

# VALE ELERY HAMILTON-SMITH AM

compiled by Andy Spate

These emails were posted on the Australasian Cave and Karst Management Association (ACKMA) and the Australasian Bat Society (ABS) email lists or sent directly to Dennis Williamson or me over the last few weeks. They have been lightly edited and are approximately in the reverse order of posting – newest on top. ACKMA member tributes have no organisational attributes, ABS members are identified ABS and non-members of either society are given their affiliations.

Apologies for my delayed reply but I am currently in South America and only just back from the hills last night. Good to hear from you but sad news indeed. It won't be the same Australian karst scene now that Elery is gone - I guess he has been gone for a while already in a way but this sort of finalises it. I presume some sort of memorial volume or some such is already in contemplation? If not it should be.

*Kevin Kiernan (Tasmania)*

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Thanks for a magnificent presentation of Elery's long and complex life yesterday. He certainly lived life well. As I said yesterday, the Victorian Branch of the Australian Association of Social Workers has requested Linette Hawkins and me to write something for our branch newsletter, Social Work Connect.

Elery was a life member of the AASW and took that seriously so we feel we owe it to him to mark his passing respectfully and also put something on the permanent record for future historians. He was an active member to the last and I just recall about 3 or 4 years ago when our association was running into difficult times nationally and the ever vigilant Victorian Branch called a meeting at Brunswick town hall to express our concern, on a cold, windy, wet night, Elery came along (struggling with his hearing) because he was always prepared to go the extra mile and really cared about social work and about standards. There was something very touching about his commitment.

What we would like to do is to use your account of his early days and his social work contribution. We will of course acknowledge you. Also Linette will get Angela's permission and we will show what we have written to her before publication. We are happy to show it to you as well.

*Jane Miller – Australian Association of Social Workers*

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I had a small but continuing acquaintance with Elery - mainly through the old Fisheries and Wildlife F&W) Department.

I distinctly remember listening to his lecture on the ecology and breeding of bats at the Australian Mammal Society Conference at the National Museum in Russell Street in 1964, when his presentation far outshone most of the other scientists by its clarity and general presentation.

Over the years he was a source of knowledge and inspiration to many of the staff members of F&W, and then CFL. I presume this continued after I left in 1988, although we did meet from time to time through the RAOU.

*Sid Cowling - former Ecologist with the Victorian Fisheries and Wildlife Department*

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I have fond memories of Elery. He visited Forestry Commission Victoria Head Office to complain about certain people using bats in the cave near Lakes Entrance for target practice (in lieu of clay pigeons). A call to District Forester Jeff Brisbane put an end to that problem. I am reliably informed Brizzy offered the suspects a choice: stop or become a clay pigeon.

And Elery attended the last FEAR Branch gathering.

*Athol Hodgson - former Commissioner at the former Forests Commission Victoria.*

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I first met Elery during the early 1980's when I first started by journey in Cave Management at Buchan. I was totally spellbound by his knowledge and his ability to captivate the audience.

I very quickly learnt that when Elery spoke, people listened.

Elery was my mentor and constant source of inspiration throughout my time spent at Buchan.

He always made himself available as a keynote speaker when celebrating a special milestone, celebration or event.

The 2007 ACKMA Conference and Centenary celebrations of both the Royal and Fairy Cave discoveries at Buchan were made very special, thanks to Elery's involvement and contribution at the time.

I will be forever grateful for his friendship and guidance. His legacy will live on for ever

*Dale Calnin (Victoria)*

raised with him my concerns and queried him as to the source of his information. I was expecting Elery to tell me it had been mentioned in a particular document which he had seen. That was not the case. In fact Elery had got the information direct from Hurley himself so we agreed that Hurley, ever the showman must have embellished history a bit. The point is though that I got the feeling Elery had a front seat to life and I was often surprised at who Elery knew and what he had done.

To illustrate, on another occasion we were discussing matters relating to patient care. The Robin Williams film Patch Adams (which was relevant to our conversation) had not long been released and I had seen it the previous week. I queried Elery had he seen Patch Adams to which he responded "Not lately". Whilst I was referring to the film it turned out Patch was an old colleague of Elery's. As I said before, it was always fascinating to hear of the people Elery knew and the adventures he had.

*Rob Whyte (Victoria)*

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*Top. Elery asked Andy and Jan Spate to construct a harp bat trap to assist with research into southern bentwing bats in Bat Cave, Naracoorte. This was Australia's first harp trap built in 1966.*

*Photo: Andy Spate*

I keep meaning to contribute this anecdote as it is the one that springs to mind first when I think of Elery.

Some time back I had been pondering something Elery had told me about the great Australian photographer Frank Hurley and his photo book on Jenolan, Gems of Jenolan. Elery had advised me that Hurley had been inspired to produce the book when he flew over the Blue Mountains with pioneer aviators Keith and Ross Smith back in 1919. This didn't make sense to me as the book was published in 1919 and I couldn't see how Hurley would have had time to do the photography and get the book into print. When I next caught up with Elery I

Many years ago Elery offered to show me the way to Cameron's Cave on the Snowy River. We had to walk around the edge of a steep hill. Elery was using a stick for balance on the downhill side. Unfortunately the stick broke and he cartwheeled off the edge into the ferns. I thought I had killed a legend but he emerged from nettles and grass and scrub unscathed.

