



BINOOMEA

The Newsletter of the Jenolan Caves Historical & Preservation Society.
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Presidents Column August 2008

Time marches on – and sadly we will be saying our goodbyes to John Callaghan and partner Phyllis Calvert. Thankfully it's not a permanent goodbye as they are retiring to the North Coast and I hope we can keep in contact with them in the future.

John was one of the founders of JCH&PS and has been our most constant supporter and guide (no pun intended!) over the 36 years of our existence. He is an Honorary Life Member and one of our Trustees, and was instrumental in saving the Post Office, and in obtaining Harold Coates as our patron in the early days. As you are probably aware, Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust has organised a farewell dinner (in association with JCH&PS) for John on Friday 15th August, to which I hope many members will be able to attend.

Phyllis Calvert has also been a stalwart supporter of the Society, with major efforts in renovating the Post office in 1993 and subsequent service in various official positions. Among those, she has served as Newsletter Editor and JCH&PS Secretary and has organised many fund raising schemes, as well as appearing in period costume at a number of our Historical Weekends. Our JCH&PS August meeting will be held on 16th, so please come along to add your farewells as John and Phyllis leave for a warmer climate and a relaxing retirement.

On another note, I would like to thank David Cook and Jimmy Lim for organising and mounting a historical display at the Slow Food exhibition as part of the Jenolan Chocolate Indulgence weekend at Caves House on 31st May. All publicity (well almost all) is good publicity in bringing JCH&PS before the visiting public.

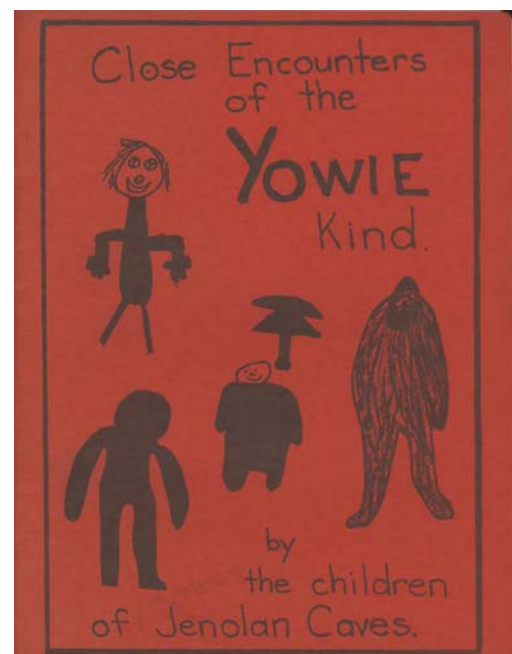
I look forward to seeing you all at Jenolan on 15th and 16th August.

Arthur Gray
2008 President
Jenolan Caves Historical and Preservation Society

YOWIE'S AT JENOLAN.

"In a modern context, Yowie is the generic term for the unidentified hominid reputed to lurk in the Australian wilderness. It is the Australian version of the Himalayan Yeti or the North American Bigfoot. The yowie is also a fearsome, hairy creature of Aboriginal mythology. Also called Doolagahl ("great hairy man"), it is venerated as a sacred being from the time of creation which the Aborigines call the Dreamtime. An alleged sighting by a hunting party of settlers in 1795 was followed by increased reports from the mountainous regions of New South Wales in the nineteenth century. What does all this have to do with Jenolan you ask? Well in the 1970-1980's there were several Yowie sightings reported in the Blue Mountains area, infact some even just up the road in the Kanangra Boyd National Park. The school children at Jenolan Caves Public School aged between 5-12 years old, wrote a story about the Yowie that hibernated in their caves in the winter. Fact or fiction, I don't know?

JCH&PS has recently reprinted a limited number of these books, and will have them available for sale at the August meeting.



WHAT DID YOU MISS ???

The usual author of this column, (the editor) was not in attendance at the JCH&PS May meeting, so unfortunately can't give an accurate report this time. I heard that items discussed were planning for the display at the Slow Food weekend held 31 May. Also discussion relating to and the decision to reprint the book Close Encounters of the Yowie Kind book, as featured on this page.

DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR AN ARTICLE FOR THE BINOOMEA?



