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BINOOMEA

The Newsletter of the Jenolan Caves Historical & Preservation Society.

Issue 125 February 2006

ISSN 0310-7248.

Australian Historical Society award

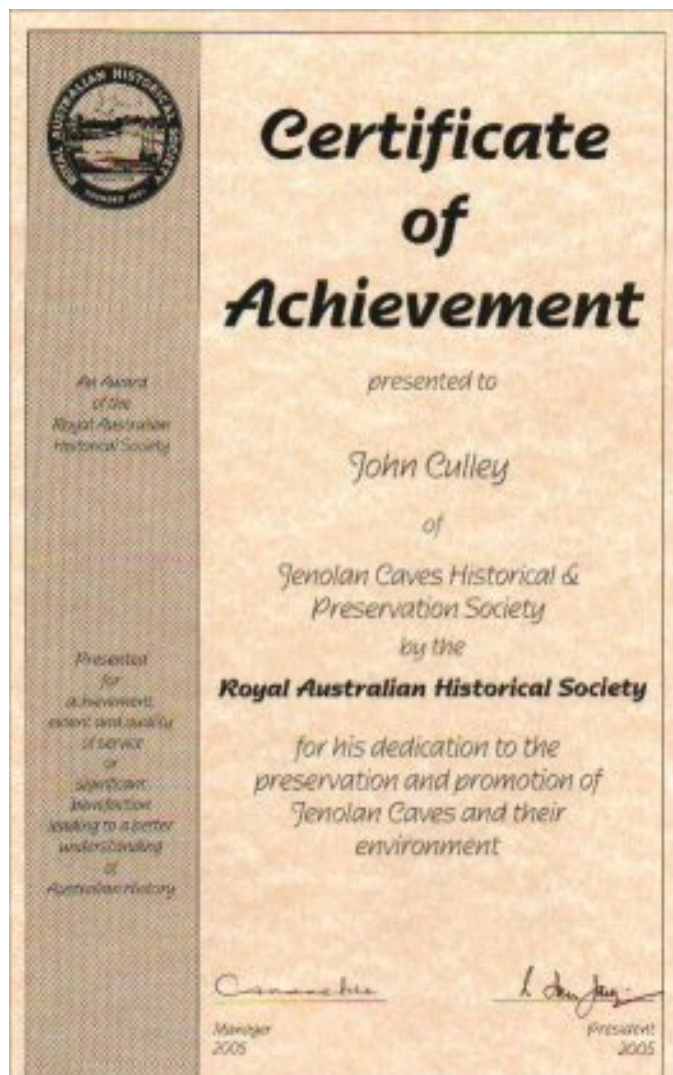
In September 2005, JCH&PS made a nomination to the Australian Historical Society for an achievement award to John Culley. We are pleased to announce that this was granted, and the award was accepted at their AGM in Bathurst, by his son Peter Culley. This award to John was the first presentation to a Senior Guide since Jerry Wilson, and it was 18 years after his retirement that the presentation took place

Our cover letter for the nomination read: It is considered by this Society that John Culley is worthy of this recognition because of his contribution over more than 28 years, to Jenolan Caves environment, both within his work profile and voluntarily. Not only did John mobilise his colleagues and subordinates to bring to fruition the visions of the early pioneers to Jenolan Caves, but he could foresee the extinction of the Brush Tail Rock Wallaby indigenous to the area, and successfully instigated their preservation.

Read the full submission written by John Callaghan & Phyllis Calvert further on in this edition. Thanks to you both on writing an excellent nomination, and congratulations to our trustee on receiving this award.



John Culley at Jenolan.



Scanned copy of award provided by Peter Culley.

REMINDER

It's that time again!

The Annual General Meeting is being held Saturday 11th February at Cottage 17 Five Mile Rd, Jenolan. 7:00pm start. **Come along!**

WHAT DID YOU MISS ??????

The last meeting was held on 12 November 2005 was held at Cottage 17, with about 20 people present. Here it was announced to the Society the successful nomination of John Culley for an achievement award as outlined above. Our President Arthur Gray made a generous donation of items to the society (see full details further on) and Kath Bellamy told us about her research of the Edwards Family, which led to her researching the film *Jedda* and its Jenolan connections. (You'll have to wait for that upcoming article). Hope to see you at our next meeting!

JENOLAN IN THE SPOTLIGHT.

