

Gold, gold, gold - Oops that was the Olympics!

What I meant was: *Caves, Caves, Caves!*

Andy Spate

I have just received a copy of Dave Gillieson's second edition of his book, *Caves: Processes, Development, and Management* (Wiley Blackwell).

This 508-page masterpiece is not a book that one reads cover to cover over a few weeks – rather it is a book you will dip into every so often when you want to know more about cave development, or speleothem types, or cave history, or karst management, or ...

When you want to know a little more about the processes of cave and karst management – or of archaeology relating to caves – or the ages and rates of speleothem development – and what they might tell us about past environments this is the book for you.

It is all there in Dave's book! The book is divided into 15 chapters. Each chapter has many subdivisions dealing with various issues. For example, Chapter 12, Historic Uses of Caves; has the following subdivisions:

Introduction

- Caves as Shelter
- Caves as Sacred Places
- Caves as sources of raw materials
- Cave Tourism
- Cave dwellings in Turkey

As another example, Chapter, 14, Catchment Management in Karst, has 11 subdivisions including the management needs of golf courses on karst. Spectacular attention to the minutiae of karst management.

This should give you some idea of the detail that is encompassed in this very comprehensive survey of caves and karst, and their management.

The one quibble I would have with this wonderful book is that the references are at the end of each chapter rather than consolidated at the end of the book, Also Figure 6.6

... The reason why the references are handled this way is that each chapter will be available online.

The book contains two indexes – one subject index and a geographic index so that you can easily find out what he says about your favorite sites(s). There is also a very useful glossary.

I launched the first edition of Dave's book at Wombeyan Caves on 2 February 1997. I look forward to launching the second edition at Wellington Caves in October 2021. Dave advises that there will be two copies of his great book available for auction in October to aid the Life Member's fund.

In 1997, the publisher's blurb said about the first edition:

Special features:

- *One of the most comprehensive accounts of caves, cave science and cave management ever published.*
- *Well-written, non-technical with case studies*
- *Shows how cave deposits can reveal great insights into past climates and ecological systems.*

And readership:

- *This book will appeal to all those who are curious about the underworld and its inhabitants. It is illustrated throughout with photographs, maps and line diagrams, many of which are original to the book.*

These publisher's comments in 1997 are entirely apposite to the second edition. Dave is to be congratulated of his second edition - a real labour of love – for the caving community. Every Australian and New Zealand show cave operation - and all the others around the world - should have this available to their staff. And many other caves people should be buying it and learning.

People have been interested in caves for a very long time. Our distant ancestors used them for shelter, as sources of water, and as places in which to conduct essential rituals. They adorned their walls with quite sophisticated artwork depicting both their existential and spiritual concerns. Caves feature in our mythology, they are used as places of worship in many cultures, and they are used throughout the world as places in which to store prized foodstuffs and wine. For at least two hundred years they have attracted scientists, artists, photographers, and recreational cavers. This book examines how caves form, the light they shed on past environments and climates, and the values, both environmental and cultural, that they provide to humanity.