

GORDON BINNS

Gordon Binns was Secretary of the Union for two periods, 1953-56 and 1959-63, and President in 1965-66. He died at Blackburn, Victoria, on 24 September 1976. He was born at Yarraville, also in Victoria, on 1 March 1899 and he spent his boyhood years in the country areas of Great Western and Seymour; it was then that he developed his great interest in natural history.

After leaving school in Seymour in 1914, he entered the service of the State Savings Bank of Victoria. He enlisted in the first AIF at seventeen years of age, served in France and was wounded at Villers Bretteneux. He remained in England for two years after the cessation of hostilities in 1918. On returning to Australia he resumed employment with the State Savings Bank and served in various Melbourne suburban branches until appointed manager in 1938. He then served at various country branches, which included Cobram 1938-44, Ouyen 1945-47 and Terang 1948-50. It was in these years that he started writing in the journal of the State Savings Bank, *Savings Weekly*, with 'Notes from Birdland' and for twenty years he wrote a weekly column, 'Re Out Doors', for the *Terang Express* under the non-deplume of Neophema. He joined the Union in 1943, when encouraged by the influence of the late Frank Howe. Of his several articles published in *The Emu* perhaps his best effort was 'Birds of Terang, South-western Victoria' (Vol. 53: 211).

In his final years with the State Savings Bank he was manager at several suburban branches 1951-56, Horsham 1957-60 and at Box Hill 1961-64; he retired in his fiftieth year of service. It was during this period, when Secretary of the Union, that he was of such great service to it. As one who worked with him on Council, I regarded his diligence and energy, particularly over his correspondence with members throughout Australia and overseas, as outstanding. He was truly one of the old school. He was an accomplished photographer and was actively involved in church and community affairs. He was ordained Deacon of the Church of England after qualifying for Th.L. in 1928.

He attended many RAOU Camp-outs: Hattah Lakes (1951), central Australia (1952), Lake Barrine (1953), Mt Keira (1954), Portland (1957), Noosa Heads (1958), Kangaroo Island (1959), Grafton (1961), New Zealand (1962), Mt Beauty (1965) and Toowoomba (1966). His photograph appears in *The Emu*, Volume 67, Plate 21. He was also a member of the Bird Observers' Club and the Gould League of Victoria and contributed to their publications.

His wife Ilma pre-deceased him by some months. Our deepest sympathy is extended to his three daughters Ruth, Phyllis and Meredith, to his son Greg, and to their families.

W. R. WHEELER