

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

– Steve Bourne



Well Kent is back from his overseas jaunt and demanding reports for the journal. He kindly provided me with a DVD of both Cango Caves in South Africa and Wind Cave in South Dakota. Cango looks like a great place to visit with the idea of crawling through a 150m tunnel after they pump the water out to gain access to Cango 3 is both terrifying and appealing!!

Jay Anderson recently circulated an email seeking information and posing questions about speleothem collection by researchers. Some excellent comments were received and this is probably an issue that ACKMA could provide some advice and direction on. Caves are well known repositories for palaeontological and archaeological remains and speleothems can give some chronology for these deposits. Add in the climatic information stored in speleothems and the push to understand climatic cycles in today's 'climate change' society and pressure for collection is likely to increase rather than decrease.

Each site should have a management plan which provides some guidance regarding collection and ACKMA members can certainly provide advice to

each other on what research is being undertaken around Australasia and who is doing what. That way duplication and unnecessary collection can be avoided.

A draft management plan for Tantanoola Caves Conservation Park has been released for public comment. I am very pleased to say that the new presentation format reported in the last journal has been warmly received by visitors with first quarter visitation for 2007/8 up a spectacular 120% on the same period last year. This will be difficult to sustain but good fun reporting at present!! Lake Cave is a second cave on the park and rarely visited in the past 25 years. Two visits have been made recently to determine water levels and ceiling thickness to assist with assessing a mining application on adjacent land and as part of a stygofauna survey. It is a fragile, yet spectacular cave that rewards each visit with plenty of bruises.

Catherine Sellars, one time Naracoorte guide, has been lured to Yarrangobilly by George Bradford. I guess there is justice in this; it is about eight years since Naracoorte 'stole' George from Buchan. He learnt from that experience! Kyung Sik Woo's 'green book' is on its way on a slow ship from Korea. Cathie Plowman and I will be in touch with sites to take copies of this book which I feel will be a valuable addition to any shop's souvenir range. Copies and how to order will be distributed to most sites by Christmas.

Department staff in Mount Gambier recently handed me a package containing the usual administrivia and a second envelope marked 'keep if you lie or throw out'. Contained therein were early issues of the ACKMA newsletter including two of the first edition – true collectors items!! They have provided some interesting reading and great mirth at some of the images – perhaps the Editor may like to re-run some of these in the future?! On a serious note, the work that a few put in to get ACKMA established is obvious and most of these members are still active. Of course three stand out, Kent, Andy and Elery. It is interesting to see the evolution of ACKMA from ACMA (karst was added sometime between issue 2 and 6), some enduring issues e.g. Mount Etna, and the growth of a twice yearly newsletter of a few pages to the quarterly 40–48 page journal – well done Kent!

I hope everyone has a great Christmas and summer holiday period.

