

13 December 2022

Vale Jeremy Beckett

The AAS expresses its sincere condolences for the recent passing of Jeremy Beckett and pays respects to his family and friends.

Jeremy's career in anthropology spans many decades, beginning in the 1950s. He conducted pioneering work with Aboriginal communities in north-western NSW and in the Torres Strait Islands and maintained his connection with these communities throughout his life. Jeremy taught in Australia and internationally, including almost thirty years at the University of Sydney, where he remained Emeritus Professor. He pioneered the move to a postcolonial approach to anthropology in Australia, introducing important international theorists to the discipline. His work continues to influence many practicing anthropologists today. His role as an Expert Witness in the Murray Island Land Case (aka, the 'Mabo' case), made significant contributions to the achievement of Native Title, and he also contributed to the Torres Strait Sea Rights case in 2009.

He is remembered by many colleagues as an enthusiastic mentor and tutor, a considered and careful listener, a rigorous and committed anthropologist, an insightful contributor to the discipline, and as a generous friend. His humour, his storytelling, his warmth, and his intellectual passions will be missed.

In 2020, Jeremy was recognised for his contributions to the discipline as an Honorary Life Member of the AAS.

Our condolences to the many anthropologists who knew him, to his friends, and to his family.

Vale Jeremy Beckett.

AAS Executive Committee.