

In pursuit of his desire to raise standards in forensic science, and to rid the field of charlatans, he not only wrote articles for scientific journals (such as *Nature*) and newspapers, but he also wrote well argued submissions to the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology when it considered Forensic Science, to the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice, to the Working Group on Forensic Science chaired by Lord Lewis of Newnham and to the Council for the Registration of Forensic Practitioners. Increasingly he became more and more involved in cases of wrongful imprisonment due to flawed or fraudulent forensic science. His practical steps to try to remedy this situation included a conference in July 2003 in Cambridge and a proposal to found the Solon Institute for forensic sciences. This is planned to be devoted to research in forensic science and casework undertaken free of charge and disclosed to both sides. This is an imaginative concept that deserves to be implemented. Indeed it would be a fitting memorial to Zak.

Zak is remembered by all those of us who were privileged to know him as a man of immense integrity, compassion and courage in standing up for what he believed to be true or just. He was also a devoted family man, and deepest sympathy is extended to his wife Sharon and three children, Tanya, Larissa and son, Aksel.

Henry Disney

### DENNIS O'KEEFFE



It was with a feeling of the deepest regret and sadness to Kent entomologists to learn of the death of Dennis O'Keeffe on 19 October 2002 after a brief, unexpected illness. So sudden was this that an eagerly anticipated visit to the Scilly Isles had to be cancelled at very short notice. He was born on 9 September 1935 at Peckham, in south-east London. Luckily, the family moved to Sidcup, Kent shortly before the house in London was destroyed in an air raid. By that time, however, even Kent was not considered safe anymore so the family packed their bags and moved to Blackpool. On their return to Sidcup in 1943, Dennis attended the local convent school and completed his education at St. Mary's College in 1953.

National Service in the RAF followed and a serious interest in long distance running occupied his spare time.

The move to Sidcup was to a house adjacent to open fields and here his passion for butterflies and moths was established; according to his sister Theresa starting as early as thirteen years old. His parents would allow him to put a bedside lamp close to an open window so that he could look at the moths that came to the light. At the same time, he put together a small collection of butterflies and moths. The funds that he needed to finance his hobby came from paper rounds and Saturday meat deliveries. He was close to L. Hugh Newman's butterfly farm at Bexley and was a frequent visitor there.



After a short spell in the Civil Service, a job with Wella, which gave experience with computers, and then opening a toy shop, he next established a successful computer programming business with a friend and so with that came some leisure time. Now his latent interest in entomology surfaced and he then began his contact with like-minded enthusiasts joining the South London Entomological and Natural History Society in 1968. He soon built up a representative collection of British macrolepidoptera, travelling far and wide in the company of Bernard Skinner, Dick Chatelain and myself in the 1970s. He had an excellent library of entomological periodicals and by assiduous study of them in the winter months he was able to locate a number of species which had become lost or obscured, the best example being that of *Thetidia smaragdaria* (Fabr.) ssp. *maritima* (Prout). He also located breeding colonies of moths of the rarity of *Athetis pallustris* (Hb.) and *Acosmetia caliginosa*, (Hb.). So he became regarded as a highly competent fieldworker. Unfortunately, these days were not to last and by the late 1970s, after the loss of an eye and problems with his personal life, he withdrew from the world of Lepidoptera and, in the winter of 1978/1979, he disposed of his Lepidoptera collection and library ("in a fit of madness", he would later say).

By 1980, he progressed to stabilising his personal life and took employment as an office manager for a law firm (where he would later become the finance director, staying there until his retirement in 1993.) In 1984 he married again, to Wiltrud, and moved to Petts Wood in 1985. This was to set the stage for the most important phase in his entomological life, since with stability came renewed contact with the world of Lepidoptera, though he never completely lost touch with Bernard and Dick. He began going out on recording trips with Dick and his diary entries start with a visit to Ham Street woods in Kent on 25 April 1986. He restricted himself to Kent records and in 1987, significantly, he mentions his first "micro." By the end of 1987 he was recording microlepidoptera in Kent in earnest and travelling frequently with Michael Chalmers-Hunt, to whom he had apprenticed himself. By 1990 he was making significant finds of his own, such as discovering a breeding colony of *Pammene agnotana* Rebel, and when Dick Chatelain died in 1991 he turned almost exclusively to the study of microlepidoptera, not only in Kent now, but to the whole of the British Isles. He said it was more challenging for him.

