

CAVEMANIACS' DINNER

Stephen Bunton

Attendees at CaveMania were informally referred to as Cave Maniacs. At previous conferences there have been Caveman's Dinners but Cave Maniac is a more gender inclusive term which also indicates the real degree of obsession with our principal pastime. While caving is our first passion, eating, drinking and socialising run a close second. The official conference dinner provided just a great opportunity to indulge those other passions.

The only venue in Dover that was capable of seating all the 106 CaveMania participants was the Dover RSL Club. The RSL Club's Ladies' Auxiliary catered for the event and it was by far their largest undertaking to date. A slight mix-up concerning the time the dinner was supposed to start caused more than a little anxiety over keeping the food warm and precipitated a rather hurried start to the evening's proceedings. In the end nobody minded, the meat was wonderfully tender. By the time we had completed the evening's proceedings it was midnight and for some cavers even later.

The quaint old-world charm of the Besser block building with its wonderful view over the bay was appreciated by everyone. We dined as the sun set over Adamsons Peak watching the play of rain showers which saw it periodically wrapped in cloud. At 9 pm we observed a minute silence as is customary in all RSL clubs. The evening included the drawing of a raffle sponsored by Cadbury-Schweppes which raised \$144.00 for ASF. First prize was a hamper of chocolates won by John Taylor. Second prize was a box of favourites won by Steve Blanden.

Earlier in the Conference the Tsunami raffle had raised \$361.00. First prize was donated by Ian and Jenny Ferrier of Mountain Designs, Launceston. It was a Petzl head torch



PHOTO: JOE SYDNEY

Stephen Bunton presenting Arthur Clarke with his Photo Competition certificates.

which was won by Ian McCulloch. Other prizes were a selection of Tasmanian cheeses, chocolates and wines which were won by Joe Sydney, Dorothy Robinson and Serena Benjamin.

The prizes for the winners of the Photo Competition, the Speleosports and the Prusik Race were also presented.

The main entertainment of the evening was an auction for the ASF EnviroFund. This was arranged by Joe Sydney, who was a brilliant success as the auctioneer. Prizes were donated from a range of sources and raised a total of \$1426.20. The formal part of the evening was the presentation of the ASF Awards by John Dunkley and it was one of his last official duties as ASF President.