

QUEENSLAND FAMILY HISTORIAN

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THE HISTORY OF THIS SOCIETY

Preamble

The organised study of genealogy and family history began in Queensland with the formation of the Ipswich Genealogical Society on 8 September 1977. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints had decided to open, through sponsorship, a branch genealogical library of the Genealogical Society of Utah, and as a result Bishop Ian C. Waters of the Ipswich Ward of the Church called a meeting of all interested persons in the Ipswich area. Approximately 30 people attended the inaugural meeting and the Ipswich Genealogical Society was formed with Mr Warren Stone as president.

Mrs Lynora Waldron of Jindalee had been teaching genealogical research at the Technical and Further Education Centre (TAFE), and had stimulated much interest. It was suggested that the Society might wish to expand to Brisbane to cater for students who may require assistance after completing their studies.

Realising the necessity to co-ordinate genealogical work throughout Queensland, and therefore the need for a statewide society, Bishop Ian Waters instituted proceedings that resulted in a name change from the Ipswich Genealogical Society to the Genealogical Society of Queensland, Ipswich Chapter.

Lyn Waldron's most recent TAFE class had been conducted from February to April 1978 at the Education Centre, in George Street, and at the conclusion all the class were invited to a **public meeting on 17 May 1978** in a room at the centre. The meeting attracted 24 people including three students of the recently completed genealogical course, Annie Thomas, Joan Gibbs and Cecily Cameron. Merie Lowenstein of Jamboree Heights was elected president and Trevor Stanley of Riverhills, treasurer, of the Brisbane Chapter of the Genealogical Society of Queensland.

With two chapters in existence the election of a State Executive took place on 8 June 1978 and Bishop Ian Waters was elected President, Mr Lynn Aberdeen, Vice-President and Mrs Lynora Waldron, Secretary/Treasurer. A newsletter, undated and unnumbered, was

circulated some time after this event and carried these details along with brief notes about the newly-formed Ipswich, Brisbane and Nambour Chapters.

Expansion was swift - the Sunshine Coast Chapter was formed on 24 June and the Toowoomba Chapter on 16 August 1978, followed by Rockhampton on 24 November, Bundaberg on 25 November and Inala on 5 December. Gold Coast followed in early 1979 after a preliminary meeting on 9 December 1978.

Joan Hodgson became Secretary of the Brisbane Chapter soon after joining in late winter 1978, on her return to Brisbane after some years in England where she had spent a great deal of time on family research. She was a member of a number of English societies and had information and contacts that no other member had at that time.

A **draft constitution** of the Genealogical Society was drawn up and circulated. Among the Society's objects it was proposed to: publish a journal and newsletters; produce a yearly directory; and organise annual conventions.

The Society was to consist of Branches which would be known as Chapters. The Society was to be run by an Executive Committee consisting of the president, two vice-presidents, secretary, treasurer and publicity officer, which would have general control and management of the administration of the affairs, property and funds of the Society between council meetings which would take place every three months. As well as members of the Executive Committee, the Council would include two delegates from each Chapter.

The Society would have the power to impose upon and collect fees, levies and other charges from members and to borrow or raise money, with or without security, from Chapters. This document was a major concern to members of the Brisbane Chapter.

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The first **Annual Convention** of the Society was held on 28 October 1978 at the All Nations Club in Brisbane and was a huge success. Nick Vine Hall, Director of the Society of Australian Genealogists in Sydney, was guest speaker and addresses were also delivered by Lynn Aberdeen, Owen Mutzelberg and Ian Waters. The film *The Strength of the Hill* was shown, outlining the work being undertaken by the Genealogical Society of Utah in preserving world records.

The first dated, monthly, newsletter appeared in January 1979. Circulated at meetings, it was a folded foolscap, four page, roneoed document, containing an article by President Ian Waters about the activities of the Society during the previous six months, and general information.

It advised that office accommodation to house the growing society was located at 30a Grimes Street, Auchenflower [Brisbane suburb - Ed.] The offer of this space was made by Mr Orme Hodgson whose wife Joan had recently been appointed secretary of the Brisbane Chapter. Members from the Brisbane and Ipswich Chapters helped alter and decorate the rooms which were ready for occupation by Tuesday 17 April 1979, with plans to open every Tuesday from 11am to 2pm and 7pm to 8.30pm.

Very early steps were taken to begin building a reference library. A number of sub-committees were formed to help with publications, fund raising, education and cemetery transcription.

From its formation in mid 1978 the **Brisbane Chapter** of the Society met on the third Wednesday of the month at the South Brisbane Town Hall, on the corner of Vulture and Graham Streets. Meetings were very informal - the committee met for a few minutes prior to the general meeting - but the small membership was very keen and visitors welcome. There was often a guest speaker.

After experiencing a few problems with room bookings and parking in streets nearby, at the suggestion of Mark Norton the Brisbane

Chapter began meeting in April 1979 at the **Holy Trinity Church Hall**, Hawthorne Street, Woolloongabba, for payment of a nominal rent.

The first meeting of the **publication** sub-committee was held on 21 December 1978 at the South Brisbane Town Hall, and Joan Hodgson accepted the task of editing the quarterly Journal. Called *Generation*, the first edition of 28 pages appeared in March 1979. There were at that time 45 members of the Brisbane Chapter. Plans were in hand to publish a **directory of members' names**.

An Easter car rally was planned by the fund-raising committee and advertised in the February Newsletter but was later cancelled owing to lack of support.

In early March 1979, Joan Hodgson circulated a document on *Some Observations on the Genealogical Society of Queensland structure and the proposed Constitution*. A little over a foolscap page long, the paper criticised the constitution, and the proposed structure of the organisation which was to be controlled by a State Executive and Council. She suggested discarding the constitution in its entirety, and to look instead for guidance from firmly established societies with similar aims and interests, and then adopt guidelines laid down by the Justice Department of Queensland.

Joan felt the system of organising branches into Chapters was not entirely suitable for a genealogical society. A proposed restructuring of the Society was offered and draft rules laid down by the Justice Department were circulated.

On 28 May 1979 the Committee called an **extraordinary general meeting** of the Brisbane Chapter for Wednesday 6 June at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Hawthorne Street, to consider the resolution:

"That Brisbane Chapter take steps to remove itself from the Genealogical Society of Queensland and to accomplish this by 'winding up' the Brisbane Chapter as such."

An extract from the Minutes of the meeting held on 6th June stated:

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"That the Genealogical Society of Queensland, Brisbane Chapter, be disbanded under Clause 11 of the Constitution, all just debts paid, and assets realised, and proceeds divided equally amongst financial members."

Twenty-eight members and two visitors were present at the meeting conducted by Trevor Stanley, chairman for the meeting. Members were invited to speak and ask questions which were answered by the committee and by Mrs Lyn Waldron representing the State Executive of the Genealogical Society of Queensland.

