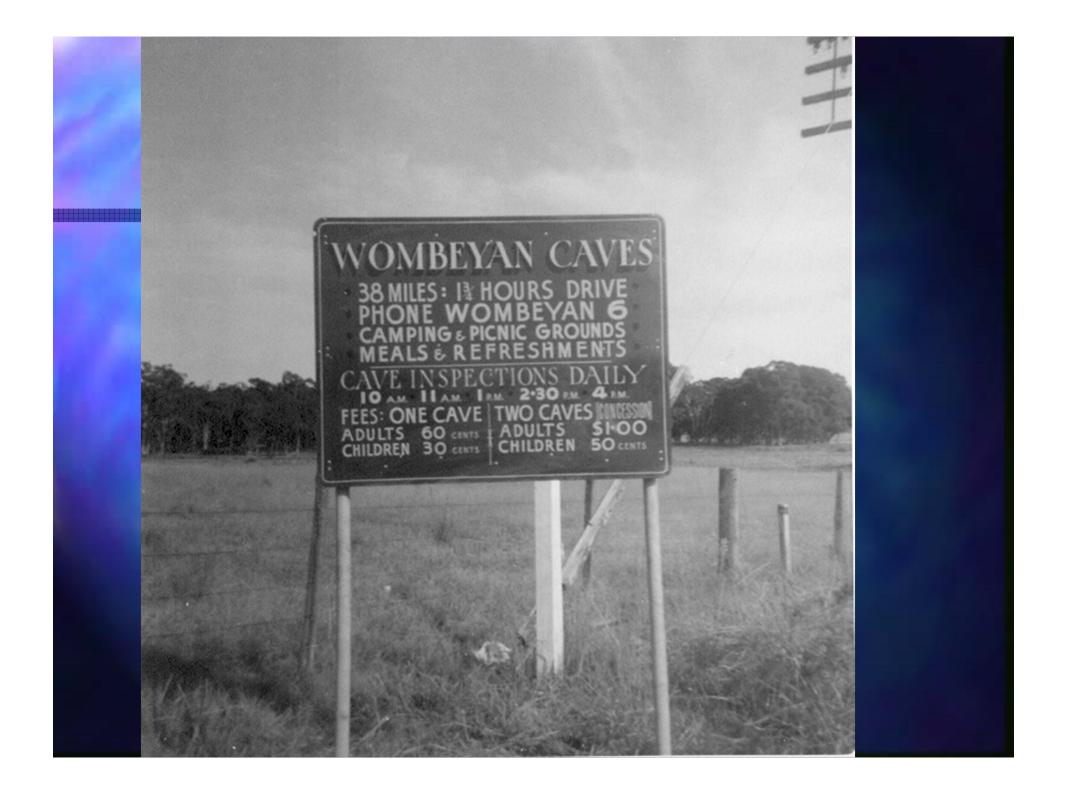
A Pictorial History of

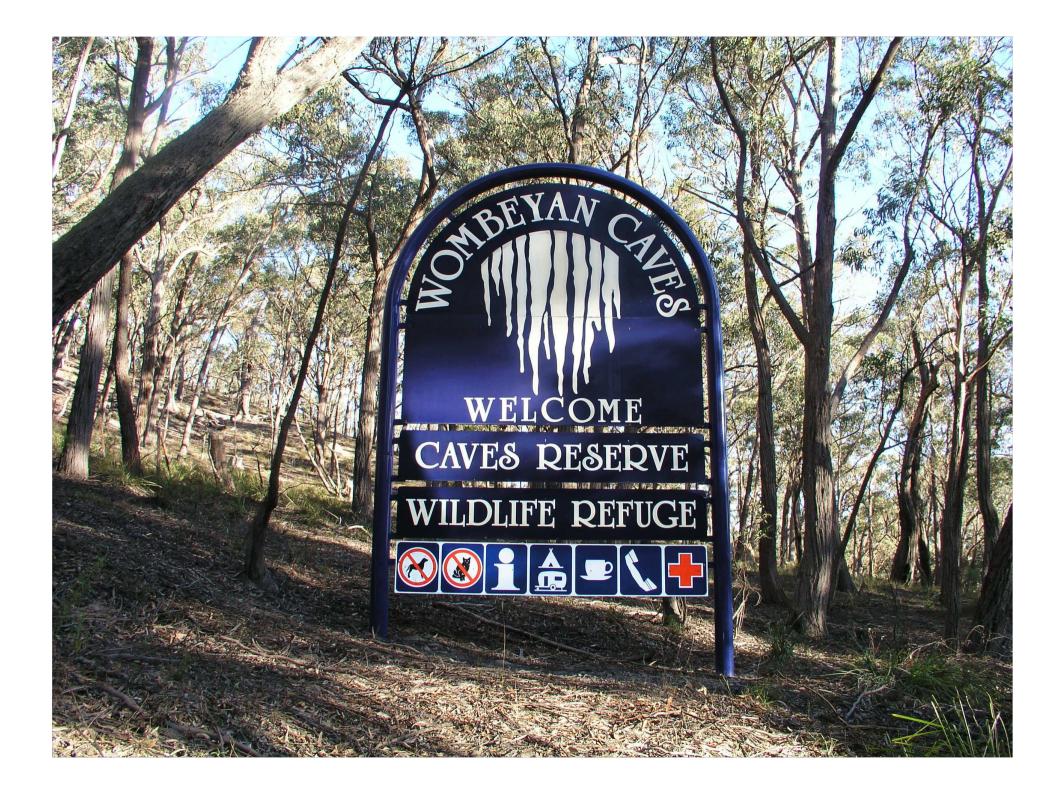
Wombeyan Caves

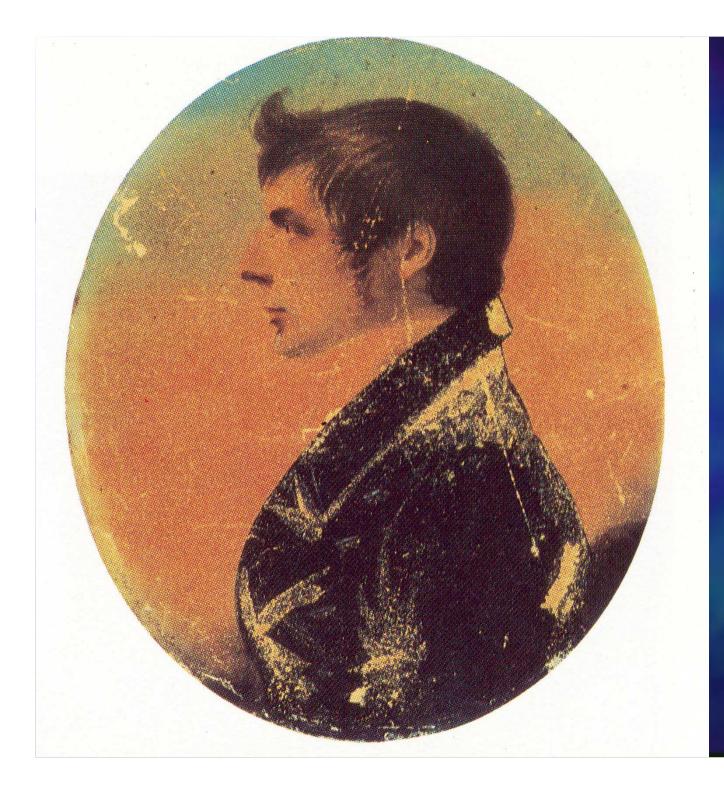
1864 to 2004 by

The Sydney Speleological Society





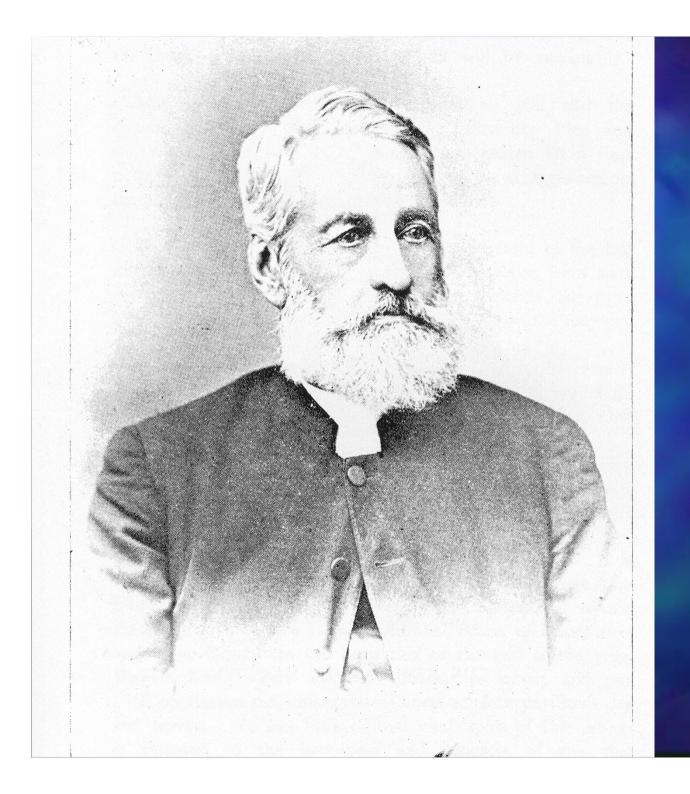




John Oxley

Early explorer of the Wombeyan

Area 1828

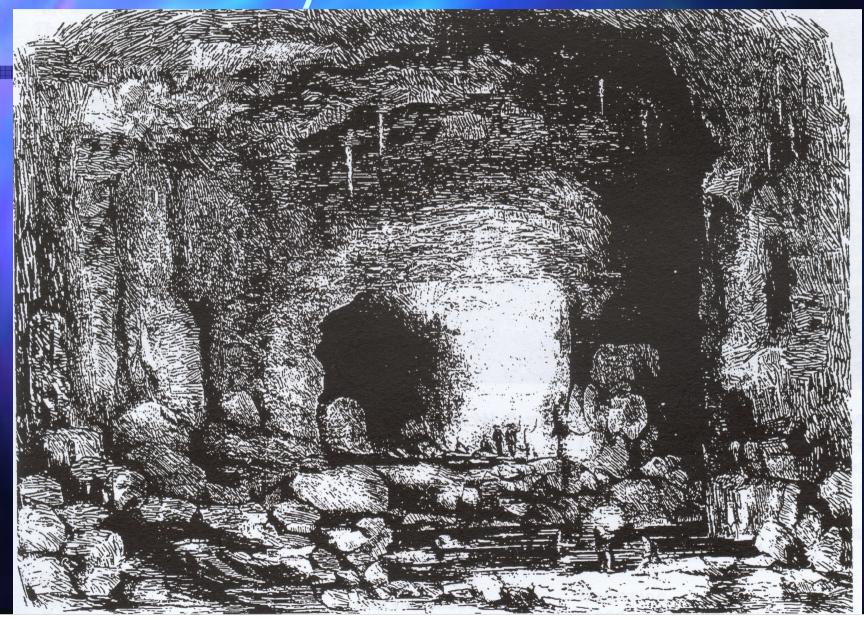


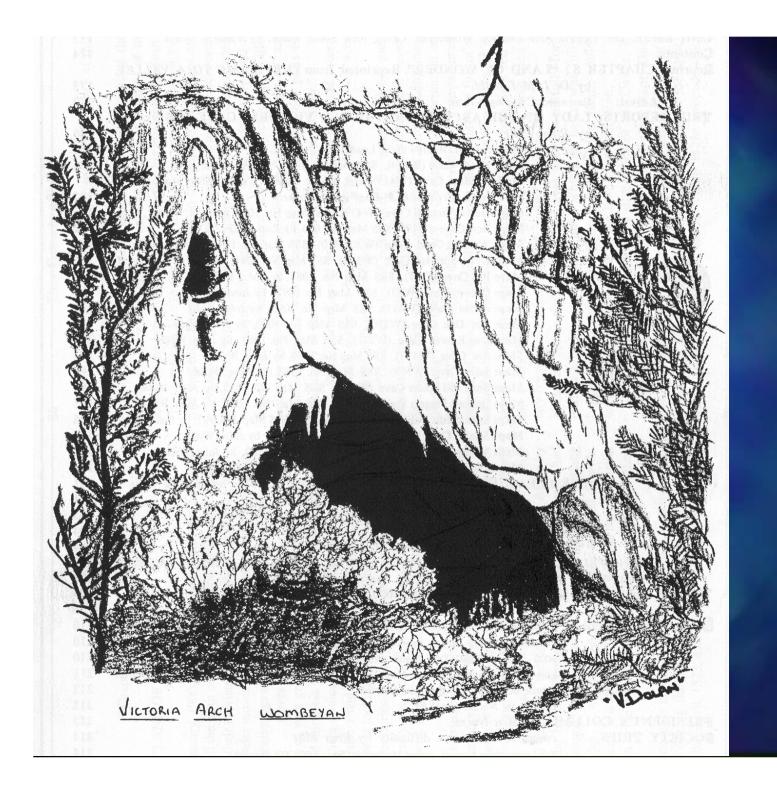
The Rev J.S. Hassall Visited the Wombeyan caves in 1842