You don't necessarily have to write the article, just tell me what you would like to read about. Articles, suggestions, letters to the editor, complaints, and stories are welcome, and can be forwarded to the editor.

Please contact:

Jenny Whitby at: 48 Park Street
Charlestown 2290 Ph (02) 49432265 or
send your email to:
jwhitby@exemail.com.au

CONTACT DETAILS:

JCH&PS

Locked Bag Jenolan Caves 2790.

Please send your membership chqs or
general correspondence to this address.

SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT.

This month's society spotlight is on member Michael Collins. His first trip to Jenolan was a week long trip with his grandmother when he was about 10 years old, spending week at Caves House, and doing all the show caves. In 2001 he returned as a novice caver on a speleological trip with Jenny & Gary Whitby, and visited some of the caves up the valley, including Mammoth Cave. He says it took him two weeks to recover from the trip.



Since then he has certainly been bitten by the cave bug. He is a now also a cave diver, leading dive exploration trips into the depths of Barralong cave. On a diving trip in June 2006 he discovered Capt Cooks Cavern in Barralong Cave. Weekdays he runs his own business as a pool builder, and now he has added Cave Guide to his repertoire. He is also a member of Sydney

University Speleological Society. His favourite cave is Barralong for obvious reasons. His first tour as a casual guide was the Lucas Cave at Easter this year. It had 60 people and they had a blackout! When asked what made him decide to become a guide, he said he wanted to share knowledge of his cave diving exploits with people.

SCAFFOLDING AT JENOLAN PAST & PRESENT.

Now that the scaffolding has all gone, with the new roof tiles, and a fresh coat of paint Caves House is looking very clean and schmick. Gone is the lichen on the roof tiles, but I'm sure it won't take long for that rustic weathered look to return. The Gatehouse also got a coat of paint, but have you noticed anything different about it? It has changed colour, as it is now painted the same colour as Caves House, whereas it previously was white. Here is a photo sent in by member Sandi Bartlett of the painting taking place back in April. 1976. The scaffolding would not pass Workcover standards today!



Caves House repaint 1976. Photo by Sandi Bartlett.



Gatehouse repaint 2008. Photo J Whitby

James McKeown ~ From fact to folklore to legend to fable...and back again!

Part 1- by Dan Catchpoole.

It is well known that all 'historical facts' about Jenolan Caves have been passed on from guide to guide over the years. In this manner, much of what is spoken by guides about Jenolan's early history is considered 'folklore' or 'legend', principally as most have never actually seen any original documents from those years. In typical fashion, the story of the first Europeans to enter the arches and caves, James and Charles Whalan, following their attempt to hunt down the 'notorious bushranger' James McKeown somewhere around the late 1830s, early 1840s, is generally told by guides as a piece of 'theatre' to entertain the tourists, or brushed over with a degree of sceptical uncertainty.



The first Jenolan guides to tell this story were the Charles Whalan and his family themselves. Indeed, all historical accounts, published and private, appear to emanate from the Whalan clan and those immediately associated with them. As the original guides were the actual reported captors of James McKeown, the story would have been relayed as factual eyewitness accounts, reliving the exciting day of his capture. Over time, as the story was told and retold by many guides, the Whalan family became more distantly associated with the Caves and the eyewitnesses to the McKeown episode died, it appears to have taken on a more theatrical telling...

"For several years this desperado carried on his depredations, retiring to the security in these, at that time, unvisited, mountain fastnesses. During the hunt for McEwan's den his pursuers saw the great black caverns, now called the Grand Arch and the Devils Coach-house." (J.J. Foster, "The Jenolan Caves, New South Wales", 1890, Pub: Charles Potter, Government Printer, Sydney).

However, as the telling of the story became entrenched as part of a guides "script", the realities of the story were lost in time, relegating to being considered 'folklore'. Over time, historians and interested publicists tried to conduct 'research' so as to find evidence of the account to back up what was spoken of by the guides, but with little success. Ward L. Harvard in "The Romance of Jenolan Caves", (1933) states....

"The problem is to determine just when and how white man first happened here. No authentic records are available, and our deductions, if we make them, are based upon tradition....and it is unbelievable that there is not extant and contemporary with it some record of their discovery"

Later books designed for tourist sales state openly that the story of McKeown is none but a 'romantic tale' to entertain the tourist. *"There is no 'James McKeown' in contemporary court records and the first newspaper account appeared 50 years later in Charles Whalan's obituary in a Bathurst newspaper, not by itself convincing historical evidence"....* (Julia Horne, "Jenolan Caves, When the tourists came.", 19??)

