

# Australian Culinary Federation Victoria (ACFV)

Formerly 'The Australasian Guild of Professional Cooks' (AGPC)



## Sydney Taylor Memorial Black Hat Award

### Part A – Selection Criteria

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Sydney Ernest Taylor (RIP) Career & Background

Sid was born in England in the university town of Cambridge and became a naturalised Australian citizen. The first cooking lessons he received were during his school boy days. At weekends and after school he, along with his older brother Horace and younger brother Lance, worked in his father's bread bakehouse. They also delivered the finished product by balancing large baskets piled high with bread on their bicycles.

Sid opted for a cooking career, rather than one in the back - breaking trade of bread making and baking, when hand mixing and moulding were the norm before the age of automated machinery in bake houses.

He served the usual three year apprenticeship at St. John's College in Cambridge. As the apprenticeship came to an end in 1939 the dark clouds of war rolled over Europe and he remained at the college for a further two years as a Commis Chef [improver cook]. During World War II [1939 - 1945], he served in the Royal Air Force in England, India, Burma and Singapore.

Returning to civilian life in 1946, he went back to St John's College for two years. During this time he commenced study for the British Trade Certificate -"City and Guilds Number 151". He then moved to the medium size Chesterton Hospital as Head Chef for a short period of time before taking up a position as Assistant Head Chef at the 350 bed Addenbrooks Hospital near Cambridge. He remained at Addenbrooks for several years until selected as one of the team of professional cooks to cater for the Olympic Games in 1956 held in Melbourne. On arrival in Australia he was assigned to the American kitchen.

After the Olympic Games came to an end he secured a job in the main kitchen of the Austin Hospital at Heidelberg, one of the major hospitals in the State of Victoria. Within a year he was called into the Catering Manager's Office and offered the Head Chef's position in Heidelberg House. At that time Heidelberg House was used for the exclusive use of private patients with a more sophisticated menu and type of cooking to that of the main kitchen, which produced meals in bulk for all public patients. After fourteen years at the hospital, Sid was successful in his application for quite a unique position, which would offer the challenge he had been seeking.

The S.E.C.V. - State Electricity Commission of Victoria had advertised for a Product Development Officer - they were very fortunate in gaining the services of Sid Taylor. The product to be developed was kitchen equipment of all types and shapes; he became part of a team consisting of design engineers, electrical engineers and various other types of skilled specialists. He went a step further; he taught the cooks how to get the best use out of equipment. He gave lectures and demonstrations to professional catering trade groups and did the same at the Food Colleges for classes of students and apprentices. He was known by the cooks and chefs of Victoria as «my friend at the SECV».

It was in January 1975 while working at the SECV, he volunteered to join the SECV Emergency Task Force formed and flown up to make emergency repairs to essential services in the City of Darwin in the Northern Territory. Darwin suffered enormous

damage on Christmas Eve when Cyclone "Tracey" tore through the city sweeping up houses, trees, and most other things that stood in its path.

Right to the end of his life, Sid was involved in activities associated with his portfolio as Overseas Public Relations Officer, and a member of the committee of the Australasian Guild of Professional Cooks as an elite "Master Member".

His favorite off duty pastime was playing golf. He took his golf rather seriously and the weather would have to be really bad before he would admit defeat to nature's elements and walk back to the clubhouse for a jar of liquid refreshment.

The committee at the time of his passing wished to recognise his outstanding contribution to the industry with an award that reflected his values.

## **1.2. Purpose of Award**

The Black Hat is an Australian commercial cookery honour bestowed by the Australian Culinary Federation Victoria.

The Black Hat Award is to be considered the highest achievement given to a chef to recognise their contribution and commitment to the commercial cookery industry and must be measurably and significantly beyond that would be expected in a normal career of a chef.

It is an award that places a high value on industry commitment in addition to culinary skill.

The primary focus of the award is intended to honour the degree, the value and length of time of the contribution to commercial cookery.

Only Chefs, who have made outstanding contributions to Australian culinary progress and development at the highest trade or professional level, will be considered for this prestigious award.

