



Founded
1928
For the Study, Care,
Breeding and Conservation
of Birds

BIRD KEEPING IN AUSTRALIA

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The Avicultural Society
of
South Australia Inc.

80th ANNIVERSARY

1928 : 2008

THE BEGINING

On Friday, February 10th, 1928, a group of thirty to forty concerned South Australian aviculturists met in the gymnasium rooms of Mr. Claude Bennett in Twin Street, Adelaide. The cause of their concern was a proposal by the then Commonwealth Government to ban the importation of birds.

After some discussion it was proposed an association be formed to make the government aware of aviculturists' concern at the proposed ban. Mr. W. Foglia, a well-known bird dealer of the day, proposed the association be called "The Avicultural Society of South Australia", with Dr. Hamilton as President and Mr. Bennett as Hon. Secretary. Mr. Lienau seconded the proposal; and the motion was carried. Thus our Society came into being, the first in Australia.

CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT MAGAZINE FEBRUARY 12th

EIGHTY YEARS AGO

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD FRIDAY, FEB. 10th 1928

A meeting of aviculturists was held at Mr. Claude Bennett's gymnasium, Twin Street, Adelaide, on Friday, February 10th. 1928.

Mr. W. Foglia proposed that a society called "The Avicultural Society of South Australia", be formed, with Dr. W. Hamilton as President and Mr. C. Bennett as Hon. Secretary.

Mr. Lienau seconded, and the motion was carried.

Mr. Foglia proposed that the number of vice-presidents be limited to four. This was seconded and carried.

Messrs. Lienau, Harvey, E. Whittington and Gosse were proposed as Vice-Presidents, and duly elected.

Mr. Lienau proposed that Mrs. T.E. Barr-Smith be asked to accept the position of Patroness to the Society. Mr. Lewis seconded.

Mr. Foglia proposed that the committee should consist of twelve (12) members. Mr. Lienau proposed, as an amendment that the committee should consist of eight (8) members. Mr. Phelps seconded, and the amendment was carried.

Mr. Lewis proposed that the officers appointed be the sub-committee. Mr. Rainsford seconded and the motion was carried.

It was proposed that Dr. Basedow be added to the sub-committee to draw up the rules.

Mr. Lewis proposed that the matter of the annual subscription be left in the hands of the sub-committee, and that the sub-committee draft views of the members and forward to the Minister of Customs through the Federal members.

Mr. Bennett proposed Mr. G. Lewis as Treasurer. Mr. Rainsford seconded. Carried.

Mr. Foglia proposed that the rules drawn up by the sub-committee, be placed before a general meeting to be held on Friday, February 24th.

Mr. Bennett proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Lewis for a supply of circulars giving notice of the meeting.

Mr. Lewis proposed a triple vote of thanks to Dr. Hamilton, Mr. Bennett and the Register. [*The Register was a daily newspaper of the time, now incorporated into The Advertiser. Ed.*].



MR. CLAUDE E. BENNETT

THE FOUNDER OF OUR SOCIETY

CLAUDE E. BENNETT Esq.
1876–1959

As a result of a lengthy correspondence printed in the *Register*, much of which was not entirely in the interest of aviculture, Mr. Bennett called a meeting of interested parties to discuss the matter. The meeting was held in his gymnasium rooms in Twin Street, Adelaide on February 10th, 1928. This meeting culminated in the founding of the Society.

Between 30 and 40 fanciers attended this meeting at which Mr. Bennett was elected Secretary; a position he held for twelve months. Business commitments then necessitated his resignation of that office. However, he continued to serve as a vice-president of the Society for several years.

A keen fancier in his day, his collection, housed in aviaries at his home on Park Terrace (now Greenhill Road) Parkside was most representative of the birds that were available at the time. First breeding medals* were gained with such birds as the Blue-breasted Waxbill, Cabini's Weaver, Fijian Parrot Finch and the Plumed Ground Pigeon, the latter gaining a silver medal. The keeping of birds served as a delightful relaxation for a number of years. However, in latter years active pursuit was relaxed due to other commitments, and finally in retirement the remaining years of his life were spent at his city premises, which were situated in the business area, and were consequently without space for aviaries.

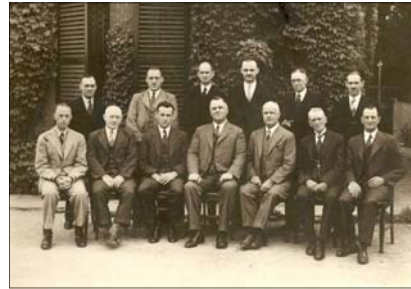
In addition to his love for birds Mr. Bennett, a Boer war veteran and a member of the constabulary in Africa after hostilities ceased, was a champion gymnast. His athletic record was challenged on many occasions by men of international fame, but usually these were subdued with little difficulty, and accordingly his capabilities were greatly respected and placed him among the top athletes of Australia and the world.

Text by the late Eric Baxter for the February, 1978 edition of *Bird Keeping in Australia*, which celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Society's founding.

* The Society's First Breeding Awards consist of the *R.W. McKechnie Memorial (Bronze) Medal* for the first official breeding of a species of bird by a member of the Society; and the *Simon Harvey Memorial (Silver) Medal* for the most meritorious first breeding in a given year.

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

Since inception the Society has held many activities and functions, the following are a few of the highlights from over the years.



The Committee of the Avicultural Society of South Australia photographed outside the Director's Residence at the Adelaide Zoological Gardens on November 19th, 1933.

