

## OBITUARY

**NORMAN JOSEPH FAVALORO** died on 25 October, 1989, at the age of 84. Born in Bendigo, Victoria, Norm as many friends called him, or Fav as most ornithologists preferred, was educated at Scots College, Melbourne, where he also showed great prowess in athletics, particularly running and rowing. Short of stature, wiry and energetic, he retained these attributes almost to the end and few were they who could keep up with him as he rushed through the mallee. A favourite memory of mine will be that of watching from the bank as Fav at the age of 71 rowed his collapsible wooden dinghy across Morrisons Lake, Ivanhoe, shouting back as he disappeared in the lignum, "Am I heading right for the spoonbills?"

In 1932 he came to Mildura, Victoria, and started his solo practice as a solicitor and he continued there until gradually phasing himself into retirement in the early 1970's. Admitted to the Bar he practised both in Victoria and New South Wales. Another delightful memory is of the day when I was prosecuting a person for shooting a Pink-eared Duck out of season. As the case was called, Fav arose from beside the Court table, closed the bird book he had been reading and addressing the Bench (and me) with that impish grin that seldom left his face, said, "I appear for the defendant, the plea is Not Guilty." He chuckled when the Court found different.

Fav thoroughly searched the north-western corner of Victoria and its extensive mallee, the whole of western New South Wales, particularly the Darling River area and north of Broken Hill to Tibbooburra and beyond, country in those early days practically inaccessible. During one early trip he saw the Grey Grasswren but it was 1968 after collecting specimens that he named this new species. He travelled much of Queensland, made three trips to Macquarie Island, and on his frequent trips to Melbourne on legal matters searched the intervening country for bird life. He published many of his findings, mostly in *The Emu* and the *Victorian Naturalist*.

He was made an Honorary Associate in Ornithology at the National Museum of Victoria and in 1953 was made President of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union. He was a member of numerous societies. He was a Foundation member of the ABSA.

Initially Fav was an egg collector, an oologist. He amassed a comprehensive collection of the eggs of practically every bird that has bred in or visited Australia and another equally comprehensive collection of the eggs of the seabirds of the world. These collections were magnificently housed, fully catalogued with data meticulously kept. He had long ago made arrangements for the collections to pass to the National Museum in Melbourne. It is hoped that researchers will make full use of the information stored. The nest locations alone outline the historic and contemporary distribution of our birds; most researchers rely on skin specimens for this. At my last sighting of the collections Fav showed me eggs he claimed to be of the Sarus Crane taken in Queensland early in the century refuting the theory that this bird is a recent-day arrival in Australia. Like so much of the collections' data it has never been written up. The collections will remain a worthy

memorial to his work. When banding started in Australia Fav entered into it zealously, firstly on raptors, a particular love of his; his yard was often full of hawks and eagles being rehabilitated after incurring injury. He knew the past location of every Sea-eagle's nest along the Murray River, virtually the whereabouts of every Wedge-tailed Eagle's eyrie within many kilometres of Mildura and he showed me many a tree nest of the Peregrine Falcon where I did not even know that Falcon was present. Later he banded hundreds, nay, thousands of Cormorants, Egrets and Ibises in remote sites along the Darling and Lachlan Rivers venturing into mazes of lignum and cumbungi which would have daunted many a younger man. His efforts were rewarded with many long-distance and overseas recoveries.

Fav remained mentally and physically active almost to the end fighting to sustain a heart which could no longer cope with a burden he had imposed on it throughout a lifetime as he worked long and arduous hours and drove himself so hard in pursuit of his beloved hobby.

He died in hospital in Bendigo but was buried in Mildura.

He leaves a wife, Lilian, a step-daughter Susan and Michael, Nina and Phillip, children from earlier marriages.

John Hobbs

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## New Members

DATE, Dr E. M., Armidale, NSW  
 DOYLE, F., Capel, WA  
 DUNN, A. M., Bandoora, Vic.  
 DYER, P. K., Chermside, Old  
 KOERBER, A. C., Ceduna, SA  
 MORRIS, F., Cairns, Old  
 PALMER, M., Yarrowarrah, NSW  
 ROBERTSHAW, J. D., Armidale, NSW  
 ROSE, A., Amelup, WA  
 SMITH, K. W., Berri, SA  
 STEVENS, Dr S., Westmead, NSW  
 THOMSON, D. H., Balgownie, NSW  
 THOMSON, Dr P. J., Woolgoolga, NSW