

ACKMA President Report December 2021

Ian Eddison

Since my September report we had our major event hosted by Wellington Caves and sponsored by Weidmuller. The whole event was online and comprised the Savannah Guides led EcoGuide course over 20-21 October and then our meeting 23-24 October. We had an engaged group of guides involved in the EcoGuide training and then a very full program of professional presentations with over 40 people attending online at one point. Overall, it was a very full few days to be tied to the computer screens but also very rewarding for those who could manage the time.

The meeting included the launch of the second edition of 'Caves', two copies which were auctioned for the life members fund, Sixteen Legs watch party, our guest speaker Anthony Sharwood on his book 'From Snow to Ash' and the latest book 'Brumby Wars'. All reports were that the training for guides and the meeting very appreciated by those who could attend.

Behind the scenes were several people managing the ZOOM and supporting presenters. Thanks especially to Andy and Kirsty. It was great to see so many take part and if we had been physically able to get together we would not have had the time for so many presenters so that was a positive of the online ZOOM. The final program planning, trial ZOOM and facilitator was David Gillieson which we owe a great deal of gratitude for his work.

Other behind the scenes work continued:

- A submission has been made on the Wild Horses management within the Kosciuszko National Park. This work was a collaboration of ACKMA and ASF. I particularly want to thank John Brush for his work on this.
- Communications have occurred regarding asbestos and a plan of remediation work at Dip cave, Wee Jasper to enable further input. Caving communities and cave and karst management were not initially sought for input. That seems to have changed and we look forward to having opportunities to be engaged.

It remains a difficult site to remediate. Once again John Brush has played an integral role in this so far.

- The creative Celebration of Caves and Karst in Australasia competition, a joint initiative of ACKMA, ASF and NZSS has been well attended and is now closed. Judges are assessing the entries which will be announced on 12th December. Our joint organisations will provide the \$1,000 grand prize and Ledlenser are providing four \$500 vouchers. There are 41 entries in all, from different media. The most popular section was written entries comprising poems and stories. You will see many entries in our journal and our social media in the coming months.

Earlier in the year I encouraged cave managers to work closely with local arts groups to run their own arts event. I am not aware of this having occurred but if any of our show cave managers would like to exhibit the entries of our competition then by all means let me know and I shall provide the entries electronically.

- The Atmospheric Data Logger project continues, and you should have seen reports updated. Despite the challenges with restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the team continue to support the various sites engaged in this research.
- The Naracoorte Inter-agency Reference Group have met, and Brian Clark has represented ACKMA. A report has been supplied to the committee and is available to other members on request.

I wish you all continued health, improved economic situations in your respective work. We are headed to new changes and fewer COVID restrictions now but do keep your guard up. Please remember to promote the International Year of Caves and Karst and the themes explore, understand, and protect.

Ian Eddison

President

