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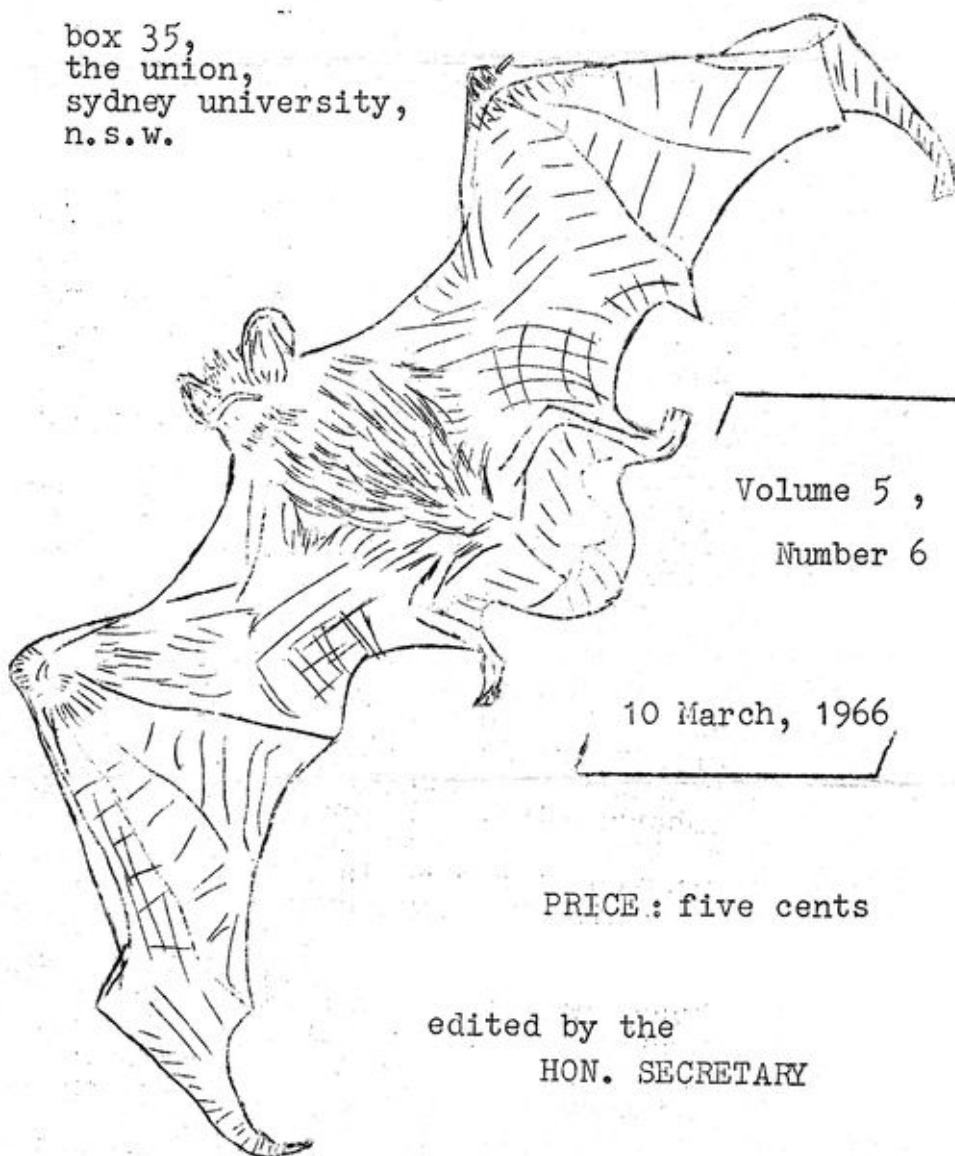
the newsletter of the  
SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Volume 5 ,  
Number 6

10 March, 1966

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edited by the  
HON. SECRETARY

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EDITORIALOn The Physical Protection of Caves

"With the great increase in caving as a sport which is now taking place much irreparable damage can soon be done, not deliberately but nonetheless inevitably by cavers who do not realize the significance of the wonders they unwittingly destroy."