A secret ballot was held and scrutineers appointed, resulting in a vote of 22 to 6 in favour of breaking from the GSQ, so the Chairman declared that the Brisbane Chapter would be disbanded.

BIRTH OF THE QFHS - and the early years

Immediately after the meeting [disbanding the Brisbane Chapter of GSQ], all present were invited to stay and discuss the formation of a new, autonomous society. This was carried on a motion moved by Mark Norton and Jan Santarossa. The old committee members agreed to remain as an interim committee which thus comprised President Merie Lowenstein, Treasurer and Vice-President Trevor Stanley, Secretary Joan Hodgson, and committee members Cecily Cameron, Joan Gibbs, Lloyd Rosewarne and Mark Norton.

Two names were suggested for the new society - the Queensland Family History Society and the Queensland Association for Genealogical Studies.

The **inaugural meeting of the new Society** was held on Wednesday 20 June 1979 and those present voted to call the new organisation the **Queensland Family History Society**. Joan Hodgson produced a six page newsletter for distribution at the meeting. Subscriptions were set at \$10.00 p.a., family membership \$15.00, with a \$2.00 joining fee. Five more monthly newsletters produced that year from July to November were distributed to members at meetings and posted to those who did not attend.

Two **Workshops** were held in the first year. Approximately 20 members attended the first workshop, on English research, organised for Saturday 7 July 1979 and many books, maps and other items were displayed. The workshop, convened by Joan Hodgson and Mary Kelly, was held at the home of the secretary, at Indooroopilly. A second workshop, on Scottish research, was organised by Chas and Cecily Cameron and also held at Indooroopilly, on 8 June 1980.

Cemetery outings or picnics had been held for most of 1979 and by July recorded cemeteries were Sherwood, Archerfield Aerodrome, Chapel Hill, Moggill, The Gap, C.of E. Tingalpa, and a start made on Hemmant/Tingalpa and Toowong. Transcribing began at Dutton Park on Saturday 21 July 1979 and was completed early in 1980. It was still being checked and typed a year later. As soon as the hot weather ended, work began on Balmoral, another large cemetery. The regular day for transcribing these Brisbane area cemeteries was the Saturday following the monthly meeting, and often other family members came to lend a hand.

In August 1979 the Society became a member of the **Federation of Family History Societies** which had been formed in England in 1974. Although the Society of Genealogists in London had been founded in 1911, the formation of regional family history societies did not begin until 1954, and the turning point came in 1963 when the Birmingham and Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry was founded.

The Federation (FFHS) was formed by 11 Family History Societies, but when the first edition of the *Family History News and Digest* appeared three years later in the summer of 1977, there were 39 member societies and 15 groups or one name societies listed. By the time QFHS joined, member societies numbered more than 100. Arrangements were made for members to receive the *Family History News and Digest*.

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Ann Swain and Marie McCulloch notified all Australasian and Overseas societies of our existence, and requested their Newsletters or Journals in exchange for our own. A **postal borrowing scheme** was devised by Ann Swain, whereby interested members would receive the journals in the mail, to read and post on to the next name on a list stapled inside the front cover of the book.

The scheme was launched in November 1979 and was available to all members but later restricted to country members, when membership grew. Originally known as Library Loan, the name was later changed to **Journal Loan Scheme**. The purchase of a computer in the Swain household in early 1981 simplified the task, and the Swain family continued to administer the Journal Loan Scheme until 1998.

Membership had reached almost 50 by November 1979 and six months later the newsletter had been registered for posting as a Publication Category 'B' which meant cheaper postage. Our official P.O. Box at Indooroopilly had also been established. A suburban post office box was chosen because it cost \$30 less than the General Post Office, where parking was also a problem.

Newsletters were produced monthly from June to November, edited by Joan Hodgson, assisted by Cecily Cameron who handled printing and distribution. It was run off on an office roneo machine.

Guest speakers were a feature of monthly meetings and included Paul Wilson, State Archivist at Qld. State Archives, in September 1979; Roger Panchaud, who trained as an Heraldic artist with the College of Arms, in October; and member Ian Stehbins on his own German research experiences, in November.

In the New Year [1980] we heard from Colin Loxton in February, on records in South Africa. Four members - Cecily Cameron, Mark Norton, Dorothy Grice, and Heather Smith - talked about their family reunions, in March. In April Dr John Steele told us of 'Early records of Moreton Bay helpful to the family

historian' and Graham Gorrie, Archivist, spoke in July.

The **Library** began operating at Grimes Street, Auchenflower, where books could be read on Mondays from 9am to 5pm, and on the first Saturday of the month from 1pm to 4pm. It was moved to the Secretary's home at Indooroopilly in May 1980 when the Grimes Street rooms were no longer available.

At the end of 1979 office bearers were: President Merie Lowenstein, Vice-President Bob Robinson, Secretary/Treasurer Joan Hodgson, Membership/Assistant Secretary Cecily Cameron, Publicity Dawn Montgomery, Committee Mark Norton, Joan Gibbs, Mary Kelly and Neville Cusack and sub-committee Ann Swain and Elizabeth Cooper. Trevor Stanley had resigned as Vice-President/Treasurer in September owing to family commitments and Lloyd Rosewarne had also resigned from the committee.

Early in the new year President Merie Lowenstein moved house and asked for leave from the Executive to allow time for alterations and renovations to be made to the new house. Bob Robinson acted as President during that time and Chas Cameron became acting Vice-President. Marie McCulloch and Mark Norton were officially appointed research officers and Shauna Hicks cemetery liaison officer. Lynette Low joined the sub-committee members.

The Committee met at Grimes Street on the second Monday of the month as long as the rooms were available, after which it met at the homes of committee members.

Joan Hodgson conducted an eight week, two-hour course in family history research at the Hubbard Academy commencing in February 1980, and in September Mary Kelly began an eight week course in family history research at the Kenmore State School.

Members were offered help with their research at monthly meetings and printed forms and charts were sold for little more than cost. The 'bulk' ordering of English certificates at a reasonable cost to members, began before the end of 1979.

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Members' Interests were published in the monthly newsletter from July 1979.

The **Second Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry** was held in Adelaide, South Australia, at Easter 4 - 7 April 1980. The theme of the Congress was 'Our Colonial Heritage' and it was held under the sponsorship of the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations (AFFHO) and hosted by the South Australian Genealogy and Heraldry Society Inc.

Joan Hodgson, Mary Kelly, Mark Norton and Chas and Cecily Cameron attended and there they met Joan Ainsworth formerly of Brisbane who was living and working in Boroko, New Guinea. Joan had been working on her family history in New Guinea and had also done extensive cemetery transcribing in the Territory. She joined the Society soon after and immediately became active in cemetery transcribing when she returned to Brisbane.

