



# Rimstone News

Official correspondence of Rimstone Cooperative Ltd

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**Rimstone Cooperative Ltd.**  
*Rimstone Cooperative Ltd.*  
A Community Advancement Society

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## Editorial

In this edition of the *Rimstone News* there are some very interesting updates including details about the **M-3 Cave Community Open Day**, where your help will be greatly appreciated. There is also an update on the **speleo research** taking place in Buchan, and a **Scrubby Cave** property update (tufa, fencing and water trough).

Make sure to see all this, with photos, in the following pages. In conjunction with this, I have been updating our website with some of the many photos of the Rimstone properties, so make sure to [visit those at www.rimstone.org.au](http://www.rimstone.org.au).

Don't forget the **Rimstone AGM** is very soon. Oh, and please be careful and diligent when depositing money into our bank, so we know from whom it came (more details below).

**Rob Brain, Newsletter editor**

Feel free to send feedback or suggestions, comments, etc. to the Rimstone Co-operative directors: [directors@rimstone.org.au](mailto:directors@rimstone.org.au).

## Shades of Death (cave)

### Open Day, Launch and free BBQ

Have you seen our newest property acquisition yet? Your help is needed to help us show it off to the local Buchan and Murrindal community!!

Rimstone Co-operative is proud to have been able to purchase the cave and property from the cavers who developed this cave. The Rimstone directors have decided to host an Open Day – which is part of our outreach policy to show the Murrindal and Buchan community what Rimstone Co-operative has been doing since purchasing it.

Some volunteers will be needed to help this day run smoothly. Please see more details further below, and we hope you will volunteer to help.

Gold coin donation will be accepted for entry on the day. Members, visitors and the local community are all invited. Costs of tea, coffee and snacks at the cave and for the BBQ at Homeleigh in the evening covered by Rimstone (gold coin donation to help cover costs is very welcome).

## Rimstone Co-op Events

Friday 20 September – 2019 AGM

Saturday 2 Nov – Shades of Death (cave)  
Open Day, Launch and Barbeque

## Notice of AGM Meeting

Formal notice of the Rimstone Co-operative 2019 AGM was emailed to all financial members on 6th August 2019.

**Date/time:** 8pm, Friday 20 September

**Venue:** The home of Darryl Pierce

Please bring a small plate to contribute to snacks/supper. Tea and coffee will be provided. Please BYO folding chair!!

RSVP: by email to the directors:

[directors@rimstone.org.au](mailto:directors@rimstone.org.au)

[Download the notice of AGM and Agenda.](#)

## Shades of Death – Open Day details

**Date:** Saturday November 2nd, 2019

**Time:** 10am to 5pm

**Opening:** 11am (the formalities)

**Where:** At Shades of Death Cave,  
Buchan-Gelantipy Road, Murrindal,  
(15 km north of Buchan)

**What:** Tours of cave and souvenir Rimstone  
Newsletter with detailed history  
of the cave.

BBQ at Homeleigh in the evening.

More information about this not-to-be-missed, memorable event is included below. Please make sure to RSVP for catering, and book accommodation asap.

## AGM 2018 minutes

The draft minutes of the 2018 AGM meeting are [on the website](#) for you to peruse prior to this year's AGM.

### M-3 Cave (Shades of Death) Open Day Volunteers are needed to help us

On Saturday 2 November we will open up the M-3 Cave (Shades of Death) to the public, and invite the local people to come and have a look with us. For this Cave Open Day and BBQ event to go smoothly, and be a great success in the eye of the locals, we need a number of volunteers for the advance planning and to help out on the day.

If you can assist with any of the following in any way, no matter how small, then please get in touch asap.

**Wanted:** A number of volunteers for various jobs to assist: Daryl Carr with overall cave operations and Nicholas White with whole event coordination.