Standing: G. Lewis, V. Duignan, G. Fisher, C. Burfield, C. Humble, F. Vyse.
Sitting: R. Minchin, C. Bennett, S. Harvey (Secretary), E. Atkinson (President), C. Lienau, H. Packer, S. Terrill



An early outing of the Society, probably taken at the Adelaide Zoo on the same day as the photo on the left, as the committee members in this photo are wearing the same suits and ties as in the other.

For many years Annual Bird Shows were held:



A GENERAL VIEW OF A SECTION OF THE EXHIBITS STAGED AT THE 1958 ANNUAL SHOW HELD IN THE THEN SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HOMING PIGEON ASSOCIATION HALL, MILE END. **MESSRS. HOGG, HUTCHINSON AND ROHRIG DISCUSS THE FINER POINTS OF AN EXHIBIT.**

Some of the winners at the 1958 show:



The Champion Australian Finch
Yellow-headed Gouldian
Exhibited by Mr. Fred Lewitzka

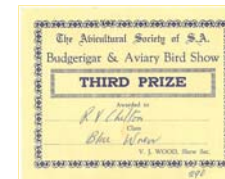


The Champion Foreign Finch
Saffron Finch
Exhibited by Mr. Syd Rohrig



The Champion Softbill
Red-capped Robin
Exhibited by Mr. Graham Hogg

PRIZE TICKETS OF THE TIME



THE GOLDEN JUBILEE
CAKE
February 1978
Decorated with the Society's
logo, in colour, and bearing
the words:

GOLDEN JUBILEE
1928—1978



The then Patron,
Mr. R.W. (Bob) McKechnie
cutting the Golden Jubilee Cake



OUR FIRST BRANCH
Inaugural Meeting, South-East Branch
September 24th, 1978.
Presiding, ASSA President Richard Chilton

MEMORIAL MEETINGS

Each year the Society holds two Memorial Meetings

THE MINCHIN MEMORIAL MEETING



This meeting has been held in honour of Mr. Ronald R. Minchin since the 1940s. The Society tries to have an interstate aviculturist of renown as the Guest Speaker at this meeting each year.

Mr. Minchin, a past President of the Society, died at a relatively young age in 1940, and the members of the day resolved to hold an annual Memorial Meeting to perpetuate his memory. Ron Minchin was, at the time of his death, Director of the South Australian Zoological Gardens. A position he held in succession to both his father and grandfather, in fact a member of the Minchin family held the position for the first sixty-five years of the Zoo's existence.

Mr. Minchin was responsible for the introduction of many species of exotic birds to both the Zoo and private aviculture, and was responsible for the Adelaide Zoo having what was recognised as the most comprehensive bird collection in Australia.

THE COLIN J. McKECHNIE MEMORIAL MEETING

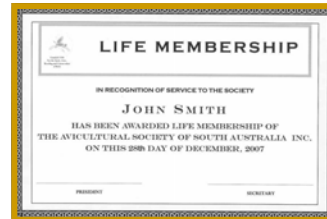


This meeting is held to honour the memory of our late Patron Colin McKechnie who passed away suddenly in March 2005.

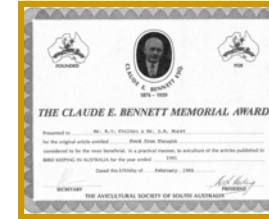
Colin, one of the McKechnies of Gorge Wildlife Park fame, always had an extraordinary interest in wildlife of all kinds, especially birds. When his father Bob (a former Patron of the Society) passed away in 1978, Colin and his younger brother Ted took on the management of the family's rapidly growing park at Cuddlee Creek, in the Torrens Valley. All types of birds, both indigenous and exotic, plus a large number of mammals and reptiles kept the brothers busy. Colin always maintained that once he became involved with the park he considered himself retired...if working from dawn to dusk seven days a week can be called retirement. A stalwart of the hobby Colin's contribution to both Australian aviculture and Wildlife Park management was immense.

SOCIETY AWARDS

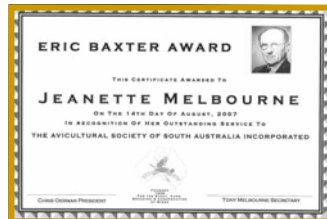
Over the years the Society has instituted a number of awards.



LIFE MEMBERSHIP
Sparingly granted for exceptional service to the Society as a whole.
There is also a Branch Life Membership Award for exceptional service to a Branch



THE CLAUDE E. BENNETT MEMORIAL AWARD
An annual award for the original article published in the preceding year in *Bird Keeping In Australia* considered the most beneficial to aviculture.



ERIC BAXTER AWARD
For service to the Society, a Branch, or for an exceptional act of benefit to the Society



ERIC RIDLEY YOUTH ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD
An annual award for an outstanding Junior



HONORARY MEMBERSHIP
Granted, at the Committee's discretion, for one year to eminent visiting aviculturists, or such other persons as may fit the criteria .



R.W. MCKECHNIE Memorial Bronze Medal
Given for the 1st official Breeding of an eligible species by a member of the Society.



SIMON HARVEY Memorial Silver Medal
Given for the most Meritorious 1st breeding of an eligible species in the



50 years continuous membership
Gold Medal



Foundation Members
C.C. Burfield (centre) and George E. Lewis (left) receive 50 year Gold Medals from then President Jack Smith, 14/2/78



Mr. Jack Hannant
Receiving his Life Membership from the then President, April 1978.