

EDITORIAL

It is an honour to follow Steve Bourne as the Journal's editor. I have read his quality product over the past seven years and this has inspired me to volunteer to follow him.

Although my active years of caving are now long behind me, I have graced the pages of this journal twice over that period of time. First, in June 2001, when a complimentary mention was made of my after-dinner address to the 2001 conference of the Association (when I spoke on "*Parliamentary colleagues and other troglodytes I have known*").

Second, in September 2016 when I submitted (and Steve Bourne kindly accepted for publication) what journalists would describe as a "puff" piece about my family's circumnavigation of the Isle of Capri and what I observed about the karst features of that predominantly limestone island.

However, my interest in caving goes back more than 50 years to the days of largely unregulated access to wild caves in some parts of New South Wales when three or four of my friends and I camped by the Kowmung River and would spend the weekend exploring the Tuglow Caves – an activity we undertook, on many occasions, over a period of some three or four years.

It is, next, appropriate to fast forward until 1988 when, after a change of government in New South Wales, I was appointed Minister for the Environment. One of my responsibilities was for the National Parks and Wildlife Service. This afforded me the opportunity to rekindle my interest in caving and to have a serious engagement with policy and legislative matters involved in the management of caves and the karst landforms within which they are located.

Perhaps more importantly, and serendipitously, I was afforded the opportunity to meet and (because of my rejection of formality) become a friend of Andy Spate, a friendship which has endured over the intervening years. Although he may demur from this assessment, Andy and I have much in common arising from our mutually idiosyncratic personalities and occasional rejection of hierarchical orthodoxy.

My first memory of him is at a conference I attended of NPWS managers at Caves House at Yarrangobilly Caves. The (then much younger) Mister Spate had been assigned to uncomplicated aspects of the catering operation, namely the making of a tossed salad to feed some 15 or so people. I stumbled across Andy in the kitchen, shaking a large green garbage bag and looking as though he was infected and doing the St Vitus Dance. When I shyly enquired what he was doing, he informed me that he had concluded the most efficient way to make this high volume tossed salad was to put all the ingredients in the garbage bag; pour a bottle of white vinegar and 1/4 of a bottle of olive oil in; close the neck of the bag firmly shut; and shake the whole arrangement vigorously. I instantly detected a kindred spirit!

My next specific memory is from a period some years later when I was phoned by the then Tasmanian Minister for the Environment, Judy Jackson MLA. She asked if I would consider seconding Andy to the Tasmanian Parks Service for a period of time to undertake a project to

recommend, from memory, management measures at the then Marakoopa Caves Reserve (now Mole Creek Karst National Park), specifically for the Kubla Khan system.

I mulled over her request for several days before returning the call and advising that the secondment was acceptable. I told her that there were two conditions that had to be met for this to happen. The first (having a duty to be frugal with the finances of the honest taxpayers of New South Wales) was that the entirety of the cost of the secondment had to be met by the Tasmanian government.

The second condition, which rather took her aback (and which I had tested with Andy beforehand and discovered was acceptable to him) was that I would take part in some of the survey work as Andy's honorary (and unskilled) field hand. She accepted on both bases. It was as a result of this arrangement that, some little time later, I had the honour to be guided through Kubla Khan and Croesus caves by Andy.

More importantly, the visit to the Marrakoopa Caves Reserve led to (from memory) more than one night of constructive conversation with Andy and with Neil Kell in the Spartan surrounds of the research hut at the caves reserve. That discussion led to me drafting a cabinet submission (I used to cause fear and trepidation the upper levels of some of the bureaucracies for which I was responsible by preparing my own cabinet submissions, a practice strongly frowned upon by the Sir Humphreys of the world who wished to give "guidance" to their Ministers and curtail ministerial enthusiasms) proposing that there should be specific provisions in the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NSW)* to enable karst conservation. That legislative proposal, later enacted as the *National Parks and Wildlife (Karst Conservation) Amendment Act 1991*, was adopted by cabinet; introduced to the NSW Parliament by me and coming into effect in February 1992.

My membership of ACKMA dates from that era—signed up by Andy. I have, as an interested bystander as it were, enjoyed reading this Journal under the editorship of my predecessors. I concluded, when the plaintive call was made for a volunteer to take over, that I should give back a little of that which I have received whilst I still have the ability to do so. Hence my nomination for the position.

It is, however, to be observed that a Judge in New South Wales (that being my current role in life), upon one's 72nd birthday, now reaches what is known, jokingly, as "statutory senility" and, hence, mandated retirement. As a consequence of that fate befalling me in some two years' time, I have indicated to the ACKMA committee that my undertaking of this role is to be a limited one and that I will be standing down after the June edition in 2020.

Be warned, therefore, dear reader, that the hand of fate may seek to tap you on the shoulder to take over this role in a little more than two years' time!

Tim Moore