**Planning stage:** We need help with the following:

- Special editor for Rimstone Newsletter History edition from discovery to today with provided material. Production, layout etc by Rob Brain.
- Invitations and Publicity – 2 people needed to work with Nicholas White.
- Lighting manager assistants – Miles Pierce.
- Catering coordinators (2x) for Shades Day and Homeleigh evening BBQ.

**On the Event Day:** We will need the following helpers:

- Cave guides (3-5).
- Traffic controller (may need parking in paddock near Leigh and Monica's place next door).
- Catering support at the cave and at Homeleigh (2-5 people).



*Daryl Carr painting the M-3 cave railings  
in preparation for the Open Day*

**Shades Open Day RSVP:** If you can help with any of the above, then please be in touch asap. Offers of assistance with tasks in the lead up to, and at, the Open Day should make themselves known to the directors by email.

Current key contacts for this event are: Nicholas White (overall); Miles Pierce (lighting); Daryl Carr (cave and tours).

**Rimstone Co-op directors**  
email to: [directors@rimstone.org.au](mailto:directors@rimstone.org.au)

### Booking accommodation at Homeleigh

To book accommodation at Homeleigh for the Shades Open Day, or for any other visit, please make sure to use the proper email address so that your request is received promptly. Then our on-duty accommodation officer can reply promptly. (Else your request might get lost.)

**Homeleigh Booking Officer**  
email to: [accomm@rimstone.org.au](mailto:accomm@rimstone.org.au)

### New Members

Welcome to our new Rimstone Co-operative members in recent months:

Aranzazu Gea Parreno  
Sarah Baeffel  
Ashleigh Clingin  
Bridget Jones  
Toby Beasley  
Stella Nikolaevsky

Please make them feel very welcome.

### Rimstone website updates

I have been adding our slowly growing collection of M-3 cave and work party photos to a new page on our website. You can see it here: (Editor)  
[www.rimstone.org.au/m3-cave.html](http://www.rimstone.org.au/m3-cave.html)

You might read herein about free accommodation to university students undertaking special project work. For more information on this aspect, email to the Rimstone Directors.

### Contacting directors

Nigel Cooke .....M 0409 967 084  
Gary Coleman ...H 9808 3716 M 0418 108 274  
Darryl Pierce .....M 0428 746 139  
Mark Tregellas .....M 0417 840 692  
Nicholas White . .H 9386 3970 M 0427 110 143  
or email: [directors@rimstone.org.au](mailto:directors@rimstone.org.au)

## Scrubby Creek Property update

### The Tufa Terrace Fencing and Water Trough Project

In July 2019 there was a working bee which addressed several issues with the new fencing at the Tufa Terraces (near the cave entrance).

The newly installed fencing went up around the cave outflow and tufa terrace, but would have stopped the cattle from using their traditional drinking source (we had to leave the gates open).

The latest major work project was the installation of a water trough outside the fenced area to provide for stock water access. The water trough takes water through a pipe from the spring outlet and delivers it to the water trough. Water returns from the trough to the tufa terraces via an overflow pipe.

The remaining task is to put gravel around the trough to prevent the area pugging up. There is no stock on the property at present. The property is quite green; but there is little grass growth, dams are empty and water flow at the spring is still extremely low.

The trough is located near the big yellow box tree on an area with topsoil which covers ancient tufa terraces from an earlier spring location. [The first photo here shows this location some weeks after the project, with successful rehabilitation after the trenching.]



*Lots of work digging and trenching to bury the water pipe for the trough (ack: Neil Wilson)*

The whole task went very smoothly as Paul Brooker had planned the fence completion,

obtained the water trough, fittings and piping. The irrigation pipe starts at the spring, works around the side of the top terrace pools, through a wombat burrow and is then buried to the trough. A return pipe from the trough back to the tufa terraces was also installed and this is buried. See the excavation effort captured in the photos here.

The gates on the tufa fence are now shut. The upper tufa terraces have very little blackberry. Together with Latrobe University botanists we are trying to source suitable plants to shade the tufa and protect the biota. At present the shade trees are the tree violet (*Melicytus dentatus*) and the mutton wood (*Rapanea varibilis*) and we will try to establish more of these. We will now be able to remove the introduced grasses and the breakdown clays in the tufa pools and let the mosses recover from the drought and drying out.

