

EARTH SCIENCES WEEK AT YARRANGOBILLY CAVES, NSW – DISCOVERING CAVES EDUCATION KIT

- Jane Gough* and Jackie Taylor**

There was a very successful launch of the Discovering Caves Education Kit and Poster, as publicised in ACKMA Journal No. 40 (page 36), at Yarrangobilly Caves in New South Wales during Earth Sciences Week. It was wonderful to see guests who had travelled long distances to be part of the celebration. Guests and dignitaries were able to enjoy morning tea prior to the launch in Yarrangobilly Caves House with views across the valley to the limestone cliffs. The official ceremony was held in the entrance to the North Glory Cave, providing a spectacular and apt backdrop to the display showing the Discovering Caves Kit and Poster.

Steve Horsley, Regional Manager South West Slopes, welcomed all participants to the launch on behalf of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). Steve thanked both NPWS and Australian Geological Survey Organisation (AGSO) staff for their input and determination in seeing this product come to life.

Yarrangobilly Caves Manager, Jo Ingarfield, initiated the development of the kit and as part of her speech read a transcript of a tape created by Kathleen Kemp to the assembled crowd. Kathleen developed and researched the Discovering Caves Education Kit at AGSO whilst on research study leave from the Department of Geology, University of Toronto, Canada. Gary Lewis, Manager AGSO Geoscience Education, had the wonderful idea of having Kathleen's presence via audio tape, as she had returned to Toronto. Unfortunately the tape self-destructed.

Kathleen had the support of a marvellous team at AGSO, and that, combined with the over whelming support of the Caving community - individuals ACKMA, ASF and cave operators in Australia - has produced a fabulous educational tool in less than a year. "I learned a lot and met a lot dedicated and eccentric cavers who were happy to share their passion for caves with me. In particular ACKMA and ASF members wrote material, provided photos, data and leads to others who could help out". A remarkable achievement. Gary Lewis

expressed particular thanks to the Ian Potter Foundation, whose financial assistance insured the success of the project.

With the formalities over the assembled guests were able to enjoy a leisurely walk through Yarrangobilly's self-guided cave, the Glory Hole. As indicated by the name the entrance to this cave is a large chamber, with a rubble pile and large opening to the surface. Many of the guests delayed their departure to enjoy tours of the Jersey and Jillabean Caves which were available after lunch.

The Discovering Caves Education Kit is an inexpensive yet high quality Australian-based geoscientific resource to add to the suite of educational titles available from AGSO. While the kit meets the needs of the education sector, visitors to tourist cave areas will find the kit informative and interesting. The kit is available from the Australian Geological Survey Organisation. Contacts are:

AGSO Sales Centre

Tel. 61 2 6249 9519 or 61 2 6249 9642. Fax. 61 2 6249 9982. Email: sales@agso.gov.au
www.agso.gov.au/information/bookshop.html

The launch was filmed, and footage was aired on Prime TV that included information on Earth Sciences Week. NSW National Parks staff at Yarrangobilly Caves must be thanked and congratulated for accommodating the launch while still catering for the needs of the general public, with cave tours and answering enquiries.

* **Jane Gough** is a Project Officer within the Conservation Programs and Planning Division of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Southern Directorate. Jane's duties include responsibilities relating to karst and cave areas within NSW.

** **Jackie Taylor** is a Ranger with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service at the Bungonia State Recreation Area, where she has been for the past five years.