## **1.3. Black Hat: The Historical Context**

*This historical context is to ensure that the original intent of the award is never disregarded.*

*Origin of the Black Hat - 1990 by Aelfryn Bailey - [R.I.P]*

*Black in the context of the "Sidney Taylor Memorial Black Hat Award" has no connection with the long established European custom of wearing black clothes as a sign of mourning.*

*To understand the origin of the Black Hat is to understand that the Romans in the 7th century, when in England, organized the many different little kingdoms into a single church order. In doing so, they helped to create the unity of England. In the 11th century, the Norman conquerors arrived in England and set about building castles, churches and monasteries throughout the land, using the cheapest building materials possible - the stones from nearby quarries. Many of these monasteries offered food and rest to many a weary traveller - for a price - thus sowing the seeds of what was to become the catering industry with professional cooks being employed.*

*In the 14th century, the introduction of brick making and laying revolutionised the building and design of all types and sizes of dwellings and structures. It brought about the building of fireplaces, ovens and chimneys. It allowed the temperature of ovens to be controlled by the use of flue plates and controlled draught into the chimney. The humble brick has played a very important part in the history of English cookery.*

*In the 15th century, the English Worshipful Company of Cooks was chartered in the year of 1482, although it had been founded nearly 50 years prior to the charter. It is both the oldest and most senior of all British professional cooks' organisations and is still in existence. The Worshipful Company of Cooks is incorporated in the Cookery and Food Association U.K., which was founded in 1885 and enrolled by Special Authority of the Lords of The Treasury in 1891.*

- *It is under, as appropriate the Patronage of:*
- *Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.*
- *The Queen Mother*
- *Her Royal Highness - The Princess Royal*

*It is interesting to note that it was a strict rule of the Worshipful Company of Cooks was that no girl should be apprenticed.*

*In the 18th century, cooks either did not wear a hat, or wore a shapeless white cap pulled into a variety of styles to suit the whim of the wearer.*

*Although it is known that cooks in some monasteries wore the old or discarded black skullcaps of the monks during the latter part of the 17th century, it is now generally accepted that the black cap originated in a London Hotel in the mid 19th century.*

*The black skull cap as headgear for an English Master Craftsman or Professional Cook originated in the 1840's at the famous Reform Club and was a black velvet cap from which a tassel dangled. It was several years later when the flamboyant and brilliant culinary artist, Alexis Soyer became Maitre Chef des Cuisines of the Reform Club that the black cap became famous through the publicity that Soyer attracted by wearing a tall vivid red chef's hat until the black skull cap took his fancy.*

*Soyer worked with Florence Nightingale in the Crimea to improve the standard of food for the wounded British soldiers in military hospitals. Generations of British army cooks even up to the 1960's will have fond memories of the "Soyer Boiler" a vital piece of field kitchen equipment. The Worshipful Company of Cooks fostered the wearing of the black skullcap but only by selected top class cooks. In England, the black skull cap is still worn by the Master Cook [being the equivalent of the French Maitre Chef de Cuisine or the American Executive Chef] at the famous English-Style restaurant "Simpson's in the Strand". The Black Cap Master Cook would stand in front of the customers with his hot trolley carving juicy slices of red sirloin beef. It is traditional at London's Guildhall when Royalty is present for English Black Cap Cooks to enter the hall and carve the huge barons [saddles] of beef.*

*And so since 1980 the tradition continues in Australia - our version: The Sidney Taylor Memorial Black Hat Award - is the traditional tall chef's hat entirely in Black.*

## 2. AWARD CONDITIONS

### 2.1 INTERPRETATION

In these Conditions, unless the context otherwise requires:

**“STMBH”** means the Sydney Taylor Memorial Black Hat Award.

**“ACFV”** means the Australian Culinary Federation - Victoria Chapter.

**“Nominee”** means the chef/cook nominated by the proposer for consideration of a STMBH by the ACFV.

**“Proposer”** means the person nominating the nominee on the official Nomination Form.

**“STMBH Nomination Form”** means the official ACFV nomination form which must be completed by the proposer to enable the ACFV to assess the nominee of the Sydney Taylor Memorial Black Hat Award.

**“STMBH Symbols”** means the symbols presented by the ACFV to the successful recipient of the STMBH.

## 3. GENERAL CONDITIONS OF STMBH AWARD PROCESS

### 3.1. STMBH Award Conditions

These STMBH Award Conditions govern the selection of the STMBH Award developed by ACFV.

ACFV may vary the STMBH Award Conditions at any time by notice in writing to the ACFV Members, ACF member states, and stakeholders.

ACF member states wishing to vary the STMBH Award Conditions may only do so with the approval of ACFV.

The STMBH may be awarded to a chef/cook who is not an ACFV member;

ACFV may award a maximum of three black hats in any given year;

ACFV may elect not to award a Black Hat in any given year.

A chef/cook cannot receive the award more than once

A chef cannot be removed as a Black Hat as it is an award for life

The award entitles the recipient to wear a classical black hat at any ceremonial chef's event.

Any working or previously practicing chef can be nominated for a STMBH award.

#### **4. STMBH SYMBOLS**

The STMBH award has two symbols.