The **First Australasian Congress** on 'Genealogy in a Changing Society' had been held in Melbourne at Easter 1977, convened by the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies. Papers from that Congress could be ordered at the Adelaide Congress and were available later in 1980. Papers from these two Congresses were a valuable reference source.

The **Third Australasian Congress on Genealogy & Heraldry** titled *Under the Southern Cross* was held at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, North Island New Zealand in May 1983. The special guest speaker was Elizabeth Simpson, Founder Secretary of the Federation of Family History Societies, who spoke in Brisbane after the Congress, at a seminar conducted by GSQ and held at the Mt. Gravatt College of Advanced Education.

AFFHO: The second annual general meeting of the Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations (AFFHO), to which we were affiliated, was held on Easter Monday after the Congress at Adelaide. QFHS undertook to produce the first *Australasian Directory of Surnames*, but this did not proceed. Officials from AFFHO gave our Society much needed help and advice in these early years.

The first *Directory of Family Names* produced by QFHS was circulated in May 1981. It was compiled by Trevor Stanley and typed by Queenie Praeger. It replaced the May monthly newsletter. A supplement was produced in May 1982, compiled by Marianne Eastgate and typed by Cecily Cameron.

The third Directory produced in 1983 was compiled by Joan Ainsworth and typed by Margaret Davis. A *Directory of Family Names* was then produced by the Swain family every second year until 1991.

The **Constitution** of the Queensland Family History Society was drawn up with considerable assistance from Dawn Montgomery and Heather Smith, and at the annual general meeting in June 1980, three changes were made:

1. Proposed to offer life membership for \$250 for ordinary members and \$375 for family members. Life members to be limited to no more than 10% of the total membership.
2. The Committee of Management consisting of a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and 3 to 5 committee members was to be changed to president, 2 vice-presidents, secretary, treasurer and 5 to 7 committee members.
3. No member of the Executive, that is the 'Committee of Management' comprising president, 2 vice-presidents, secretary, and treasurer, could hold the same office for more than three (3) consecutive years.

The last item had been introduced into the constitution of the English Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS), and Joan Hodgson was keen to see the clause inserted into our own constitution. The constitution was finally accepted by the Justice Department some considerable time after Ann Swain became Secretary.

(Following a request by the Justice Department to bring the QFHS Inc. constitution more into line with the Department's 'model rules' our constitution was extensively remodelled and amended and accepted by the members in 1992.)

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Money-raising was a serious concern. A bring-and-buy stall operated at meeting nights for more than two years and when these ceased, a meeting night raffle continued. On 20 June 1980 a Wine and Cheese evening was organised by Ann Swain and held at her home at The Gap. A very successful evening benefited the Society to the tune of \$145.

Ann Swain and Marie McCulloch were the first to purchase life membership, providing a welcome boost to the treasury. Within a year or two a further three single and one double life memberships were added: Dorothy Grice, Dawn Montgomery, Doreen Payne and Chas and Cecily Cameron.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints at Kangaroo Point opened a branch genealogical library and members were able to view the 1978 edition of the **Computer-File Index** (later renamed the **International Genealogical Index™** or **IGI™**). It was also possible at this time to order English and Scottish parish films through the Church, for viewing.

Merie Lowenstein did not seek re-election to the position of president at the **First Annual General Meeting** on 18 June 1980. Elected were: President Chas Cameron, Vice Presidents Bob Robinson and Neville Cusack (provisional), Secretary Joan Hodgson, Treasurer Merie Lowenstein, Committee Shauna Hicks, Cecily Cameron, Mary Kelly, Dorothy Grice, Mark Norton, and Ann Swain and Joan Gibbs (provisional). By the end of July 1980 we had 80 financial members and a bank balance of \$470.00.

In early August, Joan Hodgson and Mark Norton participated in the Society's first **publicity stand** at the Yeronga State High School's 'Arts and Crafts Day' and were both surprised and pleased at the reception. The display stands were made by Joan's husband Orme Hodgson.

A great deal of effort by a number of members resulted in a stand at the Jondaryan Woolshed Association's 'Australian Heritage Festival', 16 - 24 August 1980. Paula Crowe

and Bob Robinson helped with the display and Joan Hodgson travelled to Jondaryan for both weekends. Shauna and Roy Hicks also went to Jondaryan the first weekend to assist and help set up the stand. During the week, Kath and John Greenhalgh of Acland near Jondaryan, manned the stand.

The Society regularly manned stalls at the Heritage Week Festival, and Colonial George Street Festival, and the Hobbies Exhibition.

The transcription of Bulimba Cemetery was close to completion by the end of 1980 and as the work progressed, members transferred the information to index cards. These cards formed a large part of our Library and storing this material in a private home, as well as a growing number of books and journals, became a problem.

Marianne Eastgate and Janelle Milne, both cataloguing librarians at Griffith University, had joined the Society during the year. Towards the end of 1980, Marianne suggested to the Society that the library be moved to her first floor office in the Library Building of Griffith University. The library was then accessible to members whenever the university library was open and microfilm and microfiche readers could be used and printouts made.

In November 1980 the President, on behalf of the Society and Committee, signed a Lease agreement for our own copy of the **International Genealogical Index™** or **I.G.I.™** (previously known as the Computer File Index or C.F.I.), with a representative of the Genealogical Society of Utah. The early edition of the IGI™ was leased as it was not available for outright purchase. Our fiche were due to arrive in March or April 1981 (they finally arrived at the end of June) and the move to Griffith University was timely.

Whilst our Library books could not be loaned out, by paying \$5 per annum our members could borrow selected books from the University library. The librarians produced a list of books in the University library, likely to be of use to family historians.

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The material was moved to the new library by Joan Hodgson - quite a task - and the books were covered where necessary and prepared by Mark Norton and his mother Joan, a librarian.

An important **project** devised by Joan Hodgson was begun in early 1981. Under project officer Neville Cusack, members began indexing shipping and passenger lists held at the John Oxley Library. These lists of ships and people who arrived in the Colony prior to separation from NSW comprised the first part of our *Pre-Separation Index*. The index was donated to John Oxley Library which immediately gave it to the Queensland State Archives.

Also in early 1981, Dorothy Grice became convenor of **Sale of Publications**. She was given \$250 to start what was to become a time consuming but very, very successful part of the Society's operations.

Much of the selling of books at that time took place at monthly meetings and Dorothy carted heavy boxes of books to meetings every month for eight and a half years until she relinquished the position, for that of president, in June 1989.

Whilst we could not yet afford to have the newsletter professionally printed, the editor Joan Hodgson was keen to upgrade the general appearance and this took place in February 1981. Although still produced on foolscap paper and printed as a 'love job' on an office duplicator, it now had a slightly more professional look, with a picture on the cover.