(Forward to Studies in Speleology, Vol.I, Pt.I, 1964)

OBITUARY:-

1884-1966

Mammoth Cave, Jenolan, N.S.W., J13 and J14 entrances.  
Cause of death: over-exertion and consequent physical deterioration. Survived by offspring J15. R.I.P.

The rapid increase in caving activities is just beginning to make itself felt in N.S.W. and so far has been contained reasonably well. In some overseas countries however the position is becoming desperate; queuing at entrances to English caves is becoming increasingly common, so that available caves have to be rationed among the cavers. The position is scarcely better in the U.S.A. where most caves are east of the Mississippi, as are most of the population. The National Speleological Society of the U.S.A. regards owner relations as a national problem, for several caves have been permanently closed because they are more trouble than they are worth. Even if everybody behaves in an exemplary fashion on every caving trip to an area, there will sooner or later arise friction with the owner caused merely by the volume of traffic.

An analogous trend is evident in N.S.W. and will no doubt arise elsewhere before long. As long ago as 1958 the then Director of Tourist Activities stated in a letter to SUSS that the increase volume of correspondence with speleological societies was becoming embarrassing. To cries of self-inflicted paper work and bureaucratic red tape it is possible to counter that the owner or trustee of a cave is entitled to exercise a degree of control over his property, even to the extent of gating caves, though not, we hope, to blocking entirely. So Cliefden cave, Glass, Alladdin, Walli, Colong, Restoration, now Mammoth and soon the Punchbowl. SUSS has always supported preventive gating of caves; such a step was recommended with respect to Mammoth as long ago as 1949. The Glass was barred on our suggestion and later gated and members of SUSS themselves barred the Restoration Cave.

If access to a gated cave is not completely restricted there must be some criterion for determining for whom the cave will open sesame. Some owners and non-owner trustees use the buddy system, others, like the Tourist Bureau, use membership of ASF as a guide.

This implies that ASF must insist on a competent membership standard and not admit all and sundry. And it means that

there must be restriction on the proliferation of more groups in areas such as Sydney where existing societies can adequately absorb newcomers. Thus the number of Sydney societies is now in effect maximised at four. Sooner or later, by one means or another, the freelancer will be driven out of business. It is up to us to see that we aren't as well.

Finally, and this is where the story really begins, a mixed bag of pros and cons with reference to Mammoth developments: The 50' ladder pitch via J15 will certainly deter most odd bods and half-hearted cavers and will force the rest to adopt a higher standard of safety. Mammoth caving will thus be restricted to the genuinely enthusiastic people with definite projects in mind, as indeed should be the case. On the other hand there could be difficulties in the event of accident and it could be the thin end of the wedge. A tamper-proof gate as recommended by some is no easy engineering matter, and certainly not cheap. Gates need to be supervised and this is just what they want to avoid at Jenolan, although it is the only solution for caves with only one entrance. Sic transit gloria!

#### A N N U A L   G E N E R A L   M E E T I N G

the sixteenth annual general meeting of sydney university speleological society will be held on the top floor of the geography department, sydney university, at 7.30pm thursday 24 march 1966.

following the meeting ted anderson will give an illustrated talk on the recent expedition to the caves of new caledonia of which he was a member.

supper will be served by courtesy of some female members it is anticipated that this will become a regular feature of all meetings in the future.

#### A N N U A L   G E N E R A L   M E E T I N G

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT moved J.Dunkley, seconded G.Hunt

Amend sect. 4, par. a) of the constitution by adding the following:

"In addition, the Librarian, Equipment Officer and Safety Officer shall be ex officio members of the Committee, but shall not be entitled to vote except on matters relating to their respective duties."

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

## March

- 12-13 BUNGONIA Freshers' Trip
- 19 Ladder-making chez Jessup. 300' to be constructed
- 26 Field Day at Cliff Road Wahroonga, commencing about 1.30pm. (see announcement and map elsewhere)
- 24 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 7.30pm

## April

8-12 (Easter)

- |               |              |        |
|---------------|--------------|--------|
| COOLEMON      | Geoff Butlin | 462213 |
| YARRANGOBILLY | John Dunkley | 854333 |
| ABERCROMBIE   | John Steele  | 954203 |
| 23-24 JENOLAN | John Dunkley | 854333 |

## May

14-? (vac.) COLONG JohnDunkley 854333

5 GENERAL MEETING, 7.30pm (tentative date)

January, 1967

2-? TASMANIA Persons tentatively interested in a caving/walking trip see John Dunkley

Long vacation NEW ZEALAND Dick Heffernan is allegedly going

Other trips may be announced at the Annual General Meeting.

