

Obituary

ANDREW PECZE

1947 – 2008

With the sudden death of Andrew Pecze on Sunday 14 September 2008, *Emu* lost a dedicated and vital member of its production team. In 1985, Andrew was appointed Business/Production Editor of *The Emu*, and he continued in that role until 2000. As Production Editor during that period, Andrew undertook all the copyediting, typesetting and layout of the journal, and he managed the printing and distribution of each issue. Since 2001, when CSIRO Publishing became the publisher of *Emu*, Andrew continued to typeset each issue, taking extraordinary care and always aiming for perfection. In working with *Emu*, Andrew combined his passion for birds with his professional life as a graphic designer and typesetter.

Andrew Pecze was born in Steyr, Austria, in 1947. Soon after, however, his parents decided to make the long and difficult journey to Australia to escape the war in Hungary. After a brief period in one of the many migrant camps on arrival in Australia, the family settled in Nunawading – at that time on the outskirts of Melbourne. Andrew's love of birds developed early in his life, first as a young child growing up in the gardens and orchards of what was then a semi-rural area; then as a shy teenager cycling along the country roads of Gippsland, through the forests and coastal heath near Sale. Here he discovered the wonders of nature and began to acquire his remarkable skills as a birdwatcher. Andrew's connection with Gippsland and his love of nature continued in later life, exploring the bush and fern gullies of Wonyip from his property near Toora. He also became increasingly interested in Gippsland's coastal environment, helping to form the Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet Coast Action Group. In particular, he was concerned about protecting the beach nesting sites of the Hooded Plover around Sandy Point and in Waratah Bay. He designed the signs for the main beach entrance to increase awareness of the nesting birds among as many visitors as possible. He was determined to do what he could for conservation of the natural environment and to help others understand its importance. Andrew watched birds wherever he went and whenever he could, and his greatest pleasure was to introduce others to his favourite pastime. He kept detailed records of his observations and he collected breeding records of birds around his home in Preston as well as at Sandy Point. He contributed numerous records to the Nest Record Scheme and he undertook several surveys for both Atlas projects.

Andrew studied science at LaTrobe University in Melbourne, where he went on to complete a Diploma of Education in 1973. After university, he began teaching, spending several years at Collingwood Community College, where he met his wife, Carmella Savale. During his time at university, Andrew also developed an interest in



film studies. He and some fellow classmates formed the ACME Film Production Company, making short films and documentaries. At the same time, they also produced Australia's first film magazine – *Cinema Papers* – and thus began his interest in graphic design. He left teaching in 1977 to broaden his interest in graphic design and began working for the *Melbourne Times*. He then jointly set up a graphic design and production company, Band-Aid Productions, which created *Radio City*, a magazine for Triple R radio. The company grew and Andrew worked on many other publications including magazines such as *Dance Australia*, *Business Review Weekly* and more recently *Inside Indonesia*.

Andrew's association with Birds Australia, then the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union (RAOU), began in 1985 with his appointment as Business Editor of *The Emu* by Edmund Wyndham, then Editor of the journal. From 1985 to 1997, he also produced the *RAOU Newsletter*, which later became *Wingspan*, and he managed the production of the RAOU Reports and Monographs, most notable among which was 'The Taxonomy and Species of Birds of Australia and its Territories' by Les Christidis and Walter Boles in 1994, which he designed and typeset.

Andrew was also involved in the production of many other scientific and medical journals, including *Emergency Medicine* and *Australian Psychology* for Blackwell Publishing. From 1998, Andrew typeset several of CSIRO

Publishing's journals, including *Reproduction, Fertility and Development, Invertebrate Systematics, Wildlife Research, Australian Journal of Zoology, Historical Records of Australian Science* and *Australian Journal of Experimental Agriculture*. He also worked with many book publishers, and for more than 15 years he undertook all the design work and produced the catalogues for Andrew Isles Natural History Books.

Andrew's dedication, perfectionism and quiet determination always to do a good job can be seen in every issue of *Emu*. His enthusiasm and love for the journal, and his

appreciation for what it contributes to our knowledge of birds, shines through. He was a pleasure to work with, not just because of his professionalism but because of his commitment and friendship to all those he worked with. I, and all of us at CSIRO Publishing, miss Andrew greatly. He is survived by his parents, his wife Carmella, and his brother and family. We extend our deepest sympathies to them, and offer this tribute in recognition of his contribution to *Emu*, Birds Australia and the birds he loved so much.

Camilla Myers