

# **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

- Peter Dimond

It doesn't seem three months since the great Wombeyan Conference! What a success that was, the program, the caves and renewing old acquaintances. Once again thanks are due to Mick and Annette Chalker.

Our Publications Officer Kent Henderson produced a bumper issue of the journal following the Conference, covering it fully. The journal is a very important part of ACKMA in its role of keeping members informed of cave and karst topics.

Here at Waitomo we have had the coldest winter for many years, but this has not deterred brave adventure tourist donning wetsuits in the frost to

plunge into the cold Waitomo Water. Visitor numbers to all the caves at Waitomo, both adventure and show caves, are up this winter, compared with the same period last year.

There are no new developments in this area at present, except for the re-opening of Ruakuri tourist cave, for which planning is well underway.

**Membership:** ACKMA depends on members, and I would urge any member who has not done so to renew their membership. Also try to encourage new members to join. The larger the membership base, the more ACKMA can achieve, and also make the Journal more economical to produce.

## **CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY AT BUCHAN - JACK LEWENDON RETIRES**

- Dale Calnin

After 28 wonderful years of dedicated service to Cave and Karst Management at Buchan Caves, ranger Jack Lewendon decided on Friday 18 May 2001 to hang up his grubby overalls, dirty boots, and torch and call it a day.

Although Jack had been threatening for some years that he would be gone before Christmas, he never did tell us which Christmas he meant. Jack's contribution to the operation at Buchan has been outstanding. His never-ending passion for work and commitment to the resource has been faultless.

During his years of service at Buchan, he was known as "Jack of all Trades" and played a major role in keeping the caves and the reserve operating with the limited funds available. He was the Reserve's electrician, plumber, mechanic, concrete, bricklayer, tree faller, and carpenter. All of which he had no accreditation or ticket for, but

he did the job and carried it out to the finest degree.

A retirement dinner was held at the Buchan Recreation Centre on Friday 11 May, attended by fifty of Jack's friends and work colleagues spanning back many years. An enjoyable evening was had by all with many stories told of some of Jack's more memorable and embarrassing moments while at working at the caves.

As a cave guide it is estimated Jack carried out over 8000 show cave tours, all of which carried Jack's special style of cave presentation. Amongst his many achievements included the re-lighting of Fairy cave and concreting of pathways throughout the show cave system. For those that worked with him, it was a privilege. He will be sadly missed by all at Buchan, and by cave management in general. We wish him a long and happy retirement.