Then when we reached the river it was running strongly. Elery was kitted in speleo overalls so I suggested a safety line. As I reached the middle of the river I heard a splash and turned in horror to see Elery submerged in the rapids. It took all my strength to haul him to the boulder. We got across the river and spent two hours looking for the cave but couldn't bloody find it! It was a great day with the master.

*Jim Reside (ABS)*

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As with others already posted am most sorry to hear of Elery's passing but I know he led a good life and many, many of us have benefitted from his wisdom.

He gave me an award for the first piece of writing I did for an ACKMA journal which has given me the confidence to continue writing and editing articles (for NZSS) about caves.

*Mary Trayes (NZ)*

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Firstly our sincere condolences to Angela and family on Elery's passing. David and I learnt the news on Monday from Ross Anderson. Fittingly we were in the Cape Range, near Exmouth, with the post ASF conference caving camp. My first thought when Ross told me was one of great loss, coupled with relief for both Elery and Angela that Elery's suffering was now ended.

We appreciate reading the email tributes and thank Kent for sharing the funeral service booklet. Quite fitting that Elery was farewelled from the 'home' of the VSA. We are travelling in remote WA and only read the email tributes last night, under the stars at a bush property where we were camped. While many people have echoed our own experiences of this wonderful man, we were grateful to learn more about Elery and his many efforts. We had not known about the cave fauna catalogue system (thanks Arthur). And thanks to Nic for the history of both ASF and ACKMA, Elery being so intertwined with the early days of both organisations. (I think that the job in Iran that Nic mentioned was an invitation from the Shah to set up that country's first university.)

Our own experiences of Elery have been echoed by several others, namely encouragement and trying new ideas. There are two things that I'd like to add. Tim Stokes mentioned Elery's contribution to gerontology in his tribute. When I returned to nursing 10 years ago I found several very useful books that Elery had edited or co-edited on aged care. So while I had left working in cave management, I still had Elery's guidance.

Back to caves, when I undertook the Karst Management Course (along with a group that included Scott Melton, Dan Cove and Jay Anderson) Elery was leading a discussion on efforts to provide cave education in show caves. A particular statement from Elery is embedded in my thinking '*our job is not to teach people about caves, but to give them an opportunity to love caves, and the rest will follow*'.

Thank you Elery.

*Cathie Plowman and David Butler (Tasmania)*

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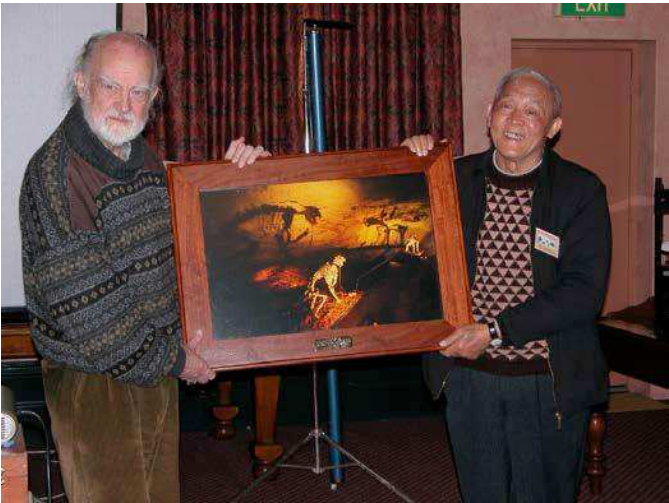
Dear ACKMA members and Mrs Hamilton-Smith,

We have been following the stream of correspondence pertaining the passing of this great contributor to our mutual interests and offer our sincerest condolences.

Please be it known that that Elery's wise advice, guidance and influence even stretched down to the tip of the African continent and was applied here at Cango Caves.

*Hein Gerstner & Crew (Cango Caves, South Africa)*

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*Elery presenting a gift to Daoxian at Limestone Coast  
2004 Conference  
Photo: Steve Bourne*

My deepest condolences! It was 2001 when I first met Elery in Mulu. I will never forget his warm and friendly smile.

*Kyung Sik Woo (South Korea)*

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Thanks for the sad news. Not entirely unexpected I guess, but shocking all the same. I still remember some of the wise and thoroughly engrossing things he said in presentations he gave at ASF conferences in the 1970s - and caving with him in 1977 at Camooweal, sitting on guano piles alive with cockroaches ...

*John Brush (Canberra)*

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It has been truly amazing to read the tributes to Elery flooding in and to reflect on just how many lives have been influenced by this great man.

There may be little that remains unsaid, but I would like to record just how profoundly Elery changed and challenged me. I had been aware of Elery from the moment I first became a guide at Wombeyan and subsequently Jenolan Caves in the 1990s. It was impossible not to be aware of him, a figure spoken of with respect bordering on reverence by all those whom I worked and associated with. As such, I first met Elery with the timidity of one meeting an idol and with the same reservations - could he possibly live up to his reputation? And what could I bring to any meaningful conservation with so eminent a person? Of course, Elery



did more than match his reputation in person and indeed far exceeded it. He was one of the most charismatic characters and one of the most fluent and captivating speakers under any circumstances that I have ever encountered. He was incredibly generous with his time and with sharing his knowledge and experience, and he had a marvellous gift of encouraging one to speak their mind as conversation ranged widely.