A.B.C. YOUTH CONCERTS, 1966

Several members joined a party to this last year and so much interest was shown that it has been decided to arrange a SUSS contingent this year. At this stage neither the programme nor the price is known but last year's cost something like \$2.90 or so for the six concerts of the series, which makes it worthwhile even if you only get to two or three of the six.

Interested people might like to see Allison Jessup at the next meeting or give her a ring; she will accept the necessary moneys and arrange tickets for everyone.



THE COMMITTEE DECIDED ...

- To become a corporate member of the National Parks Association of N.S.W. with a view to supporting that body's efforts to bring certain parts of NSW under National Park status
- To recommend to the Annual General Meeting that membership fees of the Society be raised in view of the increased cost of running the Society, purchasing new equipment etc.
- To purchase an aluminium scaling pole.
- To investigate the cost and possibilities of having some of the more important Journals in the Library bound.
- To construct 300' of new ladders.
- To arrange a Field Day in order to let members, especially prospectives, have an opportunity to practice rope and ladder techniques.

THE SPELEOLOGICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL decided ...

- To purchase a reconditioned theodolite for the Society at an approximate cost of \$360
  - To underwrite the cost of production of several SUSS Journals by purchasing all of each issue for subsequent resale to individuals.
- (the cost of the theodolite will in effect be offset against moneys outstanding from the old SUSS Nullarbor Expedition A/c)

WANTED -- POSITIONS VACANT

The now almost legendary SUSS Journal is just about ready to re-appear. In fact at the moment one is almost typed and John Lotz has another which only needs to be typed on to stencils. People who can type and who have access to a typewriter are implored to let either John Lotz or John Dunkley know as a matter of urgency. With three or four such people sharing the work there will only be a few pages each to type

Journal 7.1 will be a completely overhauled, revised and considerably enlarged reprint of J6.3 which was in demand by many members some time ago. Journal 7.2 will include articles on recent work at Wombeyan, the Deep creek system at Yarrangobilly and other articles. At least one of these will definitely be available by the May meeting of the Society.

...AND MORE ...

At the moment articles for future issues of the Journal are being written by Leslye Mackay, Glenn Hunt, Rick Crowle, Ted Anderson and John Dunkley. This is a good cross-section of members, so why don't you have a go too? Address your efforts to Box 35, The Union, Sydney University.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AT COLONG CAVES

It is well known that Colong Caves is a happy hunting ground of Scouts, bushwalkers, odd bods and other speleological types on the fringe. One would have thought that the mile or so of cave in the oldest known sections of Colong would have kept these people happy, but no, they had to penetrate to Woofs Caern and surrounding areas which are too well decorated to withstand the constant patter of little feet. In 1962 Cooranbong Speleological Association constructed a gate and conveyed it to Colong; however they disbanded shortly afterwards and the gate had only recently been installed by Sydney University Rovers. SUSS was recently, along with several other caving societies, presented with a key by the Colong Caves Trust. Any members wishing to visit this remote but extensive system (it is as long as Mammoth, or in fact a little longer at 8000') should see the secretary to obtain the key.

In 1963 the firm of Thiess Bros. submitted an application to prospect for limestone over 1200 acres in the Colong area, including part of the Caves reserve. The application met with very strong opposition from interested groups (speleos, bushies, the National Parks Association etc.) as the result of which the Minister refused the application. It was later agreed that opposition would be discontinued subject to the area being confined to that north of Rodwell Creek. This has not been approved but it almost certainly will be. This would leave Colong safe for the cave-wreckers for the moment but Church Ck. and Billy's Ck are in some danger, although the present application is for prospecting only and will only mean a few drilling holes. Metropolitan Portland Cement holds a couple of other leases for limestone mining in the area, expiring in 1975 and 1978 but at this stage no caves are threatened.

