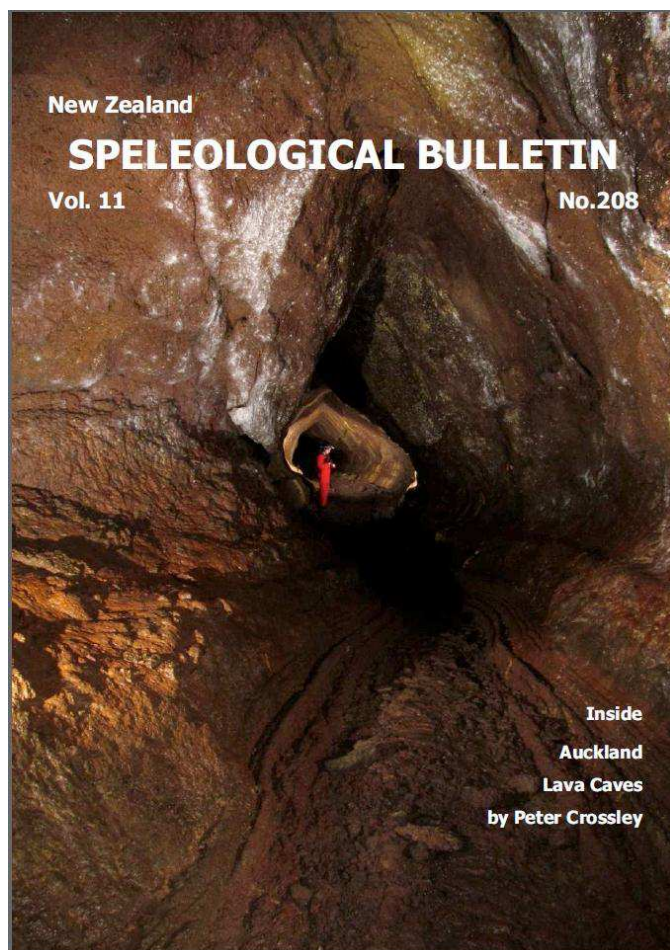


AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND LAVA CAVES

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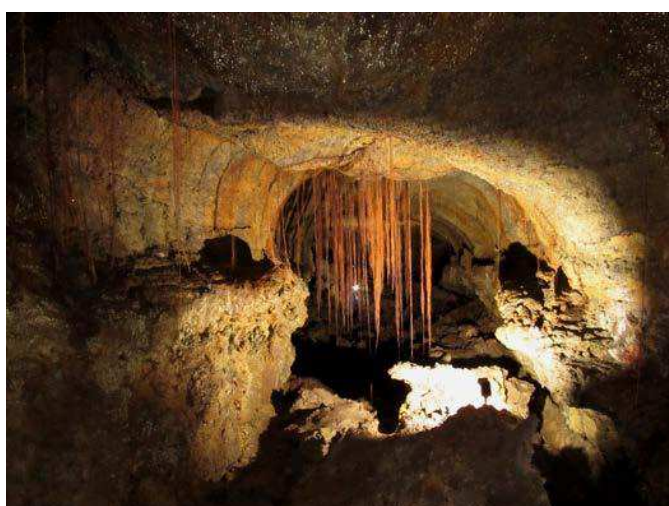
Early in 2014, I began editing this work for veteran New Zealand caver, Peter Crossley, taking much pleasure in doing so. This issue of the *NZSS Bulletin* is considerably longer than usual at 60 pages. It is the culmination of a lifetime's work by Peter in exploring, surveying and making scientific observations of the many lava caves in the Auckland area. The city is built on fifty volcanic cones nearly all of which have some measure of lava cave development.

Peter Crossley migrated from Britain to New Zealand as a young man in 1965. Since then he has notched up 50 years of caving and is still going strong. Based in Auckland, where he worked as a technician in the Geography Department at Auckland University under Professor Paul Williams, Peter explored both smaller lava caves close to home as well as larger limestone caves at Waitomo and in the South Island. About the time he could have become bored with the less adventurous lava caves he suddenly realised that some of them could no longer be found due to lost 'cave lore'

or obliteration during development. As a result he began making notes of where known ones were and mapping them. He also began to lobby landowners and land managers about the caves on their land, becoming really keen that local authorities, public and private landowners, the wider public and the caving fraternity all understood that this aspect of New Zealand's heritage was at risk.

The culmination of his interest is a well organised piece of work with many maps, photographs and anecdotes about Auckland's remaining lava caves. For cavers from either a show caves or wild caves background Peter's work provides another slant on caving altogether. Those who went on the 2013 ACKMA post conference tour which ended in Auckland gained some experience of this. They spent two days with Peter as guide, visiting Wiri Lava Cave (front cover photograph), looking at volcanic cones, visiting caves in suburban home gardens, pulling up manhole covers in leafy suburban streets and trooping round Rangitoto Island.

At one stage NZSS was in somewhat of a conundrum about publishing Peter's work because in contrast to the Society's general policy of being reticent about cave locations, Peter's work was full of maps and notes showing just exactly where they were and how to gain access. However once Peter pointed out that many of the lava caves were either on private property requiring landowner permission, already had restricted access



Tree roots are a feature in Stewart's Cave off Landscape Road in suburban Auckland. This is a relatively large and well known cave accessed through private property. It's one of the few remaining in the lava fields associated with the Three Kings volcanic cones.

Photo: Peter Crossley



Above. Kermies Cave on Rangitoto Island has a vertical entrance where real care is needed due to loose rock in the ceiling and entrance areas. The rest of the cave has some fine lava cave features making it well worth the visit. Below. The entrance to Kitenui Cavern in Mt Albert, Auckland is in a suburban street on public land. The City Council put in a manhole cover to allow access to the cave which goes under the road and several houses.
Photos: Peter Crossley

(gate or man-hole cover) or were just plain difficult to get to (abseil access or travel across rough lava-fields) it could be seen that a policy which worked well for wild caves bore much less relevance in an urban environment. Discussion in the end was short and publication of the work went ahead.

Peter makes it clear in the introduction to his work that a key aim of having it published was to ensure that local authorities have to take the existence of known lava caves into account when they consider resource consent applications for new developments such as buildings and roads. A cunning plan to ensure that the work Peter has already done over the last 20 years with various councils, the Department of Conservation and local Maori groups (iwi) will continue in the future.

I highly recommend this journal to you if you have either an interest in lava caves or the management of caves in an urban environment. Bulletin 208 has many maps and excellent photographs supporting succinct text. An excellent handbook to own if you ever aspire to exploring

lava caves on a visit to Auckland. A limited number of copies of *NZSS Bulletin 208* will be available at the 2015 ACKMA Conference at Naracoorte. Price A\$20.