The publication was regularly 8 to 10 pages long. The cover picture which first appeared was a pen and ink sketch by Mark Brelsford, of the Workman's Cottage, Goomburra Station, Darling Downs. The artist gave Joan Hodgson permission to reprint the picture which can be found in *Land of the Leslies* by Mark Brelsford, published by Darling Downs Institute Press 1978. The Workman's Cottage remained on the cover for two years. Editions of the newsletter appeared from February to November in 1981 with the exception of May when the first *Directory of Family Names* was produced and distributed in its place.

Address labels were now produced on computer thanks to Tony Swain. Tony maintained the master copy of membership listings and produced labels for the Society for 17 years until 1998, when he handed over the job.

Monumental inscriptions: At the end of January 1981 the following cemeteries had been transcribed. By QFHS members: Dutton Park, South Brisbane; Bulimba (Balmoral); Sherwood Presbyterian cemetery, with the following QFHS members taking part - Chas and Cecily Cameron, Joan Gibbs, Dorothy Grice, Shauna Hicks, Joan Hodgson, Doreen Jeans, Mary Kelly, Merie Lowenstein, Gordon Murrell, Jan Neale, Mark Norton, Doreen Payne, Queenie Praeger, Bob Robinson, Sheila Saunders, Dorothy Simson, and Annie Thomas.

By Joan Hodgson: Brookfield; Marburg and Marburg Seminary Road; Woodlands, Marburg; Zion Evangelical Lutheran, Minden; Yandilla; Christ Church Milton (transferred from old Paddington Cemetery); Murphy's Creek (with additional information by Mrs Mona McCahon); and five sections of Toowong.

By Joan Hodgson and Mary Kelly: Uniting Church, Chapel Hill; Tingalpa Old Section and Tingalpa C.of E.

By Mary Kelly and Merie Lowenstein: Waterworks Road, Ashgrove Uniting.

By Gordon Murrell: Upper Kedron Creek, Ferny Grove.

By Roberta Lawson: Archerfield Aerodrome, Beatty Road.

By Dorothy Grice: Forest Hill

By Shauna Hicks: Peachester, Mellum Creek, Beerburum and Witta at Landsborough and Mooloolah, Dayboro, Maleny School lone graves.

By Dawn Montgomery: Jondaryan, Darling Downs.

These 'picnics' had been an excellent way for members to get to know each other.

We had a **reciprocal arrangement** with the Genealogical Society of Queensland with regard to the exchange of **cemetery transcriptions** to avoid duplication and for greater accessibility for members of both societies.

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An agreement to this effect was signed by the presidents of both societies at GSQ library at Stones Corner [Brisbane] on 1 July 1981.

In addition to the above QFHS transcriptions, the following cemeteries transcribed by GSQ were placed in our library by their co-ordinator, Wayne Roberts: St. Matthew's C. of E., Grovely; St. Alban the Martyr, Wilston; Bunya Road Arana Hills; Vernon Baptist, Fernvale; Mudgeeraba; Samford; Albany Creek; Bald Hills; Bryden Catholic, Esk; and Upper Caboolture Methodist, Morayfield.

Joan Hodgson resigned from the positions of secretary, and newsletter editor, in February 1981 for family and health reasons. Her departure was quite a blow to the society she had led so ably and capably since its inception, but it was not long before other members took over her tasks.

Shauna Hicks had been Cemetery Liaison Officer and she added the job of co-ordinator. Assistant Secretary Cecily Cameron became acting Secretary for a few months after which Ann Swain took on the job and Cecily became editor of the newsletter with Joan Gibbs assisting with distribution. Merie Lowenstein also resigned from the treasurer's job at the February meeting and Marie McCulloch stepped into the breach.

Based on an idea by Shauna Hicks, the **Queensland Pre-Separation Group** was formed after a planning meeting held on 23 April 1982. Membership is open to members whose ancestors arrived in Queensland before this state separated from New South Wales in 1859. The group was officially launched at a dinner at Whepsted House in December 1982 and the official guests were Deputy Premier and Treasurer Dr Llew Edwards and Mrs Edwards.

To help with the finances in 1982, Treasurer Marie McCulloch arranged to have letterheads, With Compliments slips and greeting cards printed at her own expense. This stationery carried a logo which, with some alterations, formed the basis of the Society badge. Marie also designed and sold index cards through the

Society, and was reimbursed for these as the cards were sold. The design used in the Society badge was first printed on Page 2 of the December 1983 journal.

Newsletter to Journal. The February 1982 edition of the Newsletter heralded further changes. Postage had gone up by 50% and the 10 monthly editions per year were reduced to six, bi-monthly from February to December. The size was changed to A4 and pages increased to 15 photocopied pages per edition.

By February 1983 the newsletter had become a journal and the cover had undergone a design change by Keith Hollier, incorporating the new Society logo which was used for three editions. The name was changed to *Queensland Family Historian*.

We were no longer able to handle the printing of the journal ourselves and the June 1983 edition was printed by A. Webb & Sons Pty. Ltd., who still perform the task today. Photographs were reproduced on the cover from August 1983 and used to enhance the text and, for economy, the A4 size slightly reduced.

Dawn Montgomery began helping with the production of the Journal in late 1984 and took over completely in June 1985. It says much for the quality of her work that she still holds this position and has made many improvements.

Costs forced another change and in 1993 the journal became a quarterly produced in February, May, August and November. A much more professional heading appeared on the February 1995 edition, courtesy of Colin Cunningham. Joan Gibbs gradually took over the distribution of the journal in the early '80s and carried on doing it with help from husband Bill until 1997 - a marathon job for which she received a QFHS Special Award in December 1991.

Library: Accommodating the Library at Griffith University was a temporary arrangement until suitable premises could be found. It worked well for some time but by the end of 1984 we had well and truly outgrown the available space for our books, journals and index cards.

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These were packed up early in 1985 in anticipation of a move. Material on fiche remained available at Griffith after the books were removed and until the new library opened.

Although we were not required to 'man' the library at Griffith, a number of members helped in various ways, to keep the library functioning. These included Bob Robinson, Neville Cusack and Doreen Payne who was there almost every Saturday afternoon. Doreen continued to work for the Library at Bowen Hills to index, transcribe and catalogue, and for this received a QFHS Special Award in December 1991.

Our new home consisted of two rooms on the first floor and one ground floor room, in a building on the corner of Campbell and Tufton Streets, Bowen Hills, opposite Queensland Newspapers. Barry Alexander was responsible for finding the building, thanks to his contact with the Main Roads Department. The building was marked for demolition pending the construction of the northern freeway.

The following members were thanked in the August 1985 journal, in connection with the move: Barry Alexander, Carolyne Bruyn, Marianne Eastgate, R.Fawke, Dorothy Grice, Trish Hickey, Shauna Hicks, Keith Hollier, Lorraine Jordan, David Lang, the Lyall family, Jim McRoberts, Margaret North, Ian & Fay & Shaun Peters, Max Read, Dick Roe, Rob & Dorothy Simson, Ken Slattery, Ann & Tony & Rosslyn & Gregory & Douglas Swain, and Tom Woodlock. An appeal went out to members to volunteer for library roster.

