truth that the Crown and its Government counterparts' mission was to nullify Aboriginal culture, to terminate their long history, their deep spiritual union with their lands.

Our country is littered with statues, monuments, plaques and public spaces honouring 'famous' pioneering families and figures involved in extreme acts of violence and murder against Aboriginal communities. There is only one side being told and this is unacceptable.

I want my children to know the truth. My children are taught at school, about the First Fleet, the harsh lives of convicts and white settlers, and so, they should be taught the true events of the brutality of the Frontiers Wars and treatment of First Nations people. Both sides of the story. They deserve the truth. It's part of their history too.

### *A Voice*

I support the idea of establishing an elected Voice to Parliament with constitutional backing. This governance arrangement at a Federal level would enable expert input and participation from Indigenous people on all policy areas that affect them. They know best how to repair and heal their own communities and work through the challenges facing their people, which were all born out of the actions and effects caused by colonisation. We as a nation are failing to protect our Indigenous communities, it seems the struggles are not improving and instances like the incarceration rate of Indigenous young people is growing. For far too long, decisions

have been made without First Nation people input. Australia owes them a protected representation and voice to Parliament.

A Voice to Parliament would improve the lives of both Indigenous and non- Indigenous Australians. For obvious reasons for First Nations people, as mentioned above, but for the rest of us, I believe there is so much rich knowledge and experience that we have not even begun to truly connect with from our Indigenous people. I don't think we can begin this until the healing truly starts.

Everyone has so much to gain when our Indigenous people are strongly connected with their culture. Until then we are living in a constant state of dissonance and constantly making excuses and forming beliefs to why we don't need to listen – this only fuels racism and divide, which creates no opportunity for growth, or 'a coming together after a struggle', as the Makarrata Commission states within the Statement.

This Voice to Parliament needs to be enshrined in the Constitution, not just included in legislation so that their Voice is protected and cannot be withdrawn with a change of government. Too many Indigenous representative councils, commissions in the past have been removed and abandoned by change of governments. This can longer happen. A First Nation's Voice needs to be protected.

Earlier in my submission I shared that I was grief stricken and angry. But my heart is hopeful, that there will be change and the First Nation's people will finally receive what they have been asking for, for such a long time. I acknowledge their endurance, resilience and their fight.

I wholeheartedly request that Indigenous recognition is incorporated into the Australian Constitution which will then align with other Commonwealth countries. I support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and agree to what is been asked by our First Nations people. To formally acknowledge our shared Black and White history and put in place the necessary structures to facilitate us all to understand, heal and flourish together as a nation.

Thank you for the opportunity share my voice

Yours sincerely

Fran Moser