

## HFNC Life Membership to John Cayley

Rod Bird, Dec. 2014

Our President, John Cayley, is continuing as President in 2015 and we mark the occasion and his long and illustrious service to the group, by nominating him as the 5<sup>th</sup> Life Member of the Hamilton Field Naturalists Club (HFNC).

Lionel Elmore, a founding member of HFNC, was awarded our first Life Membership in 1979 for his major contribution to the club since its inception in 1958. That was followed in 2008, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of HFNC, by Life Memberships awarded to Murray Gunn, Rae Dempster and Grace James for their notable contributions to the club over many years.

John Cayley had first contact with HFNC in May 1962, when he addressed the club on the topic of 'Tasmanian Highlands' (a place where John had spent holidays bushwalking and rock climbing). I suspect that Harry Bishop, then President of HFNC and Officer-in-charge of the Pastoral Research Station (PRS), where John also worked, persuaded John to address the meeting.

John left the Department of Agriculture's Pastoral Research Station (PRS) for a year or so in the mid-1960s and moved back to an irrigation farm at Yanco for a few years before returning to Hamilton and there is no record of him in the HFNC minutes until about 1974. I met John when I came to the PRS in March 1973 and he introduced me to the geological features of the area as well as to the naturalists Lionel Elmore, Murray Gunn and others of the HFNC.

John began a long term of enthusiastic engagement with HFNC in the mid-1970s and served as Vice-president in 1975-76 and President in 1977-79, 1986-87, 1993-97, 2002-03, 2005-07, 2011-2015 - a phenomenal period of 20 years! Add to that terms as Vice-president in 1975-76, 1981, 1988-90, 1992, 1998-99 & 2004 (10 years) and John's dedication to the club over 40 years is obvious.

John has been to the fore in all working bees over the years, including tree-planting on the Grange Burn, Mt Napier, Lake Linlithgow, Wannan Falls Scenic Reserve, Kanawalla Flora Reserve and Glenelg Highway east of Dunkeld.

John has also attended most of the club excursions over the years, often as leader, and been instrumental in helping the club devise their annual program of speakers and excursions.

John participated on the Grange Burn/Lake Hamilton Advisory Committee and, more recently, the DEPI/PV Roundtable meetings at Halls Gap, where issues of fire management and tourism arise. Other meetings involved discussions of Forest Operations Plans with DEPI for South West & Wimmera areas.

One of John's strengths has been his ability to communicate in a friendly, non-adversarial fashion, not allowing environmental ignorance or uncaring attitudes of some to visibly frustrate or upset him.

It is worth reflecting that, with an apparent declining interest of young people in the natural environment, and the loss of older members, our club may have folded in the last 10-20 years had John & Glenys withdrawn from active involvement in its management. John's constant, dedicated effort to keep the club active, relevant and achieving its aim of being an advocate and worker for the environment is applauded.

We regard John Cayley as a very worthy recipient of Life Membership of the Hamilton Field Naturalists Club and thank him for the many years of service to the group and the companionship that he has shown to all. We are confident that John & Glenys will continue to enjoy their association with the club and offer their assistance where they can.

The motion that John Cayley be awarded Life Membership of the Hamilton Field Naturalists Club was passed with acclamation by members present at the meeting of HFNC on 11 Dec. 2014.