Sketch by H. S. Melville 1846

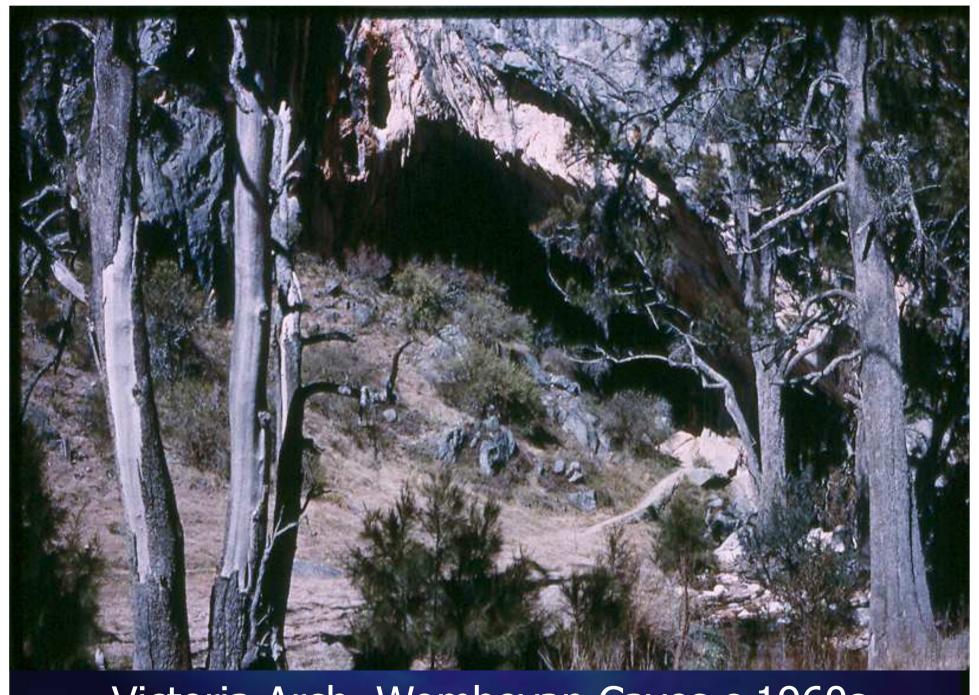


Sketch by M. S. Moses 1865

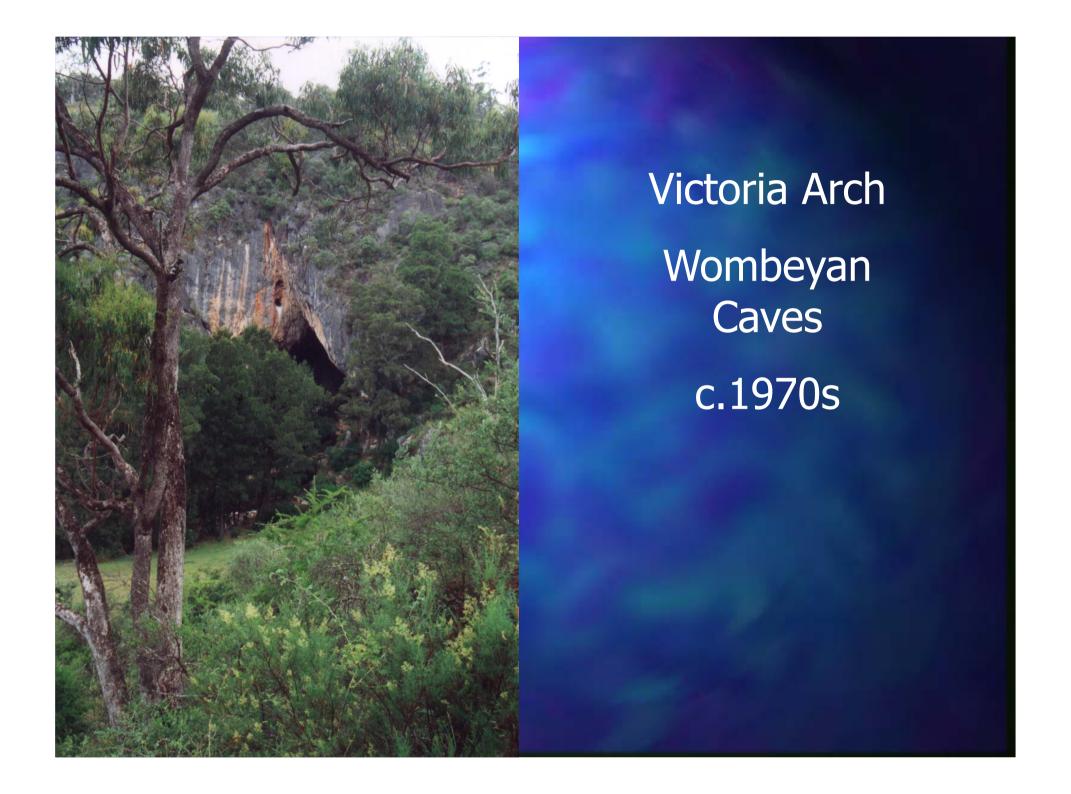


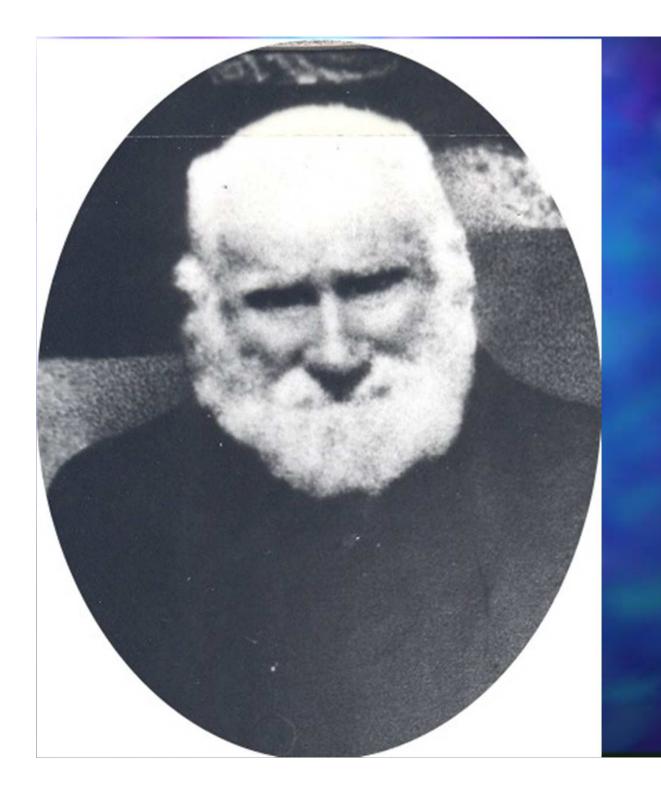


Sketch by V. A. Dolan 2000



Victoria Arch, Wombeyan Caves c.1960s

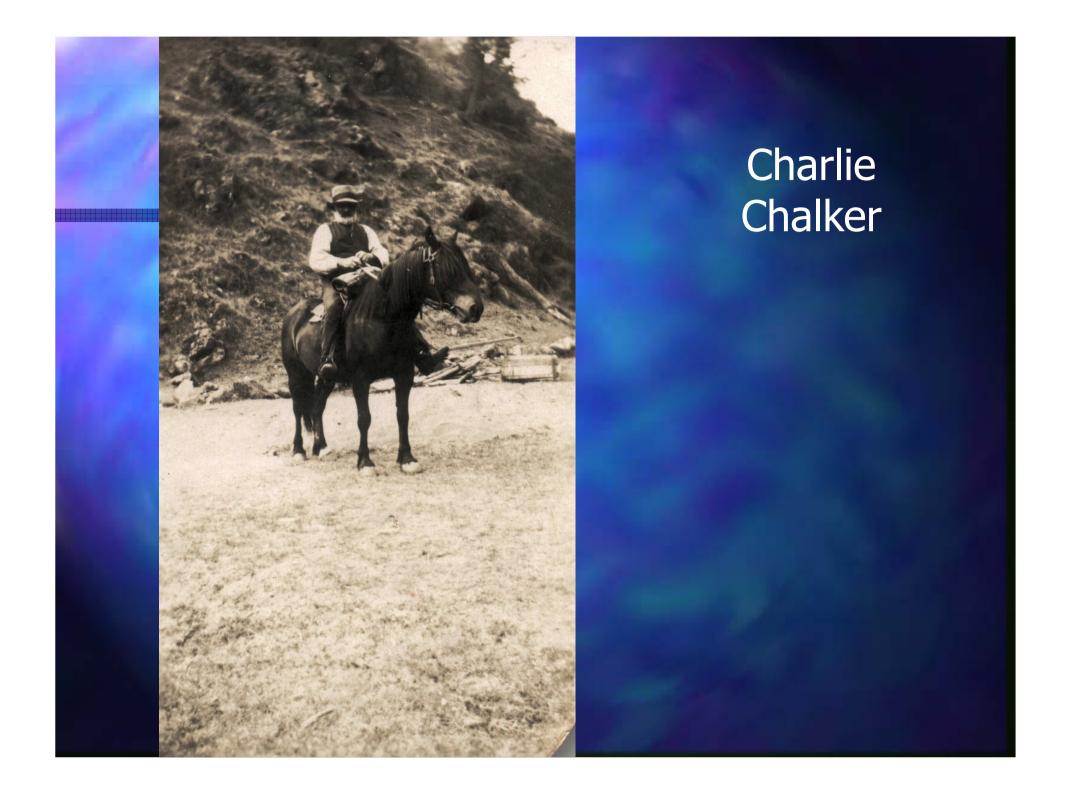


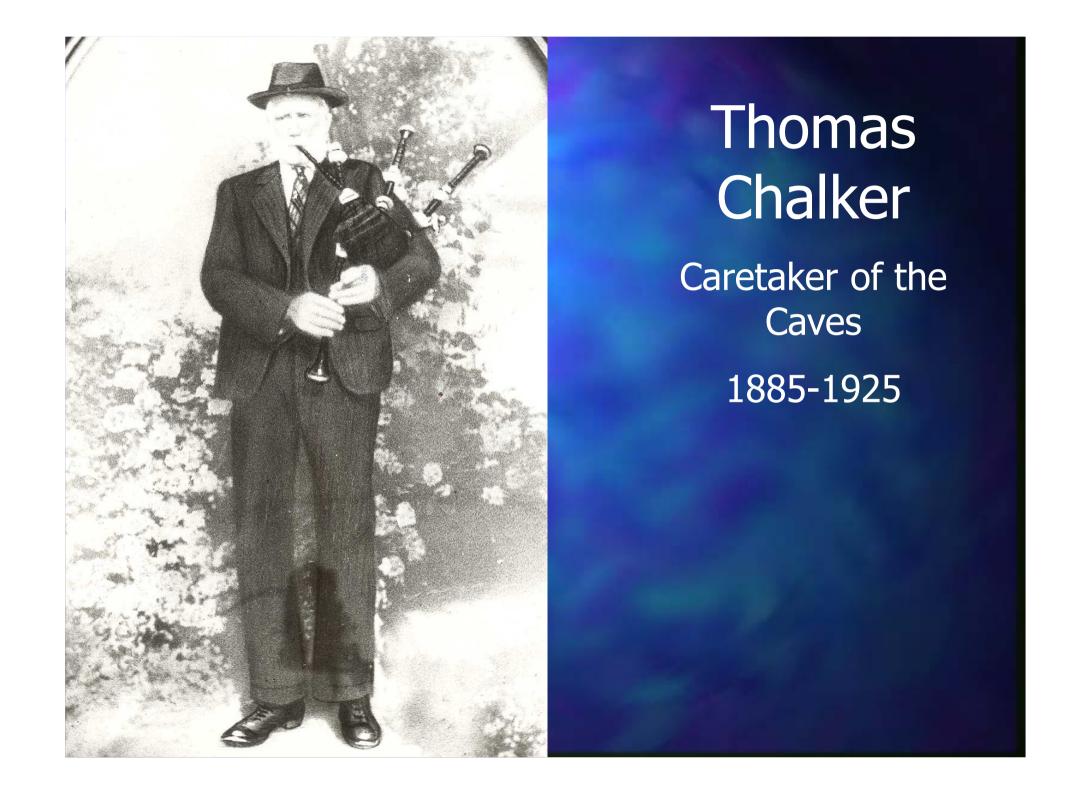


Charles Chalker

1st Keeper of the Caves

1864-1885





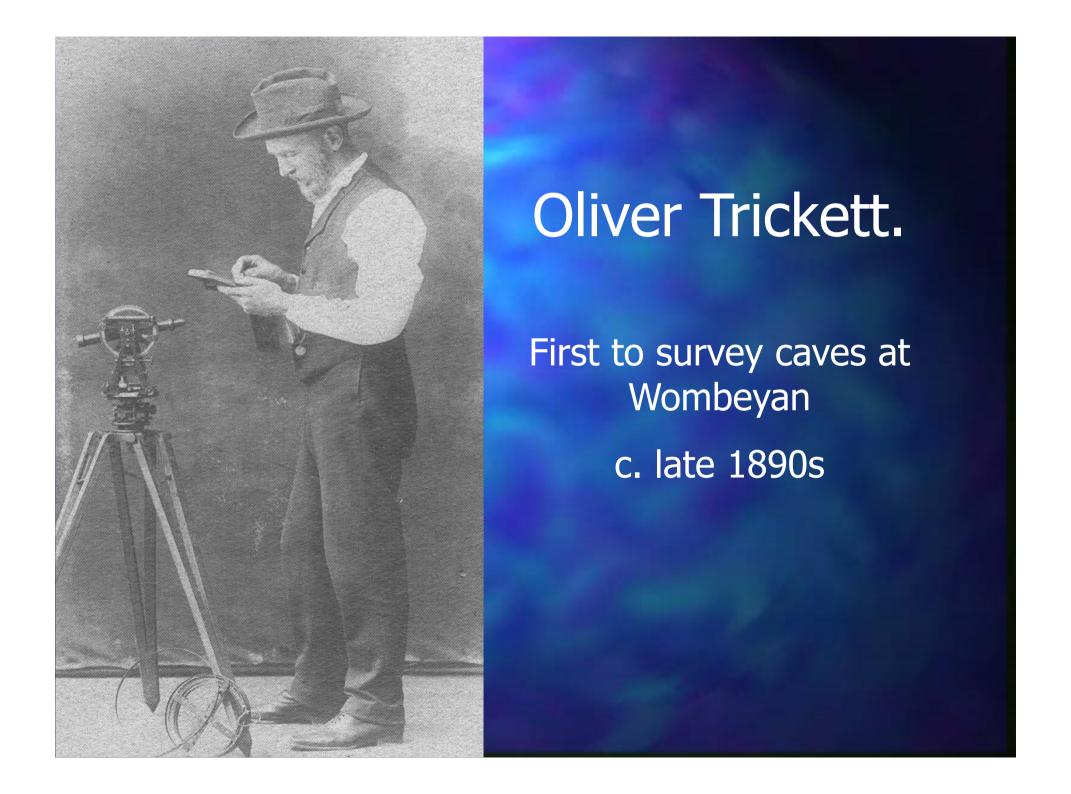


Dr Robert Broom

1896

Discovered bone deposits of

Mountain Pygmy Possum at Wombeyan



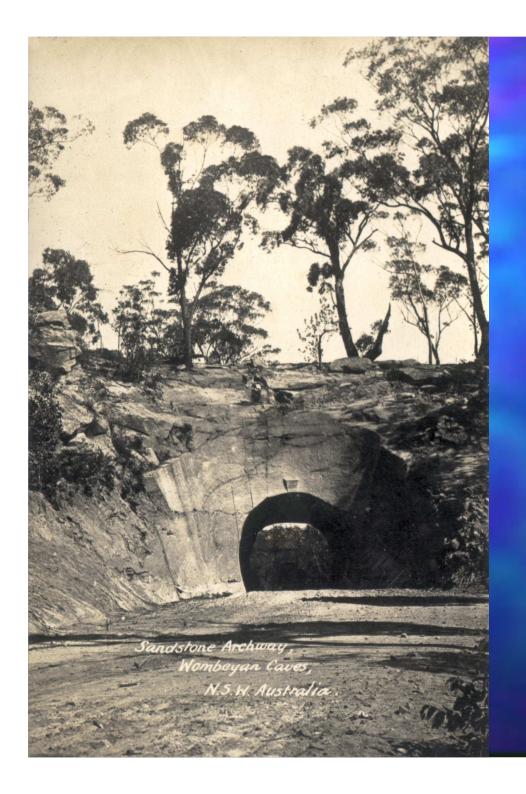
Mines Department 1892-1919 The Wollondilly Cave , Wombeyan Caves . Cave divides into small branches here. PLAN 20 to 30 ft wide, 3'6" to 4'high. Rippled floor. With stalactites, stalagmites &c. GUINEACOR CAVE Entrance Fairies Retreat Chamber 10'x10'x25' with No stalactites, shawls, mysteries and tinted columns. Unimproved M KOORINGA CAVE Entrance &Unimproved Cave

SECTIONS of Care, projected on to lines CA, AB, and AJ, giving the approximate level of the different branches Reference. Improved branches "Mystery" - Irregular form of stalactite. "Shaw" = Draped form of stalactite. "Diamond = Ornamented with crystals of calcite.

Figure 22. The Wollondilly Cave, Wombeyan Caves (ARDM 1897 plan 5)

