

EDITORIAL

So, finally, **THE DIRECTORY OF CAVES OF AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND** is published!! Dennis Rebbechi and I think it has come up rather well. It is now available at all Australian Tourist Cave locations, and many in New Zealand. However, for ACKMA members who will have not otherwise received it, a gratis copy is inserted herein.

Speaking of inserts, we are plagued! The most important insertion is the **Registration/Booking Form** for the **12th ACKMA Conference at Waitomo** next May, plus the following **Karst Study Tour**. Please get your registration into Peter Dimond promptly. Also herein are a number of brochures on Waitomo to arouse your interest!

The **ACKMA General Meeting** at Taralga in mid June was a great success! It was great to see Clyde Stiff there! I had a nice letter from Clyde shortly afterwards - it's great to see he still maintains his interest in caves. As Andy Spate and Mick Chalker have commented fully on the Taralga meeting elsewhere in this Journal, I won't bore you further, except to add my personal warmest congratulations to Kevan Wilde on his election as a Life Member of ACKMA. He has joined elite company - thoroughly merited. A presentation will be made to Kevan at a later date. As for the minutes of the General Meeting - sigh - yet another insert, herein!

The BIG, BIG news of the moment is the \$3 million Brian Clark has wangled for developments at **Naracoorte Caves**. Brian never ceases to amaze with his ability to attract capital!! Of course, getting *World Heritage Status* didn't do Naracoorte any harm. Still, Brian's skills and persistence were undoubtedly a telling factor. Well done, yet again! The money should be spent and new facilities in place nicely in time for the 13th ACKMA Conference at Naracoorte in 1999. A news article on how the money will be allocated is herein!!

While on Naracoorte, Brian Clark advises the appointment of Rachael O'Connor as his new Caves Manager. Rachael is an ex-guide at the Burra mines in South Australia, and holds a degree in Parks and Wildlife Management. We wish her well in her new position, and hope to meet her at the ACKMA Conference next year.

Great news from **Abercrombie Caves**. After 25 years closed, the *Cathedral Cave* at Abercrombie was officially re-opened on 7 September by *Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust* Chairman, Warwick Bennett. *Cathedral* is a high section of cave on the Western side of the Grand Arch, about halfway along. It will be shown as a guided tour, in combination with a section of the Arch. Festivities on the day included a chicken and champagne lunch and a choir recital. A full report on the official opening will appear in the December Journal.

The Internet is becoming very popular, very quickly, and there is plenty to interest those of our ilk. Peter Matthews controls the *Australian Speleology* home pages, which also include full

details on ACKMA and all Australasian Tourist Caves. You will find it at - <http://rubens.its.unimelb.edu.au/~pgm/austcave/>

Therein you can also get full details of the OZCAVERS mailing list (run by Raugleigh Webb). When you send an email message to OZCAVERS, all members on the list receive it. It is a great way to rapidly disseminate information & news. Subscription is free. I am now exchanging Journals with the *Cave Conservation & Management Section* of the **National Speleological Society** (USA). Its internet home page can be found at - <http://www.halcyon.com/samara/nssccms/> If you were interested in joining an international "cavers" list, similar to OZCAVERS, an excellent one is run by Jim Olsen in the USA. Email him for details at: cavers@ditell.com Our own Peter Bell maintains an Internet home page for *Caveworks* at Augusta/Margaret River Caves. Its address is - <http://griffin.bis.net.au/cwork/welcome.html>

Buchan happenings are news again, but this time perhaps not to our liking. I will add no more here to that in my article on the situation elsewhere in these pages. On a happier note, Dale and Gail Calnin's new son is now growing rapidly, and will soon be leading caving trips!! Dale advises that the land title problems for Lilly Pilly and Murrindal Caves are now resolved, and these two wonderful former tourist caves will be again used for adventure tours in the future.

Oh dear, lock up your caves! I'm off to W.A. in mid-October for a week, during which time I will be spending a day with Robyn McBeth and Peter Bell at Augusta/Margaret River. **Caveworks** should be close to completion by then, although I understand regular inclement weather has slowed construction over winter. I will report on progress in the next (December) Journal.

Jenolan Caves are suddenly booming!! Our intrepid President, Mick Chalker, is presently *Acting Manager* there for a couple of months while Andrew Fletcher is on leave. "It's different to Wombeyan", says Mick. I understand all the Jenolan Guides are running around with smiles on their faces, resplendent under Mick's *benelovent dictatorship*!! In Mick's absence, Annette Chalker is "*running*" Wombeyan (so what else is new?), with Frank Fleming's help!

No news yet on the new manager at **Yarrangobilly Caves**. Evidently, no appointment was made from the several applicants for the position, and it is to be re-advertised. It was great to meet Greg Cullen, the acting Yarrangobilly cave manager, at the recent ACKMA General Meeting.

Speaking of new appointments, now announcement has yet been made as to the successor for Dave Williams as General Manager of **Waitomo Caves**. However, I fully expect to be able to report on this matter in the December Journal, if not sooner...

While on the subject of Waitomo, details for the next Conference have come together rather well. This edition features several New Zealand articles to wet member's appetite for a *Trans-Tasman Excursion* next April-May.

The **Proceedings of the 11th Conference on Cave & Karst Management** in Tasmania is well in train. Ian Houshold and I have been busily descending on those *recalcitrant* people who have not got their conference papers in. All being well, we will have it published by Christmas (but no guarantees on which one..!)

The next (December) edition of the Journal will feature further articles on caves and karst in New Zealand, a paper by Ernie Holland on Social & Environmental Monitoring at Jenolan, and heaps more!!

Finally, Dennis Rebbeschi recently sent me the adjacent press cutting from the Brisbane *Mail on Sunday*.

I am led to wonder how many "Mr. Dennys" we have managing Australasian Caves!! Levity aside, the article raises a number of issues which we could do worse than take notice of....