We currently have a 3rd year Latrobe University student, Holly Jung, with a project investigating the extent of the old buried tufa and hoping to establish its age. She will have free accommodation at Homeleigh to undertake this work, as do other tertiary students studying caves, karst and related subjects in and around Buchan.



*Another view to put the location into perspective (ack: Neil Wilson)*

There have been problems with deer shooters. New NO SHOOTING signs will be posted to deter this. It is essential that people accessing the property do so with permission via the directors or directly with the lessee Doug Reidy.

 See more, and larger, [Scrubby Creek property photos on Facebook.](#)

### Speleo research at Buchan

Rimstone is currently assisting John Engel, a PhD student at Melbourne University Geochemistry Laboratory, with speleothem sampling. He also has samples from Shades of Death Cave. The results are defining the ages of cave formation which is related to the down cutting of the Buchan and Murrindal Rivers.

During the 1980s and 1990s Buchan research was limited in fixing the cave dates due to existing technology. Uranium-thorium dating is limited to about 600,000 years. The Buchan Show Caves have gravel beds in them which are magnetically reversed showing that these caves were present 800,000 years ago. Jon Woodhead at the Geochemistry Laboratory has validated the Uranium-lead dating series which is infinite.

The dating for the Potholes caves and Shades of Death cave is giving speleothem dates which extend the age of the caves beyond what was known before. John Webb is now revisiting his earlier work on the Potholes. John Engel's studies towards his PhD are adding considerably to knowledge of the ages of the Buchan Caves.

The Latrobe University course which uses the Buchan area to example the contrasting botany in different geological settings includes using Homeleigh for accommodation and the Scrubby Property in the course.

The tufa terraces are a particular focus as is some practical conservation. The practical conservation component has been blackberry and weed removal. The course last December discovered tufa buried under topsoil to the south of the existing tufa. Currently there is a 3rd year Latrobe University student, Holly Jung, researching the old buried tufa and trying to establish the source of the spring which deposited it. It may be possible to establish its age. She will have free accommodation at Homeleigh to undertake this work.

**Nicholas White**

### Scrubby Creek Cave exploration

Neil Wilson has had two recent trips into the cave. One in July and another in August. The stream flow rates were very low. A new sump safety floating rope was purchased so that the old non-floating rope could be retired.

The object of these trips was training new leaders and exploring the sump and rockpile at the far end of the cave.

Nigel Cooke has now been made a VSA Scrubby Creek Cave leader. The last trip retrieved some broken speleothem samples from

the main sump to be dated by John Engel and Jon Woodhead at Melbourne University.

**Nicholas White**

### M-3 Shades of Death property update

The program on the infrastructure is based around upgrading both the existing surface and underground infrastructure. Daryl Carr is manager of operations at the cave and property.

Initial investigations showed that the generator was not properly regulated as to voltage and cycles. Miles Pierce has installed a new voltage regulator and the generator is now delivering 240 volts at 50 cycles. There are still several other jobs such as venting the exhaust outside the shed to do. At this stage there is no intent to do more to the underground lighting.

The roof at the entrance to the cave was rusted and leaky. Greg Brick, local plumber and Buchan pub publican, donated some used but very good corrugated roofing iron. This was used by Gary Coleman and his roofing mate Sam Derwent to replace the roofing iron. This has made the entrance lobby to the cave more presentable, better lit, as well as controlling the spill of leaves into the cave.



*Showing off the new roofing over the cave entrance foyer*

There has been a focus on removing and reducing the overgrowth of trees and shrubs on the cave allotment. Roy Furness and Amanda Furness recently cut a lot of branches. Much of this requires disposal at the tip. It consists of dead limbs as well as quite a bit of cypress (not to be used in Homeleigh heaters due to its resin content).