The library opened on 5 August 1985 although not all resources were available. Some shelving still had to be erected and other work completed. Fay Peters was the first library co-ordinator, followed in 1987 by Margaret Matthews. Sue Schott organised the roster of members, a job she held for almost 10 years, until the end of 1994. In the beginning the library opened on the first and third Monday from 7pm - 9pm; Tuesdays 10am - 12.30pm; Wednesdays 10am - 3pm; Thursdays 10am - 12.30pm; Fridays 1 - 4pm (soon discontinued); Saturdays and Sundays 12.30 - 3pm.

It was not long before it became evident that we needed larger premises. Long before the move came to larger premises, John Blake spent much time and effort in the quest until he negotiated with Main Roads for our present home in Bridge Street, Albion.

Deanna Robertson and Jackie Buttress became library co-ordinators in late 1991 and later took over the library roster as well, from Sue Schott. They played a big part in the move from Bowen Hills to the old Albion Fire Station in October 1992. Helpers included Joan Ainsworth, Barry Alexander, John Blake, Marianne Eastgate, Hazel Fletcher, Mary Geiger, Dorothy Grice, Trish Hickey, Dorothy Joyce, Rosemary Kopittke, Alison McCreath, Dawn Montgomery, Ann Rainsbury, Sue Schott, Tony Swain, Ernie Tiley, Don Wilkinson, and others.

Much work and planning went into the Official Opening of the library on 20 April 1993 by the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency Mrs Leneen Forde AC, who graciously consented to become Patron of the Society. At the same time the reading room was named in honour of Annie Thomas who passed away in 1992 and who had held the positions of Treasurer, Secretary and Library Assistant over the years, as well as doing an immense amount of typing and indexing for the Society before the advent of computers.

Open Day: From 1982 until 1989, the Society conducted an annual 'Open Day.' The early seminars dealt with themes to which researchers in Queensland could relate and later extend the horizons. Papers presented were printed in book form and were available later, for purchase. Themes and dates were:

'Queensland Research Sources'- 12 September 1982, at The Gap High School;

'Life and Times in the early Moreton Bay Colony'- 27 August 1983, at The Gap High School;

'Queensland Local History'- 18 August 1984, at The Gap High School;

'Man on the Land'- 7 September 1985, at The Gap High School;

'A Grave Look at Family History'- 6 September 1986 at Bardon Professional Centre;

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'Our Migratory Ancestors' - 12 September 1987, at Bardon Professional Centre;

'Diversity in Family History' - 8 October 1988, at The Gap High School;

'A Medical Look at Family History' - 2 September 1989, at The Gap High School.

Education Officer: Shauna Hicks was appointed to the position of Education Officer in 1983 and in November of that year conducted a Workshop for Beginners, at Griffith University. Five workshops and a day competing in 'The Elephant Hunt' were organised during 1984 and held at Griffith University Library.

ASRAM: An Adoption Scheme for Remote Area Members (ASRAM) was set up in August 1983 and Brisbane members were asked to volunteer to help remote-area members with their research. Ann Swain was the originator and developer of the scheme which is still in operation. Marie McCulloch was the first ASRAM co-ordinator, followed by Sue Reid mid 1987, Pearl Mahony mid 1989, and Jan Veacock has been the co-ordinator since early 1994.

Honour Boards and Special Awards: In 1989, ten years after foundation, the Committee commissioned two honour boards, one to record office bearers of the positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer, and the other to record recipients of a new Award to be given, to QFHS members only, for services to family history. These boards hang in the meeting room of the Library.

The Awards were first presented in November 1989. Joan Ainsworth and Annie Thomas received Awards for 1988 and Dorothy Grice and Ann Swain for 1989. The Awards are presented annually, at the November general meeting of the Society.

Pre-Separation Population Index: Sixty invited guests and members of the Society attended the launch of the *QFHS Pre-Separation Population Index* on Saturday 13 October 1990 at Newstead House. Based on an idea by Dorothy Grice, Dorothy and Marianne Eastgate organised and co-ordinated this index. During compilation, Marianne produced three *Name Directories of the Moreton Bay Region*. She received a QFHS Special Award in 1990 for

this work and was presented with the AFFHO Award for services to family history at the 6th Australasian Congress of Genealogy & Heraldry, held in Hobart, Tasmania, in May 1991.

Others who helped: A short history such as this cannot do justice to the amount of work undertaken by members, or the tasks performed. It is not easy to single out people for special mention, but those who tackled the job of secretary in the early years - Ann Swain, Dorothy Simson, and Annie Thomas - were grateful for the constitutional clause limiting the term to three years.

Joan Ainsworth spent five years organising and producing the index to the Monumental Inscriptions at Toowong Cemetery, which earned her a Special Award. Queenie Praeger assisted Ann Swain edit the newsletter for some months in 1981 during the editor's absence overseas. There were many others.

Finally, two members with experience in the fields of genealogy and family and local history, but who were never on any committee, deserve mention. Arthur Ingram Myers on occasions drove from his home in Toowoomba to be guest speaker at monthly meetings. He was a descendant of a First Fleeter, and Queensland Chairman of the Australia Day Council when he died in 1983 aged 68.

Jennifer Harrison was another early member, whose knowledge and experience in the fields of family and local history and her contacts in the academic world were of invaluable assistance to the Society over a long period. For many years she organised guest speakers for monthly meetings.

An article in June 1980 included a quote by Anthony Camp which is as relevant today as it was then:

The more I do, the more I learn, and the more I find to do. The subject has so many facets that I can't even imagine when I might run out of avenues to pursue, to the stage when I can say - 'I have done my Family History.'

This section of the Society's history was written by Cecily Cameron with suggestions and editing from Marie McCulloch, Ann Swain, Dr Jennifer Harrison, Dawn Montgomery and Betty Baker.

QUEENSLAND FAMILY HISTORIAN

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THE HISTORY OF THIS SOCIETY

We continue our history, with memories from Marianne Eastgate, past President, from Dorothy Simson, past Hon. Secretary & Membership Secretary, and from Maureen Mutton and Marie McCulloch from our Daytime Meeting Group. Further memories, and names of office bearers and award holders, will appear in future editions of this journal.

Beginning of QFHS Library

When the Society was formed in 1979, the Foundation Secretary Mrs Joan Hodgson kept a small number of genealogical items in her own house.

I joined the Society in 1980 (Member 53) and as I worked at Griffith University Library, I thought it might be possible for QFHS Inc. to have their own Library there and use the Griffith Library facilities such as photocopiers, microform readers, etc. I approached the University Librarian, Mr Sid Page, and he kindly gave permission to use some shelves in my office to house the QFHS Library and also use of the Library facilities, all without charge.

