



CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS



OPENING ADDRESSES

Peter Berrill President ASF and CQSS

Welcome to Cave Queensland ASF 22nd Biennial Conference.

We don't apologise for the weather because this is Queensland, however we do appreciate your attendance and hope that it will not be too uncomfortable for you. The units are air-conditioned from 9pm for comfortable sleeping.

We have tried to arrange this Conference as a Caver's Conference by trying to remove some of the politics and replace it with fun, friendship and every day caving things. The papers received have been mixed and varied but, unfortunately, not very well supported by ASF members in general. Although the agenda is set, there is room for additional items. If you want to speak on some issue or run a workshop, please see one of the Conference Officials and we will try to make appropriate arrangements. The Officials are the ones standing....

We have arranged a number items of general interest such as photos, videos and slides on the Mitchell-Palmer expeditions and the Mt Etna Campaign and in particular, blockade news items. There are a number of photos of yester-year, of some now older members.

We have an International Speleo-Art Display. This initially started out with a small number of pieces but surprisingly has developed into a major International Speleo-Art Display with 41 pieces. Some pieces have been sent from as far away as the United Kingdom and Slovakia. All art is for sale. June MacLucas from CEGSA has attended specifically to display the art.

There is available for your use - a computer, photocopying, slide projector, over-head projector and general stationary etc. There is a display board for items of daily interest. There is a mobile phone for conference use and for emergency contact if needed. There are general rules for the Conference Centre which are detailed in your agenda booklet and I ask you all to read and abide by them. If you have any problems, please come and see, either, myself or one of the Officials.

Because this is Queensland, we have made available for your use sun block, insect repellent and vinegar. The vinegar is not for drinking, but to be taken with you when you go swimming. The reason is that there may be stingers in the water at this time of the year. We will keep you informed on this matter. We have a licensed bar which opens at 5 o'clock every day to late. CQSS have an arrangement where by no matter what we are doing as a club, 5 o'clock is Beer o'clock and all work and politicking ceases.

There are a number of items for sale - port wine which was produced in Roma district of Queensland, a number Bat Cleft T-shirts left over from when CQSS ran the tours, these are going cheap. If any body requires conference T-shirts we are happy to take your order and money!



Now to officially open the Conference - In considering who would be appropriate, CQSS took into account those who have given them the support at a time when it was most needed. Of course, I 'm talking about the Mt Etna Campaign days. It has been the rule to ask some local politician, Beaucrocat, Mayor etc to open such a Conference, however, during our time of need, we were cast out into to cold and virtually ostracised by them and the local communities, so we have decided to ask Cavers to officiate.

I would like now to introduce you to two people in particular, who for many years have given us their support and encouragement. One of them, during the campaign days and after and the other encouraging us in our exploration of the Mitchell-Palmer area of Cape York.

Lana Little is with the Department of Environment and is the District Ranger based at Chillagoe. CQSS first visited the Mitchell-Palmer area in 1989 and since then, Lana has given us overwhelming support and assistance both professionally and personally while at the same time not afraid to dish out a reprimand. She is a Caver at heart and places the preservation of caves and karst foremost. I will add that she sometimes is known to exaggerate the truth, so please, don't believe everything she says about CQSS.

Then we have John Toop, a past UQSS and CQSS member. John also works with the Department of Environment as a Senior Conservation Officer based here in Rockhampton and is the Zoologist, who in the mid-seventies carried out research into the Ghost Bat colony of Mt Etna. During the Direct Action Campaign, he was caught up in controversy due to being a member of CQSS, the organisation heading the campaign, as an employee of the Department of Environment and being the researcher who held an unpublished report regarding the importance of the caves systems of Mt Etna to the Ghost Bats. He has continued to support CQSS, even after Ministerial reprimands.

Please make welcome Lana Little and John Toop.



Yeppoon Recreational Centre - January 1999