

# ASSUMPTIONS OF CAVE MANAGEMENT – TIME FOR RECONSIDERATION?

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## Introduction

I want to start by thanking ACKMA for its invitation to attend this Conference and present a paper. For those who don't know me, I am a former President of the Australian Speleological Federation Inc., was a Trustee of the Bungonia Committee which coordinated the campaign against mining leases there which you'll see in a few days time, and I've been a consultant on several management issues at Jenolan, in Thailand and elsewhere. 28 years ago I organised the first cave management conference in Australia, attended several subsequent ones, and was a foundation member of ACKMA. One reason why I haven't attended any since 1983 is a feeling that a corporate culture has since developed among some practitioners that obscures the real mission of cave conservation and management – one that is exclusionary and to some extent elitist; one which devalues the good intentions, achievements, and even intellectual rights of amateurs and volunteers in a task where their input and goodwill is vital. Conversely, let me hasten to say that I am also well aware that some speleologists have been known to adopt that air of superiority as well, airily dismissing the role of paid cave managers in “their” caves, and allowing *their* corporate culture to override the cause of good cave management.

The main reason I am here today, frankly, is that it is time we did something about dispelling these attitudes. But to change attitudes (and in turn, the way people relate to each other) we have to address some misunderstandings and perceptions.

I start with the perception among many cave managers that ASF is a body representing recreational cavers. This isn't so, as its objectives make clear. *It is an environmental organisation*, one of only 100 or so in the country recognised as such by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and the Australian Taxation Office under *very* stringent criteria. Certainly its main constituents are speleological societies, but they have joined ASF presumably because they support those environmental objectives: ASF is not a caving club, it doesn't own any caving gear, it doesn't run caving trips. Its two most notable achievements in the last 12 months (assisted, I should add, by constituent clubs and some far-sighted, dedicated and selfless individuals) have all been in cave conservation and management:

- in the Mining Warden's Courts in Perth and Hobart, ensuring that caves at Cape Range and Mt Cripps will still be there to be managed in another fifty or a hundred years' time; and
- in the NSW Central West, identifying agricultural and other impacts on karst, educating farmers and planners, and fencing off remnant karst vegetation (under a Natural Heritage Trust program)

Let's turn now to the contribution of speleologists to managing caves, as distinct from keeping them out of cement bags. I acknowledge successes such as speleological representation on the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust, and of advisory groups such as at Bungonia and in the south-west of Western Australia. Conversely, I am aware of managers whose concept of speleological involvement is tokenism: to simply ask for (and ignore) opinions, demand maps and other information (which in many cases they then lose), or ask for labour for 'clean-up' days. Perhaps this is why, in recent years, several papers and statements published by ACKMA seem to be based on the premise that speleologists are the enemy, rather than on what should be an axiom, that they are partners in the process of managing caves.

Some of you might think this rush to judgment rather harsh, even offensive. So let me spell out where I come from. Yes, I'd describe myself as a speleologist – many of you do too. But I also like to think of myself as a cave manager, no less so than any of you. I've done my share of track marking and restoration in caves, organising cave management meetings, writing submissions, working on committees, advising management, training novices in good practice, even beating some common sense into gung-ho cavers. You do that too, don't you? The difference is, I don't get paid for it, and like most unpaid work in our society, it is devalued by economists and managers. Over forty years I suppose my total income from all these activities might have been \$3,000. The time has been incalculable – it probably works out at under 10c. per hour.

## Aims of this paper

This paper has three aims:

- To question a widespread assumption that cave management is about getting caves and karst into public ownership, managing them as purely natural resources, keeping people out of both the caves and the management of them, and devaluing the contribution of unpaid cave “managers”;
- More broadly, to examine the foundations on which these and other assumptions were built;
- To venture some thoughts on first steps towards a better paradigm for managing caves.

I am going to approach the problem from a human resources point of view, hence the references to the education industry. I make no apology for focusing on the worldview of cave users, because I will demonstrate that without their support the cause of sound cave management is flawed. Nevertheless this presentation is perforce brief: I will endeavour to elaborate on each part in separate, more detailed discussions elsewhere. I have drawn on several levels of experience: as a (amateur) cave manager, as an educator, as an administrator, and from 41 years of caving experience.

