



**ALLAN REGINALD MCEVEY**

Born at Rutherglen, north-eastern Victoria, on 5 September 1919 and educated at Rutherglen and Melbourne University, since 1955 Mr McEvey has been Curator of birds at the National Museum of Victoria. His publications show the breadth of his interests: on osteology, behaviour, variation, bibliography, the description of a new species, the history of Victorian ornithology, regional bird lists and birds in association with their habitat. These and other matters have aroused his curiosity and to all of them he has contributed.

His work on the relation between ornithology and art has shown how artificial is the distinction, so often drawn, between the sciences and the humanities and has brought ornithology to the notice of people whose chief interests lie in other fields. He was a moving spirit in the formation of the Society of Wildlife Artists and is still active in that organization. His editing of recent editions of the work of John Cotton and John William Lewin has done much to create an awareness of the work of these artists in an environment, so new to Europeans, in which they worked. A major and continuing interest has been John Gould, studied in relation to British art and Australasian ornithology.

Mr McEvey served Australasian ornithology as curator of one of the major Australian birds collections; by his published contributions to learning; by his bridging, as research worker, writer and organizer, of the gap between scientific and artistic observation of birds; and by the work he has done, and the high standards which he has set, as Review Editor of *The Emu* and as the first Chairman of the Records Appraisal Committee of the RAOU.

But his services go deeper. We can now assess the contribution which the RAOU has made to Australasian ornithology since 1969 and see more clearly the contribution that it can make in the future. This contribution would not have been possible but for recommendations for reconstruction of the Union that were made by Dr D. L. Serventy and Mr McEvey in the Report of the Review Committee, appointed by the Council in 1967.

It was under the leadership of Mr McEvey, as President of the Union from 1967 to 1969, that the Review Committee was finally appointed and did its work, the Report adopted and the first fundamental recommendations were implemented.

With his awareness of the importance of tradition and a far-sighted appreciation of the need for fundamental change if Australasian ornithology were to develop as it should, it was clear to Mr McEvey that the RAOU was the body to lead ornithology in Australasia. Therefore, change in the RAOU was what was needed rather than the establishment of a new body with no roots and no loyalties among the people who had for many years watched and studied Australasian birds. The loyalties of those people had to be retained and yet the organization hoped to attract new thinking and new work. The best of the old and the best of the new had to be combined.

After ten years, it can be seen that the old and the new were successfully combined and that that combination has provided a magnificent impetus to the study of Australasian birds. This would not have happened as it did but for Mr McEvey's vision in planning changes, and his leadership, wise, firm and always courteous, in carrying out those changes during his term as President of the Union.