I was fortunate enough to have studied under Elery at Charles Sturt University in 2002. This was truly a transformative period. If I were pressed on the impossible question of Elery's greatest strength, then from my own experience I would have to nominate his constant challenging of the orthodox and of existing paradigms. He quite literally changed the way I thought. He encouraged fresh thinking and actually supported development of ideas that challenged his own position on issues - truly the mark of the greatest and most honest of intellectuals. It is not at all an exaggeration to state that virtually everything that followed over the next decade at Jenolan Caves owed a debt to Elery. Approaches to cave lighting and development, staff

training, approaches to guiding and in placing all commercial operations within a much larger framework and seeking to understand the complex social relationships and motivations that underpin leisure and recreation - Elery's influence was ever present. Also present was his challenge to me and to my colleagues to never be content with the status quo but to ever ask of ourselves if there might not be a better way, a new way of approaching our profession.

To meet and to know such a transformative individual is not a privilege that all are fortunate enough to have in their lives. I am, and will be forever, grateful to have been so fortunate in the case of having met and known Elery. I regret that I cannot attend his funeral, though like so many others will most certainly be there in spirit.

*Dan Cove (Oberon)*

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*Elery with Ian Millar, Paul Williams, Di Vavryn, Barry Richard and Grant Gartrell  
ACKMA Conference, Westport 2005.  
Photo: Kent Henderson*

Elery's 1985 'Improving the Visitor Experience' was an inspiration to us in the fledgling adventure cave business here at Waitomo, and still is. Over subsequent years it was an honour to rub shoulders with Elery who brought such an international perspective to the local area.

Our sympathy is with you, Angela and your extended family at this time.

*Pete and Libby Chandler (Waitomo)*

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*Elery addressing a group at a celebration of Father Julian Tenison Woods, Blanche Cave, Naracoorte 2006.*

*Photo: Steve Bourne*

I think you and the others who have sent in accolades should edit/add to the Wikipedia entry on Elery, which makes no mention whatever of his contribution to bat research.

*Robert Bender (ABS)*

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There have been many comments on Elery's place in Australian, Australasian and World cave and karst matters.

I wish to comment on my early associations and collaborative work with Elery.

I have known Elery since the mid-1960s when he had recently moved from Adelaide to Melbourne. In Melbourne he was instrumental in chasing cave bats and involving VCES but also with SASS particularly regarding the Scrubby Creek Cave exploration at Buchan. In 1967, Elery provided the impetus for SASS and VCES to amalgamate into the Victorian Speleological Association. Before Buchan he was a driving force in CEGSA and was an internal member of exploration on the Nullarbor, Cora Lynn, Naracoorte and other SA caving areas.

He was involved with others in connecting a disparate lot of caving enthusiasts across Australia to organise into formal clubs and to amalgamate into an Australian Speleological Federation. There were obviously others of like mind who formed the first ASF Executive. He was instrumental in ASF activities at various levels. He was

the first Secretary and later President. However, early in his term as ASF President he accepted a fascinating job in Iran leaving me as acting ASF president which morphed into 4 years as elected President. At the ASF Council meeting following his departure for Iran he was made a Fellow of ASF.

The 1970s were a time of optimism in Australia with the end of the Vietnam war and a change to a Labor government under Gough Whitlam. This brought things like the Inquiry into the National Estate and funding for matters about the National Estate. Elery was instrumental in backing ASF initiatives for funding for cave documentation and for providing reports on the importance and significance of caves and karst.

Elery with others in ASF formed a Cave Management Commission and this held several very successful Conferences. From this base it was apparent that cave managers wanted their own Association. ACKMA was born out of this need for managers to have their own Association. Elery was instrumental in providing the framework for this to happen.

I will not dwell on later events as ACKMA grew legs of its own but Elery continued with his thrust providing the ideas and impetus for Naracoorte to become a listed under the World Heritage Convention. The initiative of starting a Cave and Karst Group under World Commission on Protected Areas of IUCN was from Dr John Watson. Later, Elery brought to this his capacity to communicate ideas about the values of caves and karst in a way which were readily adopted and seized upon within Asia. In particular both China and Vietnam benefited greatly from his input.

At a personal level I had many caving trips with Elery sometimes to catch bats, sometimes to get further away to the Kimberley ranges. He made himself available to plan strategies for change and caves in Victoria and Australia are better protected because of his input. One of his regrets in recent years was not being able to join us our yearly expedition to the Nullarbor. It was his early trips to the Nullarbor which really inspired him. Such a trip was not to be, even though he used to bring it up every time I saw him in the last seven years.

Others have expressed feelings about Elery in other words but from my perspective his contribution to cave knowledge and cave management in Australia, New Zealand and other parts of the World particularly in East Asia can never be replicated. It has been my privilege to work in partnership with him to effect changes for better cave and karst management.

*Nicholas White (Melbourne)*

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*Elery speaking with Greg Middleton at the karst studies field course at Naracoorte in 2004. Ratana Leukanawal, an international student from Thailand in the background, an initiative of Elery's to improve cave and karst knowledge in South East Asia.*

*Photo: Steve Bourne*

It is some years since I last spoke with Elery, but I treasure the memories of the field trips done with him, with his generous sharing of his encyclopaedic knowledge, and of his friendship. He will be sorely missed, but leaves a fantastic legacy through his influence on so many people. Elery will be long remembered.