Within the cave the works program is confined to the existing developed portion of the cave. Most of this was exceedingly solid although it has needed rust treatment and painting. Wooden steps have been replaced with boards made from recycled plastic. Progressively the wire safety panels are being refastened where appropriate or replaced with new panels. Supporting pipework has been rust treated, painted with an epoxy

metal anti-rust undercoat and a grey blue topcoat. Some pipework at the start is in need of replacement. This program needs several more trips (contact Daryl Carr). Following this there will be an overall clean up and vacuuming of the passageway, steps and nearby features.

This infrastructure in the cave was installed during the 1960s and 1970s. The materials used might not be used today but they certainly served the purpose at the time. They contain materials such as galvanised metals which may affect cave invertebrates. Rimstone Co-operative has to accept that it was not our plan to be purists and is not our plan to operate the cave as a Show Cave. The restoration program is based on being able to use the cave as an educational resource on Open Days.

Currently access beyond the developed portion of the cave is project based. The current program is to systematically remap the cave and assess restoration needs such as track marking, cleaning and defining excluded areas due to presence of fragile and delicate formation.

Broken speleothem samples are being studied by John Engel for his PhD. These show the ages when speleothems were growing, and some are quite old. The study will contribute to new landscape interpretations for Eastern Victoria.

**Nicholas White**

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### Important Update from the Treasurer

All member renewal statements have been sent out and most members are now up to date. Many thanks to those who have acted on that statement and paid their arrears together with the current year. If you have not received a statement yet then please contact me urgently to confirm your contact details. Once again, my apologies to those who did not receive a statement last year. For those who are still to pay, please do so before the AGM. Remember that only financial members are eligible for the members' accommodation rates.

We have switched over to an on-line system called Xero. It doesn't issue invoices/statements with the level of subscription we currently have. Those I have to do manually. It does however make the annual audit process much easier as the accountant has direct access to the accounts and can easily provide support were needed.

**MIC role** — A reminder about performing the role of Member In Charge (MIC) at Homeleigh. The MIC gets free accommodation for a particular stay because they take on additional responsibilities (but it's only free when there are 5 or more people present).

There are specific financial responsibilities you undertake when accepting that role. One is to ensure that the Booking Sheet is filled out correctly. That document forms part of our annual audit and it needs to have all payee and payment information for us to be able to prove where our funds are coming from, so please take it seriously.

The second financial duty is for the MIC to ensure that all members have paid for their accommodation before they leave Homeleigh. People paying on-line can do so before the stay or they can pay on-line or in cash on the weekend. Where payment is on-line, the MIC should request a deposit receipt reference. Where payment is in cash, you should deposit the cash into our bank account within a few days of the conclusion of the trip. When dealing with cash it is often more convenient for the MIC to pay on-line and keep the cash. So long as the correct amount is deposited, and has the booking number as a deposit reference, all will be well.

Finally, the MIC must forward the completed booking sheet to the Treasurer (me). Taking a photograph of a crunched up piece of paper that used to be a booking sheet and forwarding it via SMS is NOT acceptable. I need the original booking sheet or a reasonable quality facsimile of it. Once again, this document forms part of our audit so please take it seriously.

Oh, and don't forget that it is the responsibility of the MIC to ensure that all checking, appliance turn-off, clean-up, and locking is done before departure. Thank you for your assistance.

**Nigel Cooke (Treasurer)**

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### Paying into our bank account

To help us accurately record your payment details for either your **annual subs** or your Homeleigh **accommodation payments**, and obviate the need to chase you, please make sure to use the correct information as follows:

**Bank details:**

- Account name: Rimstone Cooperative
- Commonwealth Bank
- BSB: 063 011
- Account number: 1008 6510

**Reference text either:**

- Invoice Number, or
- Booking Sheet Number

It is important to use the invoice number or booking sheet number in the reference for the deposit so that we can reconcile it against your account – otherwise you might still owe us.

Thank you for your assistance.

**Nigel Cooke (Treasurer)**