Most recently, the very existence of James McKeown has even been brought into question. *"Many believe that the bushranger McKeown did not exist. There is no clear record of McKeown's imprisonment at Hartley or Bathurst or his supposed transportation to Norfolk Island..."* (Nigel Price, "An Investigation of the European History of the Tuglow Caves Area prior to 1900." 20th April 2007 (www.glenreef.com.au/EuropeanHistory.pdf))

The very absence of tangible documentation relating to the McKeown account, even beyond the reports of eyewitness account published by the Whalan family, has caused many speculations about the veracity of what is commonly still used by Jenolan's guides as a history lesson during their tours of the caves.

So how complete has the research been? It appears that the scepticism relating to the McKeown story has not been built on their being tangible evidence which contradicts the story or specifically raises doubt about it. Rather, it's the absence of any records at all, which are independent of the Whalan accounts, which has led to the factual basis of the story being questioned. The research that has been undertaken to date has neither proven that the story is true or false. Yet, this absence of information has caused some to extrapolate their own conclusions about what they considered to have 'really happened', such unsubstantiated statements being integrated into our telling of the story with the result that we move further away from the truth. It needs to be born in mind that when researchers find 'nothing', they have not necessarily proven anything.

With the increasing availability of information on the intranet, the chance of finding useful new information about McKeown will greatly increase. Such a find was made through a website called www.Ancestry.com.au which has led me on an intriguing journey, gathering records and documents relating to a "James McKeown (McKeon)" which I believe could well be the McKeown of Jenolan fame. It is hoped that at the end of the journey, the truth of this man's life will be retold accurately, without bias or hearsay and with veracity. Because, if you consider the story as told by the Whalans, James McKeown had one very interesting life!

Most early newspaper articles and tourist books indicate James Whalan is said to have captured James McKeown around 1838. Hence, are there any independently generated records of a James McKeown around Bathurst/Oberon/Lithgow/Hartley around the late 1830's? Figure 1 shows a record from a 1846 ledger listing convicts following a 'muster', who were listed as having been on a ship called the Lady Franklin which 'returned in 1844'. This James McKeown was noted to have been tried in 'Bathurst NSW 1836' and sentenced to 'Life'. He had also received a 'TK of Leave' or ticket of leave, which gave him freedom to live and work in a given district, having served out his sentence time or receiving some suitable favour for good behaviour etc.

Name	Where Tried Date of Trial	Year	Ship and Date of Arrival	Remarks
Michell Charles alias Carmichael	Inverary	1813 10	Equestrian 1844	3 rd Class Pass Mr Bradshaw and wife
Masters Richard	Duss	18 7	Do	Do Mr Masters and wife
McKeown James	Bathurst, NSW	1836	Lady Franklin 1844	Life

Figure 1 – Extract from Convict Muster ledger of 1846. (Source: www.Ancestry.com.au)

A later document, from a similar muster in 1849, also lists James McKeown (number 13073) as arriving on the "Lady Franklin in 1844 from Norfolk Island" (see Figure 2). The *Lady Franklin* was a barque built by convicts at Port Arthur specifically for the transportation of convicts between Norfolk Island and Hobart (see Figure 3). Interestingly, this record lists the "Dates of Trial" for not only James McKeown's conviction which sent him to Norfolk, but also his original conviction which saw him transported in the first place. It notes (Figure 4) that not only was he tried in 'NSWales 1836', but also was tried in 'Down 1824', that is County Down, Ireland. Note that his original sentence was for '7' year, the standard amount given, whilst 'lifers' required a further 8 years, making the total '15' which has also been noted.

No.	Name	Ship	Date of Trial	Year	Position
12980	McDonald James	Lady Franklin	1844	7	Free
	Macabberty James	from Norfolk Isld	1844	14	hired by Upsonbridge, Mon
	McLure Leonard	"	York	10	Free
	Wellington John	"	Lancaster	15	cond. Pardon
13073	McKeown James	"	Down 1824	7	"
			Bathurst 1836	8	"

Figure 2 – Extract from Convict Muster ledger of 1849. (Source: www.Ancestry.com.au)



Figure 3 – Stamp from Norfolk Island illustrating the Lady Franklin.