Towards the end of 2005, several articles about Jenolan appeared in the newspapers.

A story titled "A holiday to forget" appeared in The Sunday Telegraph on 20 November 2005, where an MP compared Jenolan Caves House to Fawlty Towers. Another article on the same page by a reporter was titled "Basil would be proud of them" referring to her stay there.

If you hadn't already heard, receivers were recently appointed to take over the operation of Caves House. On 14 December 2005 the following article was published in "The Australian" newspaper.

Resort caves in after defaulting on loan

by Anthony Klan (Reporter)

December 13, 2005 The Jenolan Caves Resort in the Blue Mountains National Park outside Sydney has been placed into administration after failing to meet loan repayments. The resort, which services the Jenolan Caves tourist attraction, had been controlled by operator Archer Field.

St George Bank appointed receivers Grant Thornton to the resort late last week after Mr Field's company failed to make a series of loan repayments. The receivers will take control of the 39-room Jenolan Caves House, the 30-room Mountain Lodge Motel, and Gatehouse, a school lodging facility. Grant Thornton plans to call on expressions of interests for the properties after March next year.

Grant Thornton recovery and reorganisation partner Paul Billingham said it was too early to determine what the assets were worth. "We have to get a handle on exactly what level of trading is taking place and we will probably need to reconsider the way in which the resort runs," Mr Billingham said.

The resort reportedly attracted a string of complaints from visitors about poor quality food and dirty rooms before it was placed into receivership. Mr Billingham said Mr Field remained a director of Jenolan Caves Resort but was no longer involved in daily operations.

The Jenolan Caves Resort operates under a 99-year lease from the NSW Government. A spokesperson for NSW Environment Minister Bob Debus said control of the resort was an issue for the operator and the receivers and the department would not intervene at this stage. Mr Billingham said the state Government administered the site through the Jenolan Caves Trust.

"Our appointment covers most of the commercial activities at Jenolan except the running of the caves themselves," he said. "This assignment represents a unique challenge - balancing the need to run a commercially successful operation with the fact that the trust is charged with running the caves, which are a unique national treasure." - *The Australian*

Following on from this, the new manager at Caves House has arrived. Dennis Winchester used to manage Caves House some time back, so some of you may know him. From what we've heard, the administrators tracked him down, wanting someone who had familiarity of the challenges.



COTTAGE SECURITY.

Just letting you all know that our headquarters for archives at Cottage 17, has now had an alarm system installed by the trust.

If you are planning a visit, please ensure you call at the guides office first, and make arrangements for access.

Don't forget to advise JCH&PS your new address if you move. We currently have 3 members who have had their Binoomeas returned to sender! If you know the whereabouts of Sally Court, Judy Keena, Ben Nicholson please contact the editor.

CONTACT DETAILS: JCH&PS Locked Bag Jenolan Caves 2790

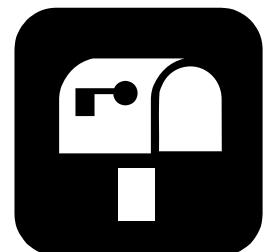
DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR AN ARTICLE FOR THE BINOOMEA?

You don't necessarily have to write the article, just tell us what you would like to read about. Articles, suggestions, letters to the editor, complaints, stories are welcome and can be forwarded to the editor. Please contact: Jenny Whitby at: 48 Park Street Charlestown 2290 or send your email to: jwhitby@inet.net.au or Phone (02) 49432265

SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT

The Spotlight has been focussed on John Culley this month. We will return to our regular column next edition.

Please send in your story!



NOMINATION TO AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY BY JCH&PS.

