

## HFNC Life Membership to Grace James

Rod Bird

Grace James was nominated in 2008 as a Life Member of the Hamilton Field Naturalist Club for her notable contributions to the HFNC over many years, and to a number of other organisations. Life Membership was conferred upon her, along with Rae Dempster and Murray Gunn, in August 2008 at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations for HFNC.

Grace was a member of HFNC from the late 1970s and was a great supporter of environmental education and conservation and was held in high regard by our members. She continued to be interested in the club's activities after she left Hamilton to live in Camberwell.

Grace had great artistic skills and in the late 1970s was able to assist Liz Fenton and Lyn Munro to produce screen-printed tea-towels and BBQ aprons with the Eastern Barred Bandicoot motif designed by Elizabeth Arthur. She and Liz Fenton also produced a knitting pattern with the bandicoot motif. These were intended to raise the profile of this endangered insectivorous mammal that had its last stronghold in Hamilton. Items such as these were presented to guest speakers at HFNC meetings and on other occasions.

In the period 1981 to 1986 Grace was the HFNC Press Secretary and she wrote articles for the Hamilton Spectator. In November 1981 she had a weekly 10-minute spot on the local 3HA radio station where she spoke about club news and associated environmental matters. Grace was also involved in presenting the case for a national park in the Grampians in October 1981. She is remembered as being a perceptive contributor to discussions at club meetings.

Grace did not serve HFNC in any official capacity after 1986, nor was she much involved in the active field work, but her knowledge and unwavering support was always there for the club over a long period thereafter.

The photograph below shows Grace between Rae Dempster and Murray Gunn, who were also awarded Life Memberships at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in 2008.

