



Welcome to the **SPECIAL CAVE LIGHTING EDITION** of the ACKMA Journal! – with several articles on the subject. We were also to have an article on the general History of Cave Lighting, but it is delayed until the next edition.

So, the International Show Caves Association (ISCA) Congress in Slovakia has come and gone. It was truly a great event, and incredibly well organised. Brief comments from Dan Cove follow below; then my lengthy report thereafter (sorry – I’m not really!). As will be noted, with great applause, Jenolan Caves is hosting the next ISCA Congress in 2014 – an absolutely wonderful thing for caves and karst in Australasia. It will be huge! Warmest congratulations to Jenolan!



Andy Spate talks ACKMA to ISCA in Slovakia.
Photo: Pavel Bella.

In the interim, quite a few ACKMA events will be happening! The most imminent, of course, is the **19th Australasian Conference on Cave and Karst Management**. As you are all very much aware, the 19th ACKMA Conference will be held at Ulverstone, Tasmania, from **SUNDAY 8 MAY 2011 to FRIDAY 13 MAY 2011**. Only about five months to go! It will be fabulous!! Full Details and the Booking Form are again inserted in this Journal! **SEE YOU THERE!!**

Speaking of our Tasmanian Conference, the **BIG news** is that the Conference Organising Committee, in a real coup for ACKMA, has secured His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, the Honourable Peter Underwood AC, to officially

open the Conference. His Excellency and Mrs. Underwood will join us on the Monday morning. This will be the first time a State Governor has officially attended an ACKMA Conference! Wonderful stuff!

There is plenty more happening in cave land. On 7 November Buchan Caves celebrated the centenary of the discovery of the Royal Cave – with a Family Picnic Day in the Buchan Caves Reserve, free cave tours, and an historical address by Prof. Elery Hamilton-Smith.

The Organising Committee for the 20th Australasian Conference on Cave and Karst Management at Waitomo Caves in New Zealand (May 2013) held its first meeting at the Glowworm Cave on 2 September (see the photo below). As ACKMA Conferences these days are getting as *big as Ben Hur*, planning really does have to start well in advance.

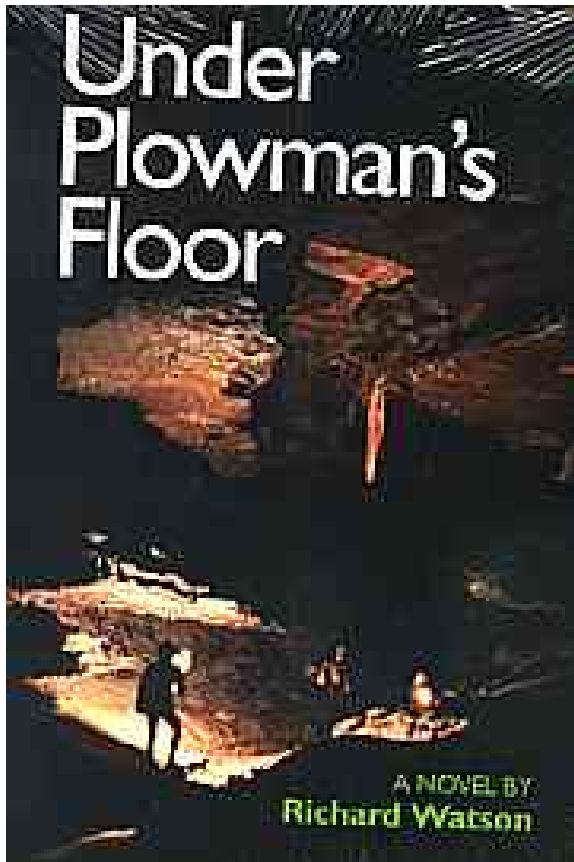
ACKMA member and distinguished karst scientist Dr. Armstrong Osborne has recently been ‘making a nuisance of himself’ at Capricorn Caves in Central Queensland – but I am sure Ann Augusteyn and her staff are more than happy! He is there with colleagues from Slovenia and Poland who are on an EU-funded staff exchange, comparing Central European and Australian Hypogean caves. Capricorn Caves were chosen for the study as they are right on the Tropic of Capricorn. The comparative sites in Poland are 50 Degrees North, Armstrong says.