Oliver Trickett's 1897 Map of

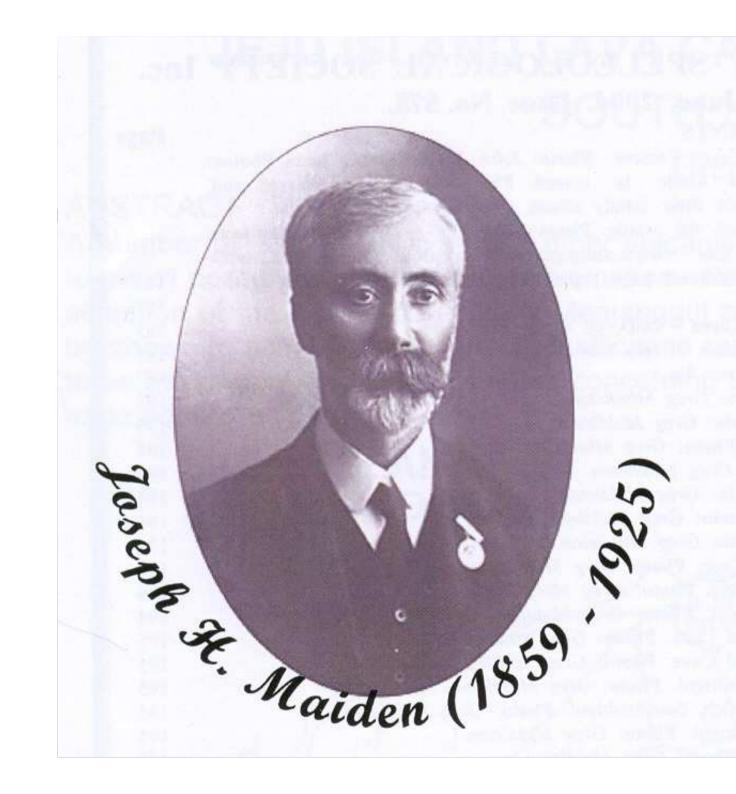
Wollondilly Cave



Tunnel to Wombeyan Caves from Mittagong

Was Opened 29th January 1901





Botanist Joseph Maiden

Named
Chalkers
Wattle
after
Thomas
Chalker in
1916



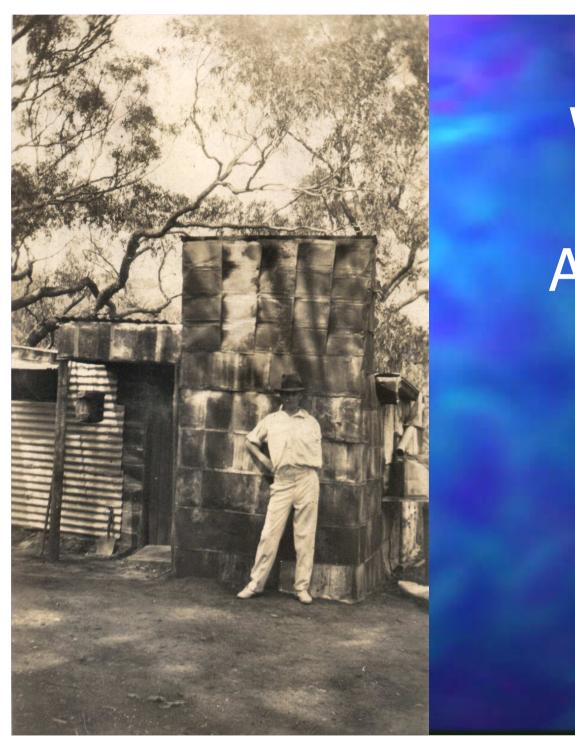


George Brown, Family and Friends

Caretaker of the Caves 1925 - 1935

Exit of Wollondilly Cave c.1920s





Wal Brown and Aub Bishops Hut in the Gully c.1920s

Digging Holes for Electricity Towers on Wattle Hill



Workmen at Wombeyan for Electricity Connection c.1920s

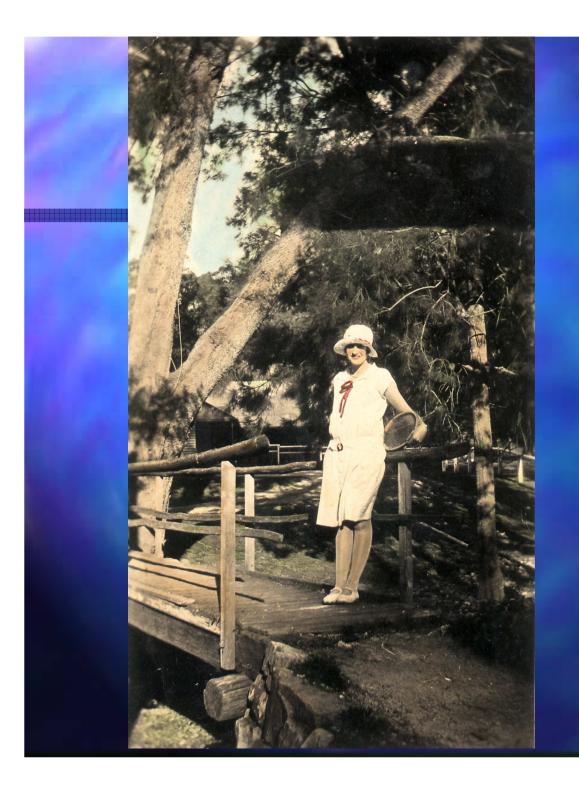


Ant Nest Clay for the Tennis Court c. 1920s



Tennis Court at Wombeyan

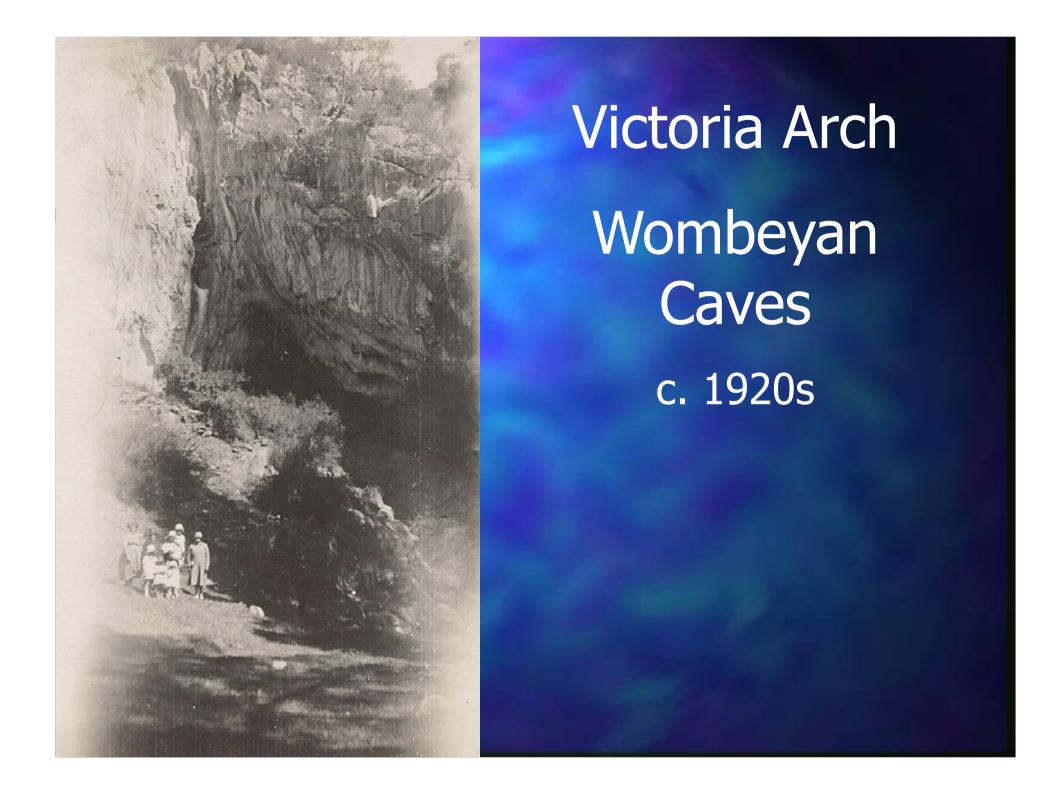


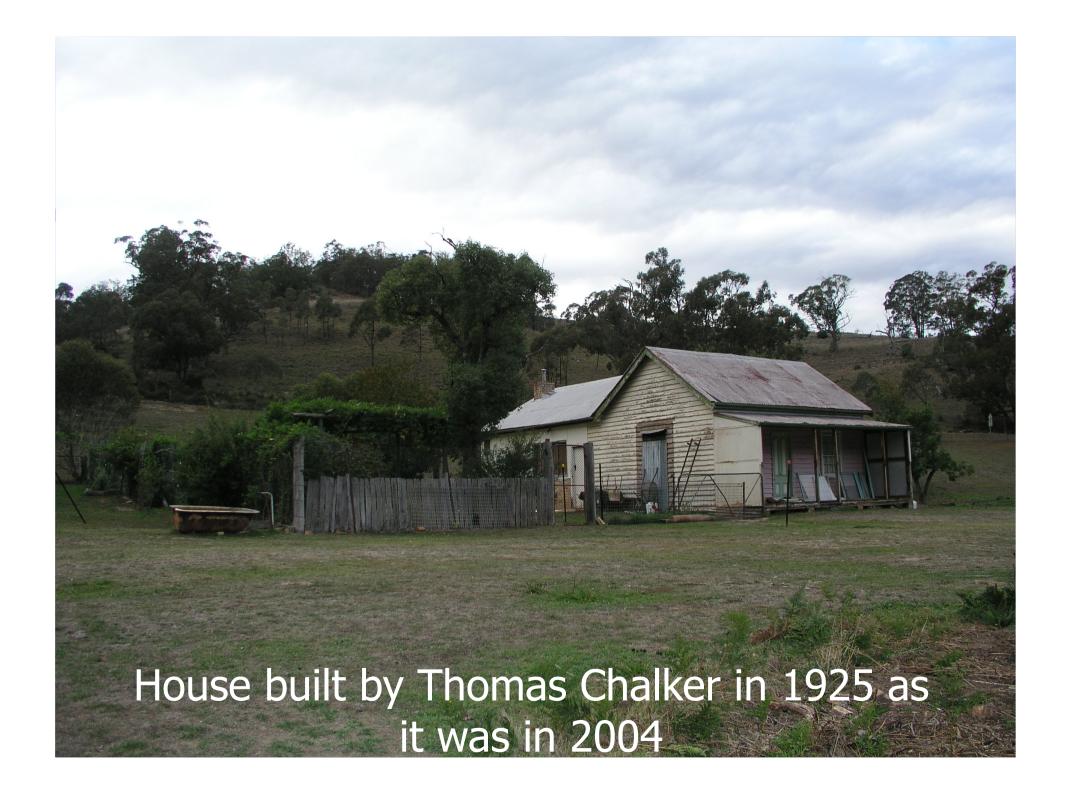


Ezme Brown

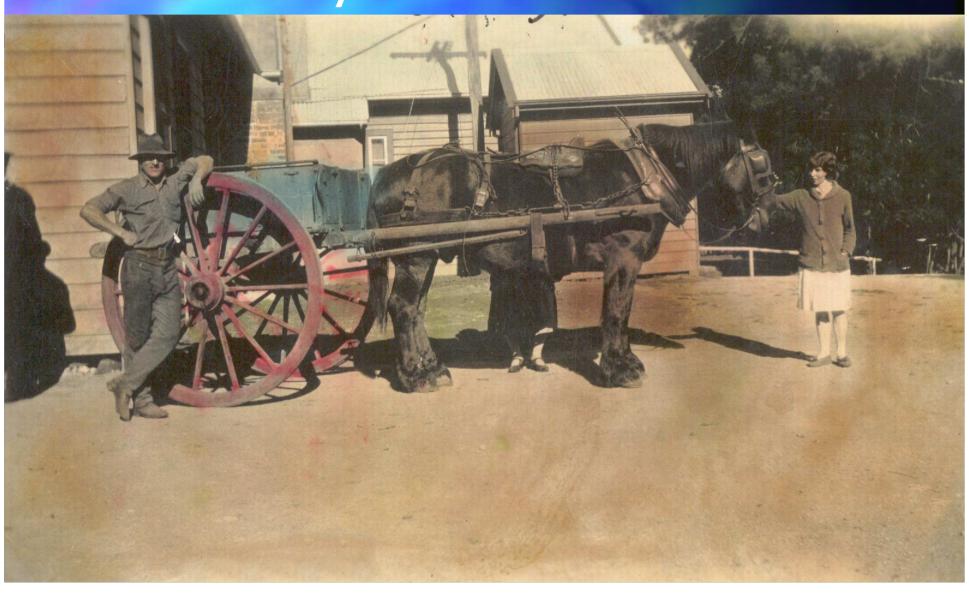
(nee Croker) ready to play tennis.

