

Brian Clark (left) and Greg Martin (right) receive their Life Membership Certificates from ACKMA President Steve Bourne – Annual General Meeting 2007. Photo: Rauleigh Webb.



TWO NEW LIFE MEMBERS – TWO NEW FELLOWS!

- Kent Henderson, et al

At the recent ACKMA Annual General Meeting at Buchan two new Life Members and two new Fellows of ACKMA were elected by acclamation, namely Greg Martin and Brian Clark as Life members, and John Ash and Ian Houshold as Fellows. There citations read as follows:

In proposing **Greg Martin as a Life Member**, New Zealand Vice President Peter Chandler said: “Our nominee started out professionally with the New Zealand Lands and Survey in August 1973 – the accounts section briefly, before he moved to parks and reserves work. As divisional officer for parks and reserves in Hamilton, he first became involved with the Waitomo reserves. On the Department of Conservation formation in 1987 became Manager – Tourism and Recreation for the greater Waikato Region, then Manager of Operations.

“He was deeply involved in New Zealand’s first mediated Treaty of Waitangi claim settlement at Waitomo, which led to the partnership management with Ruapuha Uekaha Hapu Trust. This was an administrative "first" for New Zealand between the Crown and local Maori. He was also involved in supporting and helping set up the licences for Black Water Rafting.

“He has served as Chair of the Waitomo Cave Management Committee (administering the Waitomo Glowworm Cave licence) since 1990). He has been involved with the Waitomo Caves Museum Society for many years, including a number as Chair. He is currently Chair of the Waitomo Environmental Trust. In recent years he has headed the Department of Conservation’s interests as the Waikato Regional Conservator and continues to be involved with Waitomo. He remains at the core of the successful three way relationship with local Maori and the Glowworm Cave licensee.

“Our nominee, Greg Martin, was ACKMA NZ vice president from 1995 to 1997 and president from 1997 to 1999. He has attended ten ACKMA Conference since 1985, and most intervening Annual General Meeting weekends, and has been prolific in his support of ACKMA.

“At home Greg is married to Sue, with grown-up children Katie and Nick. He rides road and mountain bikes for fitness and recreation, with 20+ "Round Taupo" rides to his credit. He was formerly a long distance runner of some ability, with 20 or more marathons to his credit, including a sub-three hour time at Rotorua.

“Greg was also involved for some years in competitive triathlons, combining his well developed skills in running and cycling with swimming, at which he was also very proficient. An outstanding member of ACKMA in every way, it gives me very great pleasure to nominate Greg Martin as a Life Member of ACKMA”.

In proposing **Brian Clark as a Life Member**, Professor Elery Hamilton-Smith said: “Brian Clark came to karst management as manager of the Naracoorte Caves Conservation Park in 1984 with little knowledge or previous experience of caves.

“He started by asking questions of paleontologist Rod Wells, speleologist Elery Hamilton-Smith and a rapidly widening number of others. Jo Bauer, at that time chief guide, took him on an off-track look at some of the caves and led him to immediate recognition of the vulnerability of caves and the importance of their strict protection. He soon developed a powerful commitment to set about improving the quality of all elements of site and visitor management at Naracoorte.

“Within the first year, he also recognised the fundamental importance of gaining the enthusiastic support of the local community for improvement, and of re-building the broad public respect for and excitement about Naracoorte. Recognising (a) that Blanche Cave had been the first ever recognised cave at Naracoorte, but had never been formally ‘opened’, while (b) Alexandra Cave had probably the grandest ceremonial recognition of any Australian cave, he set up a 1986 formal opening ceremony for the Blanche. Staff and many guests dressed in 19th century formal costume, Bruce Leaver (Director of National Parks) formally opened the cave, while the whole cave was beautifully illuminated with hundreds of candles. Naracoorte caves were back on the map! Progressively most of the lighting and pathways in the caves were re-developed; the over-mature pines which dominated the park landscape were replaced; guides encouraged to develop more creative tour programs; and an increasing variety of special events were offered; Wet Cave was re-opened and the way was open for World Heritage nomination, which was achieved in 1994.

