

# EDITORIAL RAMBLINGS

Wasn't it a sensational Waitomo Conference!!! Massive thanks to Peter Dimond, Greg Martin et al, for such a superb job of organisation. A special thank you must also go to John Ash, Peter Chandler & Van Watson of Blackwater Rafting, Nick Andreef of Waitomo Adventures, Joe Davis of Waitomo Downunder, the Stubbs Family of Stubb's Farm, and Derek Mason of Mason's Glowworm Caves for making their operations open to conference delegates. If I've forgotten anybody, my apologies. The generosity of these people really made the Conference.

And then the Post Conference Study Tour!! Another amazing karst experience! Equally massive thanks to Ian Millar and DOC staff for their great organisation, and to Mike & Lorraine Endres (Ngarua Cave), Jane Baird (Rawhiti Cave) and Crawford McLennan (Te Anoroa Cave) for opening their doors to us. As has been said before, having ACKMA visit is like "having 60 mother-in-laws turn up at once", a daunting task, to be sure! Thanks for your forbearance!

I have been talking to Joown Eesh (alias Captain Speedo) since the Waitomo Conference. He tells me fine weather has largely continued since. Oohh - we were so lucky with the fine weather the Conference received, which also held for the Study Tour. John passes on a message for Rauliegh Webb: "*Tell Rauliegh that Joe Tapara is relieved not to be assaulted by funny hats, and that we are still having problems writing the caption for the valuable relic which he so generously donated to the Waitomo Museum of Caves*". Say no more...!!

Brian Clark, the Convenor of the (next) **13<sup>th</sup> Conference of Cave & Karst Management** at Naracoorte Caves in 1999, and his chief assistant, Ken Heyne, are already gearing up! The conference dates are likely to be March/April, when bats are still in the Naracoorte Bat Cave in reasonable numbers. An organizing committee is expected to be, well, organized, fairly soon!!!

The **14<sup>th</sup> Conference** is presently planned for Wombeyan in 2001. This will hopefully be "tacked on" to the International Union of Speleology (IUS) Congress which it is hoped will be held in Sydney in the same year. ACKMA Inc. is supporting the ASF's bid for the 2001 IUS Congress, and the location decision will be made at the upcoming IUS Congress in Switzerland later this year. Ernst Holland will be the representative of the ACKMA Committee in Switzerland.

Speaking of the Naracoorte Conference, while at Te Anau Caves after the Post-Conference Study Tour, I was able to catch up with Noel "Johnny" Walker, who as some may know is now General Manager of Fiordland Travel, the operator of the caves. Of course, Noel was at both the Margaret River and Rockhampton Conferences, and was sorely missed at both Tasmania and Waitomo. However, I pleased to announce, even at this early stage, the delegate list for the Naracoorte Conference, as follows:

1. Noel "Johnny" Walker.
2. Others.

I am delighted to announce that ACKMA member **Mia Thurgate** has been appointed as Karst Resources Officer of the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust. Mia, who until recently has been attached to James Cook University in Townsville, will be "2<sup>nd</sup> in command" to Ernie Holland in his portfolio with the Trust. She takes up her new position on 30 June. Evidently, she won

appointment over a large number of applicants, and I am sure all ACKMA members will join with me in wishing her well in her new position.

Mick Chalker, our Immediate Past-President, is home at Wombeyan from the Waitomo Conference, with heaps happening. The re-lighting of the self-guided Fig Tree Cave in the 12v CBUS system proceeds apace, with the first chamber expected to be completed by early June. The **Official Opening of the Junction Cave**, to celebrate its centenary, and relighting (now complete), is expected to occur in mid-October this year. Assorted polities and media will be invited, and Mick plans to have a bagpiper present!! Bagpipes in a cave! The mind boggles!!! More news as it comes to hand!!

Our illustrious re-elected Australian Vice-President, Ann Augusteyn, remained behind at Waitomo after the Conference an extra day or two with passport problems. We used all our political influence to stop her getting back into Australia, but to no avail! Not one to hold a grudge, Ann has sent me a cutting (see adjacent) from the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin* (21/3/97) concerning rehabilitation at the Mt. Etna quarry. It is great to see the mining company, *Pacific Lime*, local conservationists, the Central Queensland Speleological Society, and the local community working harmoniously in rehabilitating the former mine site.

Good news from Abercrombie! Caves Manager Andy Lawrence and his lovely wife Anjum had a baby boy on 19 March. Baby Lawrence is their second child, a sister for Sienna. Warmest congratulations from all ACKMA members!!

The **11<sup>th</sup> Conference Proceedings** (Tasmania) are now published. Only a very limited number of copies have been printed, and over half are already sold. An order form is on the back page of this Journal. GET YOUR COPY, QUICK!!! The **12<sup>th</sup> Conference Proceedings** (Waitomo) will be published within the next few months, and I expect an Order Form will appear in the September ACKMA Journal.

Advance notice: The **next ACKMA Inc. Annual General Meeting** will be held at Jenolan Caves on the weekend of 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> June 1998. Put these dates in your diary now!!

An interesting review of Dave Gillieson's new book, *Caves: Processes, Development and Management*, appeared in February *New Scientist*. A quote: "Underground caves are natural museums where the geology and biology of past millennia are preserved...." I wonder what the *New Scientist* thinks about aboveground caves...!?!

And finally, the following is the abstract of a paper entitled: ***Spelunking as a manifestation of a counterclaustrophobia***. Myers, W.A. Journal of American Psychoanalysts Association. 1989 (3). 727-35. ISSN: 0003-0651

*"Material is presented from the case history of a patient whose interest in spelunking (cave exploration) was found to be an unconscious expression of a type of counterclaustrophobia. Both oedipal and preoedipal determinants of the claustrophobic anxieties are delineated. Of particular note in this instance is the testicular element in the genesis of the patient's claustrophobia. His confusion of the movements of his testicles into his inguinal canals during childhood defecation with the movements of the feces themselves lent an special*

*intensity to his fear of being flushed away from the mother by an expulsive anal birth from the claustrum. Childhood anxiety aroused when his testicles would become trapped in the inguinal canals was an important forerunner of the adult fear of being trapped in confined spaces. A counterphobic element of the spelunking per se was his enjoyment in hanging suspended by a rope in caves. In this manner, he was able to*

*act out (by virtue of his body-testicle equation) his identification with, and control over, the disappearing testicles in the setting of a claustrophilic union with the mother".*  
So, all of you who enjoy hanging from a rope in a cave - don't get your testicles a in knot!!! Ahh, the joys of being a shrink... Perhaps the cartoon opposite makes a definitive statement.....?