On Bridge over Wombeyan Creek





Old Tom the horse and Selby Mathews c.1925



Blacksmiths Shop and Wombeyan Creek





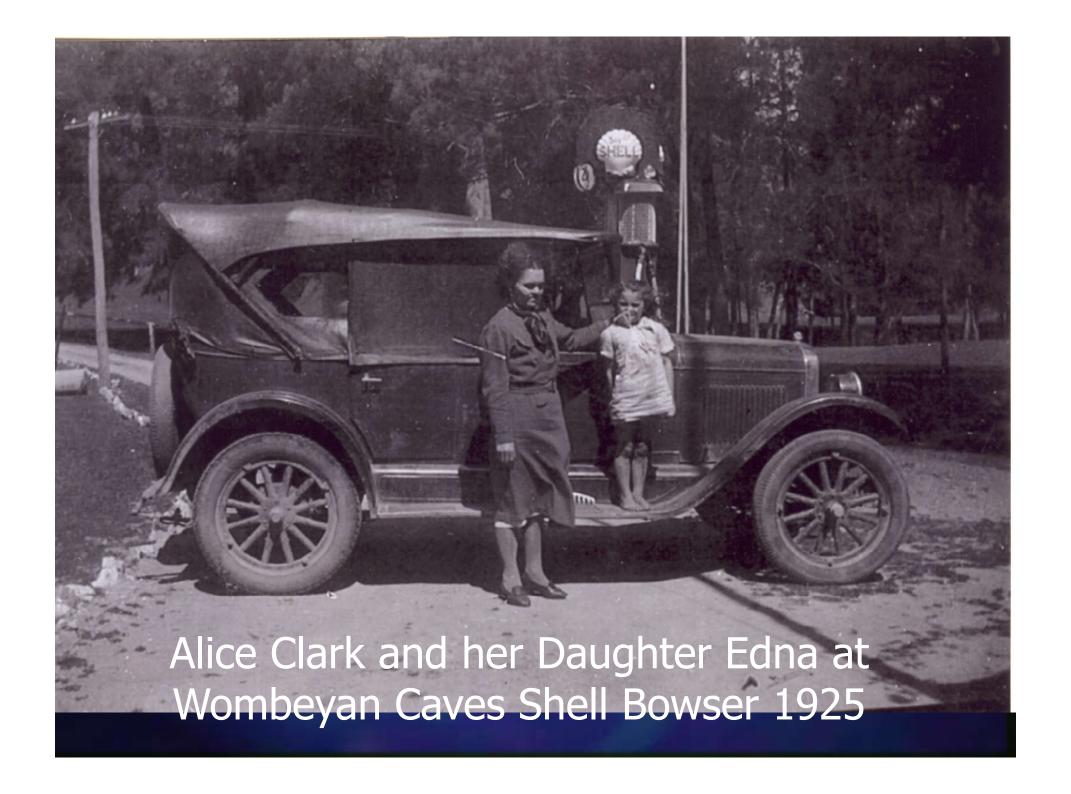
Picnic Party at Wombeyan c.1925

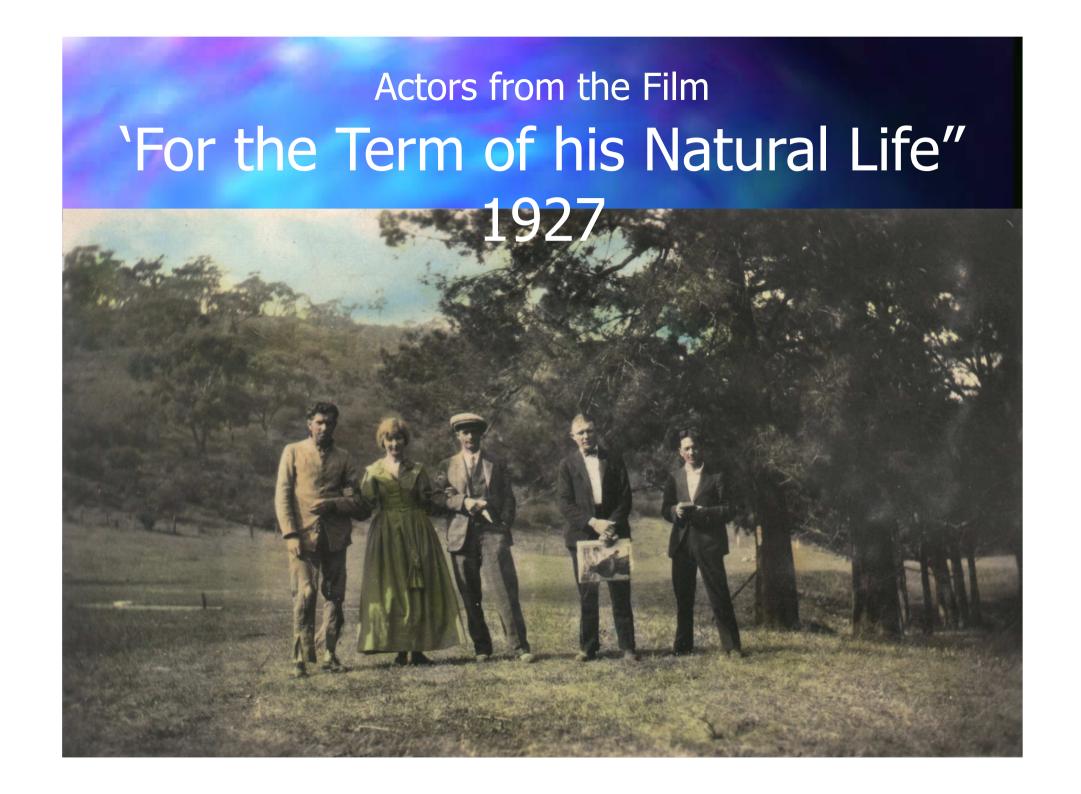


Guest House. Wombeyan Caves. c.1925

Visitors to Wombeyan Guest House







Interior of Wombeyan Guest House Dining Room 1927



Powerhouse c.1929

Brown Family. Stables/Garage 1929

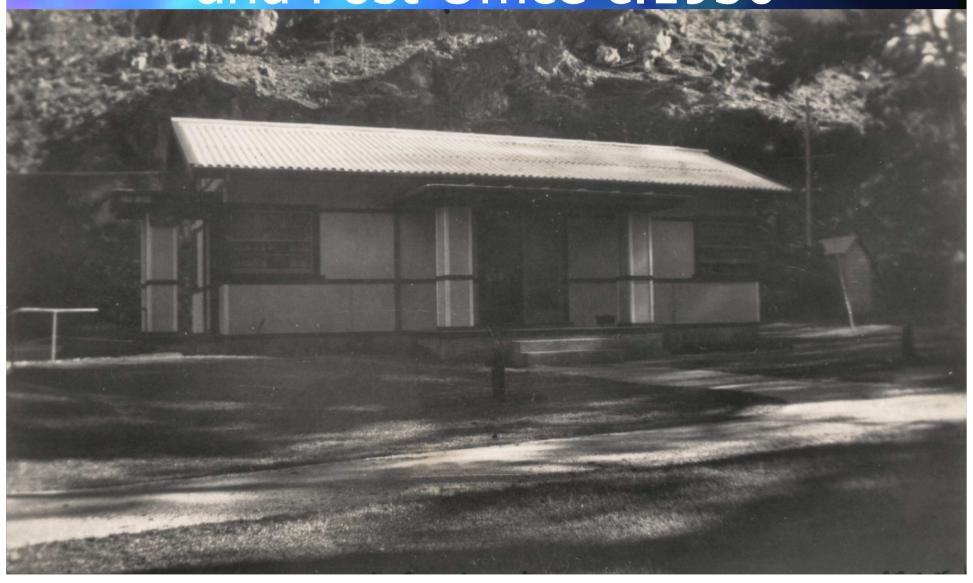




Emze Brown and Mildrid Hindwood in Tinted Cave







Cricket team on Wombeyan Caves Flat c.1930s







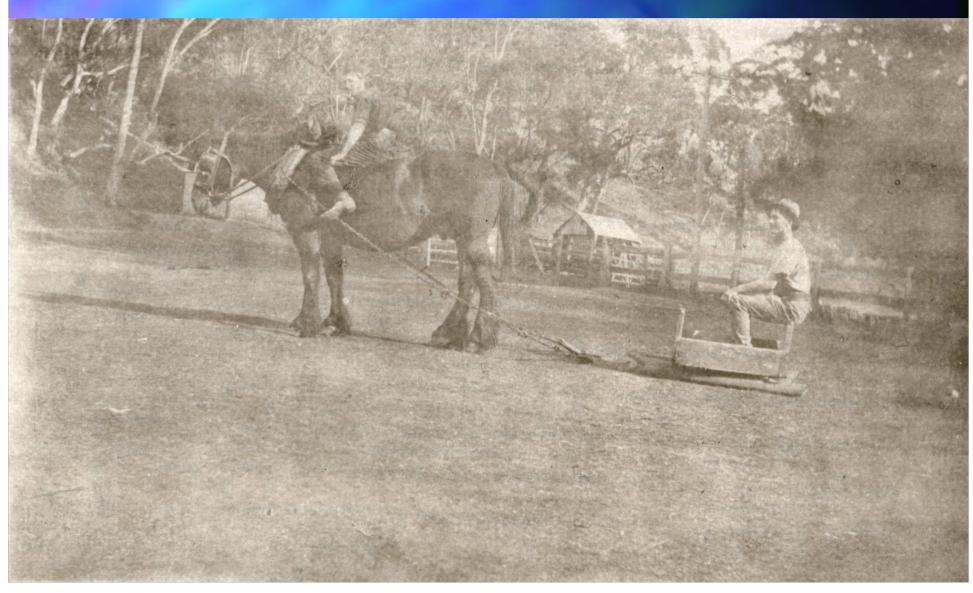
Workman at Rear of Wombeyan Guesthouse



Collecting Firewood c.1930

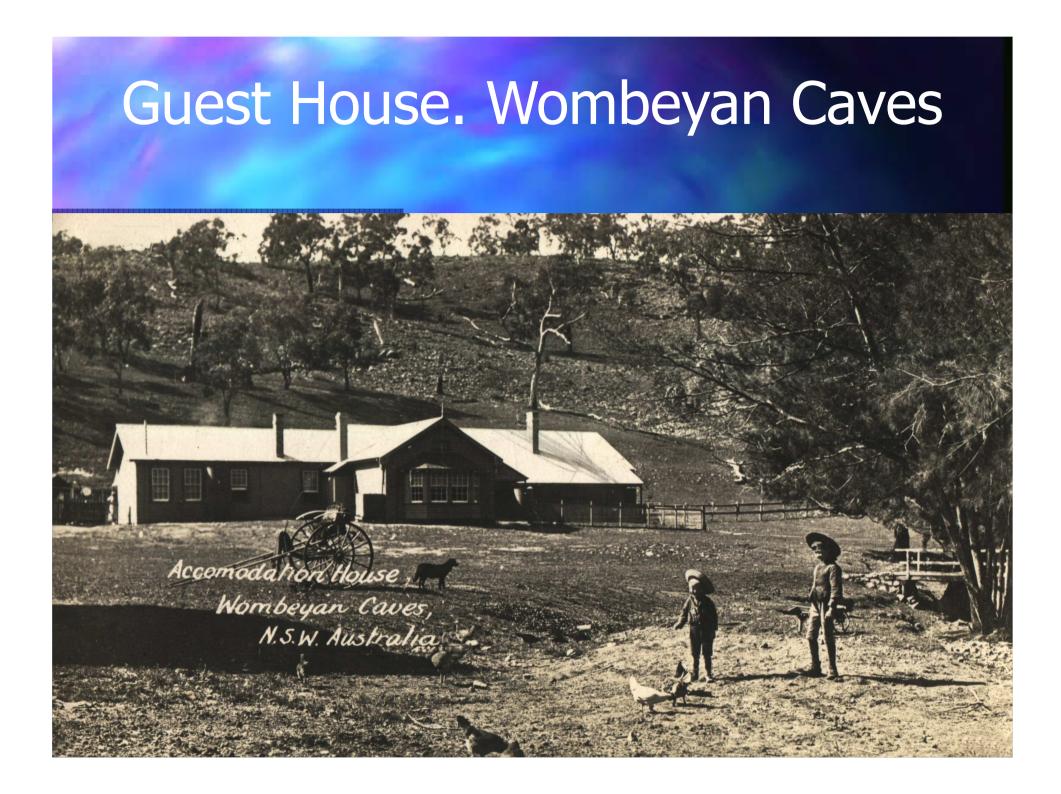


Old Tom dragging gravel for track construction



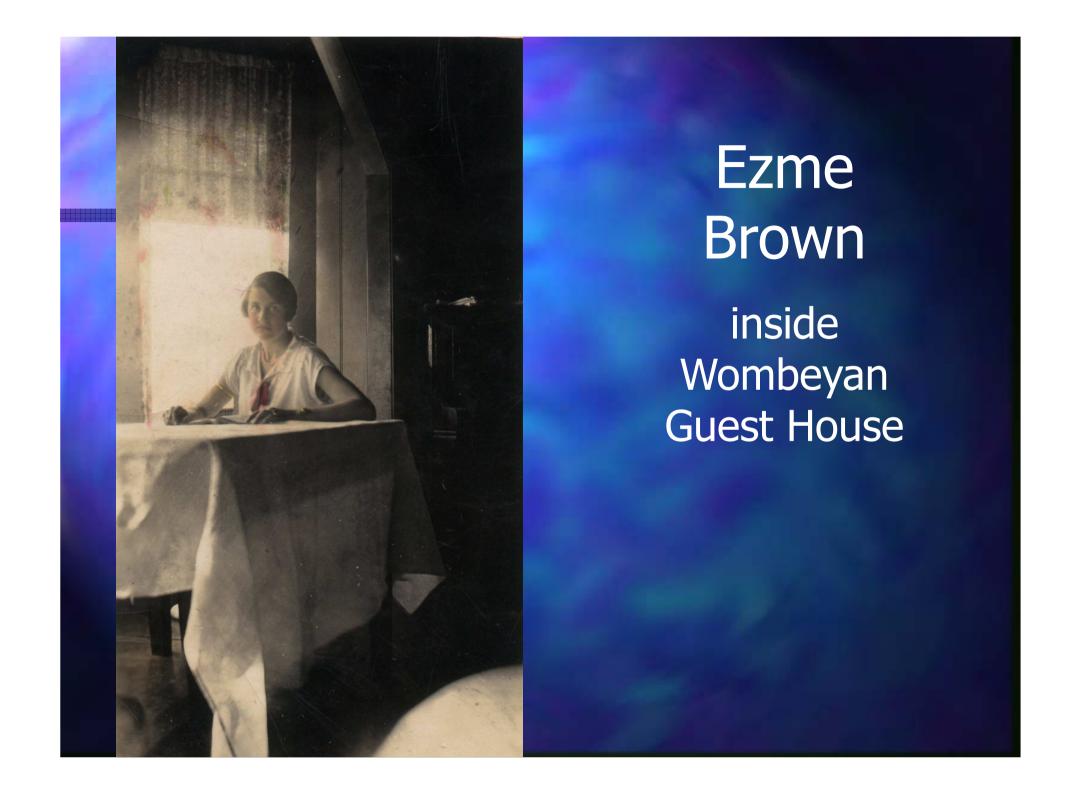
Top of Wattle Hill looking towards Wombeyan Guest House





