

Suzanne Mulligan - 2009



Suzanne Mulligan is one of those people whose mere presence forces you to jump higher and do better. She is one of the most enthusiastic and dedicated members of the Queensland branch and the backbone of the Queensland committee. At the same time she is the most modest. She keeps information about herself and her achievements to a bare minimum while concentrating on the lives of others.

Her first encounter with oral history - as in many other cases - was accidental. Knowing her inquisitive nature, her parents presented her with a book titled *If Only I'd Listened to Grandpa*. It changed Suzanne's life: the journey of an oral historian began. In 1986 she recorded her first interview with her own grandmother and soon developed an avid interest in interviewing older people about the significant events in their lives. Her

portfolio of oral history interviews - to name a few - includes a collection of interviews with a WWI veteran, interviews with Queensland's longest serving policewoman, with a pioneering Northern Territory cattle property owner, with a group of Korean War veterans and the British harbour master after the Falklands War. Some of these interviews were accepted by the Australian War Memorial and some will be donated to the State Library of Queensland.

The Degree in Journalism obtained in the University of Queensland and a membership of a photography club, the Queensland Camera Group, were significant stepping stones in Suzanne's career as a historian but she didn't stop there. Not only does she continue her own professional development but she also inspires everyone around her to move forward: to attend a course, a workshop, a conference. In the pursuit of the professional training and development of the Queensland oral historians Suzanne came up with an initiative to offer bursaries to OHAA members. This year these bursaries will enable three very deserving members to attend the national conference in Tasmania.

Suzanne's contribution to the Queensland committee is hard to ignore. At times she was the committee and kept everyone on their toes. For many years she was Editor of the On Tape Newsletter (in hardcopy and later online), providing an array of interesting articles and useful links for ever information-hungry Queensland oral historians. She combined these duties with those of the committee's Secretary and both she did brilliantly, working above and beyond the responsibilities of this post. She was instrumental in the preparation and running of the national 2007 conference in Brisbane and we owe the conference success to her strong will and organisational abilities, creativity and dedication. Currently Suzanne is the Secretary of the OHAA Queensland Branch. She has a passionate interest in oral

history and has become the first point of contact for everyone interested in oral history both in Queensland and around the world. She is well known and immensely respected in this field. She is interviewing people, writing grant tenders, and keeping an interesting oral history blog that continues to attract attention (and new members) to our association. She is dedicated and committed to sharing her knowledge with others and ensuring the association moves seamlessly into a digital age. OHAA (Qld) can't think of a more deserving candidate for Life Membership than Suzanne Mulligan and we wish her well in her future endeavours.