

The Le Souëf Memorial Award

Ian Endersby

56 Looker Road, Montmorency, Vic 3094

The Le Souëf Memorial Award was inaugurated in 1982 and has been presented 13 times.

John Cecil Le Souëf was born in a sleepout at the Melbourne Zoo, on 5 November 1905 and received the nickname 'Zoo' while at kindergarten. His father W.H. Dudley and his grandfather Albert A.C. Le Souëf had been directors of the Melbourne Zoological Gardens, while two uncles, Albert Sherbourne and Ernest Albert Le Souëf, had directed the Sydney and Perth Zoological Gardens respectively. Details of his entomological achievements can be found in his obituary [12:46] and at <http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/guides/leso/006.htm> [accessed 2 Nov 2010]. One of his greatest contributions was to re-establish the Entomological Society in Victoria in 1961, after a lapse of 20 years. After his death his collection of 15,000 insects (including 9,500 lepidoptera and 4,500 coleoptera) was donated to the Australian National Insect Collection.

'Zoo' Le Souëf passed away on 21 June 1982 and, at the meeting of the Society in August, the President advised members that plans for a memorial were under consideration by Council [12:36, 48]. A Memorial Fund was launched in the October Newsletter, and the purpose of the fund was to make an award (probably annually) to an amateur or younger enthusiast [12:51]. By the time of the Council meeting in March 1983 guidelines had been drafted and they had narrowed the potential recipients to an amateur entomologist in Australia of any age, and it could be made at unspecified intervals. The guidelines imply that nominations would come informally from Society members [13:19]. At the next general meeting (April 1983) members ratified the guidelines after they had been changed to require nominations in writing, restricting the frequency to no more than once a year, and requiring the recipient to provide an article for the newsletter on his or her entomological experiences [13:20-21].

A painting, donated by Andrew Atkins, was to be raffled amongst members to augment the Fund. It depicted a pair of the lycaenid *Virachola smilis daleyensis* Le Souëf & Tindale (now in the genus *Deudorix*). By an interesting coincidence, the raffle was won by Nick, son of 'Zoo' Le Souëf [14:3]. At the end of 1983 the Memorial Fund comprised almost \$1,150.

The inaugural winner of the Le Souëf Memorial Award was Keith Hateley, a life member of the Society. Mary Le Souëf, wife of 'Zoo', made the presentation at the AGM of the Society in June 1984 [14:35]. Subsequent winners were:

1983	Keith Hateley	Vic	13:35
1984	Geoff. A. Williams	NSW	15:2
1985	Max Moulds	NSW	16:2
1986	Andrew Atkins	Vic	16:69
1987	Bert Brunet	NSW	17:100
1988	Robert H. Fisher	SA	19:3
1989	Gunther Theischinger	NSW	19:98
1990	Deniss Reeves	Qld	20:6
1993	Peter Kelly	Vic	23:20
1996	Bob Hay	WA	27:5
1998	Bert Brunet	NSW	29:3
1999	Hugh Bollam	WA	30:15
2006	Peter McMillan	WA	37:27

A further refining of the Rules [14:33] allowed that nominations would stand for three years but the award could not be received by the same person more than once in a 10 year period. Appropriate contributions were defined and guidance given on the format of the nomination. No longer was there a requirement for an article from the winner.

Andrew Atkins, the 1986 winner, expressed the wish that the financial equivalent of his award be used to encourage junior entomologists [17:100] so the amount was added to the Junior Encouragement Fund. That Fund had been established with a \$100 anonymous donation only a few months earlier [17:58] with a separate bank account to manage it [17:99]. Various proposals were made for ways in which to encourage juniors such as the provision of display cases, literature and equipment for schools [19:90], and essay and poster competitions [20: 124]. The scope of an essay competition was published in August 1991 [21:111-112] and two entries were received [21: 119]. No record of the winning essay or its author can be found in the *Victorian Entomologist*. Because of the difficulties in attracting entries for the Junior Encouragement Award it was considered that funding a bursary for the STAV Science Talent Search would be an appropriate alternative. That this was plausible was demonstrated by the list of 1990 bursary winners which included eight projects with entomological themes [22:104].

To avoid excessive bank charges the Le Souëf Award and the Junior Encouragement Award accounts were amalgamated [25:41] in 1995.

Discussion

The Le Souëf Memorial Award is probably the best known medium in the Australian entomological scene for offering encouragement to an amateur entomologist, and yet it has only been awarded 13 times in 28 years. Each year invitations for submissions are sent to all of the entomological and insect study societies in Australia, the field naturalist clubs in each capital city and the Royal Societies of each state. From the geographical spread it can be seen that, from time to time, certain societies have taken the opportunity to honour a number of their members.

The Committee has buffered the Council and members from disappointed nominators and nominees, and no records are kept of the Committee's deliberations.

Because the Fund has been deliberately grown over the last few years by allocating interest from the Society's term deposits to it, and because not many calls have been made on it for awards recently, it stands at about \$5,500. This can generate sufficient income to fund a STS bursary of about \$70 and a Le Souëf Award of about \$250 each year. However, this high balance, coupled with the apparent lack of interest from nominees, has produced the occasional suggestion that the funds could be better used for other purposes. The most recent of these was a call for additional colour photographs in the newsletter.

Without the Le Souëf Award there is no way for the Entomological Society of Victoria, and most other Australian entomological societies, to promote and honour amateur entomologists. The Society's web page www.entsocvic.org contains details of the award and this wider exposure might produce new nominations.

References. All references are from the *Victorian Entomologist* abbreviated to volume and page.