



MEDIA RELEASE

February 21, 2019

Half a century with the Co-op and no regrets

Gwenda Johnson celebrated her 50 year service milestone with the Hastings Co-op last Monday (February 18) over morning tea and tales of the good old days with former workmates.

A local, born and bred, Gwenda has worked in the Wauchope grocery store her entire career in a range of roles, from packing shelves to ordering and front-end management.

Many things have changed since Gwenda first started out on an hourly rate of \$1.20, which saw her taking home a mere \$48.25 each week, according to original documents sourced by the Co-op's HR department.

The Co-op Corporate Centre team and a number of Gwenda's former workmates shared the half-century milestone, an accomplishment that is rarely heard of in this day and age.

"We'd like to thank Gwenda for her ongoing dedication and loyalty. It's a huge milestone and one that we are very proud to be honoring," Hastings Co-op CEO Allan Gordon said.

When asked about her loyalty to the Co-op, Gwenda said it had been engrained in her since she was a child, following her family's ties to the business in its very early days.

"I was a farm girl – my parents were on a dairy farm that was one of the early suppliers of the Co-op," she explained.

"Right from the beginning, that sense of loyalty has been there."

To this day, you can catch Gwenda at the Wauchope SUPA IGA changing over the specials prices and generally enjoying the friendships and comradery that have always gone hand-in-hand with her job.

"Most of the people that I know and regard as my friends are the people at work. The Co-op is like a big family and I've always had a sense of belonging working there," she said.

It's a far cry from her childhood dream of being an air hostess, but Gwenda maintains that her supermarket days have brought her many happy memories, even if the uniform "wasn't quite as glamorous."

"I've considered retirement several times, but I just don't quite get around to it – I just keep showing up each week," she said.

"I didn't end up as an air hostess, but I have no regrets and I've enjoyed my working years."

**Media contact -
Executive Manager Sales and Marketing, Nicole Langdon,
Phone: 02 6588 8999, Mobile: 0498 111 353
Email: nicolel@hastingscoop.com.au**