

Media Release

Sunday 6 February 2011

A FAREWELL TO PENNY TWEEDIE

The distinguished Walkley award winning photographer Penny Tweedie will be farewelled by her Australian friends and colleagues at a wake in Sydney on 20 February 2011.

Hundreds of photographers, artists, journalists and friends of the British Australian woman best known for her luminous photography of Australian Aborigines will say goodbye at the Balmain Town Hall in Darling St at 1.30 to 4.30pm.

The wake will be followed by a celebration in the hall and all attending are asked to bring a plate of food and something to drink.

Organisers of the Farewell- Professor Andrea Hull of Melbourne, former Director of the VCA and Daniela Torsh of Balmain, a journalist are working with Penny's son Ben aged 36 who is travelling from his home in England to the Sydney wake.

Penny Anne Tweedie born in Hawkhurst in Kent, England on April 30 1940 died at Hawkhurst on 14 January. She was a dual citizen and lived for some years in Balmain and also in Canberra and the Northern Territory.

Her funeral was held in Kent on 27 January and she has been accorded obituaries in *The Australian*, *The Age*, *The Courier Mail*, the *Northern Territory News*, *The Guardian* (UK) and *The Independent* (UK) as well as in many blogs including *Australian Geographic* who published her major book "**The Spirit of Arnhem Land**" in 1998. An earlier book "**This My Country**" which Penny shot in Arnhem Land was published by Collins in 1985. On BBC Radio Penny is remembered by friend and fellow journalist John Pilger and her one time photo assistant Mike Wells and son Ben Tweedie. *ABC television* in Darwin ran an obituary on their news programme a few days after her tragic death.

"**Standing Strong**" was a later book of photos of young successful aboriginal role models served as a catalogue for her Sydney 2000 Olympics exhibition in the media centre at Homebush.

With 50 years of significant international photography work her death is a severe loss to her friends and also her family and most of all to the world of photography. She is best known in Britain for her work with Shelter the charity for homeless people, her war photography in south Asia and Israel and Vietnam as

well as her portraits of Twiggy, John Lennon and Yoko Ono (amongst others) but in Australia she will be remembered for the iconic photos of Gough Whitlam pouring sand into the hand of traditional owner Vincent Lingiari when the Gurindji were finally given land rights in 1975 and also for her Timor photos just before the Indonesian invasion that same year. Her photo of painted up Aboriginal man Tom Noytuna with an orange Telstra phone contrasted with his white body paint is unforgettable and was used as the cover for the invitation to her book launch of "*Spirit of Arnhem Land*" in 1998.

Her photographic agency in Australia is **Wildlight** where many of her beautiful pictures of Aboriginal life in the Northern territory can be viewed.

<http://www.wildlight.net/wild/home/>

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