The scene therefore appears calm at the moment but it is obviously necessary to continue a vigilant watch on these continuing attempts to convert our caves into cement bags. With the quite conceivable possibilities of Colong as an accessible Tourist cave in the future when increasing demand on recreation resources will possibly lead to development of the inner and more remote Blue Mountains, it is surprising that the Department of Tourist Activities, which now has a Ministerial portfolio, does not take more interest in the snatching of caves that seems to be raising its head again.

TRIVIA

"Yes, I've just returned from a holiday in Sussex. I didn't worry much about SUSS, I just concentrated on the ... "

No, this is not a quote from a vacationing member of SUSS, it comes from the latest edition of the B.B.C.'s Beyond Our Ken, which for the information of addicts may now be heard on the ABC at 8pm Monday. Highly esteemed Goon Show, a working knowledge of which is essential in SUSS, may be heard on 2BL at 7.15 Thursday and on Third Network at 7.30pm Sunday. Be warned!

RECENT TRIPSJenolan1 January 1966Henry Shannon

Chief purpose of the trip was to continue exploration of Wiburd's Lake Cave which has become a regular rendezvous at New Year for our Queensland colleagues. Another extensive and well decorated passage was located, bringing the total length of the cave to something like 1500-1800 feet, making it the second longest non-tourist cave at Jenolan, coming right behind Mammoth in fact. A detailed map of the cave, admittedly only Grade II, suggests that joint control has played an important part in the development of the cave.

Wyanbene29-31 JanuaryJae Watts

It is understood that this trip had to be urgently abandoned on the second day due to inclement weather, after which it was adjourned to Mt Kosciusko and environs. However the main cave was entered for photography etc.

Jenolan5-6 FebruaryGlenn Hunt

Purpose of the trip was to enter the Great North Cavern with a view to relocating a promising hole and exploring it. Unfortunately the discoverer of the hole, who shall perforce remain anonymous (initials R.C.) was unable to find it, which would be the last straw after crawling all the way to the GNC. Other exploration in this area proved unsuccessful. A most significant discovery on this trip was that the second crossing of Central Level was found to be dry for the first time recorded, so that it was possible to enter some previously watery passages, unfortunately only about 50' long. Rubbish was collected on the way out; the cave is becoming a refuse-heap (or was until certain steps elsewhere mentioned were taken)

Jenolan5-6 MarchJohn Dunkley

The first SUSS party to visit Mammoth since the recent events took some 2½ hours to set up ladders and ropes and lower ten people and a load of ropes, ladders, scaling poles, cameras and so on to the bottom. Destination was Oolite Cavern where the east wall was scaled with considerable difficulty (another few hours to get three people to the top). The scaling pole was set up at the limit of exploration in 1964. Unfortunately a difficult climb above this point by Dick Heffernan led only to an impossibly small squeeze. This was most disappointing since a roof channel, the one that can be seen in the roof of the Oolite and the other end of which led to the L.L. Extensions in 1964, gave greater promises for this particular venture. However it did clear up a mystery of several years standing, and is one of several good possibilities which will be pursued now that the scaling pole is finished. Exit was made at 1a.m.



"HE WAS LEFT IN THE DARK"

(from a Daily Telegraph news item)

A team of explorers of caves finished their climb in a Derbyshire cave on Sunday, clambered out, pulled up the ladders and went home - leaving one member still down the hole.

He stayed there for 38 hours alone and terrified until yesterday when his parents asked police to find their son. The cave explorer is Gordon Parkin, 21, of West Wickham in Kent. He spent 38 hours 400' down the Oxlowe Cavern. He said last night: "When I realised they must have gone home, I became quite terrified. I yelled out, but no one came. I started to make my way back along the narrow passageway but found myself going round in circles on my hands and knees in pitch blackness. It took me five or six hours before I eventually found my way back into the west chamber, but without a ladder I could go no further."

Gordon is in hospital suffering from exposure. A police spokesman said that "sheer stupidity" was responsible for the mishap. He said if Gordon had been left underground much longer he might have suffered some serious mental effect. With a little more thought, and a check on their numbers, the others could have avoided this", the police man added.

Allvery funny you might say. Something that could not happen to us. Well, probably not. But it reminds of a similar episode that occurred on the Nullarbor a few months ago, when the expedition came across a scout at one of the government tanks along the road. Seemed his buddies had gone without him. Chased in a Valiant, they were caught 30 miles down the road. They were in a covered utility; those in the front thought little boy lost was in the back and vice-versa. In the prevailing temperature of 100+ this little episode could have ended more seriously had the boy been alone.

