

VALE KENNETH G. GRIMES

Greg Middleton and Andy Spate



Ken Grimes was one of Australia's most experienced and academically capable speleologists. His sudden accidental death on his rural property on 17 August 2016 came as a great shock to the caving community and means that Australia has lost one of its most enthusiastic and able speleological investigators and advocates.

Ken was born in October 1944 in Maryborough, Queensland. He studied geology and geomorphology at the University of Queensland between 1964 and 1968 and graduated Bachelor of Science with Honours in geology. He undertook further studies 1973-79. At UQ he took up caving with the University of Queensland Speleological Society in the mid-60s, joining such luminaries as Henry Shannon, Dave Gillieson, Tony Sprent and Michael Bourke.

In 1968 he started with the Geological Survey of Queensland, working on the groundwater resources of the Lockyer Valley. From 1969 to 1991 he was a Geologist in the Regional Mapping Section of the Geological Survey of Queensland where his work included some joint projects with the Bureau of Mineral Resources. As early as 1973 he produced a report on Ashford Cave in far northern NSW, in which he subtly refuted any suggestion that it might replace (in either scientific or recreational terms) the Texas Caves, were they to be flooded by a dam.

In 1978 Ken prepared a significant paper on the geology and geomorphology of the Texas Caves in SE Queensland, published by the Queensland Museum. This work benefited significantly from work done on the caves by UQSS and much of Ken's fieldwork was done in association with that society (which became defunct about the mid 80s).

During his time with the Survey he worked on regional geological mapping, specialising in Cainozoic and Mesozoic deposits. Some of the regions contained no karst (such as



*Ken explaining the form of H52-53 in the South Canal at Mt Eccles, Victoria, 16 January 2007, during Western District Volcanic Province excursion, following the ASF Conference at Mt Gambier, SA.
Photo: Greg Middleton*



*Ken about to enter a lava cave at Mt Napier, 16 January 2007.
Photo: Greg Middleton*

Fraser Island) but sometimes he managed to work on carbonate rocks (e.g. the Dobbyn Sheet, including the Carl Creek Limestone at Riversleigh and the Camooweal Dolomite). He carried out major studies on evolution of the Carpentaria Plains and the old landsurfaces of north Queensland. He was subsequently involved in Cainozoic mapping projects throughout most of Queensland.

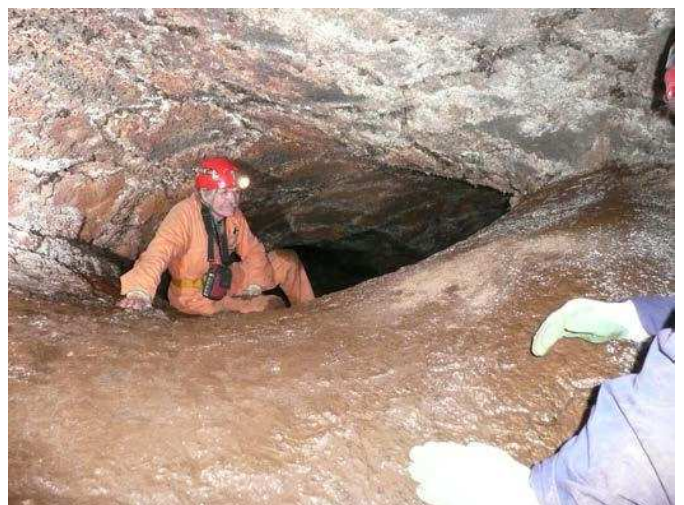
In 1990 Ken left government employ and set up as a Consultant Geomorphologist, concentrating on karst, karst-like phenomena and regolith. He called his company Regolith Mapping. About this time he and his wife, Janeen (who had also been a UQSS member; they married about 1970) moved to a rural property at Hamilton in Western Victoria. In March 1991 they joined the Victorian Speleological Association.

Ken was convener of the Surveying and Mapping Standards Commission of ASF and was Queensland co-ordinator of the Australian Karst Index for the period 1975-91. Ken published many papers, book chapters and posters on karst and speleological topics. He was recognised world-wide for his work on sandstone and laterite 'pseudokarst', on syngenetic karst and on various forms of karren. Ken was meticulous in acknowledging the contributions of others in reviewing and contributing to his writings.



