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FELLOWS OF THE QUEENSLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY: DOROTHY JEFFREY and JOHN PERRY

Dorothy Jeffrey and John Perry have been admitted as Fellows of the Society for their devotion to advancing the work of the Society. Such prestigious awards are made to those who have given long and sustained exceptional service to the Society and to family history, and the Society permits a maximum of only ten Fellows at any one time. A Fellow automatically confers life membership if this has not already been awarded. The Awards were presented by our Vice-Regal Patron, His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland, at Government House on 14 November 2016.

*Dorothy's citation was submitted by
Sarah Barry, Wendy Couper, Rosemary Kopitke and Sue Reid.*

Since joining the Queensland Family History Society in 1990, Dorothy has demonstrated her quiet, helpful support for fellow members and the Society in general. Dorothy has been involved in almost every area of the Society's activities and many, many members have recognised her work and appreciated her involvement.

In 2003 she was presented with the QFHS Services to Family History Award for the work she had done in welcoming new members, helping with their research, and undertaking supportive work in all areas of managing the library resources.

In 2004 Dorothy joined the Management Committee and served as President during the busy years of 2004 to 2007. During this time the Society was obliged to relocate from its premises at Albion. Dorothy, with the help of secretary Andrew Harries, devoted many hours to seeking and successfully finding the current premises at Gaythorne. The search entailed looking at more than 20 potential properties.

Dorothy and Andrew then undertook the difficult lease negotiations. The Society's production of CDs enabled it to qualify as light industry and thus be an eligible tenant in the Bellevue Avenue estate. Once the

lease was signed, the relocation could begin. Dorothy and Andrew Harries largely managed and organised the move, with the help of many willing volunteers. The new premises were scrubbed clean, painted, repaired, and then filled with the resources transported from the previous premises.

Dorothy has always demonstrated her commitment to QFHS and promotes the Society no matter where she is: at the shopping centre, on the bus, out socially or wherever she happens to be. QFHS always comes into the conversation, as she cajoles people to become members and then to become volunteers.

Her commitment to indexing is well known; she has indexed over

600,000 entries. Dorothy sometimes travels to the archives two or three times a week when a CD is in production. She cheerfully leaves home on the earliest morning bus, pulling her suitcase laptop behind her, catching a connecting bus in the city, then making the long trip to either the National Archives at Cannon Hill or the Queensland State Archives at Runcorn.

Visiting Runcorn involves a long haul from the bus stop up a steep hill to the archives building. Her determination to do this provides her with the stamina to achieve the



continued

task. After a long day spent looking at films, researching, copying, and, at times, helping others who are having difficulty with their own research (other visitors to QSA probably think she is part of the staff) she takes the journey in reverse, sometimes arriving home after dark.

She is persistent when it comes to deciphering records and finding elusive or partial entries in the original records. Only Dorothy knows the true extent of her research, but all members know and appreciate her accuracy and uncanny ability in finding the correct details.

Dorothy has assisted in many other avenues of Society work, including helping set up and staff book sales tables at countless events and, more recently, assisting at the QFHS seminar events.

Her knowledge of the Society is unsurpassed. Members often seek her out to check on details of Society function or history. She is always ready and willing to help Library Assistants to pass on her experiences so that others can learn.

In 2013 Dorothy was awarded the very first Queensland Senior Volunteer Award. This award is presented by the Order of Australia Association, Queensland Branch in recognition of volunteer work. Dorothy qualified for this award, not only for the work she had undertaken for QFHS, but also for her indefatigable work for many other societies and organisations.

In reading the many comments about Dorothy and her work there is a continuous thread about the work she does and the way she does it: Dorothy is unfailingly helpful, kind, and supportive for anybody who asks for her help; she has an outstanding knowledge of genealogical resources, their location, and how to use them, she has a lifelong passion for indexing and ensuring the records are as accurate as she can verify; and, she is a thorough and persistent researcher.

Quietly, charmingly, professionally, Dorothy is a vital part of QFHS and makes our lives happier and more enriched. She is an asset to the Society in every capacity. ■

John's citation was submitted by

Sue Reid, with assistance from Geoff Morgan, Bev Young and Kevin Haley.

Within a year of joining QFHS in 1996, John Perryn had become the Chair of the newly constituted Technical Advisory Group. The Group had embarked on an ambitious program to recognise the challenges of the digital future of QFHS.

His initiatives included an email system for Society members, setting up a local area network, accessing the world-wide-web from the Society's premises, and establishing a website.

Twenty years on and John continues to ensure that QFHS is connected to the wider world via the Internet.



John soon became closely involved in the organisation of the Society. He served on the Management Committee from 1998 until 2006 and was President from 2001 until 2004. He also served a term as Vice President.

While no longer on the Management Committee, John and his wife Jude continue as the Society's representatives with the State's umbrella family and local history group, History Queensland.

In 2004, John was awarded the QFHS Services to Family History Award for his contributions to the Society, serving on the Management

FELLOWS OF THE QFHS: DOROTHY JEFFREY and JOHN PERRY (Cont.)

Committee, his contributions to the Technical Advisory Group, representing QFHS in the wider community, and instigator of *Snippets* and electronic mailing lists.

John continues to manage the Society's computer network, devoting many hours to ensuring that members can access the genealogical treasures of the Internet, the electronic resources of the Society, the Library catalogue, and all the Society indexes. Without his research, experimentation and development, the network may never have been developed, and the Society might not have the computer system it currently has. John has been prepared to push himself to the edge of his knowledge, and further. He has achieved this through many hours of research and consulting widely for the benefit of the Society.

Thanks to his efforts, members have a first class computer network in the Library and Resource Centre, and connectivity to the outside world. John spends hundreds of hours researching technical specifications at home. Over the last few years, he has devoted much of his free time to researching and devising the QFHS website, launched in late 2013. The QFHS website delivers timely information on all Society events, resources, and bookshop products, as well as allowing members to access the library catalogue remotely. Website users can also search members' interests and contact those researching shared family names. John continues to work on these vital aspects of the Society's web presence.

John is in the Library and Resource Centre at least two days a week, hoping to work quietly on the computer system, but is always ready and willing to deal with the myriad of enquiries that come his way. With Sarah Barry, he has worked tirelessly to ensure that the Society's library catalogue continues to enhance the search capabilities of our collection. He willingly shares his expertise with other societies in relation to their computer networks.

By 2002, John had developed the QFHSdatasearch program for the Society. QFHSdatasearch continues to be used to

access QFHS databases and is invaluable in accessing the information from electoral rolls, Queensland School Pupils Index, cemetery indexes and much more. Other societies have also used QFHSdatasearch as an interface to access their records. For many years John disseminated the electronic newsletter *Snippets*, and produced membership lists and journal mailing lists.

In addition, John is ready to assist in the Society's education program. He frequently presents seminars as part of our Fridays@QFHS program, and is always available to contribute assistance and advice to other presenters.

Technology and the Internet are fundamental to contemporary family history research, and thanks to John, QFHS members have an enviable computer system. In recognition of his guidance, hard work, commitment and generosity, John is a worthy recipient of a Fellowship of the Queensland Family History Society.



Dorothy and John at Government House

Congratulations

(Photos by Lisa Perryn & Lyndal Cosgrove) ■