

Mirth Smallwood

Life Member, New Zealand Branch, RSCDS, 1993

Mirth Smallwood arrived from the United Kingdom in the 1950's and attended her first Summer School in 1957. Since then she has taught at numerous Summer Schools, weekend and day schools.

Her influence has been particularly strong in Wellington where she founded both Wadestown and Kelburn Clubs. She has also taught at Lower Hutt, Wellington, Island Bay and more recently, in her retirement, at Waikanae. She has conducted both Preliminary Test and Teachers Certificate courses with excellent results.

Mirth was responsible for the arrangements for Miss Milligan's tour of New Zealand in 1974, and accompanied Miss Milligan on the South Island part of the tour. She served at least nine years on the Technical Committee and was Convener for two years.

She always set a high standard, and expected potential teachers to reach that standard. She had the ability to take a dancer's steps to pieces and then rebuild them without destroying the dancer's self-confidence. Teachers have been very grateful for her many helpful hints and her encouragement of younger teachers has been very much appreciated.

In recognition of her services to Scottish country dancing in New Zealand, Mirth was elected as a Life Member of the New Zealand Branch in January 1993.