*Ian Temby (ABS)*

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It was my honor to know Elery. I discussed the literature of the field and shared interest in the historical material of caves with him for about 35 years. We became more than book dealer and customer and I cherished that friendship. One of my fond memories is visiting Elery and looking through his collection with him. Also we discussed the cave management system in the US and how it differed with Australia. My life was richer knowing Elery.

*Emily Davis (New York)*

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*People do not die for us immediately, but remain bathed in a sort of aura of life which bears no relation to true immortality but through which they continue to occupy our thoughts in the same way as when they were alive ...Marcel Proust*

Elery will always 'be there' and will continue to occupy our thoughts for so many years still to come, indeed decades... Thank you for everything...

*John Watson (Albany, Western Australia)*

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In addition to the many and varied tributes and accolades to a truly inspirational leading light in the world of caves and karst and the study of speleology in general, perhaps one of the lesser known but lasting attributes for Elery Hamilton-Smith relate to his early interest and devotion to the study of cave fauna and biospeleology in Australia. For many years Elery held the position as Honorary Associate in Zoology at the South Australian Museum. It was during this time that he was one of the pioneers in the collection, study, classification, specimen curation and museum registration of invertebrate fauna from Australian caves.

During his long standing relationship with the South Australian Museum (SAM) in Adelaide, leading up to his appointment as Honorary Associate in Zoology, Elery developed a Bio-Speleological ("BS") Card Index at SAM for registering and recording the collections of cave species from all over Australia, which included the specimens collected by himself and other early cave biologists, entomologists and arachnologists. By way of example, for the period from 1953 to 1971, he collected invertebrate species from 15 cave sites in Tasmania: at Hastings, Ida Bay, Junee-Florentine, Loongana and Mole Creek. This Tasmanian collection included 80 lots of cave species, all of which were given "BS" numbers and curated at SAM after being preserved vials in the SAM spirit (alcohol) collection or placed in the SAM dry collection (pinned to polystyrene blocks, impregnated with naphthalene for longevity).

Another lasting tribute for Elery relates the recent (May 2015) description of a new cave adapted species of Anaspides, a primitive syncarid (a "shrimp"-like aquatic crustacean), which were amongst his collection of 15 specimens taken from Exit Cave (Ida Bay karst) on 24 May 1969. Published in Zootaxa, a highly esteemed international zoological journal, his two collected Anaspides specimens provided the holotype male and one of the paratype females for the Type Locality site (Exit Cave) description for this new species.

Two of Elery's early publications that reveal his pioneering study of biospeleology include:



*Elery in Camooweal Cave, 1977.  
Photo: John Brush*

- Hamilton-Smith, E. (1967) *The Arthropoda of Australian caves*. *Jnl. Australian Entomological Society*, 6:103-118.
- Hamilton-Smith, E. (1971) *The classification of cavernicoles*. *National Speleological Society Bulletin*, 33 (1):63-68.

On a personal note, as such an inspirational mentor, Elery was one of the many friends who urged me to continue my study into the history of cave fauna in Tasmania, updating the records of cave invertebrate collections in Tasmania and going on undertake postgraduate studies into the ecology of cavernicoles in Tasmania (building on the previous studies by Stefan Eberhard). During our MSc degree studies, Stefan and I were most grateful to Elery for the loan of his "BS" card index from the South Australian Museum, along with copies of various biospeleo manuscripts.

I have recently sent some of this information to Angela, offering our condolences and apology for not being able to attend the memorial service planned for tomorrow. Tears ...

*Arthur Clarke and Siobhan Carter (Dover, Tasmania)*

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We'll have a special thought for Elery each time we visit his beautiful Buchan Caves Reserve. We'll have a special thought for Elery each time we visit his grand old caves at Naracoorte. We'll have a special thought for Elery in his transit lounge in just about any Asian airport. In fact he's so much all around us that it would be a lot easier just to maintain a special thought for Elery's care for his whole planet. "Oh, you are going to such-and-such a country? Here are the contact details for a few friends of mine you might care to look up while you are there...."

Thank you Elery for showing us how to fill life full to the brim, and thank you for introducing us to Angela.

*Grant and Merry Gartrell (Mount Compass, SA)*

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So sad to hear of Elery's passing.

He was such a positive influence to budding speleologists. I remember having a great discussion with him at the Tas Trog conference.

*Jill Rowling (Thornleigh, NSW)*

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Our condolences to Angela and family. Elery's wisdom touched many thousands of lives including ours. Thanks Elery.

*Andy and Anjum Lawrence (Oman)*

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Whilst we only had the privilege of knowing Elery for about 10 years we have been so fortunate to at least have been the receptacles of his vast knowledge over that time.

A wonderful man who always had time to talk and pass on his vast knowledge even to those of us who were only at the beginning of our Cave journey

It is sad that we have lost him but we will all have everlasting memories of the great man.

Our good wishes to his family.

*Geoff, Trish and Ben Deer (Gunns Plains Caves)*

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Thank you Kent.

I have been struggling with the words needed to express the length, breadth and depth of how I perceive Elery's contribution to this world and while only he and I know how much I personally owe him for his support over the last 30 years, you have come very close to framing my feelings.

