

MEDIA RELEASE

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EASTERN SOUTHLAND CAR CLUB ADDS THREE NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Three hard working members of the Eastern Southland Car Club were awarded Life Membership at the club's recent 60th Annual Dinner and Prizegiving at the Heartland Hotels Croydon in Gore.

Craig Jessop of Stirling, plus Errol Hewlett and Karen Laird of Gore, were all made Life Members at the dinner. All three have been tireless workers for the club over the years, performing a multitude of roles and all three have also competed successfully while they all also acknowledge the support of their respective spouses and families.

Craig Jessop moved south 22 years ago and has been a member of the club's Executive ever since. He has also been the club's longest serving President, serving for almost ten years in two different stints. During his years on the Executive he has been part of the team that came up with the idea of the Catlins Coast Rally, an event he was Assistant Clerk Of The Course for until 2007 and then Clerk Of The Course since 2008. He has organised numerous events and says "I have done what I could but have been fortunate to be part of a really good team. People may have come and gone but the whole club has been really good."

Jessop originally joined the club because they held their events on Saturday's meaning he could attend church on Sunday's, something he could not do at the other club he was considering. He has never regretted it. "My wife Rachel enjoys being a part of it and our children have been involved, helping out and even competing. In fact the club has provided an avenue to instilling the values of contributing." He also said that when he found the Eastern Southland Car Club he found a club that was extremely friendly, relaxed and competent. "It is a club I am really proud to be a Life Member of. There are still some of the old guys like Bob Dunstan, Stewart Quertier and Jim McFadzien involved. There are great grandparents and kids."

The Life Membership was a "nice surprise" says Jessop. 'I was blown away, it was really humbling."

Errol Hewlett was a member of the Vintage Car Club before he became a part of a rally service crew and got the motorsport bug. He has contributed a huge amount of hours to the club in various roles including long terms as Secretary, Treasurer, Club Captain and Webmaster where his commitment to posting event results and club points on the night or morning following an event has set the bar high for anyone who follows him. He also manages to compete and is always at the pointy end of Clubsport Basic and Championship events he contests.

Errol has also served multiple terms on the Motorsport NZ Clubsport Commission and assisted fellow club member David Kirk to rebuild the NZ Hillclimb Championship alongside overseeing the annual Clubsport Championship. He is also a Steward, a Rally Clerk Of The Course, and a Clubsport (Bronze) Trainer. He also puts a huge amount of time into rallies and events still acts as Treasurer and helps keep the club's equipment up to standard.

Hewlett says he was "pretty chuffed" with the honour. However he quickly adds he "doesn't think he deserved it," having only been a member for sixteen years. "I am in pretty esteemed company now".

Karen Laird joined the club in 1976. Like Craig and Errol she has held many roles including as part of service crews on rallies. She has been the Secretary, event record and championship place card keeper, part of the rally sweeper vehicle team and has provided first aid cover for events for many years.

Karen has also competed successfully, having been Ladies Champion twelve times in succession. She also sponsors many events including the Interclub Series while she is also constantly supporting people of all ages to try the sport and is always encouraging Under 18's and Ladies to compete.

Laird, like her fellow Life Members is very humble about her achievements but says the honour was "not expected but pretty awesome".

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Photograph: Three new Life Members for the Eastern Southland Car Club pictured at the recent Eastern Southland Car Club 60th Annual Awards Dinner from left Craig Jessop, Karen Laird and Errol Hewlett - please credit Felicia Goffin.