

M-3 Shades-of-Death Cave Appeal

Purchase of the M-3 Shades-of-Death Cave Property, Murrindal, Victoria by Rimstone Cooperative Ltd

Rimstone Cooperative acquired this property in April 2017. We continue to appeal for donations to pay for it. Details of how to donate are given below. Our target is the final \$10,000, of the contract price (\$30,000) which is due over the next 2 years.

History

The cave is situated 15 km north of Buchan, just north of the Murrindal School House on the Buchan-Gelantipy Road. It is also known as *Murrindal Moon Cave* but the *Shades-of-Death* name goes back to Henham and Moon who first explored the cave in 1906.

Shades-of-Death was developed as a Show Cave from the 1960's when it was developed by Jack McMahon, an Orbost engineer, and three cavers (Graham Shaw, Geoff Rebbechi and Warren Kennedy). Geoff Rebbechi and Graham Shaw operated the cave for tourist visits during school holidays for many years. In the 1990s it was operated by Geoff's brother Dennis Rebbechi and his wife Carol and Kim and John Van Dyk kept it open for visitors after Denis and Carol moved to Queensland. Geoff Rebbechi, the final owner the cave, was concerned that the cave and property is well looked after in the future and offered its purchase to Rimstone Co-operative.

The cave has an entrance gate, built stairways and a lighting system. The entrance is on an allotment of 0.4 ha, fenced with several sheds.

Acquisition by Rimstone Cooperative Ltd

The purchase of the property has provided both a challenge and opportunity for the Cooperative.

- It needs careful and sensitive management.
- It has exploration potential as it has unexplored sections in the upper levels. The lower levels can be wet and muddy
- It could be used as a training cave and has SRT training potential
- It is a very good cave for educational purposes
- It may be important scientifically as it is one of the "older" caves in the Buchan area being high in the landscape.
- It has potential for Open Day visits for the community

Rimstone Cooperative Ltd is a Community Advancement Society with speleological aims and experience in owning and managing property. Our success in purchasing the Scrubby Creek property has meant that the Karst Conservation Fund is again prepared to give its support. We are therefore asking for your support in acquiring this property. The purchase is funded by donations either directly or via the ASF Karst Conservation Fund that enables your donation to be tax deductible.

Donations can be made in the following way:

Directly to Rimstone Cooperative Ltd. Anyone who is not a current Rimstone member, who donates \$150 or more DIRECTLY to Rimstone, will be given membership of the Cooperative. The total donation will be put to the M-3 Shades-of-Death Cave Purchase Appeal. Membership details will be organised as quickly as possible and membership forms are available from the Secretary (nicholaswhite@netspace.net.au).

Cheques to be made to Rimstone Cooperative Ltd and mailed to the Treasurer, Nigel Cooke PO Box 155, Boronia Victoria, 3155 or by direct debit to the Rimstone Cooperative Ltd bank Account BSB 063011 Account No: 1008 6510.

Via the ASF Karst Conservation Fund. If you wish to donate through the KCF please use the form on the next page and follow those instructions. These donations are tax deductible.

ALL donations are welcome and are urgently needed. For any further details contact the Rimstone Secretary, Nicholas White. The opportunity to buy suitable cave property does not come often. We would all regret it if the opportunity was lost.

THE SUPPORT OF ALL AUSTRALIAN CAVERS AND FRIENDS OF KARST IS NEEDED NOW!

For further information contact Nicholas White, Secretary, Rimstone Cooperative Ltd (phone 03 9386 3970 or nicholaswhite@netspace.net.au).

KARST CONSERVATION FUND

ASF Inc. is an Environmental Organisation registered by the Department of Environment & Heritage and the Australian Taxation Office. ASF's Karst Conservation Fund (ASF Gift Fund) receives tax-deductible donations in support of projects relating to ASF's conservation and environmental objectives. Details of the Karst Conservation Fund (KCF) and its officers are available on the Australian Speleological Federation (ASF) website www.caves.org.au.

Directors of the Fund are:

Maria Comino LLB (Brisbane); Anthony Culberg OAM, B. Com, DipEd, TTC (Hobart); Kevin Kiernan PhD (Hobart); Phil Maynard PhD (Sydney); Nicholas White BSc (Melbourne), MA (Monash); Grace Matts, ESM, Grad Dip Admin, M St. J, JP (Sydney); Robert Kershaw, B.A. (Sydney), Grad Dip Ed (STC) Grad Dip Adult Education and Training (Wollongong).

Fund Management Commission:

The ASF has established a Commission to provide the Directors with advice on projects and to manage matters such as fund raising and reporting. The Commission Chair is Nicholas White. For further information: asf.karstfund.info@gmail.com or write to ASF Treasurer asf.caves.treasurer@gmail.com