Knowing that this James McKeown originally came from County Down Ireland, further searching of the internet led me to the website for the County Down Museum, which provides an online database for convicts who had been transported from there to the colonies. A brief scan of this database (<http://www.downcountymuseum.com/prisonersaus.aspx>) identified the following information....

Surname	McKEOWN
Forename	James
Alias	McKEON
DOB	c1793
Place of Trial	Downpatrick
Date of Trial	24 Mar 1824
Sentence	7 years
Native County	Downpatrick
Occupation	Ploughs, shears
Age	32yrs
Religion	Catholic
Crime	Robbing houses of worship
Ship	Asia 1 (3)
Departure Date	Cork 29 Oct 1824
Arrival Date	21 Feb 1825
Assigned to Work	Parramatta. R.SMITH at South Creek.
Certificate of Freedom	31/260 34/1299
District	Bathurst

If this is the James McKeown of Jenolan history it corrects three pieces of information which have variously been quoted and misquoted in reports about him. Firstly, his name is spelt 'McKeown' not 'McEwan' (which is Scottish in origin!). Secondly, for James McKeown to be tried in 1836, his capture by James Whalan would have been before then, making the discovery of the caves around 1836 or even 1835 as quoted in John L Horrocks's Handy Guide "Jenolan Caves" chapter (Pub 51 Market St, Sydney, Year 1890++??). Finally, indeed James McKeown was sent to Norfolk Island, but he did not die there as was stated in Fosters account (J.J. Foster, "The Jenolan Caves, New South Wales", 1890, Pub: Charles Potter, Government Printer, Sydney) but more in keeping with the report in The Argus newspaper on 1899.

Whilst such leads are intriguing, before we can conclude that this James McKeown is the one of Jenolan fame, we need to verify many more things. Of most importance, we need to determine what he was tried for which had him sent to Norfolk Island? Only by uncovering this information will we potentially find a link between him and the Whalans, and indeed Jenolan.

Till the next exciting episode!

Dr Dan

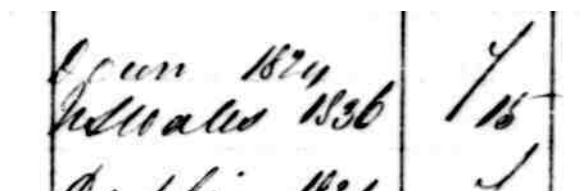
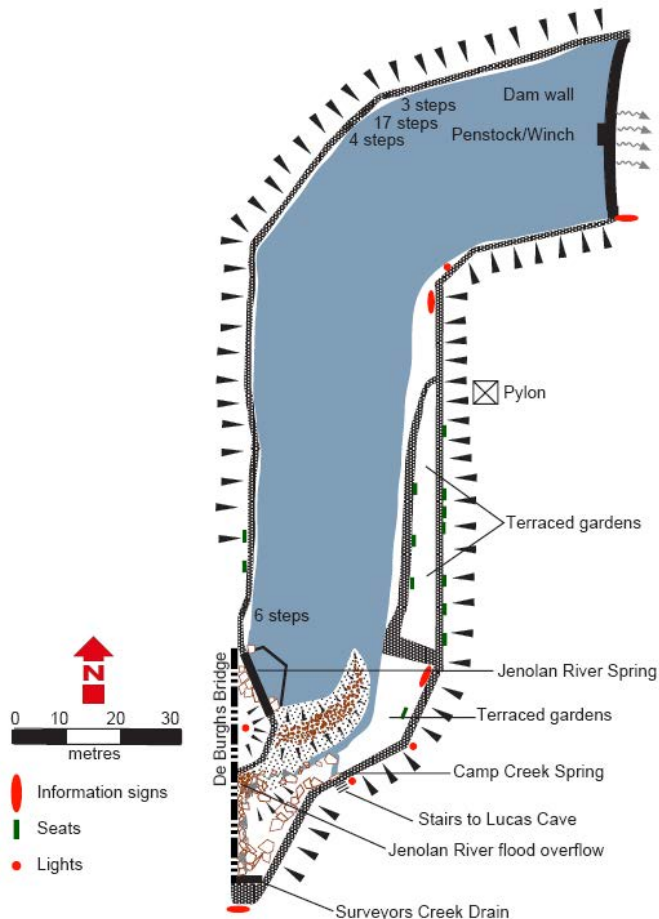


Figure 4 – Close up of "Date and Place of Trial" column from Figure 2 above.