*Brian Clark (Adelaide)*



*Elery unveiling a plaque celebrating World Heritage at  
Naracoorte Caves  
Photo: Steve Bourne*

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Please pass on my sincere sympathy to Angela and of course all who have been privileged to know him. Having lost Carol earlier this year, I appreciate the tremendous sense of loss that his passing has brought to his many friends and associates.

Because of my Murrindal connection I first met Elery before I met Carol. I was amazed at how tolerant he was of an ignoramus like me. Carol and I considered him one of few truly wonderful people that we had been able to count as not only another member of ACKMA but a true friend.

*Dennis Rebbeschi (Russell Island, Qld)*

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When you think about it there are few people who, over the course of their life, make a consistently important contribution to society and human endeavour, and even more crucially, leave a lasting legacy. Elery Hamilton-Smith was one of those few individuals. Others have already eloquently written of his endeavours over various

areas. My personal experience was very largely through ACKMA. He was indeed the Father of ACKMA, the main driving force in its creation, and its Executive Officer in its early years...and over the years his input into its endeavours were second to none.

Personally, in living in the same city, I probably saw Elery, and Angela, more than some. I will long remember our many drives, over the years, either to Buchan or Naracoorte, and I was always fascinated by the many anecdotes he imparted on our long journeys; some, of course, I had heard before! Amongst his many immense talents, he was a wonderful raconteur.

Elery, you are irreplaceable and will be sorely missed, but your legacy will continue into the distant future. Thank you for your glorious life, and unsurpassable contribution to cave and karst management in particular.

My deepest sympathy to Angela and family, but Elery's life was, truly, one that can be most justly celebrated.

*Kent Henderson (Melbourne)*

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Elery also had a great interest in and made significant contributions to cave and karst documentation. Just a sample:

It was Elery who suggested and encouraged the first Australian cave list and speleo how-to book, "Speleo Handbook" in 1968. He even provided his organisation's meeting room and large table for the massive job of hand-collating it.

It was Elery who provided me with all the critical cave documentation contacts in many countries before my first "Cave Documentation Safari" trip in 1972.

And it was Elery who suggested, encouraged and greatly helped the production of the later and much larger computer-based Australian cave list, "Australian Karst Index" in 1985.

Thanks, Elery, you will not be forgotten.

*Peter Matthews (Melbourne)*

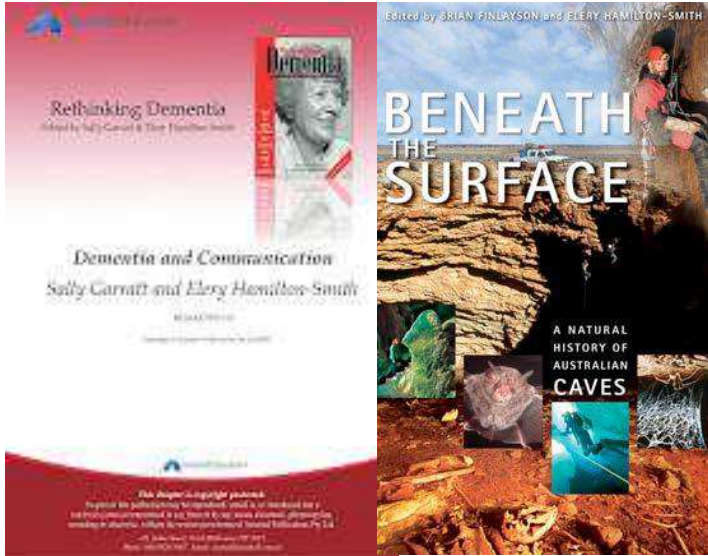
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So sad but a life to be celebrated.

*Doug Mills (Canberra)*

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Examples of Elery's diverse publications.

I was honored to have worked and debated with Elery for the last forty plus years. His insights into how people could meaningfully interact with nature and the cave environment were revolutionary. I always came away with way more than I contributed. His spirit will dwell in all the commercial caves where his ideas were adopted.

Fred Stone (Hawaii)

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Sad news - I will not be able to attend the memorial service... I will be thinking of him and his positive contributions to a better planet.

Graeme Worboys (Canberra)

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I'm very sorry to hear this - Elery was an also inspirational figure to many of us here in SE-Asia and will be greatly missed. Please convey my deepest condolences to his family and friends.

Neil Furey (SE Asia)

(Who named a Vietnamese bat *Murina eleryi* in honour of Elery)

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I am so sad to hear of Elery's death. I first met him as my lecturer in Recreation at Phillip Institute in 1978 and I know many of the recreation alumni will be sending their condolences to Angela and Elery's extended family. He was a pivotal figure in the development and recognition of recreation and leisure studies; it was only one of his areas of academic contribution. I have valued rekindling my friendship with Elery since becoming Parks Victoria's District Manager responsible for the area that includes Buchan some 8 years ago. He has made a tremendous contribution to Parks Victoria over many

Gentleman, scholar and icon of Australian science and conservation.

I didn't have a lot of contact with Elery, but when I did, at ABS conferences and the like, I came away truly inspired. To spend time with the great man was a wonderful privilege resulting in fulfilment of spirit and a renewed vigour for inquiry into and conservation of our precious natural world.

A sad time indeed.

