

THE CENTENARY MEDAL

By Lyn Hooper

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On 27 November last, a very special award was presented to one of our members for exceptional service to the history and heritage of Queensland by the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, on the night of their Annual General Meeting.

Of the three people who won this award in 2019, one was **Dorothy Jeffrey**, a well-known figure at QFHS. One of our previous Presidents, Dorothy at 84 is still very active and spends a lot of her time at the moment helping with the publication of the seventh of our series of school pupils.

It is also through outside interests that Dorothy has made such a contribution.

As a resident of Mitchelton for many years, she has a wealth of information about the suburb and surrounds from its early days.

One of her largest contributions was to the 150th anniversary of the suburb of Mitchelton in 2007, of which the information she gathered is still of great benefit to researchers of family history. She is also an active member of the Enoggera Historical Society, and the North West Branch of the National Service Assn.

Recently she assisted with information on residents and buildings of Bank Street, Newmarket for **Dr. John Pearn AO** who was writing a book on the street, and which has since been published.

Her indefatigable work over the years has thus been rewarded by this wonderful medal.

Together with the Centenary Medal came details of the history behind the medal.

The Centenary Medal is awarded to those who, in the opinion of the Council of the Society, have contributed exceptionally to the history and heritage of Queensland. The medal was designed and commissioned by Emeritus Professor John Pearn AO and was struck by National Medals. The medal is the gift of John Pearn, a Councillor of the Society, and of Mr. Greg Faux of National Medals. It was first bestowed in the Centenary Year of the Society in 2013.

The obverse of the medal portrays, in stylised format, the Commissariat Store, completed in 1829. It is enfolded by an expanding wreath, symbolising the outreach of the Society and its dynamic promotion of history and heritage into the future.



Obverse



Reverse

The reverse portrays, at its centrum, two stylised quills, symbolising research, scholarship and education. On the right side is a stylised tjuringa. The image is stylised because each physical tjuringa is a sacred object portraying knowledge and history of the Aboriginal Peoples of Australia. Many tjuringa record the history and symbolise the heritage of the Dreamtime. It is portrayed here to acknowledge the primacy of millennia of preserved oral history by the Indigenous men and women in what today is

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the State of Queensland. Portrayed on the left is a stylised image of the worldwide web. Within its strands, spelt in digital code are the words “influence, collaboration, information, impact”. The electronic web comprises a major tool of research, outreach and the promotion of history by the Society and its Members. The three images are encircled by the Latin exhortation “Colantur Annales ut Futurum Ditetur” – freely translated as “May the history and heritage of the past be preserved in the order that the future might be enriched”.

The gold medal itself is quite heavy, and is encased in a box of satin. It is truly a beautiful object and worthy of its past and future recipients.



Dorothy Jeffrey with Dr John Pearn AO

(photographs provided by the author) ■

A WOMAN'S PLACE CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF THE WOMEN'S PIONEER HOUSING

By Chris Griffiths

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Women's Pioneer Housing Ltd. (WPH) will celebrate one hundred years of success in October 2020. Born in the age of political action for women's suffrage, WPH reflected the growing confidence of women to take control of their lives. Today, WPH is the largest specialist housing provider for single women in London. It has almost 1000 properties in north and north-west London; 80% are studio or one bedroom flats in converted Victorian buildings, many of which are heritage listed. Responding to the changing needs of women, WPH has 178 flats for single women over 60 years of age, providing added security and backup services both on site and on call [*Women's Pioneer, 2019*].

This article will give an overview of the history of WPH, mention some of the foundation members and tenants and encourage readers to search their ancestries for women who may have been tenants and/or involved in the running of the organisation.

WPH was registered as a public utility company on 4 October 1920. It was the brain child of **Etheldred Browning** (1890-1986),

an Irish suffragist who had the idea of buying houses for single working women with donations from benefactors. She was joined in this quest by **Geraldine Lennox** (1883-1958), another Irish social activist and suffragette [*Women's Pioneer, 2019*].

The need for suitable accommodation for single working women in London came about as more women exercised their growing freedom in society. However, landlords refused to let to single women. At the same time, many large London family houses were unoccupied as a result of the Great War or were unsustainable as family homes due to labour shortages and rising costs. These factors meant that large houses were cheap to buy and convert into flats [*Pioneering Courage, 2019*].

The first London property to come into the possession of WPH was 67 Holland Park Avenue [*ibid*]. It was purchased for £2,850 then converted into six flats for £2,200. The opening, in 1921, was attended by **Viscountess Gladstone** (1876-1953) wife of **Herbert Gladstone** and daughter-in-law to **William Gladstone**, the former Prime Minister.