*Ken negotiating a squeeze, The Theatre H33,
Byaduk, Victoria, 15 January 2007.
Photo: Greg Middleton*

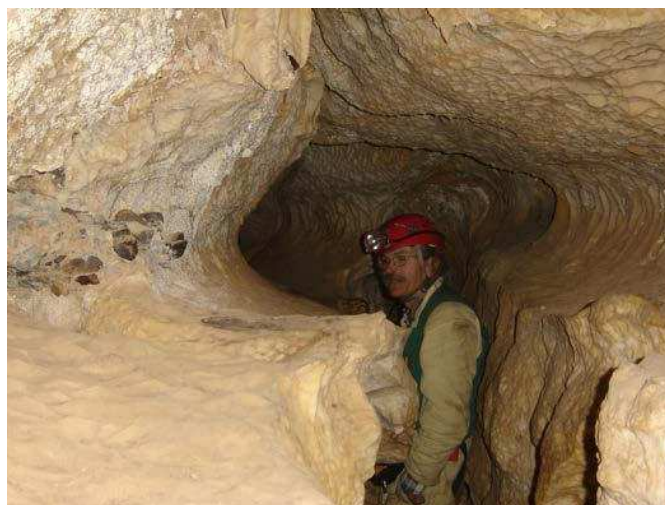
After he became a private consultant, Ken contributed to the World Heritage submission on the Nullarbor (1992), provided advice to the Commonwealth Government on the rehabilitation of the karst landforms at Benders Quarry in Tasmania, documented the karst of the south-east of South Australia for the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service,



*Ken in Carmichaels Cave H70,
Mount Eccles, 8 August 2010.
Photo: Greg Middleton*



*Prof. Stefan Kempe, Ken Grimes and Árni Stefanson at entrance
to Mt Hamilton Cave H2, Mount Hamilton, Victoria during 14th
International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology field excursion to
Western Victoria, 7 August 2010
Photo: Greg Middleton*



Top left. Measuring conductivity, Mares Forest Creek, Wombeyan (Ken closer to camera). 26 September 2005.

Top right. Ken and Marj Coggan, North Pole Cave, Mt Eccles, Victoria, 8 August 2010.

Bottom left. Ken explaining the marble breccia in the Victoria Arch, Wombeyan, NSW during a karst management course 26 September 2005

Bottom right. Ken in keyhole passage, Grants Cave, Wombeyan, NSW, 26 September 2005.

chaired an independent review of the status of the Sellicks Hill Quarry Cave for the South Australian Government, and gave advice on stability and pollution problems at tourist cave areas and for quarries in cavernous limestone. He was part of a team that studied the hazards and other aspects of the caves and karst of Christmas Island for Parks Australia. He was part of the team which advised the Commonwealth environment department of the significance of Australia's karsts and 'pseudokarsts' preparing a number of papers including a major report on the 'pseudokarsts' of northern Australia.

At the 1999 ACKMA conference at Mount Gambier, he gave the opening paper on "*The Gambier Karst*", and also an introduction to "*Karst hydrology and Australian Karsts*" to the theme session on "*The Water Below*". He contributed a paper on "*Syngenetic and Eogenetic Karst*" to the book *Evolution of Karst* (2002) and wrote the entry on "*Syngenetic Karst*" in the *Encyclopedia of Caves and Karst Science* (2004). He provided two significant chapters in the 2009 book *Karst Rock Features: Karren Sculpturing – the most significant text on karren*.

Ken prepared a number of field guides to the karst areas of western Victoria and Mt Gambier for various ASF and ACKMA conferences and on the Volcanic Caves of Western Victoria for

the International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology in 2010 after he had become an authority on volcanic caves.

In the late 1970s and 80s Ken gave occasional lectures on karst geomorphology and related topics at the University of Queensland and Griffith University. Between 2000 and about 2009 he prepared and oversaw the course on Karst Hydrology for Charles Sturt University's Karst Management Course.

Since 1999 Ken co-edited *Helictite*, the Journal of Australasian Speleological Research, with Dr Susan White OAM for ASF. They rejuvenated the journal and commenced its conversion to a fully on-line (digital) publication, issued free of charge. Ken personally laid-out and formatted all issues of *Helictite* since 1999, employing his considerable graphics and communication skills.

Ken was an extremely knowledgeable, enthusiastic and meticulous fieldworker and scientist in the fields of geology and caves (in both karst and lava). Always ready to impart his knowledge and to challenge inquisitive minds, he enjoyed teaching and explaining the processes that shape the earth beneath us. He will be sorely missed.