It was at this time that the plan to publish a book on the microlepidoptera of Kent, to complement that of the macrolepidoptera by Michael Chalmers-Hunt, was planned and he worked at this for the next fourteen years building up a database, following up all the old records that he could lay his hands on and adding many new ones himself. He recorded interesting and rare breeding species new to Kent such as *Coleophora alnifoliae* Barasch and *Eucosma metzneriana* (Tr.).

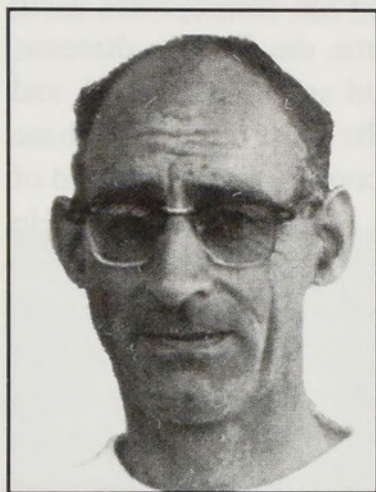
Retirement in 1993 led eventually to a rethink about location and in 2001 a move was made down to the coast, to Dymchurch, for a more relaxed lifestyle and the prospect of some migrants to look at. In this respect, he was not disappointed since, in 2002, he was able to record such species as *Hyles livornica* (Esper), *Hyles euphorbiae* (L.) and *Trichoplusia ni* (Hb.). In his last few months, his diary entries are largely local and within the last few, Castle Hill, Folkestone figures; I could not help but reflect on this as he made his last journey to the crematorium within sight of it.



His hard-earned knowledge was freely available to anyone who asked and he made contacts and encouraged the study of the smaller moths to anyone who was interested throughout Kent in order to build as comprehensive a picture as possible, to aid his projected book spanning the period from 1900 to approximately 2000. Sadly this will not now be so. The information is on disk and it is to be hoped that someone else with the same love of Kent microlepidoptera that he had will take up the task and complete the work, and give him his due recognition for all his hard effort over the past years. His comprehensive collection of smaller moths is, it is hoped, being housed in Maidstone museum where it will be available for study by interested lepidopterists. He is survived by a son, grandson and daughter and, of course, Wiltrud, who gave him so much support and encouragement in the pursuit of his aim ... A Microlepidoptera of Kent.

Brian Elliott

### ALBERT SACCO



Reverend Albert Sacco, MBE, SM, was born on the 6 December 1920, at Port Said, Egypt. After spending most of his working life on several islands of the New Hebrides archipelago (Vanuatu), he died on the 29 January 2002 in Middlesbrough, aged 81. Among many other interests, Albert was a keen amateur entomologist; a new species of butterfly which in flight looked remarkably like *Papilio machaon* L., came to his notice on the island of Tanna, and was subsequently named *Polyura sacco* Smart, 1977. A second race from the islands of Espiritu Santo and Malekula was named *P. sacco santoensis* Lachlan, 1993. More recently, Albert Sacco was further honoured with the

description of a new hawk-moth from the islands of Ambrym and Espiritu Santo: *Gnathothlibus saccoi* Lachlan & Moulds, 2001.

Both Albert's parents were Maltese, and he was five years old when his doctor father brought the family from Malta to England in order to be near his brother, also a GP. Educated in his early years by English Jesuits in Malta, and later by Marist Fathers in Middlesbrough, Albert inherited from his father a love of nature, which remained with him throughout his life. The three brothers, of whom Albert was the second, made a successful team in collecting butterflies around faunally impoverished industrial Teeside. The youngest brother, Maurice, had the quickest eye; Albert had the netting skill, whilst elder brother Paul would carry out the subsequent mounting of specimens. War broke out whilst Albert was a young man. He was commissioned into the Royal Artillery, participating in the campaign following the allied landings in Normandy, and rising to the rank of Captain. Following cessation of hostilities in Europe, he was posted in September 1945 to northern India where he was promoted to the rank of Major. After demobilisation in June 1946, he was ordained into the Marist priesthood and posted to the New Hebrides to take over a mission station at Loanatom, Tanna in 1954.



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