Because I was employed by the University, I was not able to spend much time showing QFHS members how to use the QFHS resources. However, they were available to members whenever the University Library was open, which made pretty good "opening hours."

In my own time I also volunteered to copy IGI™ microfiche for members unable to get to the Library and this took up a considerable amount of my time, especially as the microfiche reader-printers in those days left a lot to be desired! I recall member Doreen Payne spent a lot of time on Saturdays, photocopying and organising the Library, as also did Shauna Hicks. Between us, we made a rudimentary catalogue of the collection.

The beginning of the Cemetery Index Collection led to obtaining cabinets and drawers from the University at a minimum cost. Later, when the University Library Cataloguing went on computer, we were able to obtain several more cabinets and sets of drawers at no cost. The Cemetery Index was also housed in the University Library and one Christmas holidays,

members from the LDS Church came to film the cards and produce a reel of microfilm which the Society was able to sell.

The University had acquired a set of *Hobart Mercury* newspapers which later they were unable to house. As they were about to dispose of them, I asked if QFHS Inc. could have them. We didn't have to pay for them, but we did have to find somewhere to keep them! Thanks to members Annie Thomas and her family, Dorothy Grice, Ann Swain, the Burnett FHS and others, these many volumes were eventually housed and remained at these locations till they were transferred to the present Library premises.

One other main Library acquisition during this period was a set of Parish maps donated from the State Archives. These were housed, I believe, under Ann and Tony Swain's bed!

The QFHS Pre-Separation Group had its first meeting at the University Library and the Library computers were allowed to be used for database entry of the Pre-Separation Index. Dorothy Grice and Annie Thomas spent many Saturdays there entering the data and over several Christmas holidays I had permission to take a computer home to use for this purpose.

By 1985, when new premises were found for the Library at Bowen Hills, the QFHS Library had far outreached the few shelves in my office. Items were stacked everywhere, under the stairs, and in any other available place. After a marathon effort by members, moving everything, the whole of the top floor and the one room of the ground floor of the new premises were already nearly filled.

In writing this short history of the beginnings of the QFHS Library, I would like to thank all "original" members of the Society for their patience and help in building up the resources which were the beginning of the great collection we now have at our present premises. I would also like to thank the Griffith University authorities for their kindness in allowing us to use their facilities during this formative period.

Marianne Eastgate

THE HISTORY OF THIS SOCIETY

From the Secretary's Desk

The Society's first news sheet is dated July 1979. By August that year the membership was 40. At the end of the year the Hon. Secretary Joan Hodgson was encouraging members to bring a friend to a meeting, with the aim of increasing membership.

One of the original members, Ian Stehbens (No.18), planned to take me to the February 1980 meeting but he was unable to go, so I waited until March to attend my first Society meeting and joined that night, becoming member no.50. At that time Merie Lowenstein had taken over as President, Bob Robinson was Vice President, Joan Hodgson was Secretary / Treasurer, Cecily Cameron Assistant Secretary, and Dawn Montgomery was Publicity Officer. 2 Even though I had previously taken a course run by Lyn Waldron of Klan Genealogical Supplies, on *Tracing Your Ancestry*, I was really very inexperienced. I had been told about the Society's Library which was housed at the Secretary's house, and members were encouraged to use this library. In those days it was necessary to make an appointment to use this valuable collection stored in a room under Joan's house.

It was about May when I took that first adventurous step into the family history collection. I was expecting to see several bookshelves crammed with wonderful source material, but I was stunned to find that I could hold the whole collection in one hand! The few books had been either donated or loaned by members. Joan also had her own collection of books, which covered several shelves.

Probably the best source material at that time was the list of addresses of other Family History Societies, Local Historical Societies, State Archives, and the various Registry offices. It was up to the researcher to try to find what was available in the particular area where your ancestors had lived, and find books written about that local area. At this stage, very little indexing of interesting source material had taken place, but the Queensland State Archives were indexing shipping records and other

interesting material on to a card file index and you will find these still in use, but now greatly increased in size, at the State Archives at Runcorn.

My first visit to the State Archives, which was then at Dutton Park near the Boggo Road Jail, was a great experience. I was wanting to find material on North Queensland as my great grandparents were early settlers at Cardwell.

One of the Archives staff happened to be compiling a history on North Queensland, and she kept finding relevant bundles of material that she wanted me to search through. One particularly interesting item was a petition dated 1867 after the destructive cyclone had ruined the settlers road building efforts. My ancestor had signed the petition. The archivist was overjoyed.

My husband was transferred to Maroon Outdoor Education Centre near Boonah, Qld., in January 1981. Fortunately, I was able to continue to attend monthly meetings as Maroon was only about one and a half hours drive from Brisbane. I drove to Brisbane during the day, attended the meeting, returned to my Brisbane home to sleep, and drove back to Boonah the next day. Most meetings were inspirational as members would speak for a few minutes and tell us of their latest find.

One meeting night, February 1981, became quite a drama. This was the night that Joan Hodgson our hard working secretary, family history education mentor, newsletter editor, keeper of the library, cemetery recorder, and a person who seemed to run everything, resigned. Her friend Merie Lowenstein who was the treasurer, also stood down. I think everyone in the hall was in shock, wondering what we were going to do to fill their shoes.

Sometimes, a sudden change of direction brings good results. The Society had to quickly reorganise. Cecily Cameron acted as Secretary for one meeting and took over the role as editor of the newsletter. Marie McCulloch became Treasurer and by the April meeting Ann Swain had taken over as Secretary. *Next page please*

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The Society Library had to find a new home and Marianne Eastgate reorganised her own work place and office at Griffith University Library to squeeze in the Society's growing collection. In retrospect, the change was very good for the Society as a range of people took over the roles that Joan had tried to run single handed. The Society seemed to come of age and everyone took responsibility and the Society thrived.

At the end of 1983, after three years at Maroon where I had spent so much of my time working as a volunteer self taught typist for the Society's cemetery projects, the Simson family returned to Brisbane. No-one was more pleased than Ann Swain who needed to be replaced as Society Secretary. She seemed to think that as I spent so much time writing letters to all and sundry, I would be ideal secretary material.

Ann had earlier asked me to give a talk at the July 1983 meeting night. The talk was called "Armchair Research" and I tried to encourage members to write lots of letters to various places, to find out more about their ancestry. I gave lots of examples of my own experiences and what I had received back just for my effort in writing a letter.

I had no expertise as an orator. I was a housewife. In those days, Society guest speakers' talks were taped so country members could get a copy just for the cost of a cassette tape and postage. Over the years I have received many letters from members thanking me for my talk and telling me of their successes by following my example and writing a lot more letters.

