

FROM THE EDITOR

Somehow journal number 96 has been completed and you are now enjoying a rich mix of articles. Thank you to those who have hit the keyboards and contributed to this edition.

I imagine the first thing most of you asked when you saw the cover was “where is that stalactite?” I was ignorant to the fact that such speleothems occur in Australia until I received Garry K Smith’s article of Cliefden Caves, with his usual excellent images. These caves and important fossil site are in danger of being lost to development. Read Garry’s article, and President Dan Cove’s comments, and help out where to you can to ensure we don’t lose these caves.

The first circular for the 2015 ACKMA Conference, to be held in Naracoorte, South Australia, is included. It provides some important information on how to get to Naracoorte, and a brief outline of the program. Full details will be available in the December journal and hopefully on line prior to this. I hope to reciprocate to those who have kindly taken me caving at ACKMA conferences and on other occasions either prior to, or after the main event.

Rolan Eberhard provides an update on happenings in Tasmania. We have been trying to get something published for several editions on this, but there has been much political discussion and has been held over until now. I was personally very pleased to see the Australian Government’s application to the World Heritage Committee to remove 74,000 hectares from the Tasmanian World Heritage Area rejected. This outstanding landscape, both above and below ground, deserves to be protected.

Armstrong Osborn’s article covers his work in Sri Lanka, and it appears there are a lots of opportunities for the keen caver in this country with some unusual caves to explore.

On a light note, Phil McGuinn provides a quaint story about a cave, a ring and a dog. I didn’t know quite what to expect when I saw the title, but really enjoyed this contribution.

A few years ago, there was a blaze of publicity around a *Diprotodon* Fossil found at Jenolan Caves, New South Wales. Anne Musser provides a comprehensive analysis of the specimen, that is now confirmed to be *Zygomaturus trilobus*.

The value of a sincere welcome is the topic of Sasa Kennedy’s contribution. I think this is a good reminder to everyone involved in hospitality. I have also included an address by David Summers, President of the International Show Caves Association, which

includes reference to ACMKA Life Member Andy Spate, with some of his thoughts on the role of show caves.

The most travelled couple in ACKMA, John Brush and Marjorie Coggan, provide a report on the Pillaga Sandstone Caves in New South Wales, an important archaeological site.

Members who attended the conference in Ulverstone, Tasmania in 2009, will remember the Governor of Tasmania, His Excellency Peter Underwood, who opened the conference and visited Gunns Plains caves afterwards with Geoff and Trish Deer. Peter passed away in July and Geoff reflects on his short time with him at his caves.

Andy Spate gives high praise to the Sixteen Legs exhibition on the Tasmanian Cave Spider, *Hickmania troglodites*, that was recently opened in Hobart. Andy is working to bring this to the ACKMA Conference at Naracoorte next May. I hope he is successful.

Research, trip reports, management, art exhibition, an obituary, opinions and a plea to help save some caves. A rich selection of articles for your enjoyment.

Ross Anderson kindly sent me a calendar of his outstanding cave images. I contacted Ross to see if he was selling these, but alas, no. I have one of a very small print run - many thanks Ross! Have a look at some of the cave panoramas Ross has put together on his website www.lightspeed.com.au.

Many will know that Brian Clark and his family have returned to Australia after 10 years managing the Gunung Mulu World Heritage Area. Alison Pritchard, ex Yanchep Caves, Western Australia has taken over from Brian.



The Naracoorte town entrance feature
Photo: Steve Bourne

The International Show Caves Association (ISCA) conference is fast approaching and I know a number of ACKMA members, myself included, have joined ISCA and will be attending this conference. A report on this will be provided in the next journal. The conference proceedings from ISCA will be electronic only, however I have permission from ISCA to publish papers in the journal with the permission of the author. I hope to be able to present a number of papers in coming editions.

Enjoy this edition, and I look forward to your copy by mid November for the December edition.



Speleo 2017 field excursions

Cathie Plowman

The 17th International Congress of Speleology will be held in Sydney in July 2017. I have accepted the role of chairing the field excursions committee and am now looking for support from others who would like to be part of organising and/or supporting field excursions for the Congress.

Field Excursions will include:

- caving excursions during the congress;
- pre and post congress trips; and
- caving weekends and day trips before and after the congress.

July brings a range of weather conditions: 20–25° in the Chillagoe area, snow at Jenolan Caves and minus temperatures and heavy rain at Mole Creek. Weather conditions will need to be carefully considered for field excursions. If you're wondering 'why have the Congress in winter', that's something that is out of the hands of the organisers; it needs to be held in the European summer. Besides weather, practicalities such as cost, access, transport and accommodation will need to be considered.

International caving colleagues will be travelling a long way, wanting to see Australia's caves and to experience wildlife, culture, locations such as Uluru and the Great Barrier Reef and much more.

I invite cave and karst managers to consider how they may be able to support the Congress in ways such as reduced or complimentary access cave fees and reductions in camping and accommodation fees.

If you're interested in helping to showcase Australia and its caves and karst, I would love to hear from you to discuss any ideas and options. Thank you, I can be reached at: Speleo2017-excursions@caves.org.au

Coming Events

2014: 2-8 November	International Show Caves Association, Jenolan Caves, Australia www.jenolan2014.com
2015: 2-9 March	Karstology in Arid Regions, Abu Dabi http://abudhabi.zrc-sazu.si/
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