



Spellbound Tours

Greetings all! First off, a reminder of our **2008 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WEEKEND** at Capricorn Caves in Central Queensland from **16 – 18 MAY**. Full details were in the last Journal, and are inserted herein, just in case you've been asleep. It will, as usual, be marvelous! See you there! **Note the closing date for bookings is not far away!**

And also a reminder of the **11th Cave and Karst Presenters Conference** at Jenolan, from **10–16 February 2008**. Again, the info and booking form is repeated – as a colourful insert!



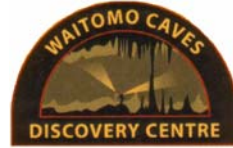
The 'usual suspects' outside the new Spellbound Tours office in Waitomo Village



The Spellbound Tower in Waitomo

Let's start off this time with lots of great New Zealand news. Pete and Libby Chandler's *Spellbound Tours* has recently moved into an office in Waitomo. They are now in the newly opened *Spellbound Tower* which is part of a complex containing the *Hu Hu* cafe and gift store. The Kay

family (owners of the cave used for Tumu Tumu Toobing) recently developed an unused section adjacent to the campground in Waitomo. Pete reports that it has been good having an office in Waitomo village as it is now easy for *Spellbound* customers to locate them. They did suffer a bit of attrition from people getting confused and missing them completely when *Spellbound* worked from the Museum of Caves at Waitomo – but not any more!



Speaking of the Waitomo Museum of Caves, it has now been renamed the *Waitomo Caves Discovery Centre*. Excellent stuff!

That is something the late Peter Dimond (former Museum Director, and ACKMA President) had been striving for whilst he was Director.

It is great to see the name change has now come to fruition. Surveys of visitors have been recently conducted, and the *Waitomo Caves Discovery Centre* came through with flying colours.

A new logo has been completed, a new domain name registered, consultation with web developers is happening, new email addresses linked to the new domain, and once most of that is sorted a new brochure for the Discovery Centre can go ahead.

While still on Kiwi Land, warmest congratulations to Jo and Ian Russell on the happy arrival of Cameron Harcourt Russell at 6.40am on Monday 27 August. Jo, an ACKMA member, is now on maternity leave from her role as Education Officer at the *Waitomo Caves Discovery Centre*.

I am recently back from yet another overseas jaunt, which this time included Canada, South Dakota, and South Africa. Obligatory articles are herein... Whilst in Canada I observed a bit of interesting signage...



Members will recall Jay Anderson's article in the last Journal concerning the **19th International Symposium of Subterranean Biology** to be held at Fremantle, Western Australia between 21–26 September 2008. This biennial Symposium is held under the auspices of the *International Society for Subterranean Biology*, the principle global forum for connecting researchers working on both the terrestrial and aquatic components of subterranean biology. Plan to attend! Registration is now open at: <<http://www.issb2008.org.au>>

19th International Symposium of Subterranean Biology 2008



Fremantle, Western Australia
21st-26th September 2008



Whilst staying with ACKMA Fellow Barry Richard at Jenolan recently (see the resultant article elsewhere herein), we motored over to Wombeyan Caves to catch up with Mick and Annette Chalker – recently back on deck after three months long-service leave, mostly spent touring in northern Queensland. Mick took Barry and me through Mulwarre Cave and Wollondilly Cave to see their now-finished complete make over.

When I was last at Wombeyan about twelve months ago, Wollondilly wasn't quite completed (see ACKMA Journal 63, June 2006).

I was particularly interested to see the LED arrays installed in the *Paddy Fields* section at the bottom of Wollondilly. Brilliantly done, to say the least!

And what of Mick? Well, Annette has now officially retired, and she has the 'pressure' on Mick! 'Maybe in about six months time', he mumbles. Of course, he has been saying that for several years. However, this time it just might well happen....we'll see.



Barry Richard and Mick Chalker
in Mulwarree Cave, Wombeyan



New LED arrays in the Paddy Fields,
Wollondilly Cave, Wombeyan

Now, some housekeeping. It comes around every year – it is Committee Nomination time again. The Nomination Form is inserted herein. I exhort members to put their name forward for election. All committee positions become vacant at the AGM – let's have your nomination! The formal notice of our upcoming 2008 Annual General Meeting at Capricorn Caves in Central Queensland next May will be inserted in the March 2008 Journal. If any member would like an item on the AGM agenda, please email details to our Executive Officer, Dave Smith, by 1st February 2008.

And finally, I would like to join Santa (pictured below), in wishing all ACKMA members and their families a very happy Christmas and wonderful New Year.

