

ASF Awards

ASF President, Mr John Dunkley, presented the awards to the following ASF members. The citations for WA members who received the Edie Smith Award was read by Jay Anderson (ASF Snr Vice President & WASG President)

Edie Smith Award

Lex Bastian OAM

Lex Bastian began his caving career in 1949, at the age of 12, when he took a torch and rode his bicycle on a 70-mile round trip to Yanchep, exploring the holes he found by the side of the road. Through the 1950s he continued to visit Yanchep, exploring every hole he could find, and very early on developed a disciplined habit of keeping field notes, sketching the caves, and locating them in relation to obvious landmarks and to each other. During this time he studied geology.

WA speleology's early beginnings were initiated and role-modelled by Lex, setting the scene for a very large and active speleological group in Western Australia.

Lex has remained a very active member of the group, participating in regular monthly meetings and training days, giving presentations to members and organising monthly caving trips to Yanchep.

The voluntary contribution made to speleology by Lex has been huge and outstanding, evidenced both by the number of research papers he has written on the hydrology, geomorphology and speleogenesis of the karst areas in south-west Western Australia, and the number of committees of which he remains an active member.

Summary of achievements

- Founder of the WA Speleological Group and father of organised speleology in Western Australia. The WA Speleological Group was started as a sub-group of the WA Naturalists, the first meeting being held in Lex's home on 17 July 1958. Lex was the first President of WASG and is an Honorary Life Member.
- Discoverer and re-discoverer, explorer, surveyor and recorder of numerous significant caves in the south-west of WA.
- Lifelong advocate of the importance of recording cave finds and scientific discoveries for posterity.
- Researcher of the caves of Yanchep and surrounding areas, with over 450 new records added to the Karst Index for the region over the period 1988-2001.
- Champion of the karst heritage of Yanchep and surrounding areas in the face of threats from urban expansion. As the universally recognised "Yanchep expert", Lex is an adviser to the national park, and is also frequently approached for advice by landowners, emergency services, local councils and Government Departments.
- Ongoing roles as trip organiser; trainer; motivator of cavers old and new; adviser to national parks, local authorities, Government Departments and landowners; popular speaker on geology; and conservation activist.
- Author of numerous articles on WA karst geology and cave history.

Lex is an individual with dreams and with insight; his level of fitness and activity, and his knowledge as a geologist and a speleologist, all contribute to a purpose-driven individual.

Postscript

Just three weeks after the ASF conferred on Lex the Edie Smith Award for achievements over a lifetime of caving, the Australia Day Honours List for 26 January 2003 contained the following citation:

Order of Australia, Medal (OAM) in the General Division:
Lennox Vernon Bastian, Beldon, WA, "for service to speleology in Western Australia as explorer and surveyor, and to the protection of caves".

We extend our heartiest congratulations to Lex, and our delight that the community recognises the contribution to Australia's social fabric of explorers and surveyors.



John Dunkley and Lex (right)

Edie Smith Award

Rauleigh Webb



Rauleigh's contribution to caving and conservation in WA cannot be calculated. He has been an "active" caver for a long time (over 25 years now), being involved in other aspects such as assisting in the organisation of WASG and of ASF as a Vice-President. Rauleigh started caving in 1976 and became a Trip Leader in 1978. He has, at all times, had the interest of the caves at heart. This is often in complete, selfless disregard for what other people would think of his actions or opinion.

Rauleigh has served on many committees including the ASF Executive, the WASG committee and CAC (Caves Access Committee), and has at all times been active in advocating the conservation of caves and karst. He joined ACKMA (Australasian Cave and Karst Management Association) years ago because he saw the need to get involved in management of caves and to educate landowners and cave managers. He has been a WASG representative on various committees involved in the management of caves such as the CMAC (Caves Management Advisory Committee) in Margaret River.

Rauleigh developed the Minimum Impact Caving Code when he saw a need for cavers to be aware of the impact that caving causes; it is a code that has achieved worldwide recognition and has been accepted by cave managers around Australia. He was the ASF Conservation Co-Convenor for WA for over 13 years. This involved coordination of a number of conservation projects and writing reports to the government and annual reports to the ASF.