## Schools, caves and human nature

As some of you know, I spent most of an earlier life in the education industry, as a teacher and administrator. I am drawing on experiences there to make some suggestions about shortcomings in the business of cave park administration. First, let's look at some parallels between schools and cave parks:

1. Schools are notoriously resistant to change. Most teachers are too busy teaching to stand aside and spend time contemplating why they do things the way they do. The same goes for park administrators. The conferences both attend are usually of peer practitioners. Enmeshed in their own beliefs and practices, many simply never comprehend how 'outsiders' see their 'problems' or could be partners in solving them.

2. When student behaviour first became a serious problem in the 1980s, the initial assumption was that the answer lay in the curriculum i.e. what was taught. It was some time before realisation dawned that the real problem lay in the *relationship* between the people involved, particularly a mutual lack of respect. What lessons are there here?

3. For a long while teachers actively excluded parents, the community and other "outsiders" from the educational process, seeing them as interfering, upsetting the apple cart or questioning familiar practices. Schools have been much better places since these practices ceased. What about caves?

For teachers, one of the regular stress-release mechanisms over morning coffee is the hoary old one about what wonderful places schools would be - *if it weren't for the students*. It occurred to me that the same wistful attitude is often apparent among natural resource managers. How wonderful if pesky recreational cavers didn't telephone for permits, turn up every weekend, have to be hounded for reports, make it their business to tell you how to do your job. How peaceful if scientists and would-be academic writers on caves and karst didn't take up valuable office and coffee time expounding their latest theories. Indeed, how wonderful parks and reserves would be if it weren't that the public generally wants to visit them, park cars, have picnics, take walks, and go into caves.

## How have our ideas evolved?

Cave management in Australia has been driven by philosophies based on and assuming public ownership of natural resources. Compared to Europe and the USA, disproportionate numbers of our caves are on public lands. At cave management conferences, only a tiny minority of papers has dealt with private tenures although they cover a lot of karst if not caves. There have been none at all describing the stewardship exercised by speleologists in three areas right here in NSW, and none on the many informal management plans prepared and practised by speleologists in caves probably never even visited by paid management. The concept of sustainable use of resources seems scarcely to have intruded, with some people ideologically and intellectually opposed to it. It is instructive that all of the ACKMA Presidents have been *public* employees.

The model of cave management thus evolving from public ownership was inevitably a bureaucratic one (worsened more recently by managerialist practices), so that with one or two noble exceptions, the public has been systematically excluded from meaningful involvement in planning and decision-making. Public involvement to many managers means no more than asking their opinion about a decision already made, or inviting them to help clean up the area for Keep Australia Beautiful day.

Public ownership is traditionally defended on the basis that it ensures protection for future generations. Strangely, however, some of our best examples of conservation are in fact private endeavours such as Arkaroola, the David Stead Sanctuary at Wirrimbirra near Mittagong, and the Earth Sanctuaries concept. Analogously, some of the most damaged caves in NSW are those in public lands, including national parks, and among the best are those managed by cavers at Cliefden, Walli and Jaunter.

Figure 1 sets out some of the assumptions of cave management, along with some cautionary questions on which a critical assessment could be built. Before examining these, though, let's look at a strategic view from the park management profession. Here are some comments of the Director of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service:

*"Rhetoric has created community expectations of conservation perfection, a frozen state of evolution and an intolerant view of protected areas as being extra-human"*

*"Human access (is seen) as threatening and indeed immoral"*

*"The claim that the principal client of a park is conservation (is wrong). The primary function of park management is conservation but the principal client is the community (my emphasis)"*

*"Protected areas are not infused with some quasi-religious quality nor do their managers answer to some authority higher than governments and the community; they depend upon the agreement of the community that it is valuable and valued"*

*"A healthy protected area system needs to have a variety of tenures to cater for the real world demands of the variety of recreational needs"*

*"Parks should be community-usable resources in such a way that the core function is not compromised while promoting the reasonable integration with community aspirations".*