Wombeyan Guest House





Results of Fire Wombeyan Guest House 22nd May 1934







Linen rescued from the fire



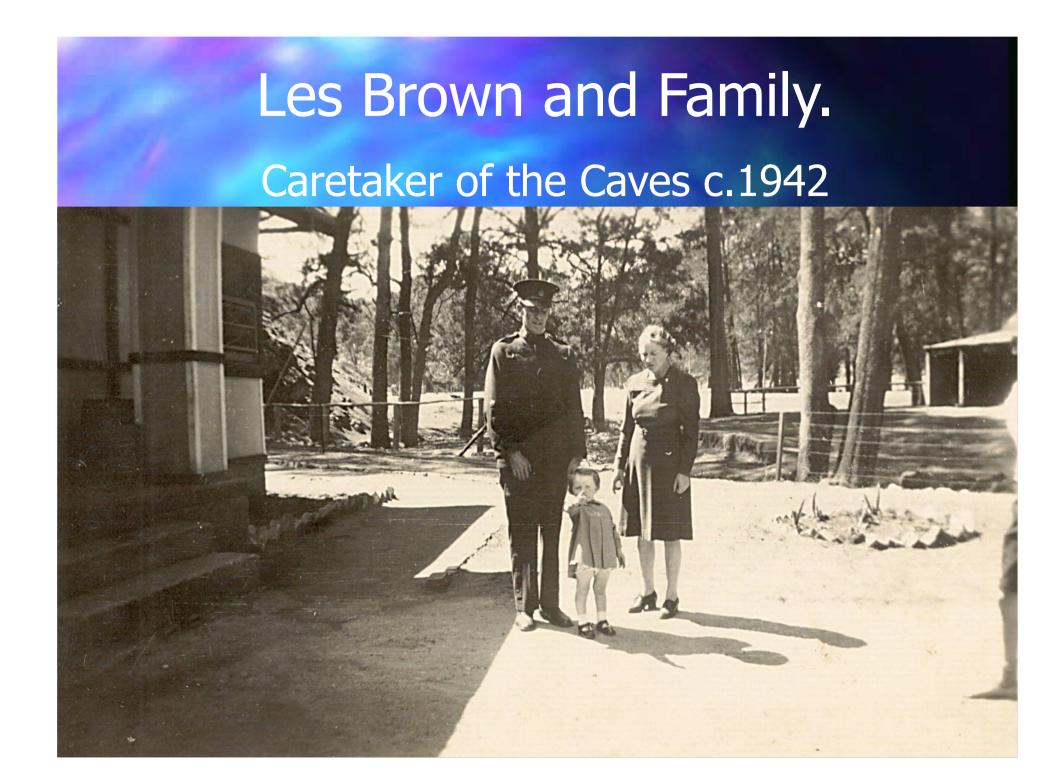
Wombeyan Caves Flat c.1930s

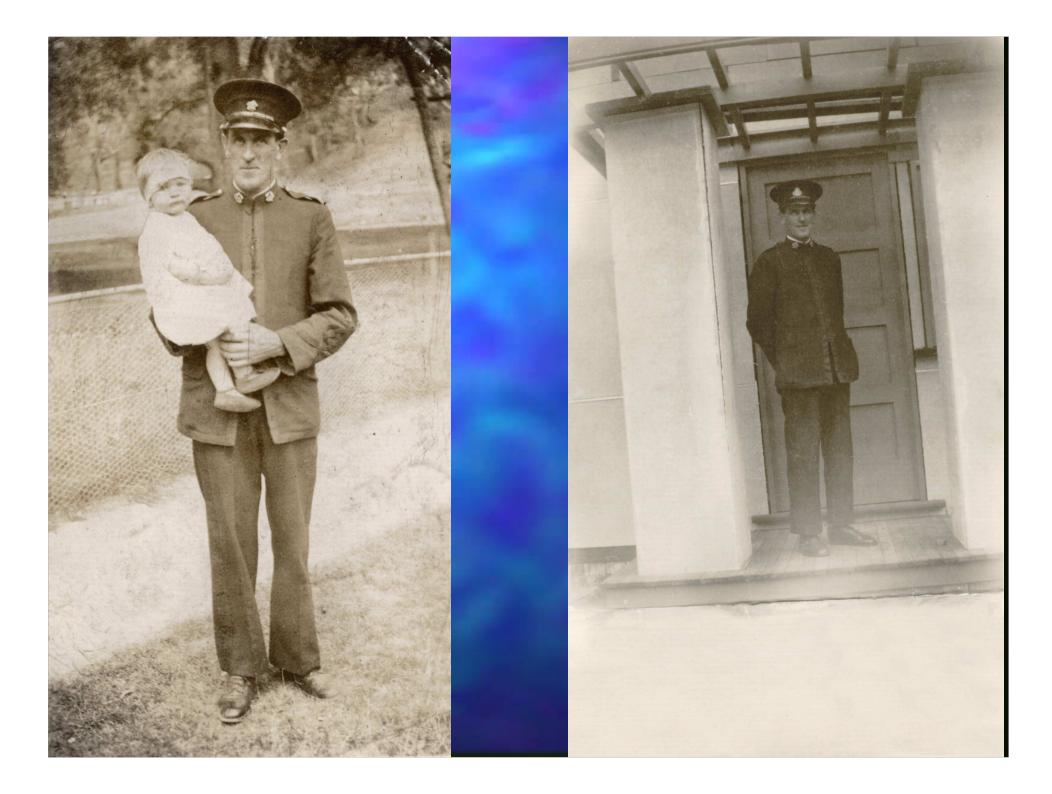


Accident on the Mittagong Road c.1930s









Joan Brown on the Wombeyan Creek Bridge 1943



Swimming in Wombeyan Creek

Note: Petrol Bowser in background

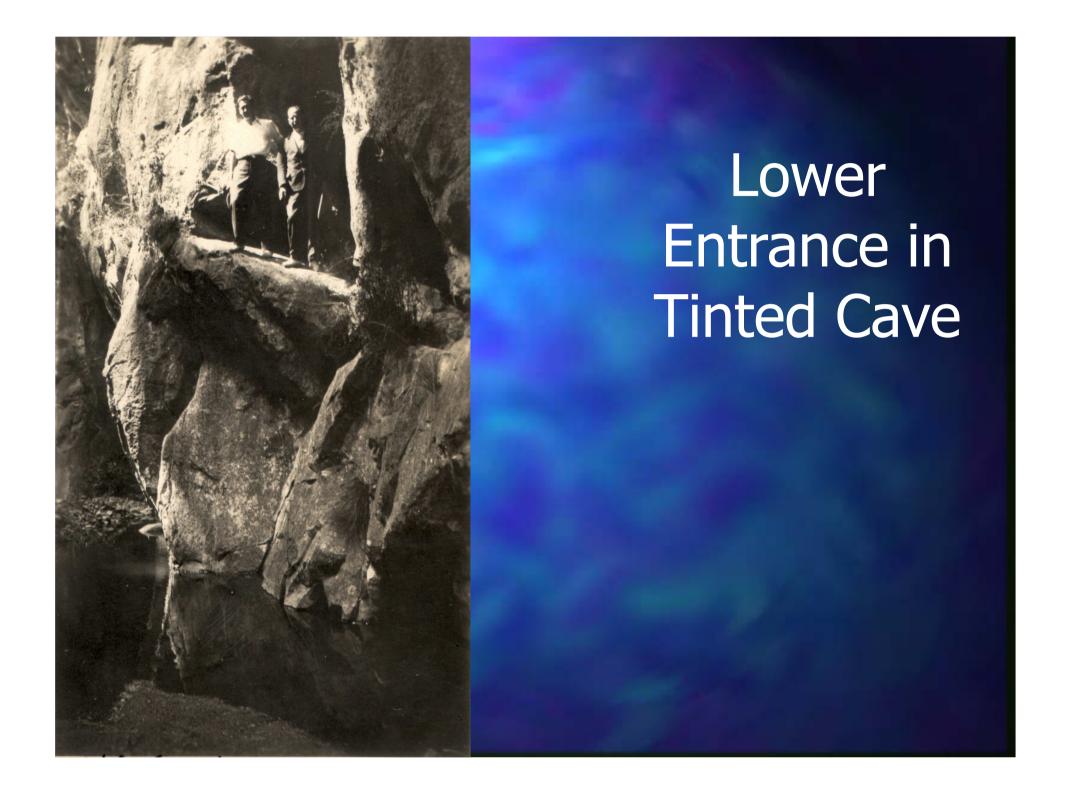


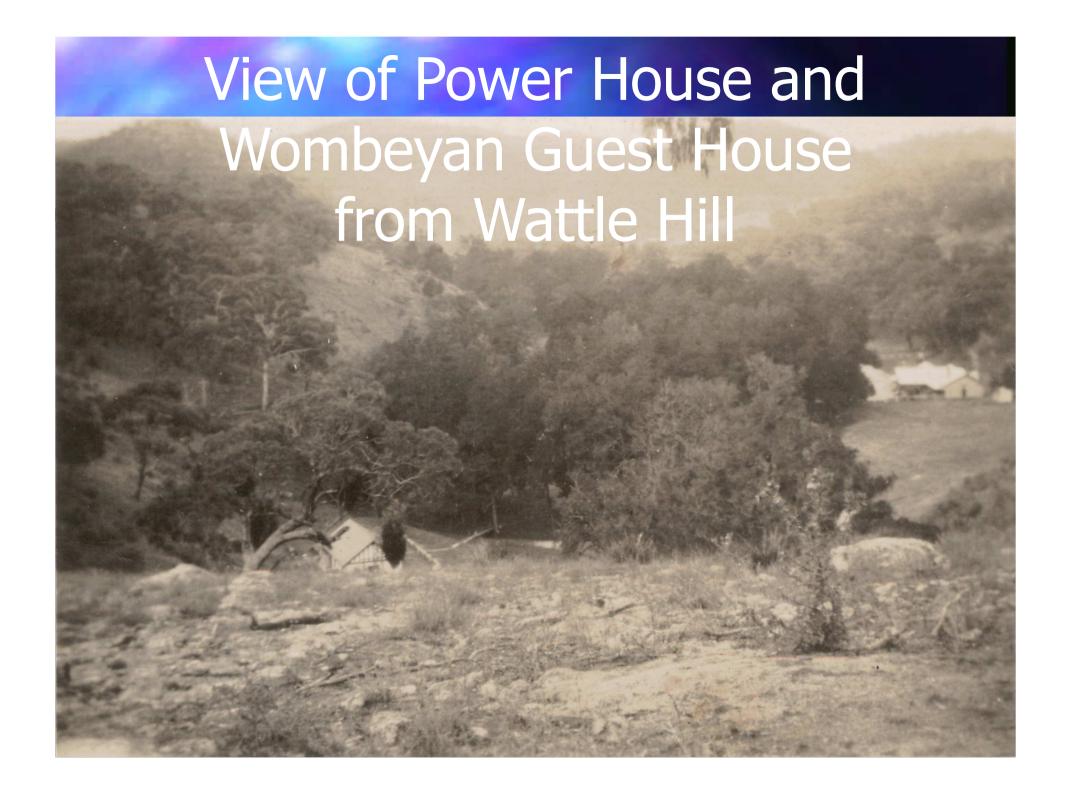
Wombeyan Creek in Flood

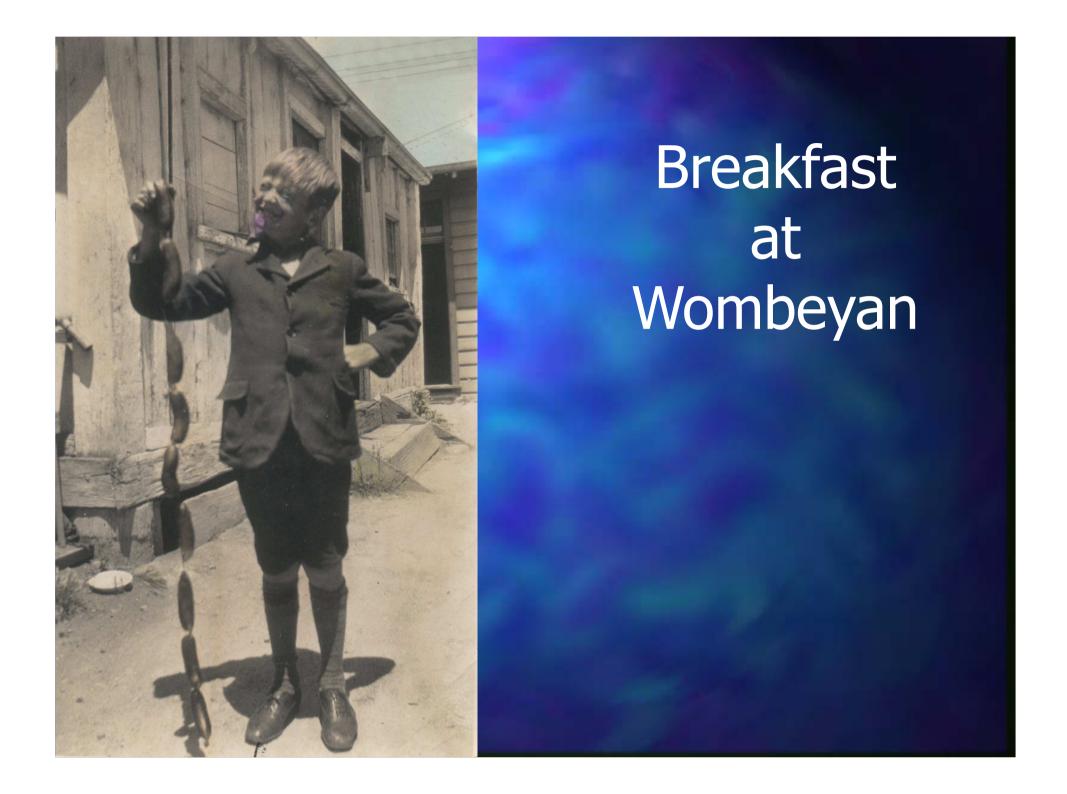
Caretakers cottage in background 1944







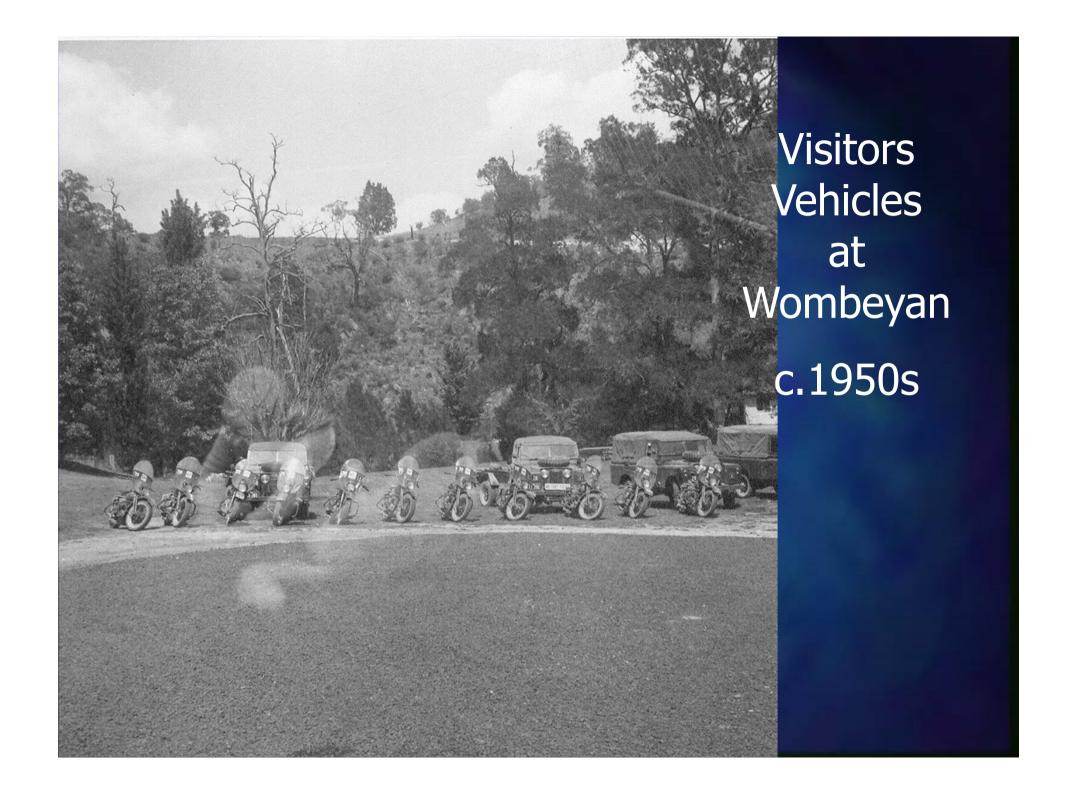




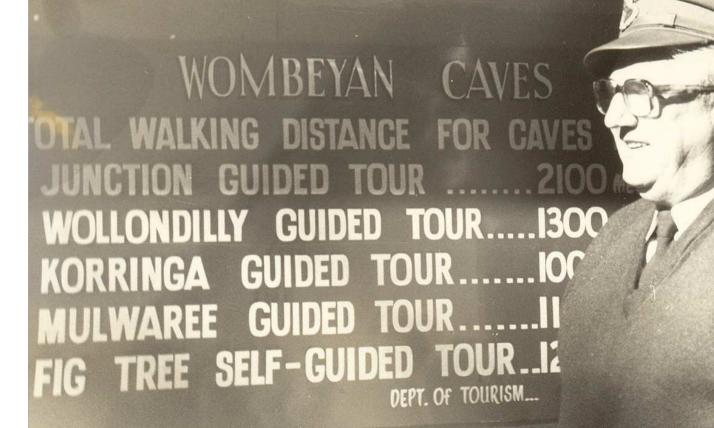














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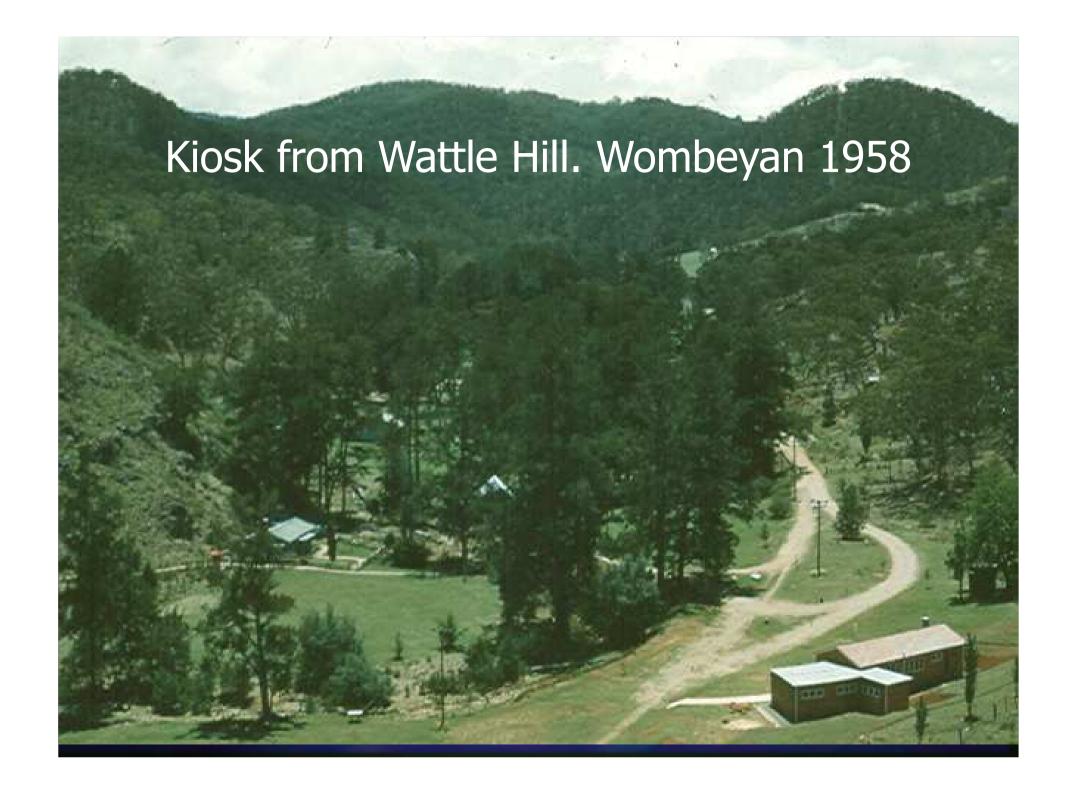
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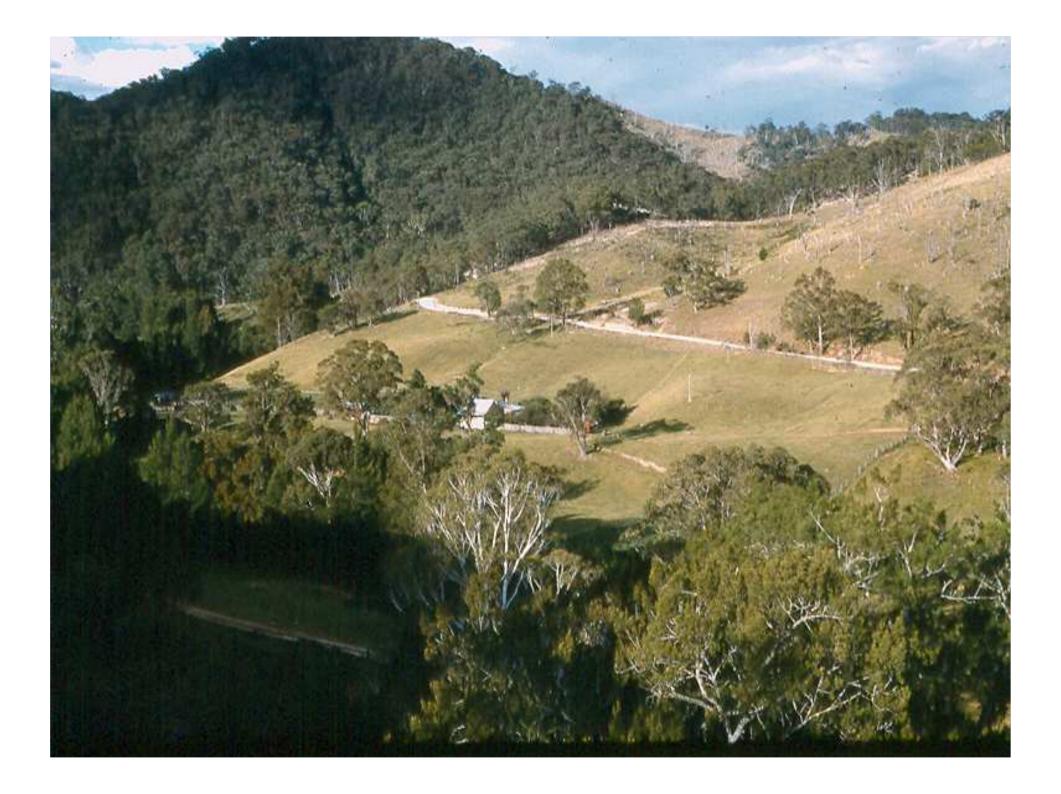


