

# THINGS ARE ASTIR AT BUCHAN!

- Dale Calnin (as told to Kent Henderson)

*Work underway on the new Buchan Caves Visitor Information Centre.*



A great deal has been happening at Buchan Caves, Victoria, in recent months.

Firstly, Buchan Caves Reserve has been successful in obtaining a further Green Corps program. Green Corps are managed nationally by the Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers (ACTV). The Green Corps team are mainly locals and will work in the Buchan area for a 26 week period. Over the past three years Buchan Caves has worked closely with Green Corps in a major re-vegetation program aimed at re-establishing threatened species within the Buchan Caves Reserve. Although the emphasis for Green Corps was to continue with our on-going commitment to the Threatened Species Program, a variety of conservation and protection work based projects were scheduled into the program, whilst at the same time providing the opportunities for quality on the job training.

Projects achieved by Green Corps team so far include:

- Removal of the Potholes Reserve fenceline.
- Spring Creek Walking Track and Granite Pools Walking Track upgrade and maintenance.
- Moon Hill Walk re-alignment.
- Reseating of concrete pavers around the swimming pool.
- Ash Saddle Walking Track maintenance in the Snowy River National Park.
- Removal of built up flood debris in Spring Creek.
- Installation of an irrigation watering system.



*Green Corps carrying out fencing at the Potholes Reserve, Buchan.*

- Weed removal at Fairy and Royal Cave entrances, and along the F.J Wilson Walk.
- Painting of the concrete floor in the Royal and Fairy Cave amenity blocks.
- Removal of tree guards from the existing re-vegetation area.
- Assistance with preparations for the Visitor Centre extensions.
- Relocation of the Information Shelter at Buchan to the centre lawn.
- Assisting with the concreting of Federal Cave entrance tunnel (40 metres).
- Surfacing of North Arm Walking/Vehicle Track.
- Upgrade of Lilly Pilly and Murrindal access tracks.
- Maintenance of tools and equipment.
- Replacement of picnic table tops in North Arm BBQ area.
- Continuing with the Buchan re-vegetation program.

Buchan Caves experienced a very busy summer with an increase in visitor numbers though the caves of about 8%. The Easter holiday period was also extremely busy with visitor numbers through the caves up by 44% from last year. The Reserve has been a hype of activity over the past few months with many improvements occurring on the ground, many of which have been made possible through the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund. The latest project to commence has been the Visitor's Centre upgrade and extension works. Consequently, we have shifted out the Visitor's Centre and are now selling tickets, souvenirs and snacks from the Ranger/Administration Office. Works are scheduled to finish late August. In other works, concreting of Federal Cave entrance tunnel was carried out in March, with the help of the Green Corps team.

Last November, ACKMA Life Member Mike Chalker, Manager of Wombeyan Caves, visited Buchan to advise on the cave lighting project in the Royal Cave. However, this project has been delayed, and is now scheduled to occur in the 2002-03 financial year.

In other news, Heritage Victoria has recommended to the Heritage Council that Buchan Caves Reserve be included on the Heritage Register as a Heritage Place. All built infrastructure (except the North Arm, Main, Swimming Pool, Royal and Fairy toilet blocks) have been recommended for inclusion. Parks Victoria is supportive of Caves House, the swimming pool, camper's kitchen, cave entrances, Linaker planting, entrance arch and rotunda being included on the register, but we are currently questioning some of the infrastructure recommended for listing.

In January, Buchan applied for the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation in January. The Tourism Association of Australia will visit in the near future to conduct their final assessment. A Draft Heritage Action Statement has been written for the Reserve. The document aims to ensure preservation and maintenance to heritage features and facilities. Work is also proceeding on an updated Management Plan for Buchan Caves.