Greg Ford (ABS)

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*Murina eleryi*

Source: [www.mammalogy.org](http://www.mammalogy.org)

years, including sitting on the Statewide Cave and Karst Advisory Committee that I have the privilege of chairing on behalf of Parks Victoria.

*Will McCutcheon (Victoria)*

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*Pseudotyrannochthonius hamiltonsmithi*

Source: [www.museum.wa.gov.au](http://www.museum.wa.gov.au)

I have been fortunate to benefit greatly from Elery's wisdom. The breadth of his work was remarkable. At Naracoorte Caves, Elery was involved with the first serious research into the bat population at Bat Cave; research that provides the baseline data for the site. He also keenly observed and wrote on the invertebrate fauna of Bat Cave, which became important when drastic changes were observed in 2000. The first discussion of a possible World Heritage listing for the site involved Elery. When I assumed the role of manager at Naracoorte Caves, it was Elery who provided guidance on World Heritage and led me into the world of UNESCO and IUCN, where he was heading up the working group on cave and karst management. We arranged an IGCP conference at Naracoorte, attracting a good number of international speakers due to his involvement. The following year, Elery spoke at another conference at Naracoorte, this time on Father Julian Tenison Woods, a pioneering Catholic priest in the south east of South Australia in the 1850s and 1860s. Some years later, he

was the keynote speaker on Woods for the Sisters of St Josephs, the order founded by Woods and Saint Mary McKillop.

Elery and I shared many common interests, one being collecting Naracoorte Caves souvenirs (he also collected many other caves of course). We had an understanding on eBay, where we wouldn't bid against the other. He was too much of a gentleman to bid against a friend for the sake of a souvenir.

Elery founded a course on karst management with Charles Sturt University. I completed both the certificate and diploma. The course covered all aspects of cave and karst management; giving students a sound geological foundation, policy, interpretation, tourism, etc. It made me a better manager at Naracoorte.

My condolences to Angela and family. Many thanks Elery for all you did for me - I am privileged to have known you as a friend.

*Steve Bourne (Naracoorte)*

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It was certainly a sad day to hear of Elery's passing but we were relieved for both Elery and Angela that any suffering had ended.

Elery was a true mentor to so many people. All you had to do was ask and he was always willing to share his amazing knowledge. His journey has ended but the number of people that have benefited from him, has sent hundreds or maybe thousands on new journeys that they would never have taken without Elery's encouragement and assistance. The world of Caves and Karst on a global scale have been forever changed by Elery's contributions.

As one of the most inspirational, and charismatic people to have entered our lives, it has been a great privilege for Sam and me to call Elery a friend. He will be truly missed but never forgotten. Our thoughts are with Angela and all of those mourning the loss of a great man.

Thanks to everyone who has posted such wonderful tributes to Elery.

*Rauleigh and Sam Webb (Perth)*

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*Elery with Greg Middleton (middle) and Ken Schultz, during a visit to a Wrattenbully vineyard, karst studies field course, Naracoorte 2006.*

*Photo: Steve Bourne*

*Source: [www.museum.wa.gov.au](http://www.museum.wa.gov.au)*

We knew it was going to be a terrible loss but until it comes one never realises how much. I felt sure I'd be able to visit and yarn and stuff next time I was in Melbourne.

It was good to talk with Angela and know she and the families were with Elery beforehand and right until the last.

*Deborah Carden (Naracoorte)*

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Heard the news yesterday through the ACKMA 'family' of Elery's passing. My condolences, and will be thinking of him on the day of the Memorial Service to be held in Melbourne which I am sorry I will be unable to attend as I live over here in New Zealand.

Elery's commendation of some writing I did for the ACKMA journal back in 2003 gave me the confidence to write other similar articles, and a book with a section about caves. I will think of him often as I sit here at my desk writing.

His was a life lived to the fullest.

*Mary Trayes ACKMA & NZSS*

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I will always remember how helpful and encouraging Elery was to me when I was gathering bat references for the 'Batalogue' all those years ago (1996?) So many bat experts helped out, including yourself (it was before the days of widespread internet searches).

Elery gave me a huge pile of handwritten catalogue cards with full details of all the articles he had read relating to bats for me to enter into the 'Batalogue', and said to keep them. I still have the cards as I could not get rid of all of that effort and work that the cards had entailed. I would be more than happy to return them to the family if they wanted them, or to some other archive. He was such a wise, gentle man, such a loss.

Please pass on my sincere condolences to the family.

*Marg Turton (ABS)*

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Xiao-Jing and I are greatly saddened by the news of Elery's passing. Such a lovely, beautiful and brilliant man! We have read all the ACKMA member's tributes to him – what a legacy!

He will live on in our hearts and minds for the rest of our lives.

Our love and condolences go out to you. Arohanui

*Kevan Wilde and Xiao-Jing (New Zealand)*

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Thank you for sharing the sad news of Elery. Australian zoology has lost a treasure, but he leaves a great legacy and a great example of generosity of spirit for us all.

*Pamela Conder (ABS)*

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Elery was a gentleman and scholar in the real meaning of the term. He will be greatly missed for his enormous contributions to ASF, ACKMA, UNESCO, cave conservation, recreation management, cave biology and gerontology.



I am personally indebted to Elery because when everyone else thought my work was crazy, Elery gave me strong support. My condolences to all his family and close friends, we will miss him greatly.

