



Editorial Ramblings

Welcome to the **21st Anniversary Edition** of the ACKMA Journal! It seems like only yesterday that Edition One was published, in June 1988. Time flies when you are having fun! Something of a retrospect is to be found elsewhere herein... The cartoon below is an apt commentary on the (so far) 75 editions of this mildly-esteemed publication...



"Don't tell me. More last minute editorial changes."

Wow! Wasn't the 18th ACKMA Conference wonderful!! Many articles thereon are herein, so I will not iterate too much here. The Margaret River Conference had 101 registered attendees, easily beating the previous record – 89 at Buchan two years ago, and that was with a limited number of internationals (probably due to the so-called 'world economic crisis'), and a number of the 'usual suspects' not attending. Of the attendees, about 50% were Western Australians, which was great. This was ACKMA's first visit to WA since 1991, it invariably being 16-18 years between conferences for any location. Of course, as conferences tend to create, we have gained a substantial number of new members. Welcome!

The organisation of our 18th Conference was close to flawless. Many thanks again to Anne Wood and her team. As do all ACKMA Conference Convenors, Anne lost considerable hair and sleep in the run up. I spoke to her on the phone just about every day in the few weeks leading up to it and, as with all her predecessors, she was a bit frazzled! Having both your office and home computers crash a few days before the Conference did not help her! But, she did an absolutely fantastic job (as expected!)

Indeed, we are most grateful to all the (clearly masochistic) souls who have convened ACKMA Conferences over the years. I took a photo of our Past Convenors who were present at Margaret River – it follows...



ACKMA Conference Convenors. L to R: Greg Martin (12th–1997); Chester Shaw (11th–1995); Phil Wood (16th–2005); Ann Augusteyn (10th–1993); Anne Wood (18th – 2009); Dale Calnin (17th–2007); Andy Spate (7th–1997 & 14th–2001), and Brian Clark (13th–1999) – ACKMA Conference 2009.

So! We are now looking forward very much to being at Mulu next year, Tasmania in 2011, and Cango Caves in 2012! What an incredible forward program!!

Indeed, next year alone is frantically busy, with almost more conferences and events than you can poke a stick at (see 'Coming Events'). The International Show Caves Congress is being held in Slovakia later in the year, and I understand our International Relations Officer, Andy Spate, will be attending. I hope to attend myself.

As briefly reported in a 'Stop Press' in the last Journal, all ACKMA members were saddened to hear of the death of ACKMA Life Member Roy Skinner on 15 February 2009. A further tribute to Roy is elsewhere in this Journal.



The late Roy Skinner. Photo: Arthur Clarke.

In late August, I will be travelling in northern Australia for two weeks, where I will be visiting Cutta Cutta Caves near Katherine, and Tunnel Creek Cave in the Kimberleys. I have never been to either before (!), so you can expect to hear about it herein.

Till September...