He has been involved in numerous projects and has worked with many other bodies (other caving clubs, Scouts etc.) to help their members visit caves and learn how to cave in a careful and safe way. Rauleigh also helped, along with several other experienced Perth cavers, to develop a training system for cave leaders.

Rauleigh has been called a "cave surveyor extraordinaire". He has mapped many caves in Australia and overseas, thus contributing to the combined knowledge of caves in a variety of karst areas. He has been the WA coordinator for the Australian Karst Index, an ASF position involving liaison between the ASF and WA caving clubs with regard to cave information - a massive job in itself.

More recently, members would be aware of the Exmouth (Cape Range) court case (mining application by Learmonth Limestone) in which the ASF and WA caving clubs have been involved. Rauleigh was the primary organiser behind this important project. He spent countless hours of his time researching, meeting with lawyers and preparing the case for court, and then spent many days away from work and in court to support the case. As this case has not yet been completed, there is still more ongoing work being done that Rauleigh is involved in.

Rauleigh Webb has given outstanding service to the ASF over a long period of time, making specific contributions to a variety of roles within speleology - exploration, conservation and documentation of caves, leadership and administration. He continues to promote minimal impact caving practices through the development and refinement of policies and procedures. Rauleigh has made great personal sacrifices for ASF and its member clubs in WA over a long period of time.

Fellow of the Australian Speleological Federation Inc.

Peter Berrill

On a motion from the floor of the ASF Council meeting in January, Peter Berrill was unanimously elected Fellow of the ASF. Our equivalent of Honorary Life Member, the award of Fellow is given specifically for outstanding service to ASF itself, and accordingly is determined by the Council. In the 30 years since it was instituted, this is only the seventh time it has been awarded, a measure of the high esteem in which we hold recipients.

Peter was a member of the ASF Executive for 13 years, probably the longest continuous service ever, and President for five very difficult years until his resignation in 2002. Under his leadership in those five

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years, as detailed in the ASF Annual Report for 2002, the ASF obtained registration as an Environmental Organisation, acquired the journal *Helictite* and other assets of the former Speleological Research Council Ltd, reformed the Karst Index Project, and undertook the highly acclaimed Natural Heritage Trust project in the Macquarie region of NSW.

Elsewhere, Peter's name has been most closely associated with the campaign to halt mining and to establish a national park at Mt Etna in central Queensland. This culminated in 1999 in the ground-breaking reconciliation which saw former adversaries surrender some leases and sponsor, jointly with Central Queensland Speleological Society and others, the incorporation of Cammoo Caves into Mt Etna National Park.

Certificates of Merit

ASF Certificates of Merit recognise specific contributions to speleology through exploration, scientific study, conservation or documentation, including roles of leadership, administration, publication and development of new techniques. Recipients for 2003 are:

Julie and Peter Bauer, NSW: for research, documentation and publication on Bungonia caves, particularly the book "Under Bungonia", and continuing active involvement in management advisory roles.

Fr Ken Boland, Vic: for innovative exploration (using ultralight aircraft), mapping and documentation of Nullarbor caves, especially Old Homestead and Thampanna Caves, and the discovery of major palaeontological and other sites of scientific significance.

Darren Brooks, WA: for systematic survey and recording of karst features of the Cape Range, WA, including assistance to WA Museum expeditions, thereby strengthening the case against mining in the area and for proper heritage protection; and for many years of editing *The Western Caver* (publication of WASG).

Daryl Carr, Vic: for exploration, discovery, mapping and documentation of numerous caves in the Buchan-Murrindal area, Victoria.

Peter Horne, SA: for documentation and publication of caves in south-eastern South Australia, and for long-term administrative support for Cave Exploration Group SA.

Athol Jackson, SA: for many years of service to Cave Exploration Group SA, including editing CEGSA News for many years, being President for over five years, and for assistance in organising several ASF Conferences in South Australia.

Tom Porritt, Qld: an active caver in several states, currently in north Queensland, described by a referee as "an Australian caver of note...a modest man whose achievements are not well publicised [and who] epitomises all that is best in Australian speleology".

Sue White, Vic: for exploration, research and publication on soft rock caves in general and western Victoria in particular; for editing of *Helictite*; and for leadership in introducing young people to caving.



Darren Brooks



Susan White



Father Ken Boland

NOTE: ASF Awards summaries by Lloyd Robinson, Jay Anderson and John Dunkley.