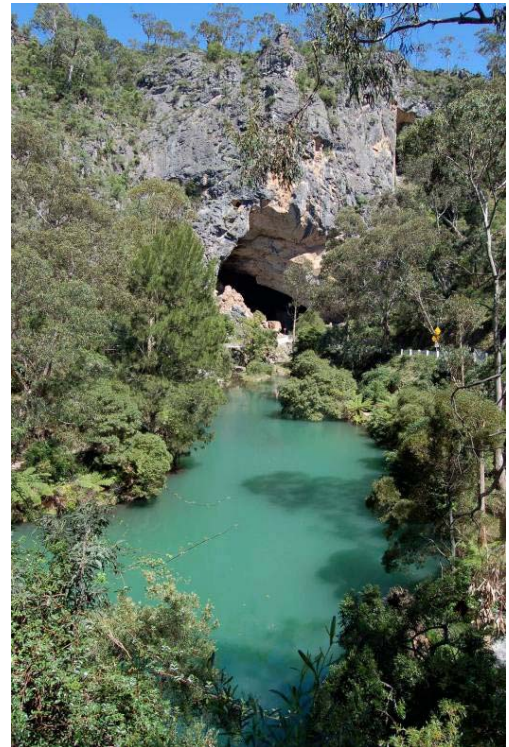
HAPPY BIRTHDAY BLUE LAKE. by Jenny Whitby.

Did you know that the Blue Lake celebrates its centenary this year!

The Jenolan Blue Lake (the Lake) is one of the Reserve's more prominent features, and it provides a visually spectacular entrance to the Grand Arch Precinct while complementing nearby features including the Reserve's diverse Eucalypt forest communities. In addition to its aesthetic qualities, the Lake and its surrounds provide habitat for terrestrial and aquatic fauna and flora.



Survey by the Jenolan Caves Survey Project.
Coordinates for survey stations available from
jnmj@chem.usyd.edu.au.



In the 1870's visitors to the caves camped in the Grand Arch or Devil's Coach house using the Jenolan River as a source of fresh water. The first reservoir on Surveyors Creek was constructed in the late 1880's on the site of the present children's playground above Caves House. Ten years later this reservoir proved insufficient to meet the demand of the increased numbers of visitors to Caves House Precinct, and a larger reservoir was constructed upstream by placing a weir across the creek. The reservoir was later filled to form Car Park no 1 but the original weir remains. In 1908 a third weir was built near the Leffel Wheel on the Jenolan River below the Grand Arch and the Blue Lake was created. But by 1920 even this was insufficient to cater for the visiting population, which had increased from 7000 people in 1909 to 64245.

The Lake is an artificial construction created in 1908 by building a dam 40 m upstream of the Leffel wheel to supply a more constant head of water for the hydroelectric turbine. The cylindrical dam wall is of a type that was built for small-town water supplies between 1896 and 1908 by the Public Works Department (NSW), and is believed to be the last of its type built. The Leffel hydroelectric turbine was replaced with a newer dynamo in 1916 at a location one kilometre downstream of the dam wall, a system that is still in use today. A 10 m high dam wall retains water in the Lake, which currently covers an area of approximately 4000 m². The Lake is fed by: Camp Creek from the south, Surveyors Creek from the west, and the Jenolan River from the north.



Dam wall in the 1970's after draining of the Blue Lake. Photo by Noel Rawlinson.

The engineering structures around the Lake include DeBurghs Bridge, the curved masonry dam wall that retains the Lake, and a trout pond. DeBurghs Bridge is an arched limestone road bridge, constructed in 1896 to span the Jenolan River and provide visitors with easy and constant access to the Grand Arch and the cave systems. At the foot of this bridge is a small reservoir, created in the late 1880s from the resurgence of the Jenolan River to provide a water supply for the water-driven Leffel wheel, a hydroelectric turbine generator (located 180 m downstream of the Jenolan River Spring). This is thought to be the first hydroelectric system built in Australia and supplied the Jenolan Caves with its electricity from 1889 until 1916.

