



## *The Avicultural Society of New South Wales (ASNSW)*

*(Founding in 1940 as the Parrot & African Lovebird Society of Australia)*

### **Aviary Bird Association Perth**

#### **Bob Philpot, President ABA of Aust (Inc)**

*(ASNSW Avicultural Review - December 1998)*

**"So yes, there are downs as well as ups, but the one thing that remains the same is that so much is still being done by so few for the many ..."**

May 1997 to May 1998 on my calendar equals twelve months or one year if you say it quickly, and that is the period of time that has elapsed since I took office again for another spell as President of the Association. When Frank Parker indicated that he did not wish to continue in the chair and there was no enthusiastic person waiting in the wings I decided to renew my acquaintance with the position.

Was this a wise decision I ask myself? Well, I have nominated again for 98/99 so I guess that provides a part of the answer. So what have I found different in my first year back compared to my previous spell, quite a bit and it goes something like this.

- In general, decreasing numbers of members in this association.
- Increasing numbers of clubs catering for specialist groups in their specific area.
- Increasing competition from commercial interests which cater for the aviculturist.
- An economic atmosphere that by its uncertainty, affects the number of new members and the quantity of birds that they keep.
- A proliferation of other interests as well as leisure activities that can be conducted from home.
- Increasing restrictions by Local Government in the number, size and construction of aviaries in back yards.

While I consider the previous list to be on the down side, what is a plus is the opportunities for newcomers to the hobby to obtain an increasing range of birds both in the pure form, as well as increasing numbers of mutations, and dare I say it, Hybrids.

So yes, there are downs as well as ups, but the one thing that remains the same is that so much is still being done by so few for the many. As a person who is prepared to commit myself at the drop of the hat with time and effort, it never ceases to amaze me how so many have such a lack of enthusiasm and cannot be cajoled or coerced into contributing.

During the past year, considerable effort has gone into trying to upgrade Bird Discussion Evenings and there were a number of evenings where numbers in attendance were in excess of ninety which indicated that this aspect was improving. In addition to the Bird Discussion evenings there has been considerable expenditure by the Association as well as time by the club's Editor Chris Normoyle to present the Journal in both a colourful and varied manner. Based on the material he has had to work with, the results have been more than successful and Chris has received some extremely pleasing feedback on his efforts. Unfortunately due to other commitments, Chris will have to relinquish the position of Editor within the next couple of months.

In items discussed earlier that I classed as the down side, a number of those points are outside the control of your committee and indeed the members themselves. It simply means that additional work needs to be done not just to hold existing members but to continue to work on gaining new members to compensate for the attrition that continues on a yearly basis.

While committee has instigated a commercial advertising campaign to interest members of the public, there is no doubt that in the area of aviculture, the best advertising is by word of mouth. This is one feature that only the members themselves are capable of doing well. In the long run, without sustained growth, the expenses to maintain a forty page Journal using colour inserts will be too great.

In closing there is a need for me to mention that there are still the same visible stalwarts supporting the Association on a regular basis. Zita and Jack Dodds, Val James and Charlie Boyer, Betty and Roy Kaminski, Margaret and Colin Breadsell, Charles Kelly and Peter Wyatt. Behind the scenes Brendon Cant and Norm Byrne have been involved with the journal and membership data base. Your committee of Peter Wyatt, Charlie Calleja, Kevin Matthews and Spencer Stewart have all been making valuable commitments of time, coming up with ideas to handle new product lines and structuring of the organisation.

There is also a very welcome group of people out there (many who do not wish to be named) who over the last twelve months have contributed birds and other gifts for the purpose of raffle prizes to aid the Association. In addition there is the special band of people who are prepared to speak at the monthly meetings and others who contribute articles for the Journal.

I need to thank our valuable advertisers who purchase space of both covers and content in the Journal and recommend that they receive your support for their products when you are considering purchasing, and to say that for anyone who has assisted the Association in any shape or form during 97/98, I do hope that in contributing in the manner that you did, the gesture made you feel just that little bit more comfortable.

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