

Gillian and Miles Giller, Life Membership recipients



Gillian and Miles Giller were awarded life memberships of the Canterbury Botanical Society at the 2019 Annual General Meeting. Both have a strong sense of community mindedness. They have given unswerving loyalty and participation to the Society for many years.

Miles and Gillian's association with the Society started in 1991 when Derek Cook visited their native plant nursery and suggested they join the Society, which they did that year.

In 1993 they joined the committee and were on the programme subcommittee as well. They continued to help with the organisation of field trips after they resigned from the committee in 1997. Miles is recorded as leading a field trip to Glentui River Gorge in 1999. In 1998 they were awarded the Senior Bledisloe Trophy "for energetic organisation of camps and arrangement and leadership of the field programme".

Gillian joined the committee again at the 2005 AGM and in 2008 became the membership coordinator. She held this position until 2014, developing organised spreadsheets, and for part of the time acted as secretary as well. Gillian competently managed the system changes required when the Society became a registered charity in 2008, no easy task. She resigned from the committee in 2014 but a year later both she and Miles re-joined the committee. Gillian was president from 2015-2018 and covered the position of treasurer for part of that time. At the 2018 AGM she was elected as treasurer. In this role, she has implemented practical changes to help ensure that the Society stays on a sound financial footing. Furthermore, she has a very good knowledge of the Society's rules and gets details correct.

Camps that Miles and Gillian have organised were based at Island Hills, Gunn's Bush, Conway Flat, Waingaro, Arapawa Island, Hinewai, Tautuku, Lake Ohau and Murchison.

Miles and Gillian place high value on the protection of remnant flora and fauna. These values have led them to prepare and present several submissions to their local council, in support of protecting these remnants.

Working as QEII representative in Canterbury since 2001 has enabled Miles to obtain access to some interesting areas on private land where camps and field trips have been held. In his spare time Miles did and still does a lot of work as a member of the Matawai Park Advisory Group, maintaining and developing Matawai Park in Rangiora.

As Alice Shanks commented at a committee meeting, "we set the bar high for awarding Life Memberships".

Fay Farrant