What's all this got to do with me you ask? Well, in a large party it is quite conceivable that one person might fall, get lost or lose a light and his absence not be noticed. Try to use the so-called buddy system as much as possible underground.

GUIDE TO YARRANGOBILLY CAVES

The Society's photographic copy of this most valuable book (the original having been presented magnanimously to the NSW Tourist Bureau) has been recovered after several years absence like so many other library books. It may be borrowed from the Librarian at General Meetings.

CAVE SURVEYING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA by R.T.Sexton. CEG(SA) o/p 1958

This invaluable reference for the cave surveyor has been reprinted and copies are available from CEG(SA) for 50c. A copy has also been placed in the library for reference.



NEW PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

We welcome the following new Prospective Members of SuSS, most of whom joined during Orientation Week.

To you all we wish a happy association with SUSS, and hope that you will not be shy and not ask how, when, where and why about our trips, meetings, etc. If you were not on the Freshers' Trip to Bungonia we hope that you will not miss the opportunity of experiencing caving SUSS-style at Easter (see Page Four for forthcoming trips); while those of you who did attend the Bungonia trip we hope will further your caving experience at Easter. For details about any particular trip phone the relevant trip Leader, who will arrange transport, etc. Alternatively come to the Botany lawn any lunch-time.

ADAMS, Robyn	16 Shackel Av., Clovelly.	6653361
Allsopp, Bernadette	2 Tasker Cres., Peakhurst	
Byrnes, John	69 Chase Rd., Turrumurra	483740
Caldwell, Ruth	20 Chelmsford Av., Lindfield	462214
Cayzer, Jeff	1 Vernon St., Strathfield	768642
Clingan, Judy	3/28 Rangers Rd., Cremorne	?
Cormack, Graham	79 MacIntosh St., Gordon	492847
Crook, Geoff	56 Blytheswood Av., Warrawee	445413
Douglas, John	29 Darook Park Rd., Cronulla	5232350
Edgecombe, Elizabeth	7 Oakleigh Av., Thornleigh	843034
England, Brian	48 Wentworth Av., Blakehurst	543777
Gale, Ian	1 Margaret St., Minto	
Goldner, Peter	9/11 Esther Rd., Balmoral Beach	961168
Gordon, Elizabeth	14 Hume Av., St Ives	?
Gorrad, Vanessa	10 Carson St., Pymble	?
Harrington, Alan	27 Boronia St., Concord West	734301
Harris, Bruce	26 Woonona Pde West, Oatley	574786
Harwood, Jim	100A Victoria Rd., Bellevue Hill	363010
Hufton, I.W.	St Andrews College	511146
Jobson, Keryn	31 Young St., Sylvannia Heights	5228797
Longshaw, Geoff	115 The Boulevard, Strathfield	6423825
McLelland, Chris	2101 Pittwater Rd., Church Point	993226
Melbourne, Alan	118 Fox Valley Rd., Wahroonga	482173
Murray, Ron	24 Mona St., Auburn	?
Parkes, Jeannette	14 Carrington Av., Strathfield	769892
Patrick, Judith	15 Barracluff Av., Bondi	306762
Poon, Peter	22 Elswick St., Leichardt	565330
Pratt, David	65 Oakley Park Rd., West Oatley	572017
Ruello, Nick	65 Gordon St., Brighton le Sands	598631
Settle, Graham	69 Centennial Av., Chatswood	416942
Thompson, Julia	12 Surrey St., Epping	863584
Wheeler, Annabel	Women's College	

