

QUEENSLAND JUSTICES ASSOCIATION CENTENNIAL CONFERENCE AND AWARDS

QJA Awards for 2018

His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland, presented the QJA annual awards for Community Engagement; Branch of the Year; and Member of the Year at the Centennial Conference Celebration Dinner. Chair of the selection committee, QJA Vice President, Marian Vierveyzer, said "Entries were very strong in all categories making it challenging for the judges to choose the winners, but it was a good challenge to have".

Community Engagement Award

Two branches, Toowoomba and Caboolture, submitted nominations for the Community Engagement category. It was Toowoomba Branch that edged out Caboolture to take the award this year. Congratulations to **Toowoomba Branch** whose nomination is outlined below.



QJA Vice President Marian Vierveyzer (Left), Bruce Birtwell (Centre) Toowoomba Branch Chair and QJA Director Garth Stephens (Right) with the Community Engagement of the Year Award

The Toowoomba Branch hosted the State Conference in 2017. The theme chosen for the Conference was "Justice in Diversity on the Range". This theme was chosen because the Toowoomba community has a diverse cultural mix and is listed as a 'welcome region' for refugees and other cultures wanting to make their home in Australia.

During 2017, as part of the QJA Toowoomba Branch's commitment to their multicultural and diverse community, the Branch sponsored three students to become JPs. All three were born in Africa and had immigrated to Australia and taken up residence in the Toowoomba area.

To reinforce community values the candidates were selected on willingness to commit to being mentored for 10 hours and to join regular staffing of the local signing site for 12 months. Candidates were also expected to participate in regular Branch activity. The Branch is continuing this initiative by offering 3 more sponsorship opportunities during 2018.

Toowoomba Branch participated in the 13th Toowoomba Languages and Culture Festival where the QJA was promoted. In addition, the Branch was represented at the Mayoral greeting and celebration of the Festival. Such linkages with the community help to reach out to prospective members.

Branch of the Year

Nominations were received from Redlands City; Brisbane South; and Caboolture branches for Branch of the Year. The award judges found that it was **Caboolture Branch** that ticked all of the boxes to become this year's Branch of the Year. Highlights from their nomination are summarised below.



QJA Vice President Marian Vierveyzer (L), Merv Gilby (C) Caboolture Branch Chair and QJA Director Garth Stephens (R) with the Branch of the Year Award.

Member Engagement and Growth: Caboolture Branch is a relatively new branch having only chartered in 2011 with only six members attending their first meeting. Finding the best venue to accommodate members proved a bit of a challenge at first, but the Branch has now settled on alternating meetings between Bribie Island and Caboolture. This helps to encourage attendance from across the area. Dedicated members worked tirelessly to promote and grow the Branch and within 4 years after chartering, the Branch hosted the 2015 State Conference. The Branch encourages non-QJA members to participate in professional development activities as they see this as an effective strategy to help grow Branch membership.

Training Excellence: All Branch meetings include a professional development component as well as an opportunity for experienced JPs and C.Decs to share their knowledge and experiences. The Branch is fortunate to have a Registered Training Officer among the membership. The ability to run pre-enrolment training helps to generate funds to support Branch activities. Annual all day workshops have been convened by the Branch and include a diverse range of speakers including Queensland Police Service officers, local politicians, solicitors and family court officers. The Branch was recently awarded a Stockland Grant of \$1,000 to purchase a projector and screen which will ensure the ongoing viability of the Branch's continued professional development training.

Marketing: Members who attend at least 3 Branch meetings in one year are rewarded with a free QJA polo shirt. This helps project a more professional image at meetings and JP and C.Dec events. It also promotes the QJA Caboolture Branch to others in the community. Caboolture branch organised a free morning tea for all JPs and C.Decs in the region in July 2017. QJA President, John Carpendale, was the opening speaker and promoted the benefits of QJA membership to members and non-members alike. The event was sponsored by the local Member for Pumicestone, Rick Williams MP, who presented the Branch with a new digital recorder for use at meetings or other events.