*Armstrong Osborne (Sydney)*

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This is sad news. I have fond memories of Elery on my few trips downunder. His wisdom and insight will be missed.

*Tim Stokes (Canada)*

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Thank you for letting us know of the sad passing of Elery. Indeed a very sad time for all. Our thoughts are with Angela and family.

Elery one of life's true gentlemen. Like many I have so much to thank Elery for - a great mentor and inspiration. His legacy will live on for ever.

*Dale Calnin (Buchan)*

Such a great loss but what an amazing life and legacy

*Julia Coggins (Yanchep)*

\*\*\*\*\*

A void will certainly be left in my life, as it will be in the lives of all those that were privileged to know Elery. Thanks Elery for all your wisdom and knowledge that you shared with us. Our thoughts are with you Angela, as we mourn and also celebrate the life of a wonderful person.

*Kay and Chester Shaw (Mole Creek)*

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*Elery addressing a group at a celebration of Father Tension Woods, Blanche Cave, Naracoorte 2006.  
Photo: Steve Bourne*

I am both sad and – oddly - a little relieved.

Sad that a wonderful mind in the body of a great friend left us, and a little relieved because he was in a bad place from which we could give him no respite - but finally nature has.

I picture him now, stroking his beard, eyes a piercing gaze beneath bushy eyebrows staring into the middle distance for a moment then pinning me to the wall with a direct stare “Well, what now young friend?”

*Brian Clark (Adelaide)*

\*\*\*\*\*

Well said Brian. May Elery truly rest in peace now.

For us Elery’s presentation at an ACKMA conference is embedded in our tour guide training manual and serves as a living ongoing testament to a great man, his wisdom, knowledge, understanding and capacity to share it.

I feel very privileged to have known Elery and share everyone’s loss.

*Ann Augusteyn (Capricorn Caves)*

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On behalf of CEGSA and all South Australian cavers, we have fond memories and the greatest gratitude to Elery for his role in the formation of CEGSA in 1955.

Even at that early stage of speleology in Australia, he saw the value of caves far beyond that of exploration and recreation.

He linked CEGSA with the South Australian Museum from the beginning and that relationship has continued ever since, contributing to the science of caves at many levels.

He was always interested in everyone and great conversationalist, as so many of us know so well! Thank you, Elery, for everything you gave us.

*Ian Lewis (CEGSA)*

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Elery, a man with such profound wisdom and vision, a mentor and a leader who has left an indelible legacy in the form of his outstanding contribution to our understanding of natural heritage and its management and importantly, the way that understanding is imparted to others.

His life-long contribution will live on in the memory of ACKMA, an organisation so dear to his heart. *Arohanui*

*Greg Martin (New Zealand)*

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Sad news on Sunday. I consider myself privileged to have met a man of his calibre. Wise man. Great life.

*Hein Gerstner (Cango Caves, South Africa)*

\*\*\*\*\*

So sorry to hear about Elery's passing. A significant group of people who share a passion for things natural, and the complex interactions that we humans have with them, have lost a very dear friend and mentor. Fortunately for us all, he scattered his wisdom widely and with great generosity, humour and clarity. Every so often one knows that they have sat in the presence of a truly great man. Elery was just such a person. (He became even greater when the bottle of port was opened).The Maori people here have a saying:

*Ka hinga te totara i te wao nui a Tāne.* The totara tree in Tane's great forest has fallen.

*John Ash (Waitomo, New Zealand)*

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How extremely sad. Thank you for letting us know.

*Maree Treadwell-Kerr (ABS)*

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This is a sad day for us and a sad day for ACKMA. But, of course, also a time to remember and celebrate Elery's extraordinary life and his contributions to furthering cave and karst management and conservation that shall never be forgotten and that shall forever be his great legacy.

*Dan Cove (Oberon)*

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A lovely guy and a great teacher, karst enthusiast and humanitarian.

*Ian and Anne Millar (New Zealand)*

\*\*\*\*\*

The Father of ACKMA, Professor Elery Hamilton-Smith AM, died peacefully early on Saturday morning, 27 June.

A memorial service was held at St Francis' Pastoral Centre, 326 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, on Wednesday, 1 July at 3pm.

*mors janua vitae*

*Kent Henderson (Melbourne)*

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A very sad day indeed. It feels like a true legend of the cave world has been lost. Elery did so much for cave and karst management and to quote Beneath the Surface "Caves are much more than just holes in the ground." I think we'd all agree that in one way or another Elery's passion for caves, their history and the conservation of them taught us all that.

A true gentleman who will be sadly missed but also admirably remembered for the wonderful work that he did for the caving world.

I am sure Elery would agree with this next statement:

*"Don't cry because I have gone, smile because I have been."*

*Katrina Wills (Kelly Hill Caves)*

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*ACKMA members at Elery's service.  
Rear L-R Steve Bourne, Brian Clark, Cath Loder,  
Dale Calnin, Miles Pierce  
Front L-R. Angela Hamilton-Smith, Kent Henderson,  
Andy Spate, Ian Lewis.  
Photo: Kent Henderson*

A sad passing but there are lovely memories. What a character. A great friend, a generous mentor, an intelligent adviser. Always accessible.

We will have a remembrance here at Naracoorte Caves World Heritage Site - staff have many stories to share. Elery is part of our World Heritage legacy.

