**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CELEBRATE THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF DR. MARY STEWART NEWTON, WHO ACCOMPLISHED MUCH THROUGH STEADFAST AND DILIGENT HARD WORK.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are delighted to pause in their deliberations to recognize individuals who devote themselves to projects which provide a public service and benefit the lives of others. Dr. Mary Stewart Newton is one such individual; and

Whereas, born June 23, 1932, Mary was the daughter of the late William Tinsley Stewart and Mabel Moore Stewart, who were the proprietors of the Stewart Furniture Store in Woodruff. Intelligent and driven, she earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of North Carolina‑Chapel Hill in 1954, a master’s degree from the University of South Carolina in 1974, and her doctorate from the University of South Carolina just three years later in 1977; and

Whereas, with a mind toward service, Dr. Newton worked for the State as a psychologist until her eventual retirement. In her position, she treated drug and alcohol addiction patients. Upon her retirement, rather than settle down to life at a more leisurely pace, she chose instead to take up and dedicate herself to what had always been her true life’s work; and

Whereas, with a passion for family history, Dr. Newton has become most widely known for her act of authoring the Walter Stewart Family History, which catalogues thousands of descendants and helped carry on a century‑old family reunion tradition; and

Whereas, in the early days of computing, Dr. Newton did an immense amount of work, improving and updating family records, finding funding, developing a family database, and almost singlehandedly writing all of the stories and anecdotes included within the family history volume, which was published in 1982; and

Whereas, as a direct result of her work, by the 1970s, Dr. Newton had reinvigorated the family reunion, made it once again relevant and interesting, invented a structure of house historians, established a position of chief historian, started an annual newsletter tradition, and began a Saturday activity tradition which encouraged even the out‑of‑towners to attend; and

Whereas, having started this project during the early years of her life, Dr. Newton raised her children as a single mother when her husband passed away, attended graduate school, and established her career in professional psychology, all while toiling away diligently to ensure that the family traditions were honored, upheld, and remembered; and

Whereas, predeceased by her three brothers; her husband, Gordon F. Lesslie, who was the father of her three daughters, Katherine Fields, Linda Clark, and Judith Smith; her husband, William F. Rawlinson, who shared her passion for genealogy; and her husband Richard C. Newton, who shared her passion for world travel, Dr. Newton herself passed away on September 1, 2020, at the venerable age of eighty‑eight; and

Whereas, Dr. Newton’s tireless work was indicative of her tremendous character, and her personal mission to record and preserve the history of the Walter Stewart family was a noble and honorable pursuit. As many would say, “Without our past, there is no future.” The House of Representatives is pleased to salute her and thank her for her public service, and wish for her memory to be honored at the 114th Anniversary of the Walter Stewart Reunion, which will be held on August 7th, 2021. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and celebrate the remarkable life of Dr. Mary Stewart Newton, who accomplished much through steadfast and diligent hard work.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Dr. Mary Stewart Newton.

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