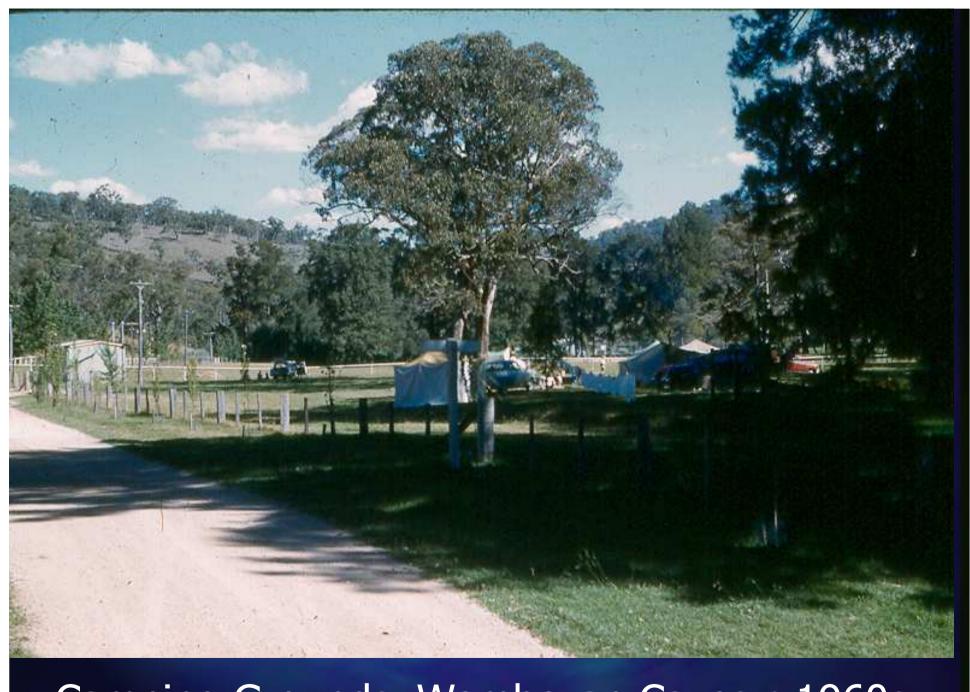


View along pipeline, Wombeyan 1958

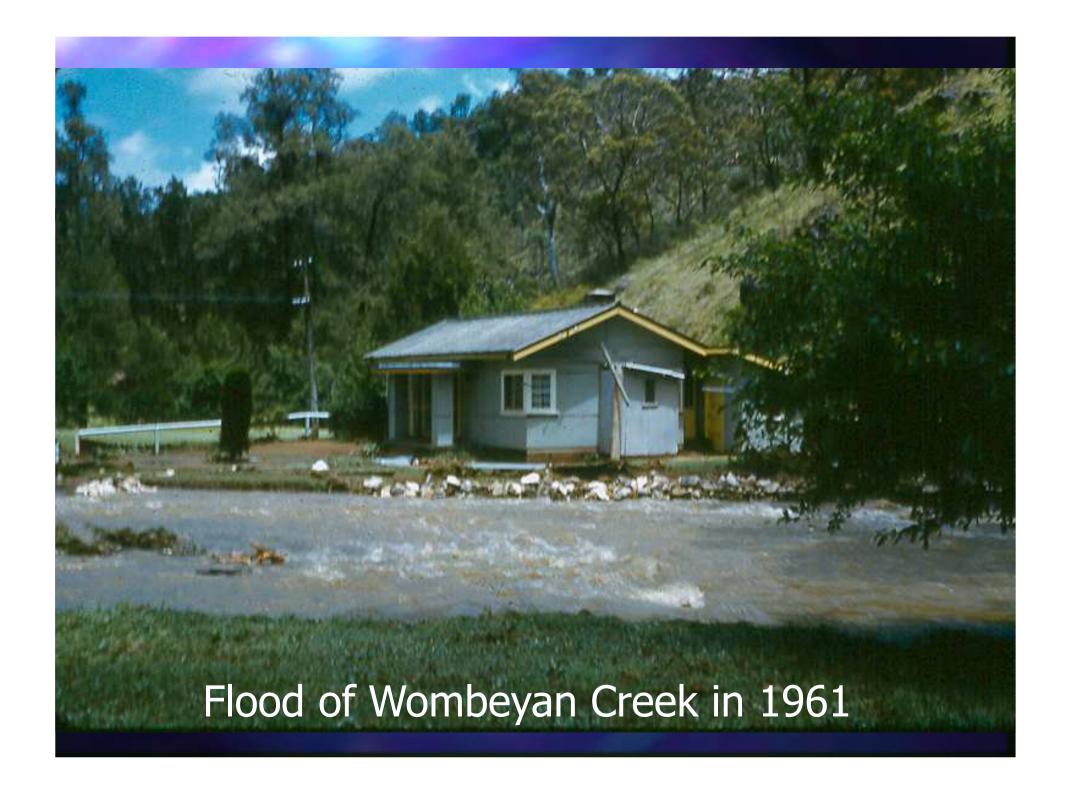








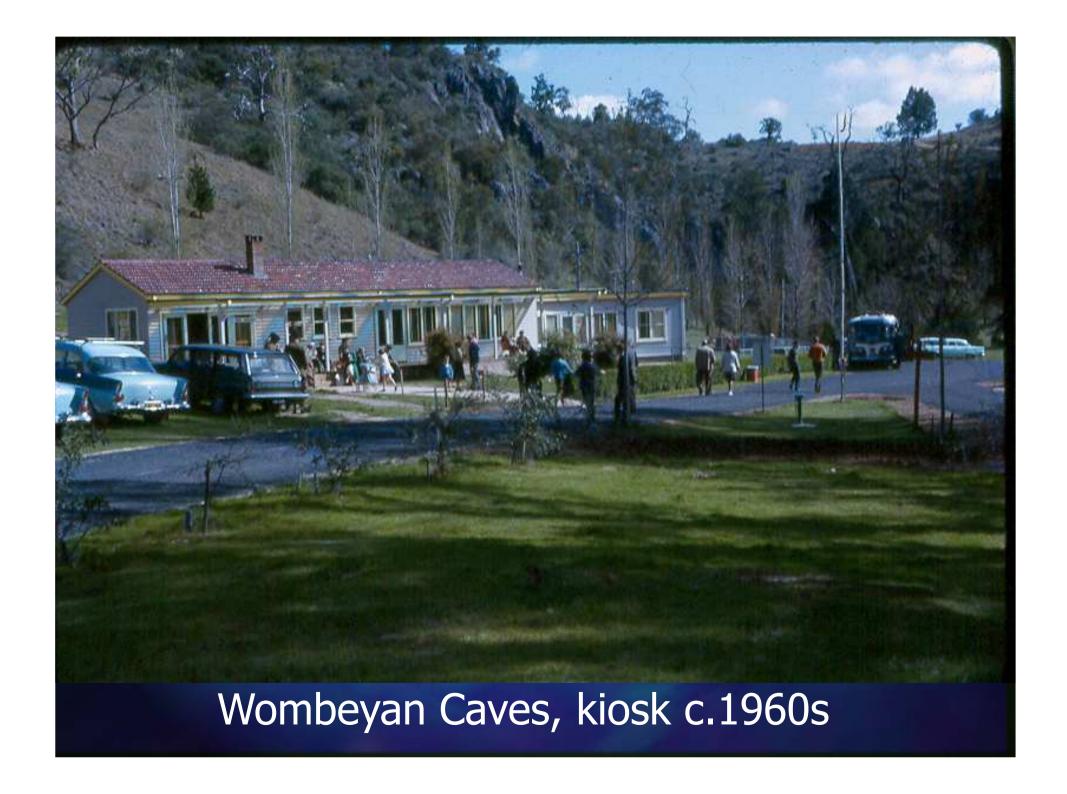
Camping Grounds, Wombeyan Caves c.1960s







Results of 1961 Flood through Tennis Court





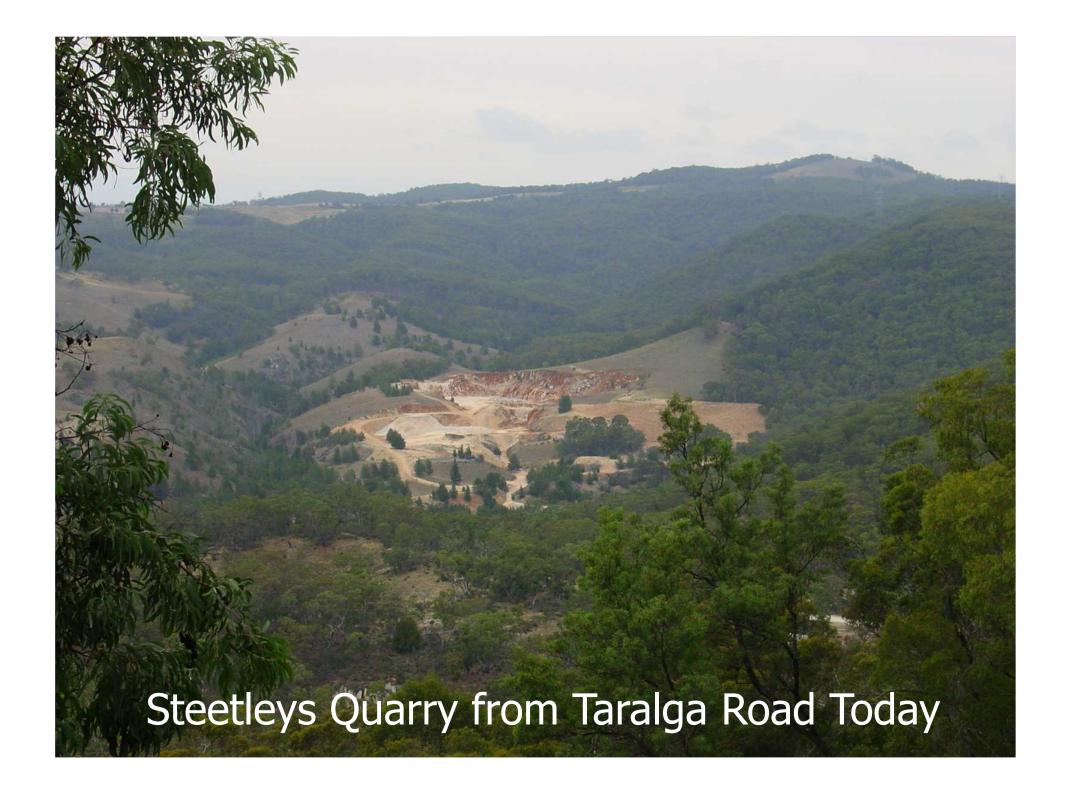
Inside the Kui kiosk

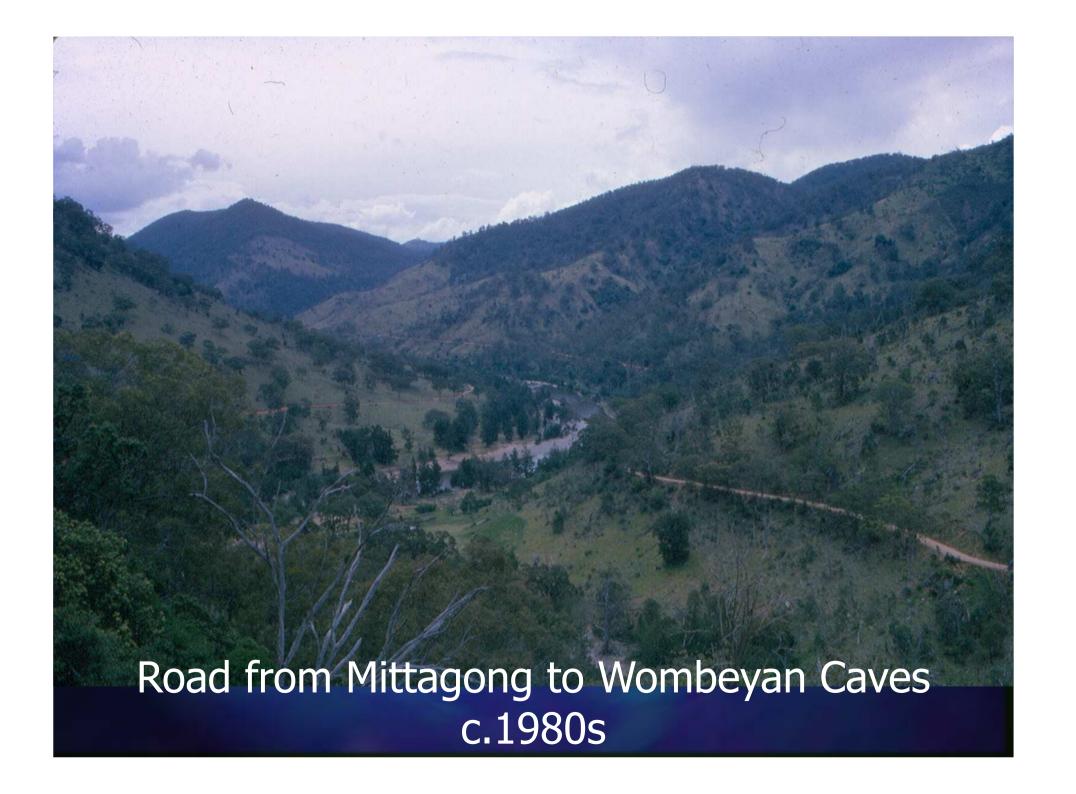


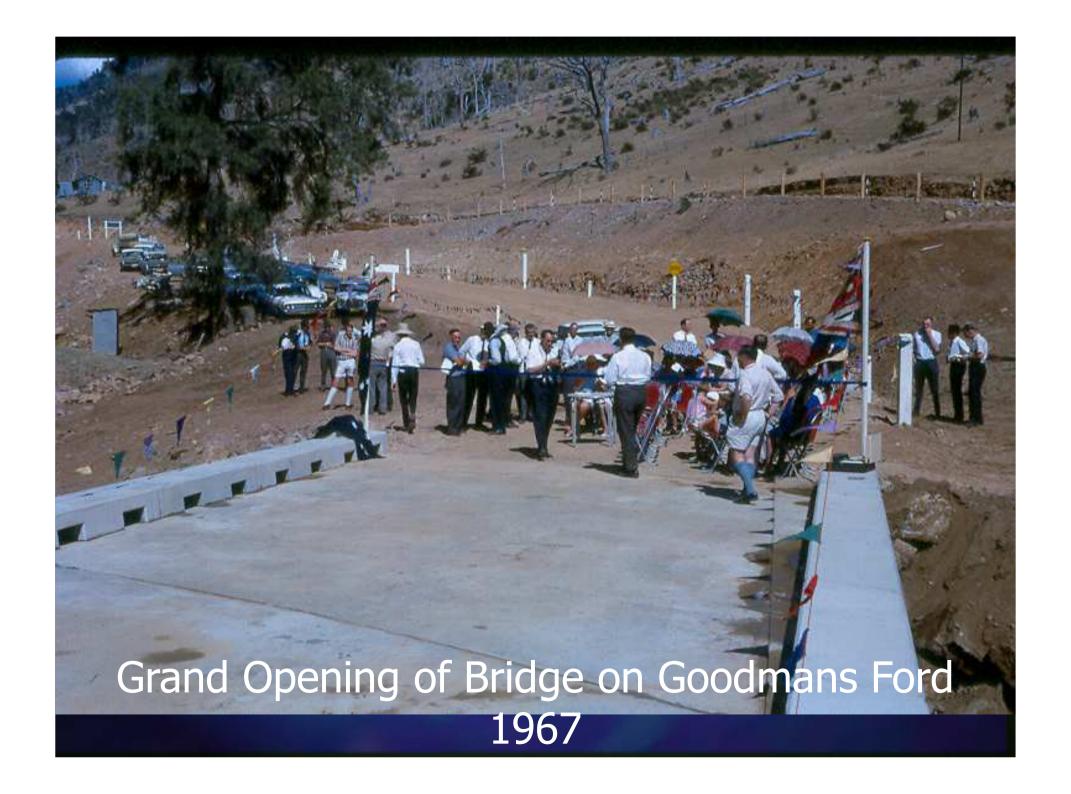
Steetleys Quarry c.1960s

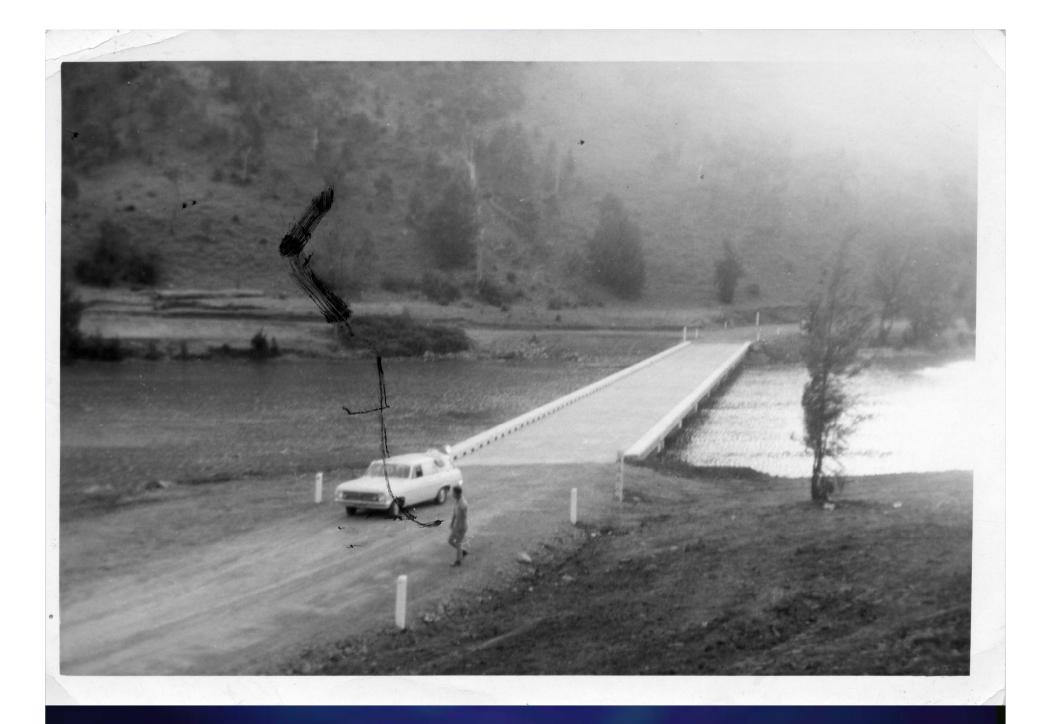


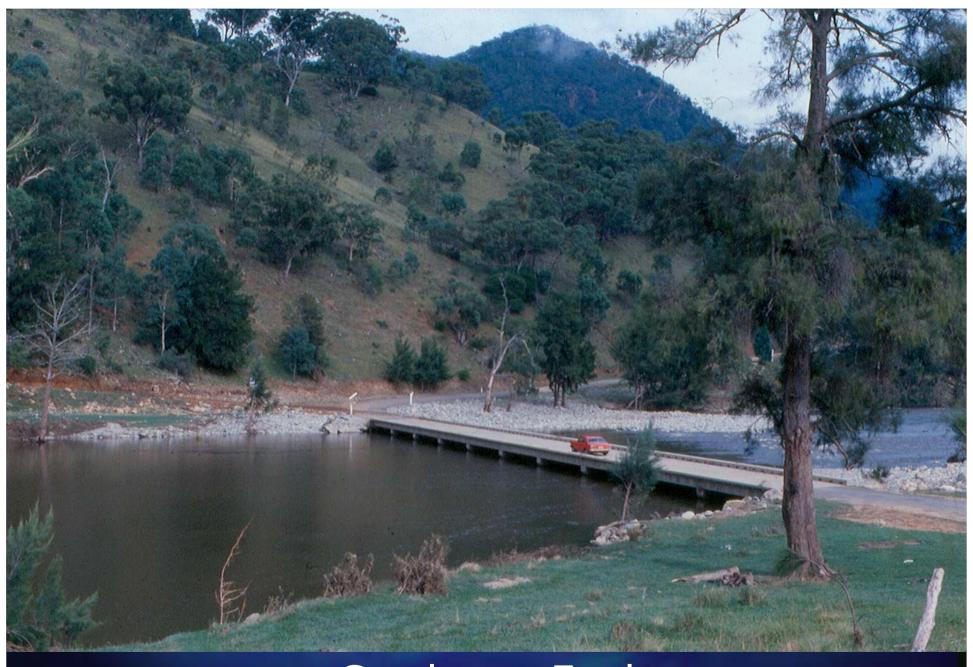
Steetleys Quarry c.1998