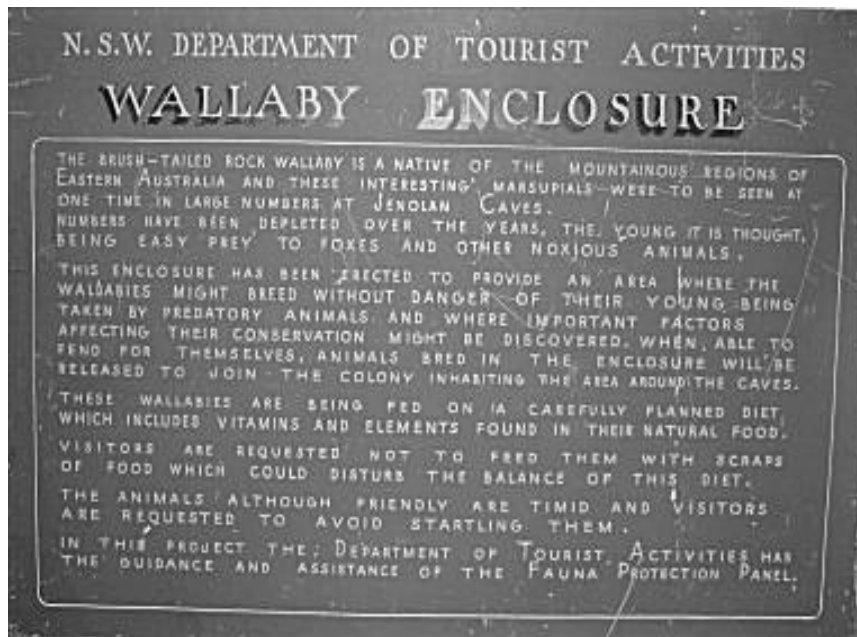
The following is the actual submission written on behalf of JCH&PS by John Callaghan & Phyllis Calvert.

John Culley started at Jenolan Caves in 1960 as relief truck driver. Over the next few years he progressed through the guiding ranks and became Senior Guide in 1973. In 1983 John Culley became Reserve Ranger. These positions were held with the respect of all his peers until his retirement in 1988. Being the Reserve Ranger gave him the opportunity to use his small team to upgrade the infrastructure, including surface walking tracks and also concentrate on the preservation of the endangered Brush Tail Rock Wallaby.

In 1964 John Culley was co-discoverer of the Barralong Cave, together with another Guide, Ron Newbould. This was the first cave to be discovered in the Southern Limestone area of Jenolan Caves in more than sixty (60) years. Although off the popular River Cave the Barralong Cave is quite inaccessible and has never been developed for the public to see and is enjoyed now by Scientific and Specialist Cavers.



Photo - John Culley & Ron Newbould at Crazy Column, Barralong Cave 1964.



The old Wallaby enclosure sign, now part of the JCH&PS Collection.

The enclosure was destroyed by a group of well-meaning environmentalists and the Brush Tail Rock Wallaby diminished to such an extent that the last remaining six (6) were re-captured in 1992 and returned to the reconstructed enclosure. It was John Culley on a return visit after his retirement, who again had the foresight to see their demise and recommended this saving procedure take place. Now, under National Parks and Wildlife, there is a very successful natural breeding programme within that enclosure and the future of the species, and in particular the DNA line, in the locality has been ensured.

Early in his time at Jenolan Caves John saw that infestation of the fox and feral cat, together with increasing visitation, was having a detrimental effect on the local colony of Brush Tail Rock Wallabies, to the effect that that extinction in the area was imminent.

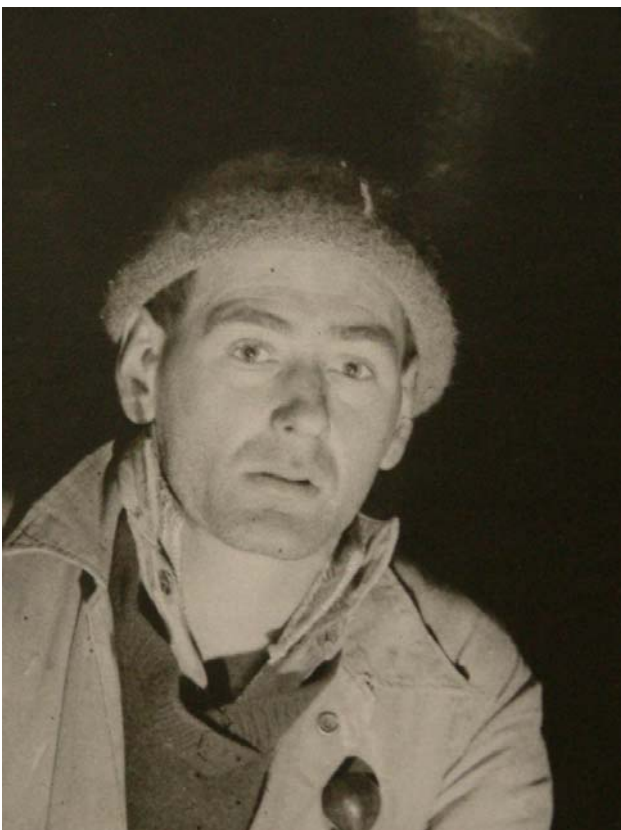
As a result in 1965 he initiated the erection of a substantial electrified enclosure among the cliffs, on the Reserve, but away from the visitors, to preserve their existence. Much of the work to establish the enclosure was done in his and his colleagues, own time and at minimal Governmental expense.