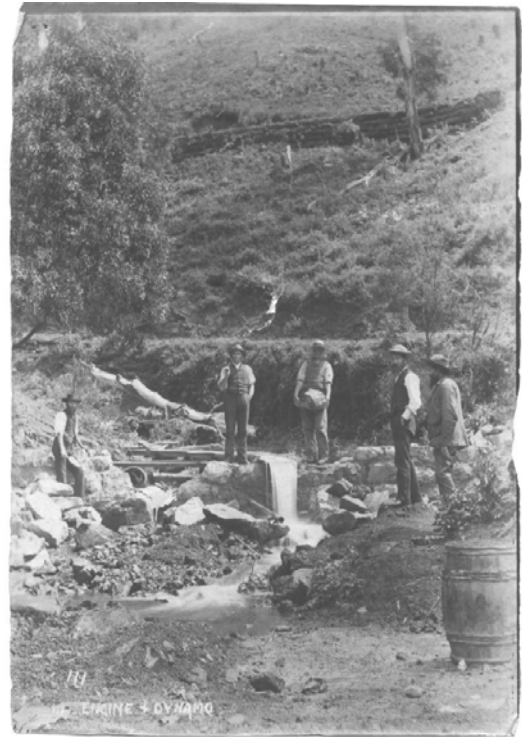


Trout pond and fish ladder. Photo by S Whittlestone

A trout pond, consisting of a low masonry wall and fish ladder below the wall that is filled by flow from the hydroelectric plant was built in 1906 in the hope of attracting sport fishermen to the area. As with the hydroelectric system, the fish stairs at the trout pond are believed to have been the first of their kind built in Australia.



Ernst Holland driving a tractor in the drained Blue Lake 1975. Photo from of JCH&PS collection.



Building the Leffel Wheel.
Photo from JCH&PS collection.



2005 draining of The Blue Lake to remove debris. Photo by Dave Rowling.



Debris in the Blue Lake, photo taken in 2005 from the dam wall. Photo by Dave Rowling.

References: The Blue Lake Management Plan JCRT 2006.
The Auxiliary Precincts Jenolan Caves Reserve Conservation Plan (Built Environment) Supplementary Volume 1988.

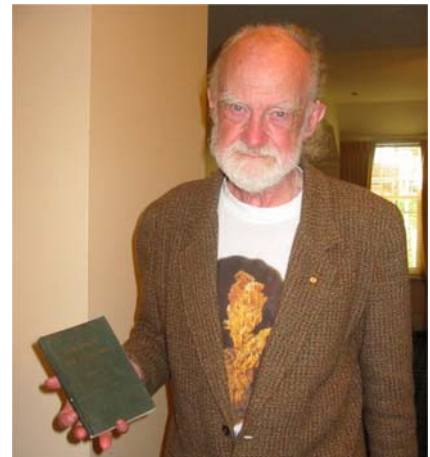
HIDDEN STORIES ABOUT JENOLAN by Jenny Whitby.

Following the reprint of the book "Close Encounters of the Yowie Kind", here is the first article about some of the lesser known books written with references to Jenolan Caves in them. Whilst the title of this edition's feature book does not appear to reveal any connection to Jenolan, one of the three short stories inside the book certainly does.

The Spirit of the Bushfire. (Vol. 4) by Whitfield, J.M, 1916.

Illustrations by George Lambert. Edward Lee & Co, Sydney. This book is one in a series of four, and says Book IV on the cover. JCH&PS members Elery Hamilton-Smith & John Dunkley told me about this book, here are some of their comments.

Elery said "Little is known of author, Jesse Whitfield. Illustrator Lambert was destined to be recognised as one of Australia's great artists and virtually founded an artistic dynasty, including amongst others his sons - sculptor Maurice and musician Constant.



Elery with his copy of the book.

