

NEW ZEALAND NOTES

- Dave Smith

WAITOMO GLOWWORM CAVE - Bevan Jenkins

The Glowworm Cave is undergoing a slight upgrade of its lighting system. We are replacing all the old dimmers and running a communications cable through the cave to these. This will enable the lighting intensity to be controlled from the ticket office computer and with diagnostic software will aid in identifying any problems. Other upgrades include a motorised “push button” opening system for the existing door. This will help to maintain the climate of the cave by improving the reliability of the system, i.e. the door is open when it should be and closed when it should be. This will also improve safety.

On the environmental side of things we are implementing a real time display system, at present we have all the environmental data in real time but only as numbers. The graphical add-on means we are more accurately able to see trends. It is hoped that this system will form the basis of an environmental display when the ticket office is upgraded, but that's another upgrade/upgrade.

Research within the Glowworm Cave and the Waitomo catchment by master's students is going well. Anna Schmekal's work on condensation and evaporation is progressing very well. While Rachel Zaloum is carrying on her work on the catchment conditions and their effect on the Waitomo stream and comparing the present results with those obtained in a similar study carried out in the early 1980's.

Kate Banbury (previous karst officer) is enjoying her “big overseas experience” and has made her way via China, Mongolia, and Russia to England, with many interesting and amusing tales along the way.

MUSEUM

Martha Ash is leaving the Education Service at the Museum. Though Martha will continue doing a day a week archiving at the Museum, she will be mostly gone, working on a new business venture developing a range of resources for schools. A few months ago the Education Service received an excellent review from the Ministry (the service is funded as part of a Ministry of Education *Learning Outside the Classroom* programme, currently in year one of a three year contract). The Waitomo Museum programme is one of the best and most well established of the LEOTC contractors. While Martha is irreplaceable, there is a high quality field of applicants for the position and the new manager should be in place early in the New Year. Jan and Rebecca are continuing on which should allow a smooth transition. Martha has also stood down as

President of the *Museum Education Association of New Zealand*.

BLACK WATER RAFTING

Black Water Rafting and Waitomo Adventures Ltd (WAL) may be heading for the courts over the use of the name “Black Water Rafting”. The name was approved as a trademark for BWR about two years. Waitomo Adventures are considering a trademark challenge. This came after BWR have recently received a WIPO (a ruling body on domain names, etc) decision in BWR's favour over the use of “blackwater.com” by WAL. Also in the pot is a case by BWR against WAL for using the BWR name.

Local ACKMA member Derek Mason has recently moved to Cambridge and his 300 hectare farm property may be on the market soon. The two main cave ventures on the property, *Long Tomo Rafting* and *Black Water Dry* will definitely be kept on separate titles with legal right of way granted by the Mason Family.

NZ SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The NZSS AGM was held in Waitomo at Labour Weekend. The new President of the Society is Jenny McCarthy from Pahiatua, the first President from the Manawatu Speleo Group. Stephen Swabey from Auckland University is now Conservation Officer and Dave Smith continues as NZSS' ACKMA Liaison Officer.