Within the cave environment John Culley saw that major upgrade for presentation, preservation and safety of the visitors was required and led his team of guides in complete redevelopment. This included concreting and stepping the pathways, together with installation or replacement of handrails, within the caves, a project which had been documented in early diaries of the Pioneers of Jenolan Caves. In 1968 he taught his staff how to mix concrete, first in a wheelbarrow, with the use of a lowie, before a little electric concrete mixer, affectionately known as “Bertha”, was acquired. His ‘recipe’ for the concrete was as natural as was possible, using cave gravel, cave sand and cave water, this allowed the final product to blend with its surrounds. This same concrete is used in 2005, and shows no sign of cracking or deterioration. Previously, pathways were still comprised of calcite crystal, mud and rock, with the occasional concrete stairway for access to more difficult areas. During the thirteen years the project took John Culley worked with his team, teaching and leading them, with the result that only one cave on one occasion, was closed to the visitors. His work is still used by 250,000 visitors to Jenolan Caves annually.



In 1971 progress and visitation decreed that demolition of old buildings was imminent. John Culley, together with some of the guides of the day agreed that much of the history of Jenolan Caves was about to be lost, including the Post Office, built in 1898. Being given 24 hours to dismantle and store the cedar weatherboard Post Office, became the birth of the Jenolan Caves Historical and Preservation Society. John Culley was the original Interim Chairman and Curator, pending the inauguration of the Society. He remains a Trustee of the Society today.



John Culley in Barralong Cave 1964.

Living in the environment John Culley was always available to his peers and subordinates. He gave selflessly of his time, energy and expertise, both at work and privately, encouraging his neighbours to stop for a chat on their way past his home, supporting and advising as needed. Much of his contribution to what Jenolan Caves is today, remains unknown. Indeed, much of his visions of the future are even now just coming to fruition, nearly 20 years after his departure. John Culley retired after 28 years at Jenolan Caves without acknowledgement from his superiors as to his contribution to this Australian icon.

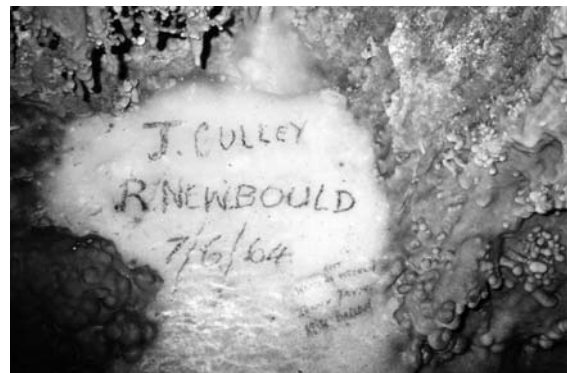


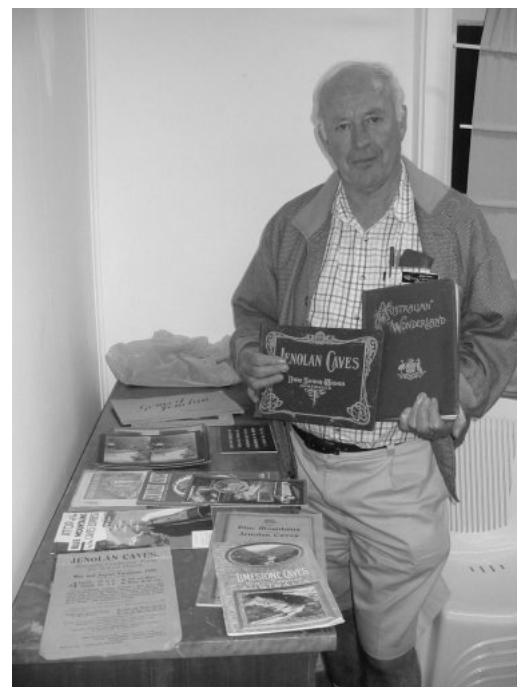
Photo taken in 2000 of historic inscriptions in Barralong Cave.

PRESENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT.

At the last meeting, the society received a substantial donation of Jenolan items including rare books, Shelley China, other crockery, pamphlets and stereo photocards. The items had been purchased from a collector by Arthur Gray, our President, and donated to the Society. His donation of items as documented below is a valuable addition to our collection, and we sincerely thank him for his generosity.

Crockery

1. Tall Jug, off-white, 10.5 cm high. Picture: "The canopy – Jenolan caves New South Wales". Bottom: Elizabethan Fine Bone China. England 2
2. Saucer, off-white, 14.5 cm diameter. No picture, bottom: Shelley Fine Bone China England
3. Saucer, off-white, 14.0 cm diameter. Picture: "The broken Column Jenolan Caves New South Wales" Bottom: Elizabethan Fine Bone China England 13
4. Leaf shaped small Dish, buff colour, 12.5 cm diameter. Picture: (Minaret?) "Jenolan Caves". Bottom: Made in Japan
5. Saucer, off-white, 12.5 cm diameter. No picture, bottom: Victoria Czecho-Slovakia
6. Small Cup, off-white, 6.5 cm high. Picture: "Tent canopy LC Jenolan Caves". Bottom: Victoria Czecho-Slovakia
7. Medium sized Cup, off-white, 8.0 cm high. Picture: "The broken Column Jenolan caves New South Wales". Bottom: Elizabethan Fine Bone China England 3
8. Tall Jug, off-white, 13.0 cm to top of handle. Picture: "'The Broken Column' Jenolan Caves, New South Wales". Bottom: Elizabethan Fine Bone China England 13
9. Small Vase, light brown (?), 8.0 cm high, 9.5 cm diameter. Picture: "Jenolan caves House, NSW". Bottom: Shelley made in England 786
10. Smallish Milk-Jug, white, 9.5 cm high. Picture: "Jenolan Caves House, New South Wales". Bottom: Opaline designed in Australia on Czechoslovakian china, made in Germany
11. Egg Cup, off-white, 6.5 cm high, 4.5 cm diameter. Picture: "Broken Column, Lucas Caves, Jenolan Caves NSW". Bottom: Shelley England
12. Egg Cup, off-white, 6.5 cm high, 5.0 cm diameter. Picture: "Grand Column, River Cave, Jenolan Caves NSW". Bottom: Shelley Fine Bone China England
13. Wooden Egg Cup, dark brown, 6.0 cm high, 5.3 cm diameter. Picture: "The Minaret Jenolan Caves". No markings on bottom
14. Smallish Cup, white, 6.9 cm high, 7.0 cm diameter. Picture: "Jenolan Caves House, New South Wales". Bottom: Opaline designed in Australia(?) made in Germany
15. Small Milk-Jug, white, 8.5 cm high. Picture: "The Minaret (sic), RC, Jenolan Caves". Bottom: Victoria Czecho-Slovakia
16. Cup, off-white, 6.5 cm high, 9.0 cm diameter. Picture: "The Grand Arch, Jenolan Caves, NSW". Bottom: Shelley England 4
17. Egg Cup, off-white, 6.2 cm high, 4.6 cm diameter. Picture: "The Canopy, Jenolan Caves, NSW". Bottom: Shelley England A



The President and some of his presents!

Books

1. "Views of the Jenolan Caves, NSW" - 6 coloured pictures. (Larger size)
2. "Views of the Jenolan Caves, NSW" - 6 coloured pictures. (Smaller size)
3. "The Jenolan Caves: An Excursion in Australian Wonderland" by Samuel Cook 1889 (signed on fly-leaf: W.L. Havard)
4. "Guide to the Jenolan Caves New South Wales" by O. Trickett, 2nd Edition 1905
5. "The Jenolan Caves Illustrated" by Cyril Haviland (11 illustrations with accompanying verses)
6. "Gems of Jenolan" photographs by Capt. Frank Hurley, issued by Government Tourist Bureau
7. "The Blue Mountains and Jenolan Caves" – A scientific guide book, 1923, issued for the Pan-Pacific Science Congress, Aust.