##### **4.1. Symbol One**

The Sidney Taylor Memorial Black Hat Award Trophy

The trophy is presented by the recipient's peers, in this case the Full Committee of the Australasian Guild of Professional Cooks Ltd (Now Australian Culinary Federation Victoria) to the chef to be held for 12 months by the new member or until a worthy successor is found.

The awardee will have his/her name engraved on a miniature plaque, attached to the Black Hat Trophy.

##### **4.2. Symbol Two**

Awardees are entitled to continue to wear a traditional style Black Hat as a holder of the highest recognition given by his or her counterparts.

##### **4.3. STMBH Privileges and Honours**

STMBH Awardees will also be awarded the following privileges and honours;

- Framed photograph of the STMBH with an awarding certificate. The certificate will carry the ACFV official seal and an endorsement of the recipient.
- Honorary Life Membership of the ACFV;
- The award will be announced at the ACFV annual meeting, and presented to the recipient at a suitable high profile ACFV function.

#### **5. SELECTION CRITERIA**

The selection criteria for the Sydney Taylor Memorial Black Hat Award will include assessment of the following nominee information, as provided by the Proposer on the official STMBH Nomination Form;

- Nominated Chef Details;
- Resume and Work History;
- Years of Experience;
- Mentoring History;
- Character Details;
- Leadership Experience;
- Involvement in Chef Associations;
- Exceptional Culinary Competencies;

- Achievements & Awards;
- Continual Development;
- Industry Involvement and Commitment;
- Professional Standards;
- Contribution to Cookery;
- Pursuit of Excellence;
- Nomination Summary;

## **6. SELECTION PROCESS**

The selection process for the Sydney Taylor Memorial Black Hat Award includes the following;

### **6.1. Nomination Form**

The nomination for the Sydney Taylor Memorial Black Hat Award must be completed on the official nomination form provided by the ACFV.

### **6.2. Nominees**

Nominees can be either of the following;

- Australian Culinary Federation member
- Authorised representative from a Professional Hospitality and Tourism body

### **6.3. Confidentiality**

The nominated chef must not be advised of his/her nomination at any stage.

### **6.4. Nomination Assessment**

Upon receiving a nomination the ACFV committee will form a sub - committee to evaluate the suitability of the nominated cook/chef.

#### **6.4.1. STMBH Sub - Committee**

The STMBH sub - committee shall consist of a minimum 7 members including;

- Two committee officers each with a minimum of 5 yrs ACFV Membership, and 15 years industry cookery experience;
- One previous Black Hat recipient.
- Four diverse ACFV full members each with a minimum of 15 years ACFV membership;



The STMBH sub-committee shall discuss and present their decision to the full ACFV Committee for final approval.

The S.T.M.B.H. will be awarded to the successful cook / chef at a full committee meeting if a majority decision is reached by the S.T.M.B.H. sub - committee in a secret ballot.

A copy of the nomination form will be provided to each member of the sub - committee, so that a close scrutiny of the evidence can be achieved and further investigated if necessary by any member of the sub - committee.

The chairperson may elect a 'research member' of the sub committee to assist in gathering and sorting information.

#### **6.5. STMBH Sub Committee Chairperson**

The STMBH Sub Committee Chairperson shall be decided by the ACFV president and must be either one of the two ACFV committee members or a previous Black Hat recipient.

The chairperson must ensure that sub committee members are encouraged to engage in frank and robust discussions and opinions during the sub committee meeting prior to the secret ballot vote. Robust discussions should be seen as a positive opportunity for clarification.

#### **6.6. Evaluation Process**

The evaluation process will include;

- A copy of the nomination form distributed to all sub committee members;
- A minimum of 4 weeks consideration;
- Email questions and answers to the proposer via the chairperson, with all sub committee members receiving copies of Q&A;
- One sub committee meeting to provide the proposer with opportunity to present the nomination to the sub-committee;
- A final meeting with all sub-committee members present to cast their vote in a secret ballot.

#### **6.7. Secret Ballot**

After the sub-committee chairperson is satisfied that the evaluation process has been followed, the chairperson will call for a secret ballot.

The secret ballot will consist of sub committee members recorded a yes or no vote on a piece of paper and inserting into a box.

The chairperson will open and read yes or no, which is tallied.

All sub committee members must be in attendance for the secret ballot.

Guests will be asked to leave during Black Hat nomination discussions and / or votes, except for Q&A time following the proposer's presentation.

#### **6.8. Successful Nomination**

A simple majority is required.

Only successful candidates will be recorded in the minute book

Successful nominee names are referred back to the full ACFV committee for endorsement.

The ACFV committee shall endorse the decision of the STMBH sub committee.

#### **6.9. Unsuccessful Nomination**

Unsuccessful nominees are only reported back as being unsuccessful on this occasion.