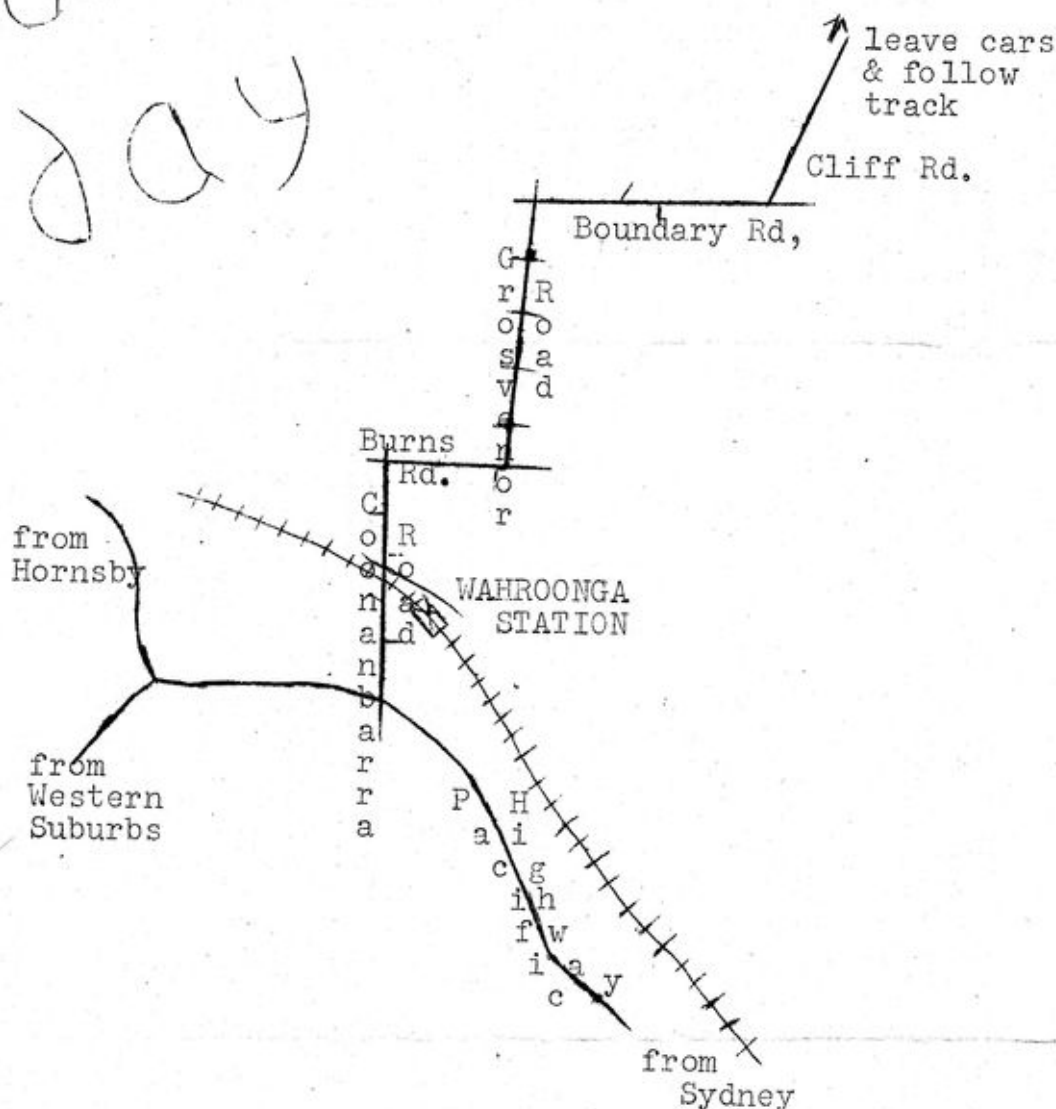
CONGRATULATIONS CONGRATULATIONS CONGRATULATIONS

To Tom and Elizabeth on the birth of their son Jim.

P.S. If you want to phone Jim, he is available at 445375  
Strangely enough, Tom & Elizabeth are available at the same no.

field  
day

26-3-66



A Field Day will be held at the cliffs off Cliff Road, Wahroonga commencing at 1.30pm on Saturday 26 March. Activities will include rope and ladder work, belaying, climbing techniques, the right knot for the right occasion, prusicking, abseiling etc. etc. The Field Day is designed not only for Freshers, who are especially welcome, but also for older members needing practice. A barbecue or somesuch is a likely adjunct.

For those arriving by train, cars will meet the 1.37pm north-bound train and the 1.42 south-bound. If you are arriving by a different train ring Grahame Jessup or Dick Roberts the night before or on the morning. Yabbadabbadoo.