Professor Elery Hamilton-Smith advises of two publications of interest:

- The book *Beneath the Surface* by Brian Finlayson and myself has been out of print for some time and it is not easy to find secondhand. I have had a number of questions about it, and I can now say that the publishers (University of NSW Press) have digitized it and it will soon be available on a print-on-order basis.
- Rev. Julian Tenison-Woods great 1862 text, *Geological Observations in South Australia*, principally in the district South East of Adelaide, was the first major karst cave study in Australia. Since the 1970s, it has become clear that a lot of his ideas about the Limestone Coast geology which were generally dismissed were in fact right 100 years ahead of his time. It has long been in the Rare Books category and hence incredibly costly. But a low cost paperback reprint has just come on the market in the US. Go to the Abebooks website <<http://www.abebooks.com>> and you’ll find a whole horde of low-cost dealers offering it, some on a free postage basis. Too good to miss!

New managers have taken over Engelbrecht’s Cave in Mt Gambier, South Australia – Brenton and Kemelee Lynch-Rhodes – having gained the concession from the Mt. Gambier City Council. They commenced operations on 1 July 2010. A warm welcome to ‘caves’, and to ACKMA, to both! We wish them well! An article on Engelbrecht’s Cave, by Ian Lewis, is herein.

The 'cave novel', *Under Plowman's Floor*, was recently bought to my attention. (It is available through *Speleobooks*). Clearly, this is a matter of the greatest national significance. I asked Cathie, but she wouldn't tell me! So, you will just have to go and look under her floor for yourself...



The following article appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 12 July 2010:

1000-year climate code stored in cave deposits
by Nicky Phillips

Walking into a cave of stalagmites and stalactites is like entering a Tiffany's showroom. But unlike an expensive ring, the sparkle of these formations is a precious record of climate history. Scientists are using structures from the Wombeyan Caves, north-east of Canberra, to build a picture of rainfall patterns in south-eastern NSW over the past thousand years. Instrumental rainfall records extended only to the 1800s, lead researcher Janece McDonald, of the University of Newcastle, said, and 'given natural climate variability, 200 years is insufficient to capture the true variability of moisture patterns in south-east Australia'. As stalagmites and stalactites grew they encoded information about the climate, she said.

The structures formed when rainfall, which is slightly acidic, percolated down into the ground and dissolved rocks made of calcium carbonate, such as marble or limestone. When the water, which then contained a lot of calcium, finally seeped through the ceiling of a cave it would either drip onto the floor and form the layers of a stalagmite or deposit on the ceiling and form a stalactite, she said.

Dr McDonald removed several small stalagmites from the Wombeyan Caves to analyse trace elements which accumulated in the formations over time. Higher concentrations of elements such as phosphorus indicated the area experienced a lot of rainfall at that time, she said.

By assessing the geochemistry of the stalagmites, which were easier to study than stalactites, Dr McDonald and her colleagues were able to formulate rainfall trends in the Sydney catchment and surrounding area for the last thousand years.

It is good to see Wombeyan getting some publicity – it would also be nice if the NSW *National Parks and Wildlife Service* would finally appoint a Manager too (after over two years...) Of course, Janece's work is well-known to many ACKMA members – she featured in a front cover photo, and within, ACKMA Journal No. 63 – June 2006 (The article – *Modern Cave Dripwater Study*).

ACKMA Fellow Arthur Clarke was back in China recently visiting, amongst other places, the (now) Leye-Fengshan National Geopark. It was successfully nominated and accepted as a global geopark during the course of the International Global Geopark Conference held in Greece during the first week of October. Says Arthur: *So there were lots of speeches, toasts and banquets, plus hassles getting to caves because of lots of road closures, plus the evening entertainment with cultural events and fireworks etc.*

After delays, the Waitomo Glowworm Cave complex was finally officially opened on Thursday 21 October – a report by Greg Martin is herein. Greg also advises that ACKMA luminaries Miles and Rhonwen Pierce have been in Waitomo recently. After staying a few days with Pete and Libby Chandler (including, I'm advised, a 'big night' at the Waitomo Tavern!), they also stayed a few days with Greg and Sue Martin.