Community Engagement: In May 2018 the Branch held a Domestic Violence Community Engagement event which was attended by about 100 guests. To fund this event, local businesses were approached for sponsorship and prizes for the multi-draw raffle. Sufficient funds were raised from the many generous donations to cover the cost of the event and to also allow members to make a donation of \$1,000 to the Zonta Club to purchase items for their Baby Emergency Packs. During the function QJA President, John Carpendale and QJA Business Manager and Registrar, Wendy La Macchia, presented members with their QJA Centennial Pins.

Branch members have been touched by the plight of the drought stricken farmers and their families this year and have donated \$500 to the Queensland CWA for their Public Rural Crisis Fund. Members from Caboolture branch are keen participants in various signing sites across the region which supports the local community.

Member of the Year

There was a strong field of nominees this year for Member of the Year award. The nominee were:

- Leanne Kendall – nominated by Greater Springfield Branch
- Noel Hosking – nominated by Brisbane North Branch
- Keith Taylor – nominated by Gold Coast Branch
- John Olding – nominated by Caboolture Branch
- Carmelo Pasquale – nominated by Mackay Branch
- Gregory Smith – nominated by Redlands City Branch

The judging committee had a very tough job choosing a winner from such a high quality pool of nominees. However, after much deliberation **Keith Taylor** was selected as the winner based on the following submission from the **Gold Coast Branch**.



His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland (Left), presents Keith Taylor (Centre) with the Member of the Year Award with judging panel member QJA Director Garth Stephens (Right).

Introduction: Keith Henry Taylor, Justice of the Peace (Qualified), has been a Justice of the Peace since he swore his oath before Magistrate John Kearney at the Southport Magistrates Court in 1968. This is the same year that Keith became a member of the Queensland Justices Association, and is this year, 2018, celebrating his half century membership of this century old association. A great asset to the Gold Coast Branch, we are very pleased to nominate him for this prestigious award in his half century year.

Member Engagement and Growth: Unlike most QJA members, Keith is not satisfied with membership of just one Branch and,

while technically he is a member of the Gold Coast Branch, he also regularly attends the Logan Branch meetings and actively participates in both branches activities, such as meetings, workshops, discussion groups and community forums. He has established a collegiate network between the two branches and willingly shares experiences between the two.

Training Excellence: If there is a professional development opportunity going you can be assured that Keith will be as keen as mustard to attend. He is of the view that, regardless of how much you think you know, you can always learn something new. He maintains a huge library on JP matters, in particular Land Titles Documents, Enduring Powers of Attorney Documents and Family Law, and can be counted on to share his expertise with budding JPs.

He is one of the “go to people” on the Gold Coast and has mentored 4 new honorary justices this year at the Harbour Town JP in the Community site. JPs and C.Decs mentored by Keith speak very highly of their experiences. Keith is dedicated to ensuring his knowledge is as contemporary as possible and to this end, when the National Mortgage forms were being introduced, he contacted all States and Territories to find out what was going on in their jurisdictions. He then went on to report his findings to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and recommended that they disseminate this information to fellow JPs via a technical bulletin.

Keith’s drive and dedication to delivering an excellent service has seen him go the extra mile to ensure his knowledge is not lacking. Following a recent professional development activity with the Southport Public Trustee, where, due to time constraints, he was unable to clarify all of his concerns at the time, he followed up with a private session with the Public Trustee.

Marketing: Promoting the QJA where ever possible is one of Keith’s hobbies. He decks himself out in QJA apparel which he wears with great pride, along with his QJA branded name badge and pin. Keith also promotes the use of the QJA resources on line to new Justices to assist them with performing their duties.

Community engagement: Community is very important to Keith and throughout his adult life he has always embraced the idea of service to his community. He is a recognised community leader, a strong supporter of Neighbourhood Watch, where he can be seen and heard delivering information sessions to the general public about the importance of enduring documents such as Enduring Powers of Attorney, Advance Health Directives and Wills.

He is the backbone of both Harbour Town and Upper Coomera signing centres on the Gold Coast and puts in about 22 hours per week between the two. He clocks up over 200 km. per week traveling to service his JP clients.

So far this year he has provided service to 1766 clients, witnessed 4383 documents, and signed his name on 8256 individual pages. He is always willing to serve his community and keeps his signing equipment with him at all times so that he can step in whenever a JP is required.