Pamphlets

1. "Atop of the Blue Mountains by the Caves Express"
2. "Jenolan Caves New South Wales Australia – A Symphony in Limestone"
3. Government Tourist Bureau: "The All Green Route – days Motor Tourist Service"
4. "The Limestone Caves of New South Wales Australia" Government Tourist Bureau 1915
5. Handbill – "Jenolan Caves, May & August Vacations 1929"
6. Small Brochure – "Jenolan Caves" (G. Petersen – Manager), with envelope
7. Large colour postcard – "Grand Arch West Side". Reverse surface blank

Stereo Photographs (Kerry & Co - 9 items)

- 391 "Katie's Bower Imperial Cave Jenolan"
- 423 "Looking Out – Grand Arch, Jenolan"
- 459 "F. Wilson Exploring – Jenolan"
- 468 "The Bridge – Lucas Cave Jenolan"
- 550 "The Styx River Cave Jenolan"
- 606 "By the Grand Arch Jenolan"
- 610 "Den of Cerberus Skeleton Cave Jenolan"
- 614 "Devil's Coachhouse Jenolan"
- 634 "The Spectre Column O.C. Jenolan"

Stereo Photographs

- (Rose's Stereoscopic Views, with description on reverse surface (4 items)
- 3723 "The Proscenium, Jenolan Caves NSW"
- 3726 Lucas Caves and Broken Column, Jenolan Caves NSW"
- 3735 "McKeowan's Creek and Bridge, Jenolan Caves NSW"
- 3819 "View near the Bathing Pool, Jenolan caves"



Since 1991, Jenolan Caves hosts a Carols in the Caves event each December. It is a popular event and well attended, although numbers were down a little this year, with some late bus cancellations due to the Caves House publicity.

The first 11 years were staged by Lance Smith. Lance had his standard performers supplemented by choirs, bands and other groups. Since 2003 Simon Koenig has taken over, with some changes to the format, lighting and production. In the past, audience members bought their own chairs, but now seating is provided. The Christmas Story is still told but now a limited cast appears (no children) and they perform only on the northern side of the arch, whereas Lance 's production used both sides.



Centre Stage. Photo by Rob Whyte.

The Grand Arch is closed to all through traffic and visitors fill the archway. The magic occurs as performers appear both on stage and scattered about the lofty heights of the arch. Usually two performances are scheduled, at 2:30pm and again at 8pm. The night performance is always the best but the afternoon performance is ideal for those people who want to see the big event and be back in Sydney before night falls.

Jenolan Guide & JCH&PS member Domino Holbrook-Cove sings in the performance each year. This year she got a great reaction when the lights turned to illuminate her up in the Organ Loft which seems particularly high up. In 2005 the stage was set up for the first time below Camp Rock, whereas previously it was in front of the Chifley Exit. Seasoned audience members say it is an improvement as by and large, all audience members can see all of the performers, whereas in previous years what you saw was dictated by where you sat. The show has an impressive lighting display. A starlight snowstorm effect being popular, and a Christmas tree effect with several shapes of green topped off with a yellow star, all done with lights shining on the wall of the arch.



Jenolan's own Domino, a seasoned Carols performer.

With the change in producers in 2003, Santa didn't make an appearance that year, but has been back the last two years. In 2004, Santa made a memorable return appearance, which he would probably rather forget. In the afternoon performance, amidst the crowd singing Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer, Santa came bounding out on top of Camp Rock, waving enthusiastically at the crowd - when his pants dropped. A quick dash behind a rock and with his back to the crowd Santa secured his pants and returned for a second go, and yes, whilst waving madly, down they went again. This got repeated about 3 or 4 times before Santa decided he had exposed enough of himself and disappeared for good. In the evening concert the routine got changed so that Santa, now looking firmly bound up with gaffa tape, bounded out onto Camp Rock, waved a couple of times and retreated never to be seen again, and this time with his pants still in place. You will be pleased to know that Santa made a brief appearance at Carols 2005, and his pants stayed up this year.



Effective lighting display. Photo by Rob Whyte

Carols in the Caves is scheduled to be held on 6 December 2006. It's a great show, so put this date along with the meetings in your diaries now!



MEETING DATES FOR 2006

11TH FEBRUARY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THEN 6TH MAY, 12TH AUGUST, 11TH NOVEMBER.

(ALWAYS SCHEDULED FOR 2ND SATURDAY IN FEB, AUG, NOV .

MAY IT'S THE FIRST SATURDAY DUE TO MOTHERS DAY

VENUE: COTTAGE 17, FIVE MILE HILL,

JENOLAN CAVES AT 7:00PM