

VALE MARIONNE DIGGLES



On 5th January we lost a most valued member when our secretary Marionne Amee Diggles died. Marionne was born in Cairns on 9th August 1948 to Verna and George Rogers. George took Verna to Cairns so that she would have support from her mother, Florence Wheeler who was a trained mid-wife and sister Amee for the birth. Several weeks later they returned to Clifton where Marionne grew up. She attended Clifton State School and then boarded with a family in Warwick to complete her secondary education.

Marionne married James (Jim) Diggles and they moved to Ocean Grove, Victoria; where they raised their four children. Marionne was bitten by the family history bug while in Victoria in the mid-1980s, but it was not until she moved back to Queensland in late 1991, that she truly became involved in her own research and that of others. This is where she found her life purpose.

She joined what was then the Darling Downs Family History Society on 2nd June, 1992 and immediately became a volunteer, not just a member. In August 1999 she was elected Secretary and for over 26 years she was known as part of the M and M team (Marionne and Marie), only relinquishing the title on the 5th January as she drew her last breath.

When we were able to secure our present building which was at 61 Drayton Road, Marionne was one of the merry band of helpers to convert the old post office into our library. We moved the building in November 2006, and she was

up before dawn to follow the building and take a video. Then the hard work started of getting ready to re-open. And that's another story.

While she had enough to do with her involvement with TDDFHS she joined the History Queensland Fair Committee in 2007 and was secretary from 2009 to 2016. At that time the secretary also took care of insurance.

While we were a large enough society to procure our own insurance she felt it was an obligation to help other smaller societies afford public liability which was being arranged through History Queensland. She and I travelled to places far and wide – Rockhampton, Goondiwindi, Texas all in the name of supporting other societies who were members of History Queensland. Many trips were also made to help put the brochures into the information packs for family history fairs.

She attended every conference, exhibition etc. that gave us a chance to sell our publications and promote the society. The last event we attended together was the Brisbane Valley History Expo on 25th October last year, 3 days after her terminal cancer diagnosis. Although she was not well at all she was determined that we had committed to it. She knew this would be the last event we would attend together.

Marionne was secretary right until the last, checking emails, giving us all instructions, checking research reports etc. No one person will ever be able or willing to do the various tasks she did without fanfare or recognition. She saw what needed to be done and did it.

Marie Green