

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

– Steve Bourne

Once again Kent is at me for a report, early just so he can go overseas-again! Things are returning to normal at Naracoorte after the usual end of financial year mayhem.

One workshop at the Buchan ACKMA conference focussed on cave management, with one issue raised being lack of certainty of long term funding and the strict annual cycles we are forced to work with. One plus side of this is when someone has unallocated funds and extra becomes available. This happened at Naracoorte when funds were provided for a project to revamp the visitor viewing area of the Fossil Chamber in Victoria Fossil Cave, on 25 June! Fortunately the funds were allowed to be carried forward as one week was not feasible to complete such a project!



In Tantanoola Cave:
L to R – Dr Marie-Luise Frey, Katrina Eggelston
(cave host) and Dr Jutta Webber.

We have also been able to upgrade cameras, a lens and infra red light sources in our Bat Cave viewing system. Advances in technology have been amazing in recent years and the results are simply outstanding. Our long term consultant on this project, Charles Tomas, sought advice from where else but those supplying the BBC and David Attenborough's crew.

I have been in regular contact with Jay Anderson in Western Australia, who has some exciting projects on the go in Jewel Cave. Francine, the new CEO of the Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association following Robyn McBeath's departure, visited Naracoorte in June.

Two UNESCO assessors visited the proposed Kanawinka Geopark, which stretches across western Victoria into South Australia. Central to the nomination are the volcanics, however many caves are also within the proposed park.

Several ACKMA members have been heavily involved in this nomination, as we heard from Sue White at Buchan. If successful, it would be Australia's first Global Geopark. I hosted one of the assessors, Dr Marie-Luise Frey, for a few days at Naracoorte, reciprocating her hospitality after Andy Spate and I visited her a few years ago. Marie-Luise hails from the Messel Fossil Pit in Germany and had a lead role in establishing the Vulcaneiffel Geopark in Germany.

Chris, the technician, installing a new camera in Bat Cave, Naracoorte



I have been maintaining contact with Shizhen, our Chinese visitor at Buchan and who we hosted at Naracoorte for a few weeks. The South China Karst region was successful in gaining World Heritage inscription for two of the three nominated areas. Shizhen has successfully completed her Masters degree and is hopeful of gaining a position working in the karst field.

I visited Kelly Hill Caves on Kangaroo Island recently to take some promotional photographs. Those who attended the ACKMA AGM in 2006 there will remember the fibre optic lighting system. It is still functioning quite well, but there is a lesson to be learnt here. We have heard (at length!) from Andy and Neil Kell about the need to maintain lighting systems and check the output of the globes. This was another example of that, as the cave is substantially dimmer than my last visit, with the metal halide globes used to light the optic fibre quite obviously putting out less light than when new. Make sure your lights are not just working, but working at peak capacity!

I hope the winter is not too quiet visitor wise and everyone is getting plenty of rain.



Editor's Note: Our President recently suffered another birthday. He is pictured above in a state of complete psychosis attacking his cake at his birthday party at Naracoorte. The image was sent to me from a 'wishing to remain nameless' source...