I took over as Honorary Secretary from Ann Swain at the AGM June 1984. I had recently been invited to attend committee meetings in preparation for taking this office. I had no experience but Ann helped me a lot during my first few months in office. A few things stick in my mind as I think back on this wonderful learning experience.

How many of you remember the February 1985 meeting? Shauna Hicks was guest

speaker. This was the night that only 33 brave souls ventured out. You see, Brisbane was in the grip of a power crisis, but to make matters worse it was also rather wet. Can you imagine driving through Brisbane traffic at night without traffic lights and in the teeming rain?

Fortunately, when we got to the hall at Holy Trinity Woolloongabba, the power came on and we were able to start the meeting. Later, Shauna had barely begun her talk "Archives for the Beginner" when the lights went out. But did this faze Shauna? No, she continued her talk in the pitch black hall and managed to drown out the sound of the pelting rain on the old galvanised roof. This event is immortalised in the April 1985 *Queensland Family Historian* with my comments in "From the Secretary's Desk."

Another memorable meeting was the night we had a guest speaker no other than the highly acclaimed Anthony Camp, Director of the Society of Genealogists, London. He was visiting Australia as a speaker for the 4th Australasian Congress held in Canberra. It was 21 May 1986.

I got to the hall early, to make sure all was ready, but when we opened the door we received a shock. The normally barely clean hall had become a renovators' workshop. The whole hall was full of piles of timber, wood shavings, saw horses and pots of paint. The workmen had simply closed the door on their day's work and had ignored the fact that we were holding a meeting in the hall that night. Shauna Hicks could cope with dramas but how would this English visitor manage to straddle piles of loose timber strewn all over the floor? We had barely started to move things out of the way when Anthony Camp arrived. Dressed in his traditional blue suit, this English gentleman took it in his stride!

During my time as Secretary, I received lots of phone calls. In those times it was the secretary's home phone number that was used as the phone contact for the Society.

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I usually rose at 7 a.m. but I can remember crawling out of bed at 6 a.m. to answer one gentleman who wanted to know what records we had for Tasmania! I have never researched in Tasmania, all my lot stayed on the mainland and, besides, at 6 o'clock in the morning, I could not have cared less if Tasmania fell off the end of the earth! I was not impressed.

One dark night when I was tucked up fast asleep in my little bed, I was woken by that terrible ring. It was about 10.30 p.m. and I thought "Who could that be?" I decided it must be urgent as nobody would ring at this hour unless it was. It was a woman phoning for family history advice. After about an hour on the phone, I suggested she might like to join our Society. She answered "No, I belong to another society. But you have been so helpful, and I will ring you again."

Have you ever noticed that on the inside back cover of the *Queensland Family Historian* there is always an item "Information for Advertisers and Publishers." This was first included in the journal in August 1986. Why was this necessary?

The well known family history guru Nick Vine Hall had recently published the names and addresses of all the family history societies - including contact phone numbers. My personal phone number was included. I have even had phone calls on Christmas Day after people have opened their present!

I continue to this day to have phone calls using this number for the Society. I have stopped being angry as it was not the book reader's fault. I try to help them or refer them to an appropriate committee member. It is now almost 12 years since I stepped down as Secretary, but I am sure to get more calls yet, thanks to Nick Vine Hall. I did send him an appropriate letter.

My next position was that of Membership Secretary 1987-1990. Even though my husband was once again transferred out to the country, this time to Oakey, 120 km west of Brisbane, I continued with the job. We returned to

Brisbane most weekends to be with our sons studying in Brisbane, and the QFHS Secretary Annie Thomas managed to get the necessary paper work delivered to me so I could continue the task.

With so much free time on my hands at Oakey, I continued my long term project of helping with the cemetery recording. Shauna Hicks gave me the complete set of index cards for Dutton Park cemetery. I have forgotten how many shoe boxes full of cards that represented, or how many hours work.

Some of you will realise that Oakey is a very cold place, often rivalling Stanthorpe for the winter minimums. Our rented house was rather like living in the deep freezer. We also had the expense of a home in Brisbane so we had to be rather careful with the finances. We did have a heater, but to save on the enormous electricity bill, I always turned it off as soon as my husband left for work. Typing with gloves on my hands was very difficult!

One of the Society's early cemetery tasks was Bulimba [in Brisbane]. I joined the transcribing team for the Saturday afternoon 'picnic' in 1980, handwriting the memorial inscriptions on sheets of recycled paper. This was used paper, where we wrote on the back of it, not recycled in the sense we know it today.

Then came the task of typing the handwritten script. After checking the details, the typed script was transferred on to hand printed index cards. After more checking and when the cemetery transcribing was finished, and all the script was checked back to the original monumental inscriptions in the cemetery, and all corrections made, there was the index to be typed.

I have no idea of how many person hours it took to complete a cemetery like Dutton Park, Bulimba or Toowong [three of Brisbane's largest]. I hope those researchers who use these records today, sometimes give a thought for the people who plodded around the cemeteries on those hot summer days and on the cold winter days when the westerlies blew. I am proud to say that I was part of the team.

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When the typing projects first started, not only did you give of your time, but you were also asked to provide the materials. Some members were able to get recycled index cards as their place of work was changing from card files to microfiche indexes. For those stay at home mums like me, who had the time but not the money, providing masses of typing paper and an endless supply of typewriter ribbons became a burden.

Shauna Hicks realised the problem and asked the Committee to provide good quality bond paper and, eventually, carbon ribbons for those important projects. This move coincided with the metrication of paper sizes. We had been using either foolscap or quarto paper, now we used the new A4 size. This meant that all records could be bound into neat same size booklets.

It was at the end of 1984 that Marianne Eastgate announced that we would have to find another venue for our Library. By that time we had outgrown her office and were using an extra room at Griffith University Library, but the University Library needed that space and we had to go. It was announced in the June 1985 *Queensland Family Historian* that a new venue had been found at Bowen Hills, thanks to Barry Alexander.

After a repaint, the new premises were ready and our need was for office equipment like desks, chairs, library shelving, microfiche readers and photocopiers. They seemed to fall like manna from heaven, as first one then another member heard of some bargain. Thanks to the volunteers, the new premises were up and running, a few weeks later.

This period while I was Secretary, was an exciting time for family historians. The LDS Church opened their second genealogical library in Brisbane. This was at Eight Mile Plains and the opening was announced in our December 1984 journal.

I was able to announce more exciting news as the Queensland Government were putting their early registration records on microfiche and making them available to societies like ours.

Money had to be found to pay for these really valuable resources. The first set of indexes was announced in our October 1985 journal. They were the early church records of Baptism, Burial and Marriage indexes from 1829-1855 for Queensland. The next set was the Birth Index 1850-1869 and they arrived about April 1986, along with the Victorian Birth, Death and Marriage index. Other States were indexing and, as well, the Society had purchased the newly released edition of the I.G.I.TM

Hon. Treasurer Annie Thomas kept a close eye on our finances, and we seemed to always have just enough money when a new purchase was announced. The really big one was the purchase of the St. Catherine's House Index 1866-1912. Members were asked to make donations (of money) to the Library. We also needed to purchase second hand microfilm readers to use the new index.