(McPhail & Williams, 2000)

Fig. 1: SOME ASSUMPTIONS OF CAVE MANAGEMENT

RECEIVED WISDOM:	CAUTIONARY QUESTIONS:
1. Cave management is (only) about managing natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We wouldn't need management if there were no human visitors</li> <li>• Therefore cave management is also about managing <i>people</i></li> <li>• A protected area is a cultural construct as well as a natural one</li> <li>• Pejoratives like <i>problems, threats, disputes, conflicts, hazards</i> reinforce assumption that the principal client of parks is conservation</li> </ul>
2. Cave (& karst) management is (only) about managing caves and karst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What about upstream catchments?</li> <li>• What about integrating karst with broader land-use planning so karst is not left as an island?</li> </ul>
3. Cave Management is about managing caves on public land  AND a corollary: 3a. Sound cave management can <i>only</i> occur if caves are publicly managed	Of all participants at ACKMA Conferences in the last 12 years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• only 6% represented private land owners</li> </ul> Of papers presented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• only 2% dealt with management on private lands</li> <li>• There were none on the stewardship of caves by cavers</li> <li>• None on impacts in major agricultural areas like NSW central west</li> </ul> BUT: most of Australia's karsts & (possibly) caves are on private land  RESULT: perceptions are biased towards public administrators
4. Caves have a zero carrying capacity  AND a first corollary: 4b. Cave degradation will accelerate indefinitely without appropriate action  AND a second corollary: 4c Caves face their greatest threat from cavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reductionist argument – leading logically to total exclusion of human influence</li> <li>• Doesn't apply to most active stream caves nor most caves in tropics</li> <li>• Outmoded - diverts attention from values that might be impaired</li> <li>• If true, ASF Minimum Impact Code is simply delaying inevitable</li> <li>• An affluent society which produces the increased usage is the same affluent society which can afford to deal with it</li> <li>• On a regional scale, impacts on karst from agricultural practices probably vastly exceed those of miners and cave users</li> <li>• Contradicts common sense – a cave removed by quarrying is gone forever. All others are at least restorable</li> </ul>
UNQUESTIONING BELIEF IN THESE ASSUMPTIONS LEADS TO THE FOLLOWING:	
5. Cave management is (only) for professional cave managers AND a corollary:  5b Only professional cave managers engage in cave management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The same rhetoric once peddled by teachers, health professionals, lawyers etc. – it is exclusionary, elitist, outdated &amp; unproductive</li> <li>• It may result from creeping credentialism &amp; professionalism</li> <li>• (See also QPWS Director's comments on management priesthood)</li> <li>• Sheer hubris</li> <li>• Ignores stewardship exercised by speleologists e.g. Cliefden, Walli and a long list of caver-initiated conservation &amp; restoration projects</li> </ul>

**BUT WHAT IS REALLY DRIVING THESE ASSUMPTIONS?**

I don't have time here to discuss each assumption in detail, just to touch on a few aspects, but I must say that some thorough deconstructionist analysis is badly needed. Too many assumptions have the effect of reinforcing pre-existing stereotypes and prejudices, producing rhetoric rather than stimulating discussion. *My main point is that these propositions have assumed the status of unassailable articles of faith*, even though they are no more than considered and well-intentioned opinions:

- They are based on a subjectivity that is often elitist and self-serving;

- Some began life as assertions or implications by gurus but have not been analysed in detail;
- Some appear as though they resulted from quasi-Marxist struggle sessions where the official line was rammed down people's throats.

In fact, they are nothing more than starting points for discussion. *All* of the propositions appear reasonable. But every single one is simplistic, most are tendentious, some are redolent of that elitism, hubris or sheer presumption which the Director of the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service refers to.