“Perhaps his most remarkable innovation was the development of the Bat Observation Centre where a series of infra-red movie cameras in the Bat Cave enabled visitors to see the daily life of the bats in their own home cave. In turn, this facility has greatly enhanced the capacity of the site to provide for the long-term research program being pursued on the ecology of the bats. Then, in due course, he led the development of the Wonambi Fossil Centre. The Victoria Cave Fossil site was the basis of the World Heritage recognition, and while every effort was made to enable visitors to watch the excavation process and to explain the fossils to them, it was recognised that this did not always achieve real understanding of the meaning of the site. Wonambi enables them to see moving, snarling replicas of the Pleistocene fauna in the setting of a Pleistocene swamp and almost conveys them back to that era.

Like the Bat Observation, it is a unique presentation.

“Even Sandra & David Williamson’s Yulgilbar Wood Gallery at the park entrance, developed with Brian’s support and sense of direction, is probably the finest “souvenir shop” I have ever seen associated with a nature park. There are no mass-produced gimmicks, but only woodcraft of the highest aesthetic quality – a place of true artistry. A highly-respected expert in nature-based tourism, who had worked with park service people in all continents, visited Naracoorte and described Brian as “...one of the greatest park managers I have ever encountered”.

“Naracoorte was only the first act of the Clark drama. Brian was recruited as manager of the Gunung Mulu WHA in Sarawak. This wonderful site had been dogged by governmental ineptitude and a great number of conflicts. The high hopes for its future appeared to have been lost. Within a very short time after Brian’s arrival, the storms abated, and although the site continues to present some inevitable managerial problems, these are all being overcome in Brian’s own creative style. The quality of both site protection and visitor experience is now superb and again, Mulu has its own wondrous features. The Forest Canopy walk is one of the finest, while another of the exciting opportunities for visitors is the medical plants tour of the rainforest. The indigenous people share their incredible understanding of the flora, which provides them with a comprehensive medical system.

“Brian’s focus on the local community remains absolutely central to his work. But Mulu is very different to Naracoorte. Brian arrived to find a long-exploited and relatively impoverished population with little in the way of community services. He has helped that community to work together, to develop quality in their community services and a constantly improving quality of life. Brian served as ACKMA President from 1999 to 2001, and was convener of our 1999 Conference at Mt. Gambier. It gives me very real pleasure to nominate him as a Life Member of ACKMA”.

In proposing **John Ash as a Fellow**, ACKMA Executive Officer, Dave Smith, said: “John Ash has been one of the most influential cave/karst managers in the history of Waitomo. He has made a particular contribution in cave conservation and education, and in the development and management of black water rafting & Ruakuri Cave.

“He first started caving in the late 1950s as a schoolboy from Auckland Grammar School, led by the well known recreational caver John Pybus. After joining the Auckland Speleo Group, John caved throughout the North Island during the 1960s. He was particularly involved in the exploration and survey of the Kairimu area and Puketiti Station, two of Waitomo’s major karst areas. Puketiti Flower Cave and the Henry VIII series of Gardner’s Gut were both explored or surveyed by John.

“At Auckland University he completed an MSc in Geology, studying alongside well-known cave /limestone scientists such as Vic McGregor, Peter Barrett and Cam Nelson. After some time in the States John shifted to Waitomo in 1974 and worked in Te Kuiti (a service town about 20mins from Waitomo) as a schoolteacher. Through the 1970s he developed a particular interest in cave education and cave conservation. John became involved with the Waitomo Museum from its inception, and particularly supported and developed its education programs. He has been on and off the Museum Board since then, continuing to this day.

