

Obituary

MICHAEL STANLEY REID SHARLAND

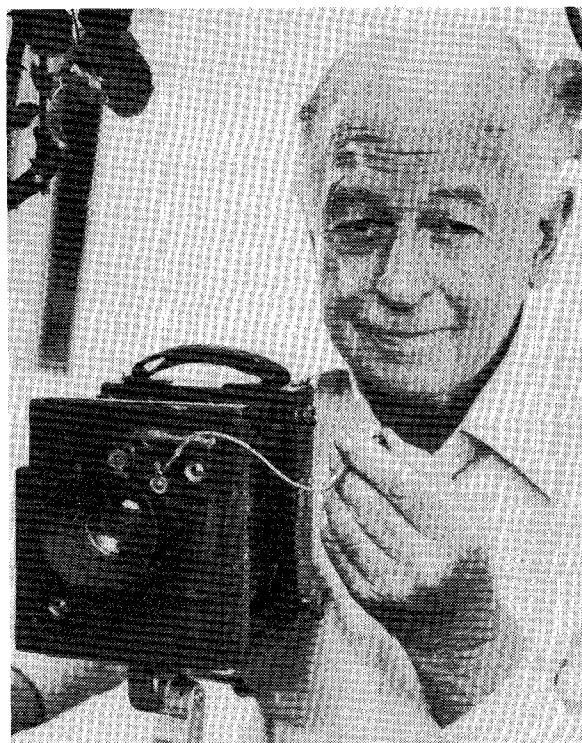
Michael Stanley Reid Sharland, one of the old school of bird students, a senior member, past President and Councillor of the RAOU, died in Hobart on Wednesday 11 February 1987 at the age of 87 years.

Michael was a journalist by profession. His early training was with Hobart's daily paper *The Mercury*, with which he was closely associated for over 60 years. In 1927 he transferred to *The Sydney Morning Herald*; in 1929 he moved to Melbourne where he was employed by *The Argus* and, for a short time, as a correspondent for Reuters in London. After service during World War II as Chief Photographer with the Australian Paratroop Battalion, he returned to Tasmania and his old friends at *The Mercury* for a brief period.

From his very early days at Campbell Town in the Tasmanian Midlands, Michael took a keen interest in natural history, particularly in birds. Early in his journalist career, under the pen-name Peregrine, he started a nature column in *The Illustrated Tasmanian Mail* and, after *The Mail* ceased publication, he continued this column in Saturday's *Mercury*. Peregrine's nature notes continued without a break for 60 years, which is believed to be a world record.

In 1947 Michael left *The Mercury* again, this time to take up the position of secretary of the Scenery Preservation Board, which he held until 1962. In this position he was active in the restoration of several buildings in the convict settlement at Port Arthur and, one of his dearest loves, the Entally homestead at Hadspen.

Michael pursued throughout his life his interest in the study and conservation of nature. While residing in Sydney he took an active interest in the Royal Zoological Society of N.S.W. and was elected a Fellow of that Society. On his return to Tasmania, in addition to his position on the Scenery Preservation Board, he held appointments on the Animals and Birds Protection Board, the Nomenclature Board and, as Honorary Ornithologist, the Tasmanian Museum. He was instrumental in rejuvenating the Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club; in 1971 initiated the formation of the Bird Observers Association of Tasmania; and was appointed a life member of these two organisations. He was the Tasmanian State Secretary of the RAOU and as such was a member of the RAOU Council, and served as President of the Union from 1949 to 1951.



Michael was a regular contributor to *The Emu*, and also wrote articles for the *Tasmanian Naturalist*, *Gould League (N.S.W.) Notes*, *Australian Museum Magazine*, *The Bird Observer*, *Australian Bird Watcher* and for the now defunct magazines *Wildlife* and *Walkabout*. He also published several books on birds and the natural history of his native state Tasmania. In addition to his writing, Michael was a skilled photographer, specialising in black-and-white shots, which he claimed allowed him greater definition and character. His papers in *The Emu* were often illustrated with his excellent photographs and in his later years he won two international awards for his bird photography.

Our sympathies are expressed to his wife, Iris, who often accompanied him on his excursions, his son, Roger, and his daughter, Elizabeth.

Leonard E. Wall