Despite my criticism, there is still some sound received wisdom here. So what is the dominant paradigm driving this received wisdom? Boiled down, I believe it is:

- *That caves are badly damaged and can only get worse*
- *That managing caves (and karst) is about working out control mechanisms to arrest or minimise this deterioration*

### **1. That caves are badly damaged and can only get worse: Contemporary roonism and the doomsday industry**

I wonder if you've heard the saying, often pejoratively called the cockie's lament:

*"When the sun shines, it means drought; when it rains, it means flood; and when the grass grows, it means bushfires".*

This is roonism, a catch-all recently given a run in the media. The word derives from the 1921 poem "Around the Boree Log", which goes

*"we'll all be rooned, said Hanrahan, before the year is out...."*

So roonism is the conviction that things are bad and getting worse. Tony Abbott, Federal Minister for Employment, and Michael Egan, NSW Treasurer have taken up the theme with gusto (and I suppose that alone should be good reason for being sceptical!). Egan felt it remained an enduring feature of the Australian psyche: certainly it may be a deep strain in the Australian character, akin to the cultural cringe.

This alarmism is manifested in the assumptions made about managing caves and karst. There's too much academic and management talk about problems, threats, hazards, crises and conflicts. Too much about the impacts cavers and others allegedly have. Not enough about the truly amazing achievements of cave conservationists, of caves and cave areas that wouldn't be there to manage had it not been for cavers. Not enough about practical solutions, about building on this truly remarkable record, about restoring damaged karst and caves, or about the sustainable use of them.

I recall a conversation many years ago with Kevin Kiernan in which he lamented the loss of Lake Pedder. I tried to console him with the observation that if it had not been for the Pedder campaign, there would have been little public support to save the Franklin. Shortly afterwards, in an address to the 11th ACKMA Conference, Kevin noted: *"... there is too great a focus on failure and too little focus on success". ... "If those of us actually working in karst related fields are to continue to make progress, we need to maintain and expand our dialogue with one another"*

He went on to ask: *"How many of our conflicts still arise because different stakeholders talk different languages"? ... Virtually everyone wants to do the right thing. But often people have different perspectives, different experiences.... We have to assume goodwill, not simply because it is usually the reality, but because if we don't make that assumption we're doomed from the start"*

I think he was implying that if you build a management culture which, albeit unintentionally, is perceived as exclusivist or elitist, and especially if you do not assume goodwill in others, you are doomed from the start. So, let's start not with roonism, but with boonism: building on the boon of a pre-existing, greater civic conservation ethic.

This leads to my second paradigm:

### **2. That cave management is about working out control mechanisms**

Some years ago I worked in a school that for a decade had survived without formal school rules. The only written rule was that the school expected students (and staff) to relate to others the way they'd like others to relate to them. I was given the task of codifying as rules the situation that existed in practice. Instead of producing the usual list saying DON'T do this, DON'T do that etc., I came up with a statement of what was the RIGHT thing to do. As for class rules, we didn't have any. The understanding was that students were trusted to do the right thing unless they showed that the trust had been betrayed.

Does your cave area work like that? If a school of 800 adolescents can thrive with minimal but essentially positive statements about human behaviour, why do cave managers need so many negative ones to 'control' responsible, essentially trustworthy adults?

The problem, again paraphrasing the Director of Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service is that there is a culture in some quarters that holds that only professional managers understand the 'proper' management of parks absolutely, and that all elements of management must be subject to strict control and detailed implementation. This is a bureaucratic model: a high degree of specialisation, hierarchical authority structure, recruitment based on ability and technical knowledge, interchangeable staff, and an impersonality regarding customers as "outsiders" who are intruding into the park. It is manifested in talk about 'impacts' of intruders or visitors, control of their activities, complicated permit conditions. Guides wear uniforms to assert their authority. Interpretation emphasises the cognitive dimension i.e. the assumed imparting of knowledge by 'experts' rather than the creation of understanding or of affective sympathy with management aims. Management plans are wherever possible done internally or by 'expert consultants' – the public is seldom given a serious role, public consultation is seen as time-consuming, and therefore inefficient. What appears to be efficiency then becomes confused with effectiveness. Regulations proliferate and become an excuse for inaction or poor management. Some regulations say much more about the poor human relations strategies of management than they do of customers' behaviour: witness the ludicrous, draconian proposals currently before the NSW Parliament whereby I risk a \$3,000 fine for carrying a torch or karabiner in my car boot.

