

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- Greg Martin

The major event for our Association for this report was the gathering of the committee and members for the Annual General Meeting and Committee Meeting at Jenolan Caves over the Australian Queens Birthday weekend. An orderly and efficient meeting was conducted and my sincere thanks must go to Andy Spate for his contribution as Executive Officer during the past term. Dave Gillieson has now taken up the position and I welcome him to the Committee along with all the other elected to office. I would particularly like to thank Ann Augusteyn, who did not re-nominate after two years as Australian Vice-President, for her service to the Committee in general, and her ongoing work for ACKMA in general.

Dave Smith and Pete Chandler accompanied me to Jenolan Caves to make up the New Zealand contingent. We had an action packed couple of days taking in all that we could see in the time available, including an adventure cave trip, plus a visit to Wombeyan and Abercrombie Caves and the new headquarters for the Jenolan Caves Trust at Bathurst. Many thanks to all our hosts, it was a great experience.

Getting back to NZ was however a different story. We had been flying for two hours and were in the vicinity of Norfolk Island when the trip had to be aborted as unusual weather conditions prevented a landing anywhere in New Zealand! So it was back to Sydney. Consequently we arrived home a day late.

## Floods And More Floods

Is it global warming or are these weather patterns just part of the normal cyclic range of events that have happened over the eons of time? In the first two weeks of July the Waitomo Catchment experienced heavy rainfall resulting in high flooding, as did most of the Central North Island. Many roads were blocked with flooding and slips. Those who label things have labeled this flood event a "one in a hundred year event". The Glowworm Cave first flooded (1cm deep on *The*

*Cathedral* floor) on 2 July with 70mm of rain recorded on 1 July. The following week, there was 200mm of rain recorded over a four day period (8-11 July), resulting in flooding of *The Cathedral* floor being some feet under water.

The heaviest rain occurred on 9 and 10 July with 87mm and 53mm respectively. This resulted in the cave being closed completely for a day, and no boat operations for five days. All four boats were sunk in the Grotto. By 23 July there had been 10 days of half boat tours, 6 days of no boat tourist all, and 2 days of the month when the cave was closed completely. Nearly all glowworms below flood height were lost due to the extended period of being fully immersed in water. The population above flood height has remained stable and the areas affected by flooding have repopulated quickly in the last three weeks. It seems that the flooding was conveniently timed with the glowworms life cycle.

## Rock Sensors

Kate Banbury reports that members of the ACKMA Email list may recall queries made about rock temperature and methods of measurement. The debate over the relationship between rock temperature and ambient air temperature was not fully resolved, but progress has been made in the method of measurement. It was found that the type of sensor installed actually transferred the ambient air temperature through the cable exposed from the rock. The next plan is to use a basic thermistor seated into the rock with either an epoxy or polystyrene seal behind. Apparently the cables used for thermistors do not transfer heat.

As we head into spring it will be soon time to commence preparation for the busy summer months ahead then on to the Naracoorte Conference at Mt Gambier which is now just on the horizon. Make sure you are there!