John Dunkley recently gave this summary. "It is a fairy tale full of hobgoblins keeping kangaroos and wallaroos out of their homes in the caves, because men are now entering and changing them. The story is set in several arches, caves and the underground river, and the repeated references to Mammoth Cave lead one to wonder whether perhaps the author visited it. The publication date was 1916 but several clues suggest the story may have been written somewhat earlier. The only tourist caves not mentioned are Jubilee and those on the south side beyond Lucas Cave, leaving the inference that the story may have predated the Skeleton / River / Baal / Orient discoveries. Then at one point Hobgoblin is shot on top of the Devils Coach House, from where he falls through the hole in the roof. Shooting was common in the early days, even promoted, but was banned in the Reserve in the mid-1890s. Finally, an earlier book in the same series dates from 1898. Depending on this date, Mammoth (discovered 1882) had then been known for about 15 to 30 years."



Illustration from the book. See the Hobgoblin in the top left corner.

Here is an extract from the book.

"The cause of this 'crank' of the Hobgoblins was that of late men had come to the caves much more frequently. They talked of putting up iron gates at the entrances, and of protecting the stalactites; in fact, they behaved quite as if the caves belonged to them." This made Hobgoblin furious. Had he not been in possession for the last hundred years? What right had those wretched men to be constantly poking their noses in. ... "The men mean to take the caves" he said grumpily. "What shall we do?" ... "Kill them!" squealed all the goblins ... "Well", he said savagely, at last, "if the men come in the kangaroos shan't!" ... "The men are in the Mammoth!" they yelled. "The men are in the Mammoth!". Even hobgoblin sat up at this distressing piece of news, and looked about bewildered. The entrance to the Mammoth was so far away from the other caves that they had hoped to keep it." ... "The men are in the Mammoth, Hobgoblin, don't forget that. The men are in the Mammoth!" ... "The men are in the Mammoth" they replied in subdued tones."

.....
A Hobgoblin is a term typically applied in folktales to describe a friendly or amusing goblin.

It is also a pale ale brewed by Wychwood Brewery, in Oxfordshire UK



JENOLAN CAVES IN THE EXHIBITION OF CHARLES BAYLISS PHOTOGRAPHS, National Library of Australia, Canberra. by John Dunkley.

Until 26 October the National Library of Australia in Canberra is hosting an exhibition: "A Modern Vision: Charles Bayliss, Photographer 1850-1897". The exhibition includes 16 wonderful original photographs of Jenolan, all dating from the 1880s.

Bayliss set up business in Sydney in 1876 and may have visited the caves in the late 1870s on one of his photography expeditions to the Blue Mountains. Specialising in landscapes, his views of them probably date from the 1880s, after the discovery of the Imperial Cave in 1879 and the Left Imperial Cave in 1880. Bayliss photographed both caves, issuing two sizes of prints and these were available for purchase by clients eager for views of unique aspects of the scenery of New South Wales. Improvements in transport enabled an ever-expanding number of middle-class Sydneysiders - tourists or 'excursionists', as they were often called - to experience an antidote to city life in the Blue Mountains, Fitzroy Falls and increasingly at Jenolan.



Charles Bayliss (left) in Hill End circa 1870.

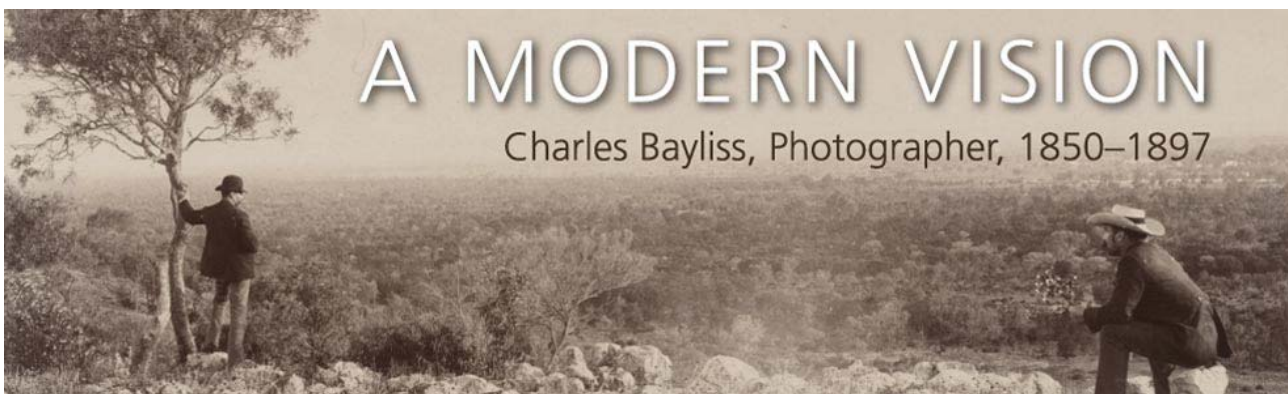
Photo from www.photo-web.com.au



From Nettle Cave, New South Wales 1880s by Charles Bayliss.
Photo from National Library of Australia. nla.pic-an24680762