The common theme is a system based on 'rational' rules. – the exercise of control on the basis of knowledge, authority or coercive power. In this mode of thinking, all that is required is more resources for proper

management enforcement. This is a lose-lose outcome because on this model, resources are never enough. Financial demands are open-ended and unachievable, leading to internal morale problems and an external perception of an increasingly control-driven bureaucracy with insatiable demands. Visitors are apt to be reminded of their school days, with neither they nor staff understanding that schools aren't like that any more, and nor should parks and reserves. They have little sense of 'ownership' of the resource – and they behave accordingly.

## Respecting the contribution of others

There are 10,000 caves and karst features in the Australian Speleological Federation's national database. This year we will spend \$12,000 further developing it. ASF members own about \$20 million worth of cave maps alone. One which I've had a lot to do with, of Bullita Cave, has cost about \$100,000 in direct out-of-pocket expenses to produce. Factor in a labour component and some on-costs and its notional value is over \$300,000. There has been no real legal requirement to do so, but we've always shared it with the managing authority. Why? Because there has been an informal understanding - they respect our contribution and intellectual property rights, have actively sought our views on management and taken them on board, and there's been a quid-pro-quo benefiting all.

Contrast that situation with the experience another member club had recently in its dealing with a management authority. The authority flexed some autocratic muscle by demanding copies of all maps and information on caves held by the Society, on the threat of access being denied to caves – coercion bordering on intimidation. They had no legal right to this material and their attitude was not conducive to getting it.

I'm not suggesting cavers should be paid for this sort of thing. *I am* saying they deserve respect and recognition for what they do achieve, including their largely selfless conservation work in ensuring that there are still caves left to manage in this country. Out of respect comes goodwill. I said above that if you do not assume goodwill in others, you are doomed. By extension to all cave users, *I conclude that many of the so-called problems of cave management have more to do with the way people are managed than with the way caves are managed.* The problem lies as much with managers as with cave users. If you do not respect the rights, the contribution and the views of users, or if they are treated as though their views don't matter, the feeling becomes mutual.

Some speleologists can be difficult, but the disparaging remarks about cavers made in this forum (i.e. ACKMA) over the last few years are unbecoming.

## First steps towards an alternative paradigm

So, is there an alternative? Well, firstly the mutual perceptions of each other held by many managers of the public in general and of cave users in particular have to change. Cave users must be seen not as problems but as participants or partners in the process of managing

caves. In a later paper I will enlarge on this theme, but for the moment let's examine some examples that treated cavers as problems.

In Hobart a couple of years ago I was astonished to find myself recruited as a kind of 'go-between' between speleologists and management. There were no advisory committees, much less a policy-making body on which community groups were represented. This is a common situation around Australia, and I wonder to what extent it is influenced by statements like this: "*speleologists have an inherent (conflict of) interest in maintaining their own access to caves, often at the expense of other potential visitors*". This implies that other 'cavers' e.g. managers and scientists, address management issues in a detached manner, which is clearly nonsense – they have vested interests too. Apart from decrying good management experience and giving offence to many cave users, this statement is simply not borne out by experience e.g.: Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust.

The same authors began their discussion thus: "*We have long held the view that caves, their contents and values are more at threat from cavers and their activities than they are from the activities of quarry operators and other users, or abusers, of karst areas*". There followed a brief explanation that this referred to all cave users including scientists and cave managers. Nevertheless, the discussion then rapidly segued into an unremitting catalogue of bad news about caver impacts, user and abuser were conflated, regrettably gratuitous references were made to speleologists and in practice the catch-all term 'caver' soon transmuted into 'recreational caver'. Except for the suggestion that the Australian Speleological Federation should draw up a Minimum Impact Caving Code (which it did), no strategic direction was set. Despite its subjectivity, this otherwise valuable paper continues to be quoted by later writers on cave management as though it were settled dogma. It's not.