*Deborah Carden (Naracoorte and Tantanoola Caves)*

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I am very sad to hear this too.

When I arrived in Australia he invited me straight away for a cup of tea to tell me all about bats in Australia.

A very generous and very knowledgeable man. I am very sorry to hear.

My thoughts are with his family.

*Tanja Straka (ABS)*

\*\*\*\*\*



Elery will be remembered for so many things - his involvement as a speleologist, as a Professor, a sociologist, fellow ACKMA member, and friend.....

His interests included caves, environmental management, postcards, bats, memorabilia, people, nature.....and much much more.....

Elery's contributions to World Heritage, as well as to Cave and Karst Protection and Conservation around the World will not be forgotten. Elery was involved in so many ways and we will all remember him for something different I am sure.

Our thoughts are with Angela and family.

*Jay and Ross Anderson (Western Australia)*

A scholar and a gentleman ... we are the poorer for his passing.

*Geoff Kell (Wee Jasper)*

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Lindy - Thanks for representing the bat society! The passing of a legend.

*Simon Robson (ABS)*

\*\*\*\*\*

Elery was certainly a pioneer, and one of the unique people who was speleologist-turned-batologist in the early days. Consequently, through the extensive banding programs that he was involved with, our eyes were opened to the amazing migration patterns of bentwing bats and others. He will be missed.

*Greg Richards (ABS)*

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Sad to hear Elery has passed away, he is a bat legend.

*Marg Turton (ABS)*

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Thanks for letting us know about Elery passing away. He certainly made a significant contribution to bat research and conservation and was an amazing man. If you find out the funeral arrangements could you let me know (I will check too) as I would like to go both for myself and to represent other ABS members that can't make it.

*Lindy Lumsden (ABS)*

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I saw this morning with sadness the announcement that Elery had died yesterday. It seemed so quickly that his health deteriorated. He was an extraordinary man in so many ways. He was of course a key contributor in the history of bat research in Australia. Many of us are grateful for his encouragement.

*Terry Reardon (ABS who named Mormopterus eleryi – Bristle-faced free-tailed bat - in honour of Elery)*

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*Mormopterus eleryi*  
Photo: Terry Reardon

At least it wasn't like a "black hole" where all of that wisdom was sucked up and lost. He has left a great legacy. Many thanks for feeding me his last email (I think it was you). I managed to get off an email to him just after ACKMA telling him how much the itinerant Kiwis missed catching up with him.

Got a wonderful reply back from Angela who said that he smiled widely when she read it to him.

Carry his "banner" to China with you when you go.

*John Ash (Waitomo, New Zealand)*

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Great innings for a great mind! Gone but not forgotten! I hope he will be haunting our caves from now on!

*Monica Yeung (Canberra)*

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I think Dan has articulated my sentiment beautifully.

As is the belief of many cultures, I'll look out for the strong winds as Elery travels to all his favourite places and those he is yet to see over the next few days.

(Just let him know that we are not very fond of strong winds in Mulu!)

Sympathy to all.

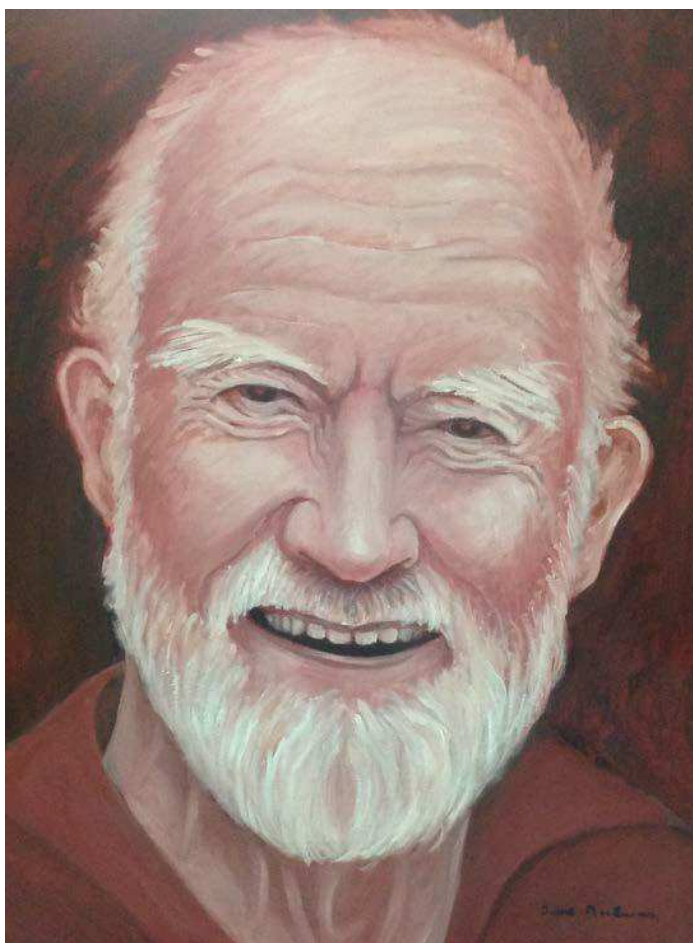
*Alison Pritchard and all the team at Mulu*

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The end of an era.

*Peter Matthews (Melbourne)*

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*Portrait of Elery  
By: June MacLucas*