“In 1980 he launched one of the first commercial adventure tours in New Zealand: WOAD – Waitomo Outdoor Adventures and Diversion. These were largely weekend tours and many were for school groups. This was personally challenging as a lot of thought was put into the ethics of commercial adventure tours and whether it was appropriate or not. Perhaps this led to some of New Zealand's first photomonitoring in Zweisohlen in the early 1980s with Malcolm Wood.

“In the late 1980s Pete Chandler started Black Water Rafting through Ruakuri Cave. Through WOAD John had a van and a good set of helmets and lights, so he and Pete joined forces. This resulted in a whole new local industry – cave adventure tourism, which has since been echoed around Waitomo and the world. It also contributed to the general adventure tourism industry that was developing in New Zealand around that time. As the co-owner and co-manager of Black Water Rafting John and Pete developed high standards of safety, guide training and service, providing lifestyles and careers for hundreds of people including cavers and locals. John also helped form Waitomo's first joint marketing group in 1981, and recently conceived the popular 'two landscapes – twice the fun' brand.

“In the field of cave conservation, John was involved with the major scientific study of the Waitomo Glowworm Cave in 1976. He was the inaugural Chair of the Waitomo Catchment Trust in 1991 and is a former member of the Waikato Conservation Board. He was also Waitomo's Cave Search and Rescue Advisor for many years and was ACKMA's Education Officer for a couple of years.

“In 2003 BWR was sold to Tourism Holdings Ltd and John took over their Ruakuri development project. The quality of the Ruakuri development is testament to John, combining big picture thinking and attention to detail. The outcome, as seen in the set of papers presented at Buchan, is hopefully well worth the long nights sweating whether the tunnel breakthrough calculations were accurate!

“Facts and figures and chronologies paint a small part of the picture of John's contribution to Waitomo. The greater part is the personal qualities he has brought to bear to cave and karst management issues. He is a good and inclusive communicator, some who always tries to build relationships in the community. Taking diverse views and building a consensus is a particular

strength. He manages both big picture thinking and attention to detail.



Ian Houshold (left) and John Ash (right) receive their Fellow of ACKMA Certificates from ACKMA President Steve Bourne – Annual General Meeting 2007.

In 2006 John Ash was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for services to tourism (the Kiwi equivalent of the Order of Australia). John Ash: Caver, Black Water Rafter, Ruakuri developer. A good fellow! It is with great pleasure that I nominate John as a Fellow of ACKMA.”

In proposing **Ian Houshold as a Fellow**, ACKMA Life Member Andy Spate (with input from Rolan Eberhard) said: “Ian Houshold is a native Victorian and studied geomorphology there and, later, at ANU. Whilst in Canberra he got in cahoots with Andy Spate, and they both arrived in Tasmania in the 1990s to be involved in the Marble Hill quarry issue. Andy went back to the ‘North Island’ but Ian stayed and was played a leading role in rehabilitating Bender's Quarry at Ida Bay following its closure, using new methods to promote restoration of natural water flows and quality.

Initially he was employed as Karst Officer for the Parks & Wildlife Service and (several restructures later) as Geomorphologist for Department of Primary Industries, Water & Environment (now just The Department of Primary Industries & Water). Ian initiated projects such as a rehabilitation plan for Newdegate Cave at Hastings, an inventory of magnesite karsts in northwest Tasmania and the Mole Creek karst strategy. He maintains a strong interest in geomorphology generally and loves nothing more than chewing the fat on landscape evolution over a few dozen cold ones.

Ian's professional interest in geomorphology has been pursued through various river-related endeavours and, recently, trips to karst-free Macquarie Island. Ian has been involved in ACKMA for many years. He was a member of the Organising Committee for the 11th ACKMA Conference in Tasmania in 1995. He has attended seven ACKMA Conference, and since 2003 he has served on the ACKMA Committee at Karst Science Officer (Australia). It gives me great satisfaction to nominate Ian as a Fellow of ACKMA

