

FROM THE EDITOR

This journal contains reports from the Yarrangobilly Caves Guides Workshop and ACKMA AGM. I had been to Yarrangobilly several times previously, but never for more than two nights, so a week gave me a chance to explore much more of what Yarrangobilly has to offer than I have previously seen. I also took a few photographs – what a great place for the camera enthusiast! Sasa Kennedy writes on a caving trip she and others did with George Bradford, Manager of Yarrangobilly, while a report or images of Eagles Nest Cave will have to wait until I return for another visit as a new member of the Canberra Speleological Society.



*View of Caves House from the bluff, Yarrangobilly Caves
Photo: Steve Bourne*

John Brush and Cathie Plowman provide excellent reports from the Vulcanospeleology Conference held on the Galapagos Islands. Six Australians attended this event and these reports are sure to inspire others to visit the islands – I know I want to get there!

Katrina Wills and Matthew McDowell provide an update of research and interpretation at Kelly Hill Caves, Kangaroo Island, South Australia. Matthew completed his PhD investigating palaeontological sites in the cave, with research outcomes being integrated into interpretation on adventure cave tours.

Nick Powe, Kents Caverns, United Kingdom sent in an interview he provided to the media on his family operated cave. I am sure many cave managers will relate to the challenges Nick presents in his interview.

Nicholas White reports that the Australian Speleological Federation has made changes to its Code of Ethics. These changes involved bringing the Code into line with the International Union of Speleology (UIS) requirements which introduced clauses opposing the use of caves for competitive events. The new clauses are unambiguous in opposing the use of caves for competitive events.

Background to Caving Competitions

A few years ago in New Zealand, cave managers and the New Zealand Speleological Society had to respond to a request to conduct a competitive event that involved caving as one of the components. A compromise was reached and a very closely controlled and non-timed trip through the cave for the competition teams was conducted. See Deborah Carden's article *The Race Through Metro Cave* in ACKMA Journal No. 62 March 2006 for a discussion on this event.

In 2008, Parks Victoria had a request to have a cave at Buchan used for a competitive event. The advice of the Cave and Karst Advisory Committee to Parks Victoria was that it should proceed that it be an untimed event under very strict control. This occurred and it was held in Wilsons Cave at Buchan with entry from the upstream entrance which consists of climb downs over rocks for about 40 metres of cave length until the main streamway which continues for about 80 metres to a walk out entrance. The cave is robust and there is little to damage.

In 2013, the organisers of the Mark Webber Challenge inquired through several cavers and the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service about having a cave component in the 2013 event. They had conducted a cave component in the Gunns Plains Show Cave in the 2012 event. Geoff Deer spoke about this at the recent AGM and advised that the event did not have a detrimental impact on the cave.

Actual Changes Adopted

Add the following new clauses 1.4 and 3.11

1.4 The newly adopted UIS Code of Ethics can be found at: UIS website: <http://test3.brlog.net/> as the document Revised Code of Ethics proposed to the 2013 General Assembly.

3.11 Competitive Events in Caves

Competitions should not be held in caves. Although caving is a sport and has elements of performance, and training is necessary for safety, competitions of any sort are inappropriate in caves, because heavy physical use damages their natural values. Damaging caves in the name of sport is totally unjustified.

See the Australian Speleological Federation website www.caves.org.au to download the revised guidelines.

After 38 years of distinguished service to the Western Australian Department of Parks and Wildlife and its predecessors (the National Parks Authority, Department of Conservation and Land Management, Department of Environment and Conservation), John Watson, former South Coast Regional Manager until 2007, retired at the end of March.

During his career, John has been closely involved in supporting and promoting many national and international conservation initiatives. These included development of the Fitzgerald River National Park Biosphere Reserve, participation in drafting the IUCN WCPA Guidelines for Mountain Protected Areas (1992 & 2004), lead editing the IUCN WCPA Guidelines for Cave and Karst Protection (1997), and contributions to the IUCN WCPA Ecological Restoration Taskforce on Best Practice Guidelines for Ecological Restoration



*John Watson receiving his Fellow award from the President Steve Bourne at Mulu, 2010
Photo: Kent Henderson*

in Protected Areas (2013). He also acted as local host for the IUCN WCPA "Protected Areas in the 21st Century: from Islands to Networks" mid-term meeting held in Albany in 1997.

John's contribution to caves and karst was recognised by ACKMA when he was made a Fellow of our association at the 2010 ACKMA AGM at Mulu, Borneo.

Another retirement in Western Australia is Anne Wood. Jay Anderson reports on Anne's career later in this journal.

Corrections

The image on the back cover of the last journal was incorrectly attributed to Rolan Eberhard. It should have credited to Geoffrey Lea.

A caption in Sasa Kennedy's article referred to Fox Whistle Tour, instead of Foot Whistle Tour. I apologise for these errors.

Coming Events

2014: 17-22 August	International Workshop on Ice Caves, Idaho, USA
2014: 2-8 November	International Show Caves Association, Jenolan Caves, Australia
2015: 10-15 May	ACKMA Conference, Naracoorte Caves, South Australia
2015: 21-26 June	30th Australian Speleological Conference, Exmouth, Western Australia
2016: May	ACKMA Annual General Meeting and Cave Guides Workshop, Rockhampton, Queensland
2017: July	International Union of Speleology Congress, Penrith, NSW, Australia
	Do you know of an event that may interest ACKMA members? Please send to publications@ackma.org