

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

– Steve Bourne

Life in caves land appears to be fairly hectic at present. Buchan, Margaret River, Jenolan, Yarrongobilly and Chillagoe are all busy with large re development projects that I am aware of and no doubt there are others. At Naracorte, we are partway through a substantial revamp of the Victoria Fossil Cave viewing area in the Fossil Chamber. Many tonnes of concrete and rubble have been removed and substantial remodelling undertaken. The new design and materials chosen may surprise a few but you will have to wait for the write up in the September journal. There has been many twists and turns with this project and just when I thought I had all bases covered: World Heritage values and obligations covered-check, researchers happy-check, department contracting and procurement processes followed-check, I learnt I even required approval from the local council and Planning SA as it is also on the State Heritage List. It will be a race to see if approval comes before the project is completed!



Kevin Mott transporting Marie Choi and her broken leg from Lake Cave to hospital

The Tantanoola Caves Management Plan will hopefully be adopted prior to the end of June. For a small park of just fourteen hectares with two major caves, it has been a long drawn out process with significant mining interests immediately adjacent to the park. What has been learnt through this process is how little we know and understand the geology and hydrology of the immediate area. Making decisions based on sound knowledge is difficult when so many gaps

exist. During this process we have had a researcher Remko Leijds investigating stygofauna in Lake Cave, a spectacularly decorated cave with a lake in the end chamber. Access and egress is a little challenging and the tally so far is one heart attack, a knee reconstruction, severe scrapes and bruises, one case of vertigo and two cases of claustrophobia requiring quick exits. Perhaps the cave is best left closed to save not only the cave but forests from the paperwork!!

The Inaugural Geotourism Conference will be held in Perth in August and it is pleasing to see several ACKMA members presenting. Andy, Elery and I are presenting a paper titled *Show caves: Australia's oldest form of geotourism?*, tracing the early development of cave tourism through to the innovations we see today. I may request some images of recent developments if I don't have myself, so if you have some great shots of new work, or good early historical images, I would be grateful to be able to use them and showcase as many of Australia's caves to an international audience as possible. Images can be sent to <bourne.steven@saugov.sa.gov.au>. Remember only low resolution is required for Powerpoint, no huge files please!

The ACKMA AGM weekend was a resounding success with attendance exceeding fifty. Anne Augusteyn and her staff are to be congratulated on their hosting of the meeting and for showcasing their region. Andy and Cathie ran workshops prior to the weekend which were thoroughly enjoyed by the Capricorn Cave staff. Geoff Deer and I showed some images of our worksites and of other caves around the world to a few staff on the Monday night. None have had the opportunity to visit other sites and it seems like a good idea to allow some time for short presentations of each represented site to the host site's staff.

This would be very valuable at the next AGM 'weekend' in Mulu 2010. I missed Capricorn Cave tours on the weekend due to the ACKMA meetings and another with Capricorn Tourism marketing staff and am extremely grateful to Bianca and Anne for a late night tour on Monday night that concluded near midnight. I am sure it was the last thing Anne needed! Thank you all for a most positive and rewarding weekend!



A view of the lake in Lake Cave, Tantanoola