16 of the photographs (about 10% of the whole exhibition) are from Jenolan, including the Garden Palace, Lots Wife, Pinnacle Rock, Devils Coach House, Gem of the West, Grecian Bend, Brides Veil, Architects Studio, Carlotta Arch, The Mysteries, Nettle Cave and the Bathing Pool on the river. Entry is free and more information can be obtained at www.nla.gov.au. The Exhibition Catalogue (\$34.95) has full-page reproductions of some of the cave photos. If anyone particularly wants one I will get it from the Library and deliver at the August JCHPS Meeting, but it can be downloaded from the web-site contact me at john.dunkley@effect.net.au.

The exhibition also includes several stunning panoramas of Sydney in the 1880s, up to 10 or 11 panels joined together. Adjoining this exhibition is "Wild Places", another magnificent series of modern photographs of northern Australia by Richard Green on panels up to 2.7m long, including one of the ubiquitous boabs on the limestone karst terrain of Gregory National Park, NT. Both exhibitions are highly recommended.



SYCAMORE WEEDBUSTING AT JENOLAN — Bruce Welch.

The first Jenolan Caves Sycamore Weedbusting weekend was held on 10th & 11th May. It was hosted by the Lithgow Oberon Landcare Association with the NPWS & Jenolan Caves Trust. Accommodation, tools and training were provided. The weekend was attended by a small group including a cave guide, NPWS staff, a specialist trainer, and volunteers. Among the volunteers was recently rejoined JCH&PS members Bruce Welch. The first day was spent on the hillsides just upstream of the dam on Surveyors Creek. This was followed by a fabulous BBQ at the playing fields. Sunday was spent working down from the top of the 2 mile hill towards the same area. The infestation is severe but hopefully with at least two weedbusting weekends per year it can be reduced.



The group having lunch near the top of the 2 mile hill. Photo by Bruce Welch.


If you have any good stories or memories you would like to share with us about John Callaghan, please forward them to the editor Jenny Whitby (contact details page 2) who is compiling them to present to him on the evening. We are also interested if anyone out there has photos of John in action at Jenolan. (especially from his early days there!)

CAROLS IN THE CAVES

On the 13th December 2008 Jenolan Caves will be hosting... "The Jenolan Caves Christmas Festival" ...a day full of Yuletide festivities set within the caves precinct and around the historical Caves House. Community, business and school groups from the local area and across the Blue Mountains will participate in the activities and entertainment.

The centrepiece of the event will again be the Carols Concert held in the spectacular Grand Arch, with both celebrities and local community artists joining together in the production. Most importantly, the Festival will promote the Christmas spirit of goodwill and charity with the focus of the day being to raise much-needed funds for research into the causes and cures of childhood cancer by attempting to raise over \$20,000 for the Children's Hospital at Westmead's , Oncology Research Unit.

So come along to the August meeting and hear Dr Dan Catchpoole our very own casual Jenolan Guide & also Head of the Tumour Bank, Oncology Unit, discuss how JCH&PS members can get involved in this great event.



CHANGE IN MEETING DATE

THE NEXT JCH&PS MEETING WILL BE HELD ON

SATURDAY 16TH AUGUST 2008

AT 3PM.

AUGUST MEETING IS ONE WEEK LATER THAN NORMAL DUE TO THE
COMBINED EVENT OF JOHN CALLAGHAN'S RETIREMENT FAREWELL DINNER

Last meeting for the year is on 8 November 2008. Normal meeting Saturday night.

Then February 7th 2009 AGM HISTORICAL WEEKEND 2009.

(One week earlier than normal due to Valentine's Day) Big annual get together for members, AGM Dinner, and more! Put this date in your calendar now, so not to miss it!