I will always remember the day when a postal delivery truck refused to deliver a parcel because it was too heavy. We had ordered *The Great Seal of Scotland* and it had arrived at the Sunnybank Post Office. *The Great Seal* was in 11 volumes, and some were rather large. The whole packet was in a mail bag which was large enough to later store our large marquee type tent!

I got my son to come with me to the post office and we were directed to the loading bay so the heavy bundle could be put into the back of my little car. The volumes cover from 1306 to 1668 and make interesting reading. Like all early records, the first nine volumes are in Latin. Have you ever tried typing Latin? I thought I might copy a few extracts but gave up in favour of a photocopier. The volumes are all bound in dark blue. Please find them in the Library and feel the weight of the whole 11 volumes. However, they are a good source for early Scottish research into land records, and offer a chance to learn to translate Latin.

Another project I was involved with was the Strays Index. At first this was a QFHS project, but was later taken over by AFFHO.

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Rae Hopkinson of Atherton in North Queensland felt she would manage this. Rae devised the system and when it was ready for its first edition, she sent all the material down to Brisbane, as she could not type. Guess who typed the index? I was still the very busy secretary, but between Christmas and New Year there is very little mail.

I started typing on Boxing Day, two years in a row - 1985 and 1986 - when I typed the first two indexes. We did not have the luxury of home computers way back in those days. We typed on a typewriter and if you made a mistake, you re-typed the whole page. People were beginning to realise that the unpaid typists needed a little recognition for their work, and "Thank You's" were included in some of these booklets.

One last reminiscence, another of those phone calls, this time in office hours. The postman had arrived in his truck with his usual large bundle of QFHS mail, and I was busy recording every item when the phone rang. The phone was near my typewriter and, as I moved some papers to write notes about the conversation, the gentleman on the other end of the phone heard my typewriter carriage whiz back as I placed some heavy papers on the keyboard. "Oh" he said, "You have a computer! I will just get my details and you can key them in and give me my pedigree." If only it was that easy!

The computer age may make life easier, but the records produced are still only as accurate as the typist. By the time you get the finished product each record has been transcribed many times. Early typewriters were around by the turn of the century but most original records were still hand written for the first half of the 20th century. Neatly presented computer records need to be checked just as thoroughly as hand written records.

It is very easy to trace your family back to the wrong ancestor. Records like wills, where the testator names his wife, children and grandchildren, confirm you are still on the correct family line. The Death Duty Index (see *Queensland Family Historian* October 1986) is

a valuable source for family relationships. If you ever have some time to spare, go back through those old journals and read what I said in my little piece "From the Secretary's Desk." The advice I gave is still relevant today.

Dorothy Simson

The Monday Morning Group

I decided that as I was Research Officer for the Society, but had no formal learning in the art, I should go to a series of lectures held at the local high school. These lectures were to be given by a lady who had experience in family history research.

Things seemed to me a little odd, as she was telling us things that I knew for a fact to be wrong. Being the shy retiring type that I was then, I held back, but not for long. Eventually I started to correct her, which was not the way to win friends and influence people.

It was at these lectures that I met Maureen Mutton and Joan Ramsauer. Joan invited Maureen and myself back to her place for a cup of coffee and from that, Maureen offered her home as a future meeting place. That is how the group started and it has grown over the years.

You do not have to be a member of the Society to come to these meetings as it is open to any one who may want help with their research. Most end up joining the Society but it is not compulsory. I will now let Maureen tell about the group.

Marie McCulloch

When Marie McCulloch asked me to write about our Monday meetings, I thought "How can I put into words, and describe, something that at times is so disorganised, but over the years has been very successful?"

Ladies (and on a few occasions, a gentleman) have been coming to 20 Marmont Street, Geebung on the first Monday of each month, since 1981. The average attendance would be about 10, and as I tell all newcomers "It's my house, but Marie's brains."

Next page please

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It has become very much a self help group, as we are all willing to share our ideas, and help each other in different ways. Great joy is shared by all when someone is able to tell us they have "found him or her." Different magazines are exchanged and these prove to be very helpful.

Many of the holidays taken by the ladies are to help with their research, and it's interesting to hear of the new relatives they have discovered, and see the photos taken, and even documents regarding their families. We are all interested, when someone reads us the life story of one of their ancestors - especially the more colourful ones.

Nobody ever feels embarrassed to ask that 'silly question' which they may not like to mention at a much more formal meeting. Marie says we must have learned something in all these years, as she is not asked so many questions now! Then along comes a new person, and we are all willing to help again.

Our ladies have become very close, and have shared many joys and sorrows over the years, such as the birth of grandchildren, weddings, etc. and, sadly, some illnesses and the death of two of our members.

I don't know what else I can write, only to say I enjoy having them to my house, and I'm sure it's not only the coffee and biscuits that is the attraction. A big thank you to Marie for putting up with us, all these years, and steering us in the right direction regarding our Family History.

Maureen Mutton

Postscript from Marie McCulloch:

When the first Monday of the month is a public holiday, the meeting is on the second Monday of the month.

Maureen does not mention that when she is on holidays the house is still open for the meetings. She also did not mention that the death of her husband George was another of our sorrowful occasions. Thank you, Maureen, for so many years of hospitality to the members of this group.



"BASKET OF GOODIES FOR CHRISTMAS"



You'll find a basket in the QFHS Library which we're going to fill with "goodies" to brighten up someone's Christmas, just as we did last year. It will be our Christmas Project again, to give something back to the community and help folk who are less fortunate than ourselves. Members are invited to bring in a little something, e.g. a small toy, a tinned Christmas pudding, a box of talc, anything which you feel would be suitable to make up a hamper for the Society to present to the Salvation Army. Donations should be non-perishable of course.

Then, before we close at Christmas, we will get in touch with the Salvation Army and present them with our very generously filled basket. We have chosen the Salvation Army because, as we all know, they too are in the business of 'finding relatives' and bringing families together.

Wendy and the Library Management Team

THE WELCOME WALL

The Australian National Maritime Museum invites Australians to subscribe towards this project. For just \$100 (80% tax-deductible) you can commemorate your family name in bronze, and record their story on the database. The Wall will take 40,000 names, and is close by the Pyrmont docks in Sydney where millions of new settlers arrived on Australian soil.

Names are added to the Wall each Australia Day, culminating on 26 January 2001, marking the Centenary of Federation.

For information and a brochure and registration kit phone (02) 9552 7777, fax (02) 9221 6823, or email via their site on the Web - <http://www.anmn.gov.au>