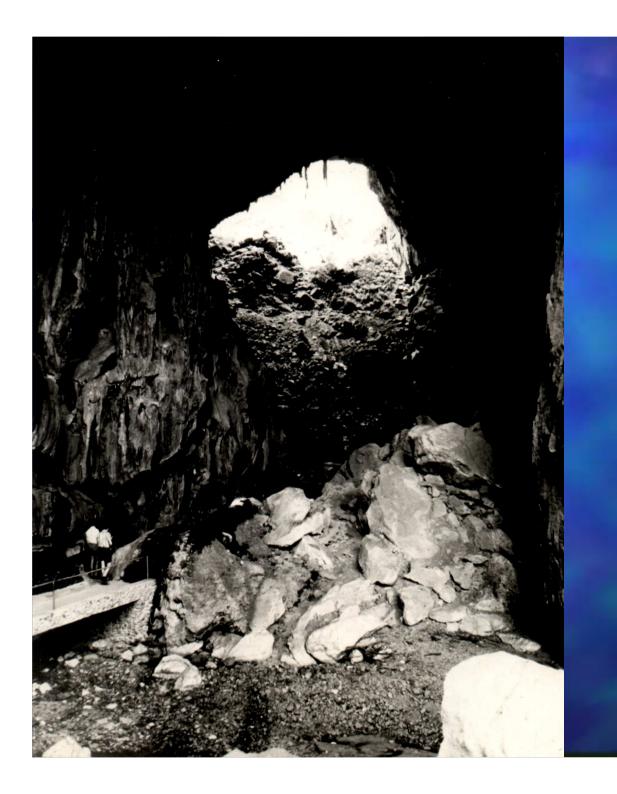




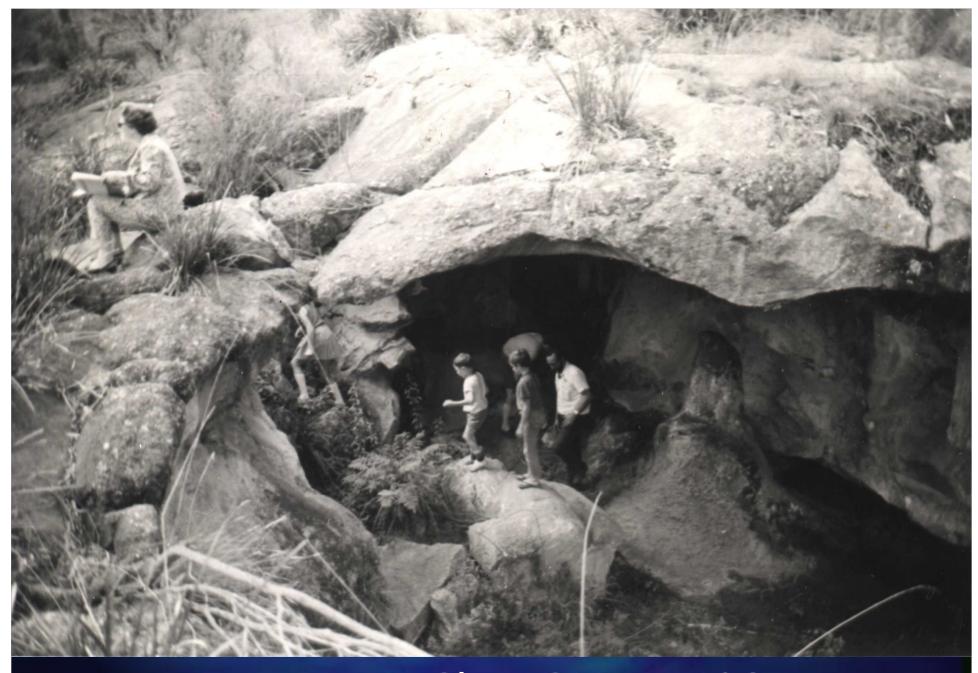
Goodmans Ford



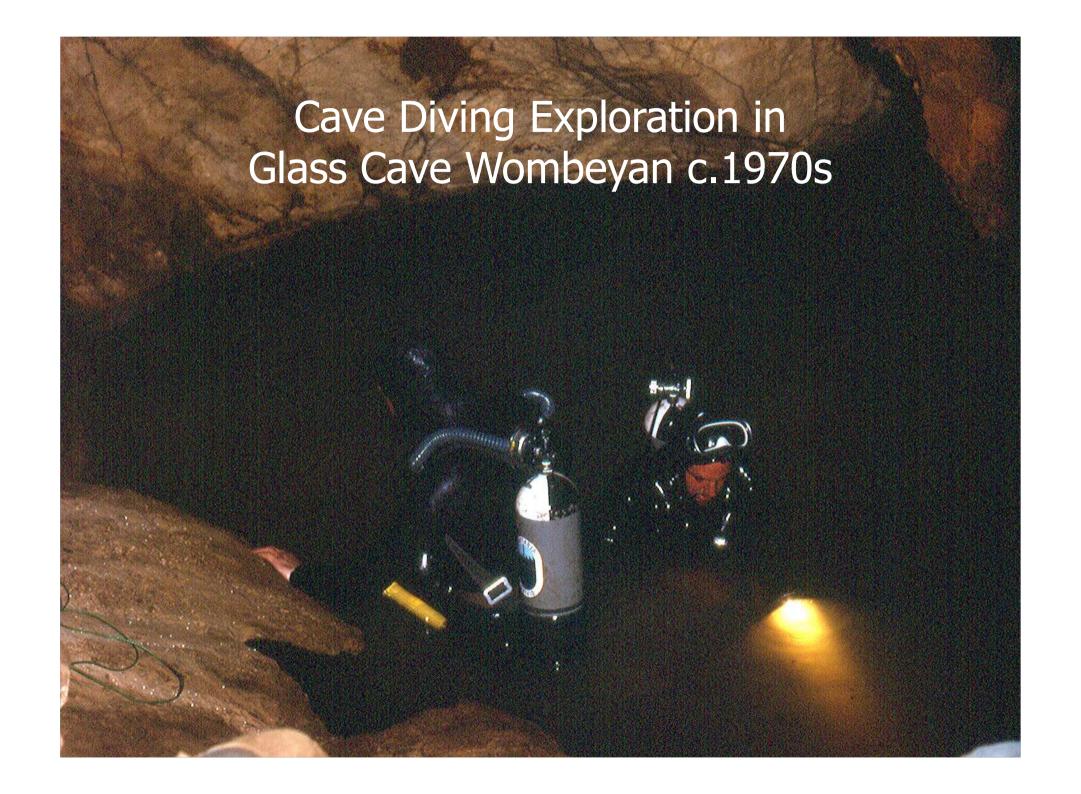
Camp Grounds at Wombeyan c.1970s

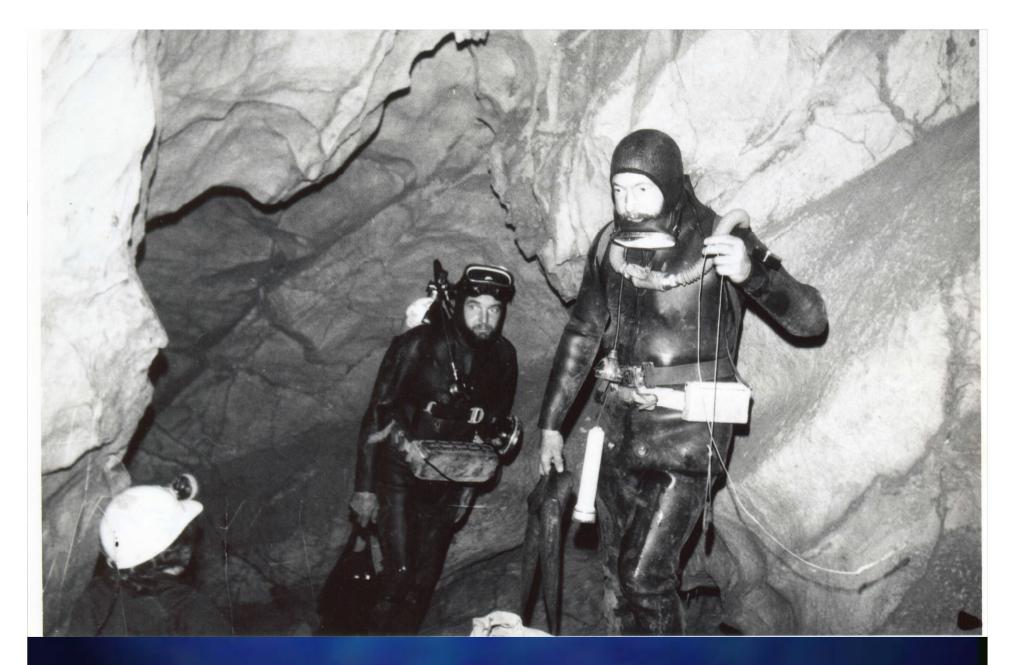


Inside
Victoria Arch
Looking out
the
Collapsed
Entrance

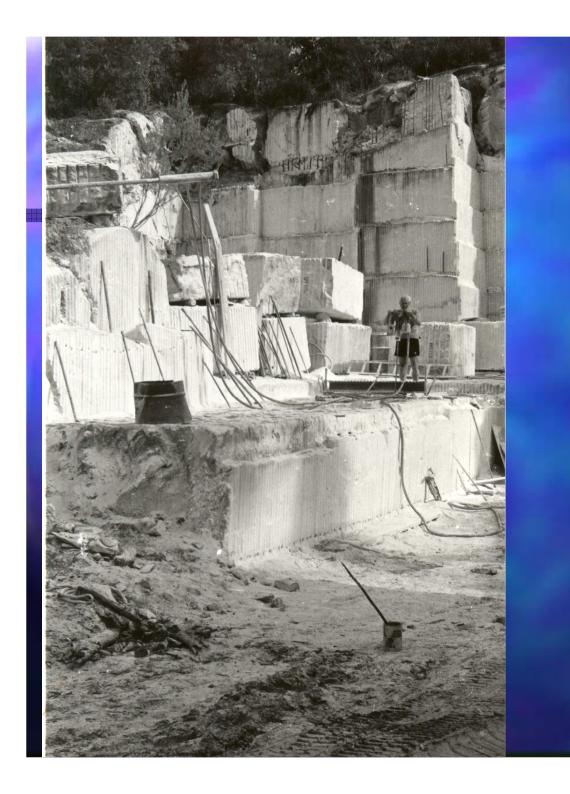


Entrance to Glass Cave c.1967





Divers exiting Glass Cave Wombeyan c.1970s



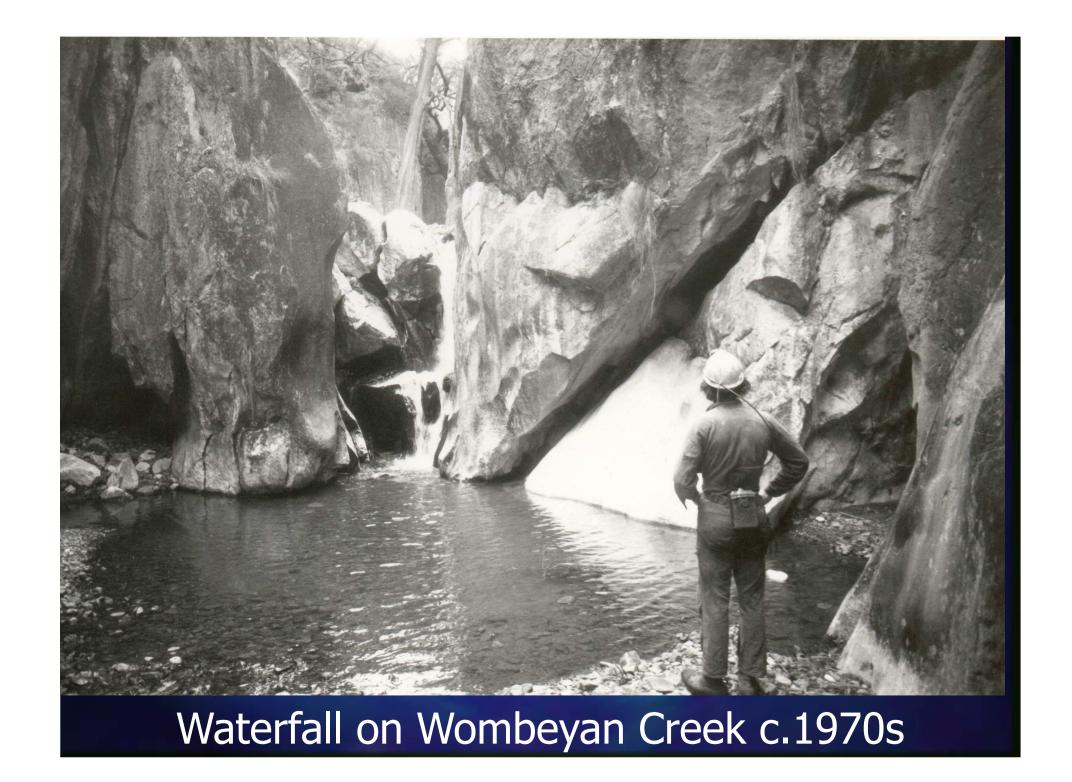
Marble Quarry
Wombeyan
c.1970s

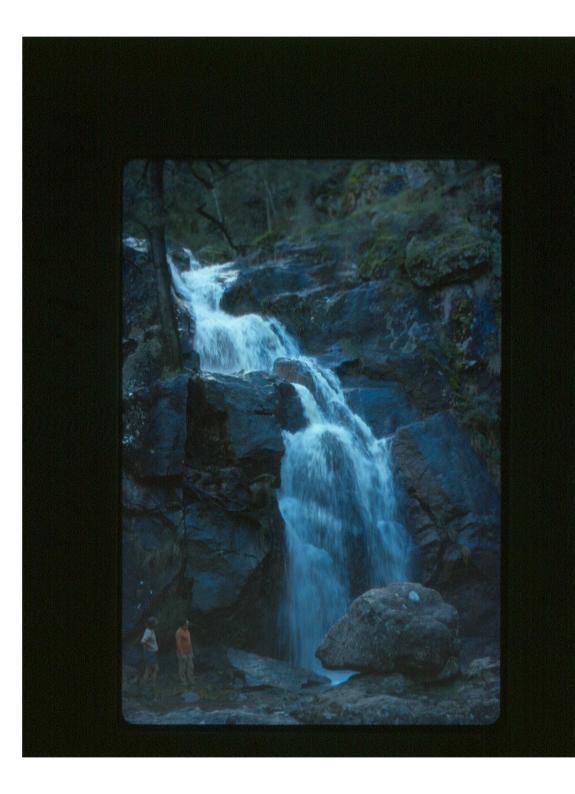


SSS Members Surveying on