In other New Zealand News, Pete Chandler tells me that show cave prices in Waitomo were adjusted on 1 October. The Glowworm Cave is now \$46.00 per adult (including a twelve minute AV show) and Ruakuri Cave is \$69.00 per adult. Pete reckons that although they are now 'more affordable' for Australians given the strong Aussie dollar, they must still be the most expensive show caves in the world, based on cost per minute!?

Our list of friends ever expands! As a result of contacts made at the recent ISCA Congress, ACKMA is now happily cross-affiliated with the *Association Nationale des Exploitants des Cavernes Aménagées pour le Tourisme* (ANECAT) – the French National Show Caves Association, and with the *Associazione Grotte Turistiche Italiane* (ACTI) – the Italian Show Caves Association. All good stuff!

Finally, it is Committee Nomination time again – it comes around every year. The Committee Nomination Form is inserted herein. How about YOU this time around – a great many members have much to contribute, if only they would put their name forward!



At the Inaugural Meeting of the 20th ACKMA Conference Organising Committee at Waitomo on 2 September 2010. In the semi circle from left to right: Dave Smith – Department of Conservation (& ACKMA Executive Officer); Celina Yapp – Waitomo Caves Discovery Centre; Libby Chandler – Spellbound Tours; Pete Chandler – Spellbound Tours (& ACKMA NZ Vice-President); Van Watson – Blackwater Rafting; Angus Stubbs – Blackwater Rafting; Ray Scrimgeour – Department of Conservation; Travis Cross; John Ash; Shelley Katae – Tourism Holdings Limited; Robert Tahī – Tourism Holdings Limited (& Manager, Glowworm Cave). The vacant seat to the left is that of Greg Martin, District Conservator, Department of Conservation (& former ACKMA President), who took the photo.

JENOLAN 2014 – ISCA COMES TO A LAND DOWNUNDER

- Dan Cove

Management and staff at Jenolan Caves are celebrating the success of securing the hosting of the 7th ISCA Congress in late October 2014. Given that this is the first time that a Southern hemisphere show cave system has hosted the Congress, it is a significant achievement and a wonderful recognition of the high standards in management of Australasian caves. I do not believe that it is inaccurate to state that the recent levels of innovation and progressive thinking that we showcased at the recent Slovakia Congress surprised many of our international colleagues.

I will not duplicate Kent's comprehensive review of both ISCA and the 6th Congress, which follows this brief article. However I will add my observation that ISCA is a most interesting organisation, and one that is working hard to become a relevant source of information, discussion and networking for show caves across the world – that are grappling with the truly international issues of environmental and commercial sustainability. To this end, the central theme of the 7th Congress, *Jenolan 2014*, has been announced as 'The challenges of sustainably showing caves in the 21st century' – a broad theme but one that recognises the separate (but naturally interrelated) issues of environmental stewardship and commercial operation of nature based tourist attractions in an increasingly competitive and demanding field. ACKMA now has a strong relationship with ISCA; however I would also urge individual cave systems to consider the possibility of becoming ISCA members. Membership is increasing worldwide, membership fees have been revised downwards (particularly for lower visitation

show cave sites) and there is a growing sense of a collaborative approach to show cave management. I would be very happy to provide further information to any interested reader.

I am, naturally, looking forward to the challenges and rewards that the hosting of this Congress offers. I have no doubt that the next four years will seem to pass all too quickly, but we will provide frequent updates and information as the date draws closer. We certainly hope to complement the International component with a strong Australasian contingent so, for those who are annoyingly well organised, block out the last week in October 2014 when Jenolan Caves looks forwards to greeting all delegates to the 7th ISCA Congress.



Dan Cove (left) and Peter Austen with the 'ISCA Bell' – Jenolan is its custodian until ISCA's *Jenolan 2014*.

