



Member memories – SHIRLEY MCCORKINDALE

The only child of Duncan and Eileen McCorkindale, Shirley was born on 11 August 1930 and lived in the family home at 42 Alderson St, Newmarket, throughout her life until her move into Carinity Hilltop Aged Care at Kelvin Grove shortly before her death on 23 June, 2021.

A librarian by profession, Shirley worked at the State Library of Queensland for over 20 years. As the Senior Departmental Librarian she coordinated the library services provided to departments and agencies for Queensland Government and mentored many early-career librarians. Her dedicated service earned her a Queensland Public Service Medallion for Achievement in 1994.

As the Family History Librarian at the State Library, she supported clients researching their family history, and this abiding interest led her to write *Unlocking the Past, a guide to family history and genealogical resources in the State Library of Queensland*. Published in three editions (1988, 1991 and 1994), the book is now held in 26 libraries worldwide and remains a vital research guide. With her interest in history and genealogy, she also became a valued member of the Queensland Family History Society, including acting as a judge of the Society's annual Family History Book Award. She also actively supported other historical entities, including the Brisbane History Group.

Another of Shirley's enduring interests was the performing arts, attending Queensland Theatre Company performances for some 20 years with fellow Zontians Leneen Forde, Merryl Ducat and Jan Delpratt. Ballet was a particular passion from her time as a committed student of well-known Brisbane teachers, The Misses Joy and Nell Bassett. With them, she performed in several ballet recitals in the 1940s, including those organised by the Brisbane Branch of the Australasian Society for Operatic Dancing (now Ballet Theatre Queensland), and earned her Solo Seal, the highest vocational examination of the Royal Academy of Dance.

A committed Catholic, Shirley served on the Parish Council for Jubilee Parish and often visited and took communion to patients in hospital on behalf of the St Vincent de Paul Society. She also completed a Master of Theology degree at St Paul's Theological College in 2006, choosing as her dissertation topic the conflict between the Catholic Church and Alfred Loisy, the French theologian excommunicated for his criticism of the Church's traditional interpretation of the bible.

Shirley's faith and her commitment to others led to her being invited to become a charter member of the Zonta Club of Brisbane when it was established in 1971. Dedicated to Zonta's ideal of advancing the status of women, Shirley was a member until her death, serving as President for the 1988-1990 biennium and always responding enthusiastically to calls to serve, including cooking sausages at Bunnings and preparing delicacies for fundraising events.

Shirley's many Zonta friends and the staff who worked with her at the State Library remember her fondly as knowledgeable, unflappable and with a wonderful sense of humour.

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Shirley McCorkindale (far right) with Leneen Forde and Babette Stephens.