

Editorial

Christian Bom

It is a great pleasure to present to you my second edition of the ACKMA Journal. I have received some great feedback after publishing the September edition. I encourage those willing to provide feedback to please do so. This is not something I have done before, and I have a lot to learn. There are countless years of experience in the readership of this journal, and I am willing to take on board any feedback or suggestions you have for me to improve in future editions. I hope to maintain the high standard that has been set by previous editors over the last 124 editions.

The October ACKMA meeting and guide school was a great success and it was wonderful to see many of you attend. The presentations were fantastic and there were presenters from all over the world. The presentations included natural disaster stories, fascinating behaviours of platypus in the Blue Mountains, the effects of cave lighting, and much more. The presentations are now available in the members section of the ACKMA Website. The guide school component was run by Savannah Guides. It is a great pleasure to announce I have been invited onto the Board of Directors of Savannah Guides. There are countless opportunities for future collaboration between Savannah Guides and ACKMA and I am looking forward to seeing what this relationship will bring.

Another year is coming to an end, there have been some tough times for us all but as we have heard from Jodie Strickland in the recent ACKMA meeting, it is all about

resilience. So, I thought I would share Jodie's definition of resilience once again; "The Process of adapting to stressors by using all the tools, resources and support you have in order to push through the struggle and the stress and ultimately to grow." Thanks to Jodie for this wonderful reminder.

The arts competition for the Australasian Celebration of the International Year of Caves and Karst has now concluded. I am excited to share some of them with you over the next few editions of the journal. It has been a great collaboration by the NZSS, ASF, and ACKMA.

In this journal you will find an article from Capricorn Caves' Amber Countryman, who is bursting with passion to share her love of the caves with fellow artists. Amber recently facilitated an Art Retreat at The Caves which was a huge success and will now be a yearly event.

The new Cave Animal of the Year has been announced, and this one certainly hits home for me as it is the Ghost Bat! *Macroderma gigas* have been in a steady decline across Northern Australia so there is no better time to celebrate this amazing creature. I had the pleasure last year of being taken through some of Mt Etna Caves National Park's caves by Ghost Bat expert John Augusteyn. John has clearly spent countless hours observing these creatures as he could even call to them! It was a wonderful sight and something I will not soon forget.



UPDATE

ACKMA 2022 EVENT NEW ZEALAND.

Due to uncertainty around isolation requirements immediately after the NZ border reopens to Australia on 30th April 2022, the committee has agreed the 2022 ACKMA AGM will now be held in May and will be 'online'.

The NZ conference is tentatively postponed to early October 2022. The NZ team will continue to plan the event with an update to be provided at the next committee meeting on 27th February 2022.

We recognise the traditional people of the lands of all our members and editorial contributors.

ACKMA acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet and work, and all Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' continuing connection to land, place, waters, and community. We pay our respects to their cultures, country, and elders past present and emerging.

ACKMA recognises the unique role of Māori as Tangata Whenua and embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi recognising Māori as tino rangatira of Aotearoa/New Zealand while embracing the three guiding principles of the Treaty – Partnership, Participation, and Protection. We will endeavor to implement bicultural policies and practices that incorporate and value Māori cultural concepts, values, and practices.