## Lessons from Education

Turning now to the experience of the education industry. In some states at least – ACT, Victoria, Tasmania - every public school has a governing, policy-making board on which the professional teaching staff is generally outnumbered by parents and students. In Victoria particularly they have strong power over staff selection and tenure. This is an industry for which professional training is a minimum of 4 years university degree, one where professionals rightly claim special 'expertise' and might be expected to know better than their clients how to manage schools. In other words, one human service deliverer – education - trusts students of ages as low as 13 or 14 to be responsible voting members of policy-making bodies, but another one – natural resource management - denies it even to highly experienced adults who are directly affected. I suggest it is because the latter group see people as interfering with their task rather than being potential contributors to achieving their objectives. Why *do* most public resource management authorities behave this way, restricting public involvement to things like clean-ups? That is tokenism. The fact is, *real* community involvement makes professionals uneasy. Yes, it is time-consuming,

but in the long run, it's a much more effective way of achieving your goals.

Apologies to those of you who regard yourself as (former?) speleologists, but nearly forty years a speleologist may have put his finger on it thus:

*"The former speleologist in his or her growing maturity begins to see speleology as either a manifestation of psychologically immature mind ... or as a group of unsociable eccentrics"*

Many speleologists are indeed their own worst enemy - are we going to deny that this thinking has passed through all our minds occasionally? Subconsciously or not, though, it affects the philosophical attitude of managers towards managing caves: "we are the experts, we will make the rules". For example there was the proposal at an ACKMA Conference a few years ago that ACKMA should "*determine priorities and recommend practices in karst management ... transcending the idiosyncrasies and perhaps uninformed position of localised administrations*" and that "*the fragmented nature of cave management control can lead to a divergence in philosophy and thus in approach*". There was, of course, no suggestion that anyone other than

'professionals' might have a worthwhile contribution to make.

There are several caves and cave areas in NSW managed by speleologists under a form of stewardship. Remarkably, this does not appear to have come to the notice of any ACKMA Conferences for I can find no mention of it in past Proceedings. I now make the provocative proposition that the caves under this form of management have fared somewhat better than most of those managed by the NSW NPWS. Why? Because under the stewardship system all the players have a sense of owning the problem of looking after the cave. Cavers have long had informal stewardship of individual caves or parts of caves in some places like Jenolan, and they are the ones who have drawn up similarly informal plans for the management of these sites.

We have to learn from the practice of excellence by other human service providers who long ago started moving away from these outmoded management practices. The fact is that *all* cave users are cave managers. Owning the *problem* is not the same as owning the *cave*. To enable people to look after what is their own, we have to give them a sense of ownership and stewardship of natural resources. This means we have to embrace the human dimension of cave management.

Let's see what the Director of QPWS had to say about this approach:

Why community involvement is needed

*"It would soften the view of a park management priesthood which only reluctantly tolerates human presence and secular advice"*

*"It would modify the impression that the only locus of strategic and management knowledge resides in the professional managers"*

*"It captures a broad range of perspectives and consolidates broad support"*

*"We must change from a culture of park providers. The system (attempts) to intensively manage increasing demand to avoid compromising the integrity of the system. All that is then needed in this model is more resources ... Such an approach is lose-lose. The financial demands are open-ended and unmeetable, leading to internal morale problems through frustrated expectations and an external perception of a system with insatiable demands"*

(McPhail & Williams, 2000)

A couple of thousand years ago, Aristotle observed that "*What is common to the greatest number gets the least amount of care. Men pay most attention to what is their own; they care less for what is common*". I guess he foresaw Garrett Hardin's *Tragedy of the Commons* by 2,000 years. Nevertheless, where conventional property rights solutions are not practicable, it *does not follow that environmental problems can or should be redressed by regulatory means*. So what should you start doing?:

- Critically examine management behaviour rather than externalise problems as customer behaviour
- Help others share "ownership" of the resource that you manage
- Respect them for what they achieve rather than criticise them for what they don't
- Find ways of encouraging meaningful community involvement in management decision-making, not just token "clean-ups".
- Attend a speleological meeting, try to understand their culture, and think about joining either a club or ASF

*It is time:*

- to recognise that there is a wealth of common sense and experience out there among people who are *not* paid to manage caves, but who love them and who already exercise a measure of informal stewardship over them.
- to recognise the pivotal role played by speleologists in ensuring there are caves still left to manage in this country.
- to find common ground with private landholders, catchment and groundwater management planners, and vegetation managers, and perhaps to learn from the work recently completed by ASF in the NSW Central West.
- to devise practical means whereby non-owners can exercise a formal stewardship over certain caves and karst e.g. through a Memorandum of Understanding.
- to accept that the so-called ‘problems’ of cave management may well lie in our assumptions about human behaviour or about what management means.

