

VALE PETER GEORGE UNDERWOOD AC (10 October 1937 – 7 July 2014)

Geoff Deer
Gunns Plains Caves

Peter Underwood served as 27th Governor of Tasmania from 2008 until his untimely death in July 2014 after a short illness. A State Funeral was held on 21 July 2014 with proceedings also being broadcast on ABC radio. He had previously been Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Tasmania in a distinguished law career. He was appointed an officer of the Order of Australia in 2002 and was made a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2009.

In May 2011 ACKMA held its conference at Ulverstone. Peter Underwood was invited to open the conference.

Then President of ACKMA, Steve Bourne welcomed him and in his welcome told us all about the first South Australian Governor to enter a cave. Apparently this was done by being lowered in on a chair. This caused a little consternation among some, including the Governor. After the conference opening, the Vice-Regal party travelled to Gunns Plains to visit the Gunns Plains Cave with Trish and Geoff Deer.

On arrival at the waiting area, Richard, the Governor's Aide-de-camp noticed a rope from the wall of the waiting

area through the cave entrance door. Enquiries about the rope got the reply from Geoff that "that has the chair attached." The journey down the steps was therefore a little subdued but once inside the cave proper and learning the history of the cave, the Governor soon became more confident. The normal hour long tour took over 90 minutes as all took in their surrounds and enjoyed the beauty of the cave while having a lot of fun.

Protocol has its ways off addressing the Governor but in true cave guide fashion Trish got away with a "mate" and Geoff a "bloke" during the visit. Peter Underwood held the highest office in Tasmania but he was still one of the people.

Tasmania and Australia not only lost a great jurist and Governor with the passing of Peter Underwood AC but also a bloody good bloke. He will be sadly missed by his family, friends and all Tasmanians. He is survived by his wife Frances, his four children, three stepchildren and 12 grandchildren. Our condolences go out to all of them.