Recognising that a fair proportion of the clients at the Harbour Town signing site are of the Muslim faith, Keith has ensured that a Koran is available for taking the oaths of these clients and ensuring that his colleagues are aware of the practices and restrictions associated with this religion.

In Summary, Keith is one of the stalwarts of the Gold Coast Branch. A JP dedicated to the oath he took 50 years ago “to serve the community”, and he does it so well. Congratulations Keith.

Honorary Life Membership

One of more memorable highlights of the Centennial Year Conference Dinner was the announcement and presentation of QJA Honorary Life Membership award, the highest personal accolade the association can bestow, to QJA’s recognised elder statesman, **Raymond Young OAM**. His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC (a long-time acquaintance of Raymond) was on hand to make this presentation. Ray joins an elite band of QJA officers whose exemplary performance over an extended period has justified the awarding of this honour. Congratulations Raymond!



His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC(L), awards Raymond Young AO (R) with his Honorary Life Membership Award with QJA Directors Garth Stephens and Marian Vierweyzer and QJA President John Carpendale.

2018 Centennial Year Conference

Justice across the Generations



Centennial year celebrations got underway on Friday evening, 2 November, as delegates and guests enjoyed the 360-degree panoramic views of Brisbane as they circled around in their gondolas on the **Wheel of Brisbane**. Clearly visible from the top of the Wheel, which is 60 metres above the ground, riders could see the Story and Victoria Bridges. After the ride it was all feet back on the ground and across the river to the **Public Quarter** restaurant to socialise with colleagues and guests while enjoying a selection of canapes.

Centennial Year Conference 3 November 2018

Up early to set up, the Conference Volunteers swung in to action welcoming delegates to the 2018 State Conference, the Queensland Justices Association centennial year, at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. Members mixed and mingled throughout the day while soaking up the collective wisdom of our guest speakers. As delegates were seated the auditorium was filled with the sounds of Cold Play’s ‘Clocks’ while the QJA centennial video rolled across the three huge video screens.

The program was packed with three plenary sessions, nine concurrent sessions, and opened with a **Welcome to Country** presented by Maroochy Barambah, Songwoman and Law-woman of the Turrbal People, the traditional land

owners of the conference site. Maroochy gave us a short history of her life in Cherbourg and then sang Advance Australia Fair in the language of the Turrbal people.



Songwoman Maroochy Barambah

Official Opening

The conference was officially opened by the Honourable Yvette D’Ath MP, Attorney General and Minister for Justice, who took to the stage, reflecting that the QJA has now joined an elite circle of Queensland businesses celebrating 100 years. The Attorney-General reflected on a little history of JPs in Queensland noting that 2018 also marks the 100th anniversary of the first woman appointed as JP in Queensland. This honour goes to Matilda Hennessey who was quite a pioneer of her time.

Ms D’Ath commended JPs and C.Decs for their volunteer service, their support to the legal system, and, how many make themselves available at all hours to assist the Queensland Police Service. She noted that 123,000 services are provided through the JPs in the Community program annually.

Keynote Address 1:

The JP Role – Through the Years

Chief Justice, the Honourable Catherine Holmes (also QJA Patron) was our first keynote speaker and she breathed new life into the history of JPs in Queensland. Her Honour spoke about the arrival of the first JPs in Australia with the first fleet and how Governor Phillip set them to work immediately establishing a court of Petty Sessions with two JPs presiding. Queensland saw its first JPs in 1825 which were authorised under the British Parliament to hear cases.

It wasn’t until 1886, 27 years after the Colony of Queensland was established, and the Justice Act was introduced that JPs were appointed under Queensland Law. Moving along to modern times Her Honour spoke about the paucity of JP training during the 20th century and noting that between 1981 and 1989 only 17% of JPs had completed any training.

All that was to change with the recommendations of a Green paper, in 1989, setting out the abolition of the one category JP system and introducing the system we have today with Commissioners for Declarations, and Justice of the Peace Qualified.

With the introduction of the *Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Act 1991* training became mandatory. A video of the Chief Justice’s full speech is available at [link Chief Justice](#)