*It is time to:*

- To assume goodwill
- To show trust in people rather than assuming the worst
- For managers to get out and try to understand the culture of speleology by going to club meetings, joining occasional trips and talking on the basis of equality
- To work in partnership with like-minded individuals and organisations towards common goals, rather than rely on increased internal resources

Clearly a lot of work lies ahead, and Figure 2 sets out the basis on which the human dimension might be approached. I will have achieved the objectives of this address if we can at least agree that the *process* of management needs a rethink, rather than the usual concentration on the *product*. In particular, a closer partnership with ‘outsiders’ has to be a priority goal.

Years ago, I remember some sound advice from a colleague during a management dispute: “*Look, John*”, she said, “*if you want to gain power you have to learn how to give it away*”.

In most schools throughout the country, professionals have given away a great deal of their power, trusted others, and as a result schools are much the better for it. Power-sharing gives a feeling of “ownership”, of “stewardship” of what is managed. It’s cheaper than seeking more staff to ‘control’ things, and it’s more effective.

As cave managers, paid and unpaid, professional and amateur, I believe we all need to find ways of achieving this in managing our cave and karst resources.

Fig. 2: THE HUMAN DIMENSION OF CAVE MANAGEMENT – CHARACTERISTICS OF MANAGEMENT MODELS

OLD (Bureaucratic)

TOWARDS THE NEW

Common Theme	Control on basis of inputs - 'expert' knowledge, authority, coercive power Over-emphasis on natural elements	Based on goodwill & trust Human beings seen as an integral part of the equation. Balances natural with social/cultural elements.
Recruitment	Seeks technical knowledge	Also seeks interpersonal qualities
Organisational functioning	High degree of specialisation  Hierarchical authority structure  Efficiency	Core knowledge expected but flexibility encouraged Team-based task allocation based on who can best do job Effectiveness
Organisational culture	Impersonal, elitist, exclusionary	Interactive, inclusive
Management of visitors	Highly regulated control of activities General public seen as outsiders or intruders Outsiders e.g. cavers with special knowledge, regarded with suspicion Talk of impacts of visitors or intruders Talk of problems, threats etc.	Minimum regulations  Visitors seen as part of the equation Outsiders' contributions actively sought and honestly acknowledged  Talk of opportunities and outcomes
Permits	Complicated, based on legal rights of management	Simple, based on agreed policies, recognising & respecting rights of all parties
Supply of Information - Resource Inventory	Seen as management 'right'	Intellectual property rights respected Seen as partnership exercise
Uniforms	Guides wear uniforms (to assert authority)	Minimum uniform – maybe a hat?
Interpretation	Interpretation emphasises cognitive (transmission of knowledge)	Interpretation emphasises affective (senses)
Strategic planning	Management plans done internally or by 'expert' consultants	Management plans based on widespread community involvement (NOT just token 'consultation')
Public involvement	Public involvement seen as time-consuming, & therefore inefficient	Public involvement seen as integral, and in the long run more effective

## REFERENCE

McPhail, I. & Williams, A. (2000): Parks, perceptions and people. *Wild Times* (supplement), February 2000. (based on a paper presented at the International Symposium on Society and Resource Management, University of Queensland, July 1999).

*(POSTSCRIPT: I was sorely disappointed after presenting this paper to find that only a small minority of the people I spoke to had in the last decade been to a conference of speleologists or even to a caving club meeting, one asserting that he didn't attend such gatherings unless paid to do so! Conversely, it's only fair to mention that last year I visited the patch of a hospitable and dedicated cave managers, but one to whom the local cavers would not talk. To understand the culture of cavers you have to go and meet them).*