Mares Forest Creek

c.1970s



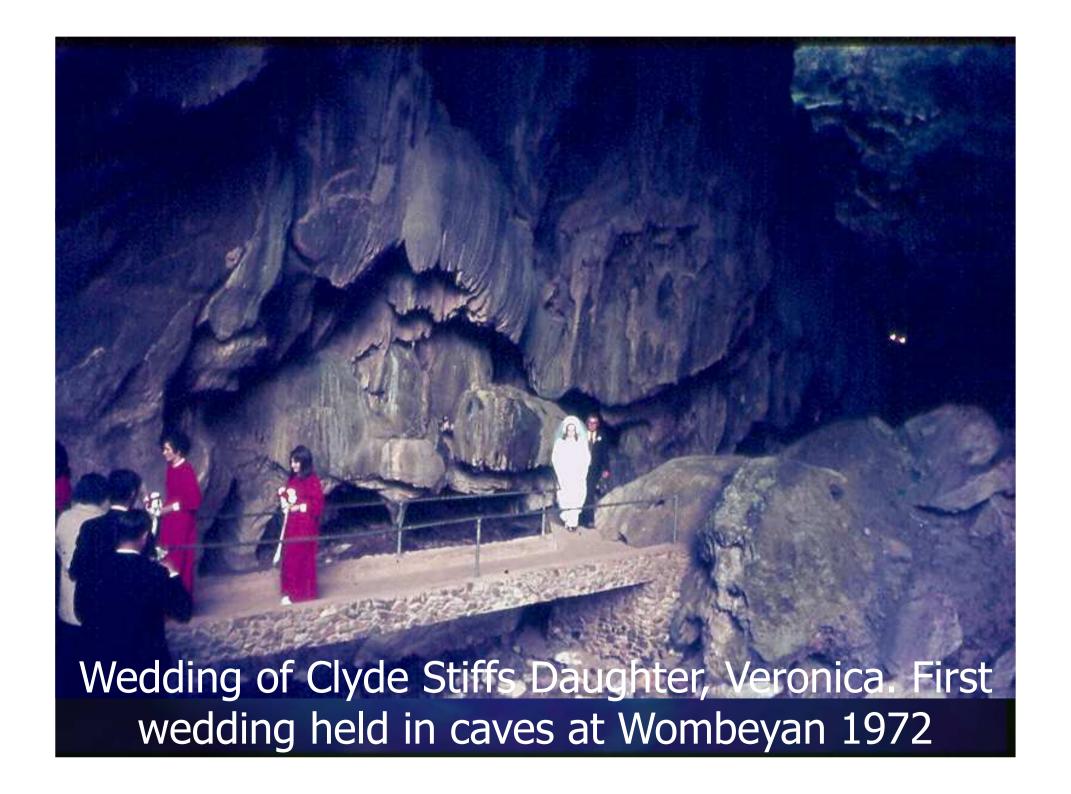


Waterfall Wombeyan Creek

c.1970s

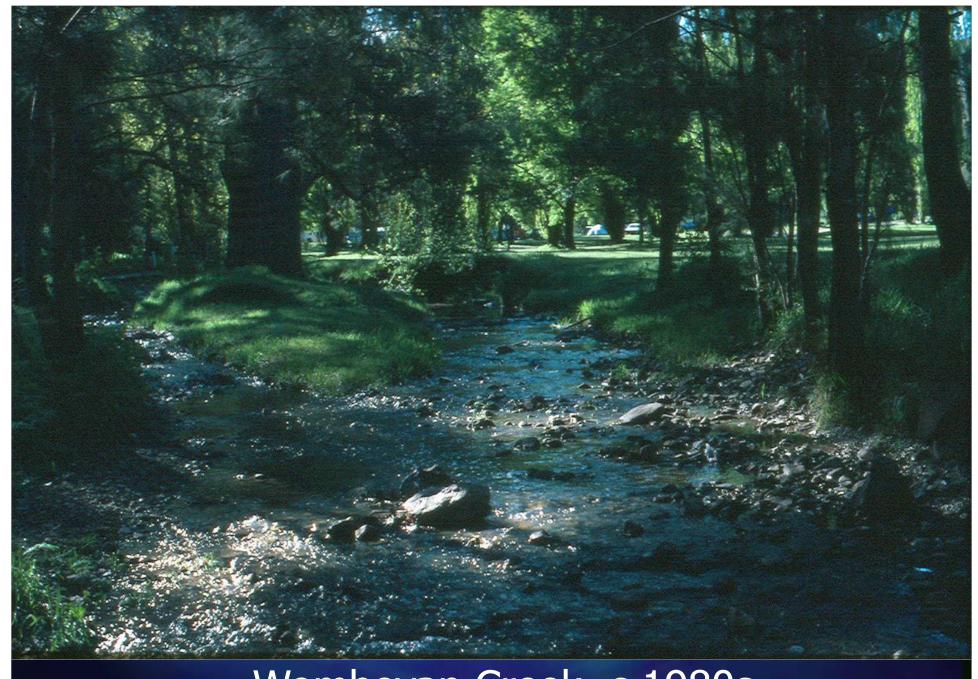


Wedding of Michael and Annette Chalker 1971

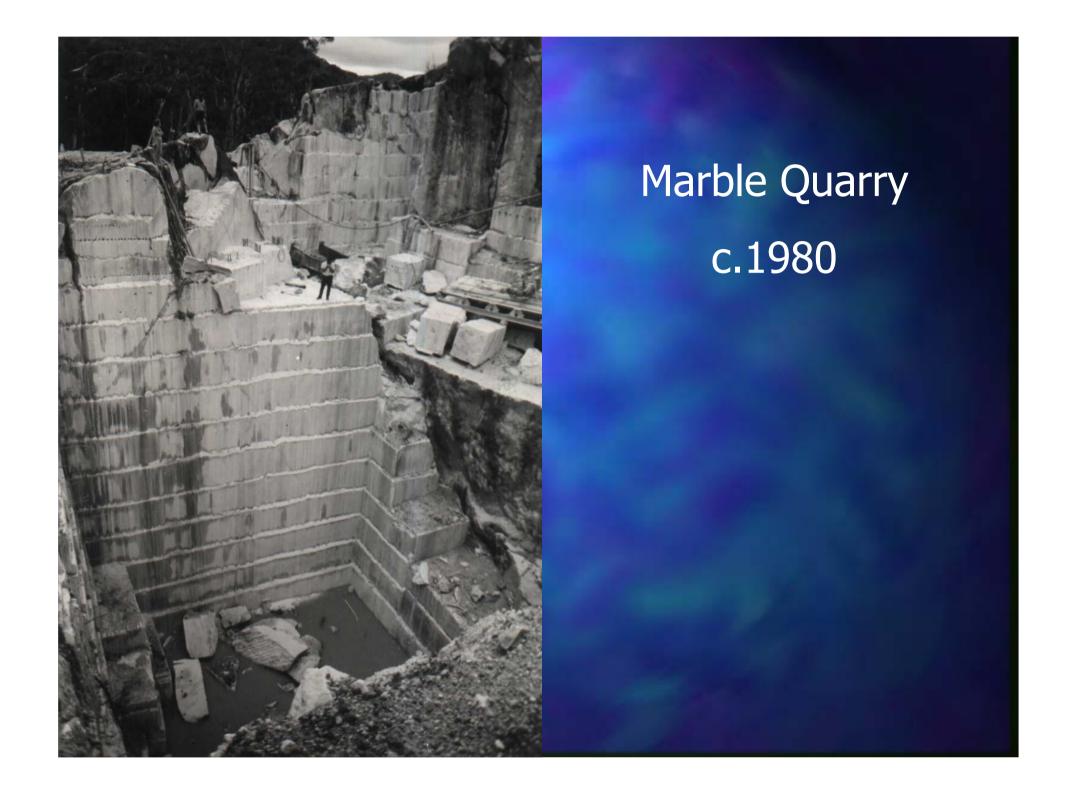


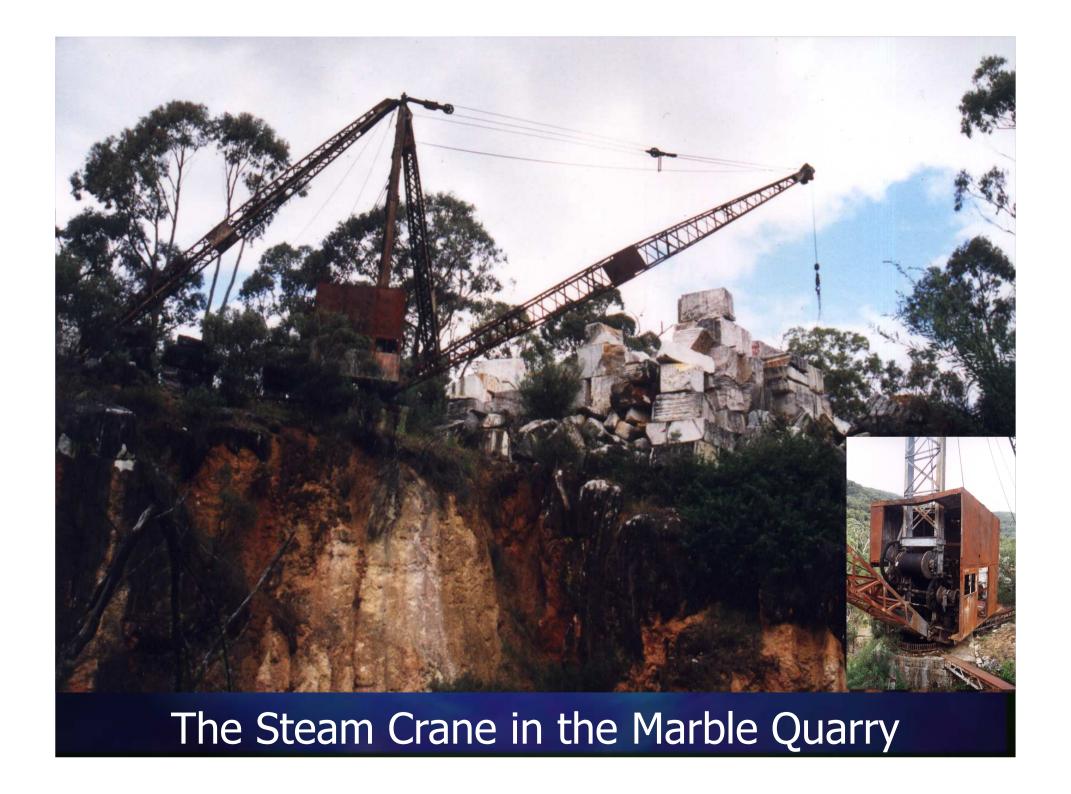


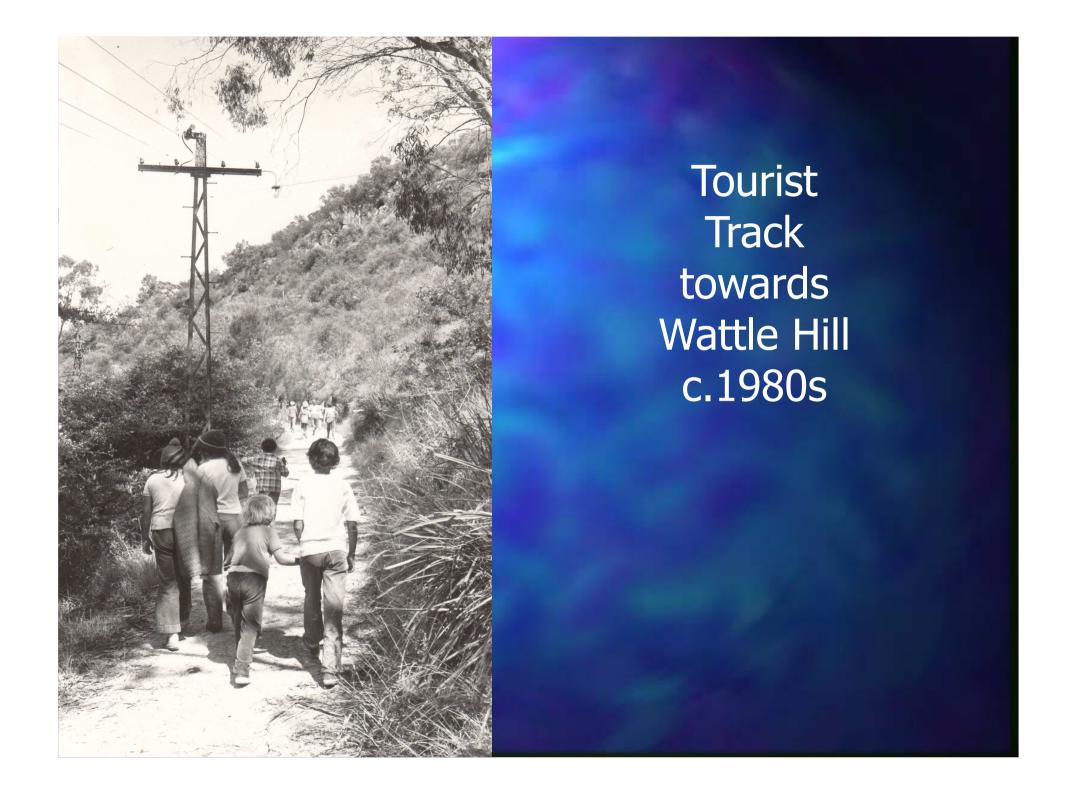
Group of Wombeyan Guides c.1980s

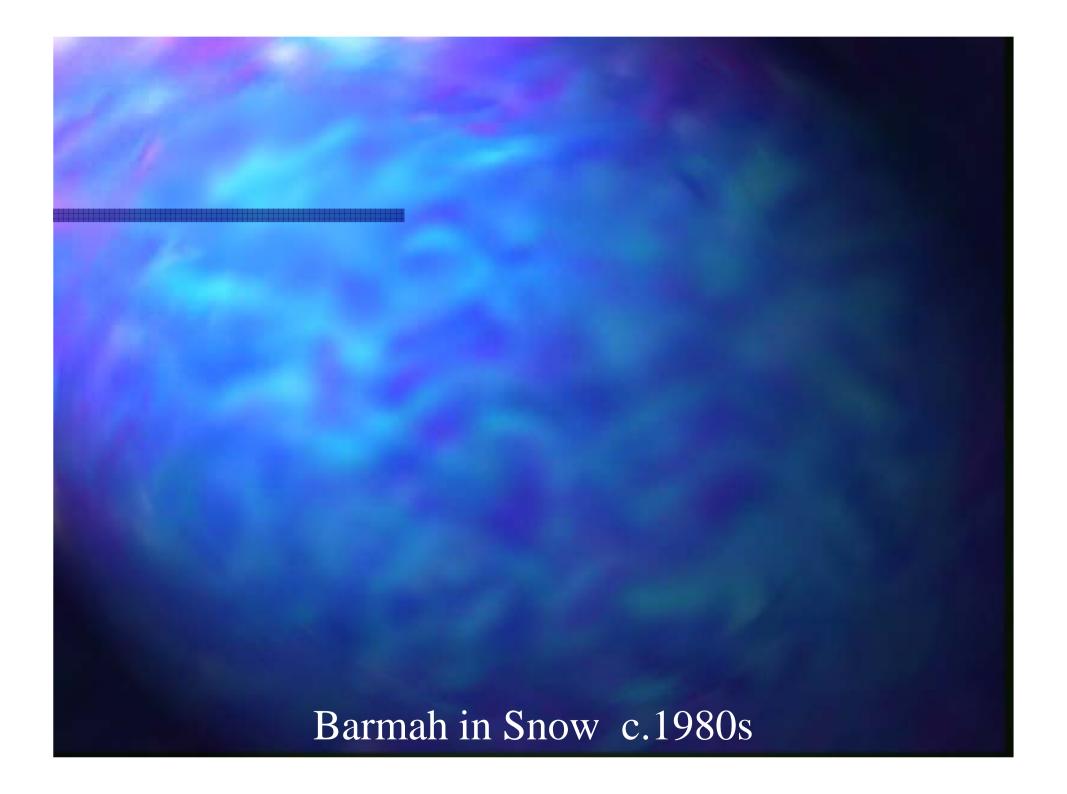


Wombeyan Creek c.1980s



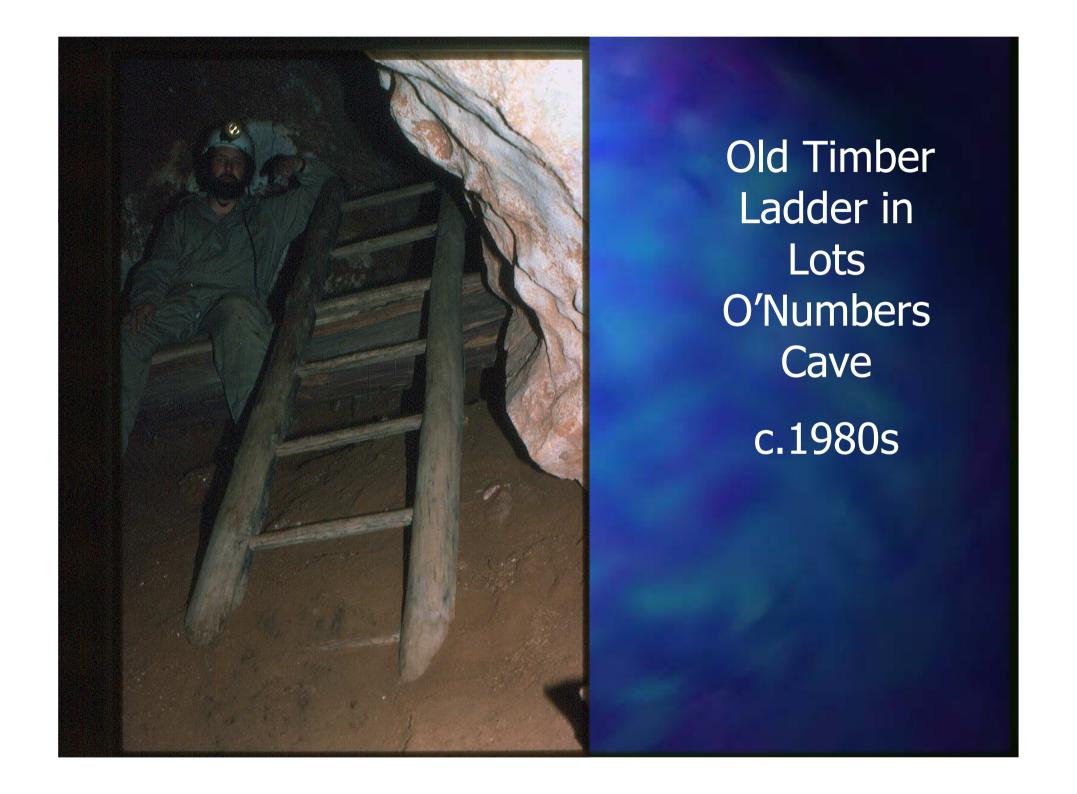


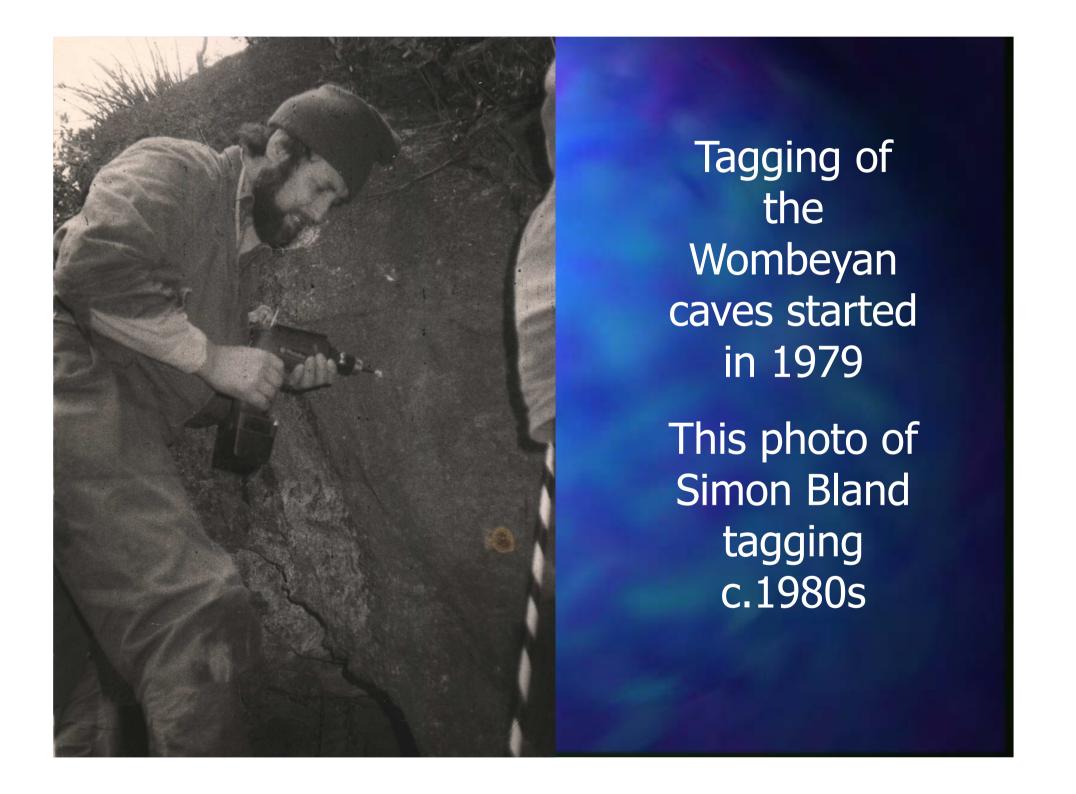


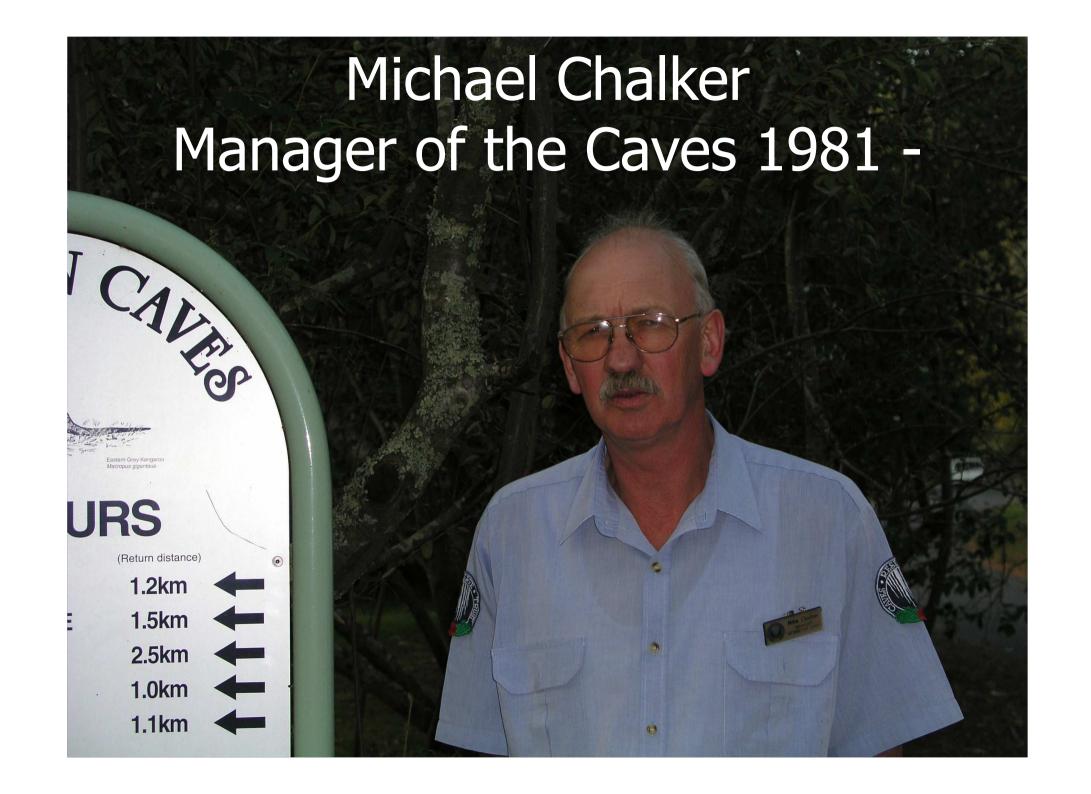


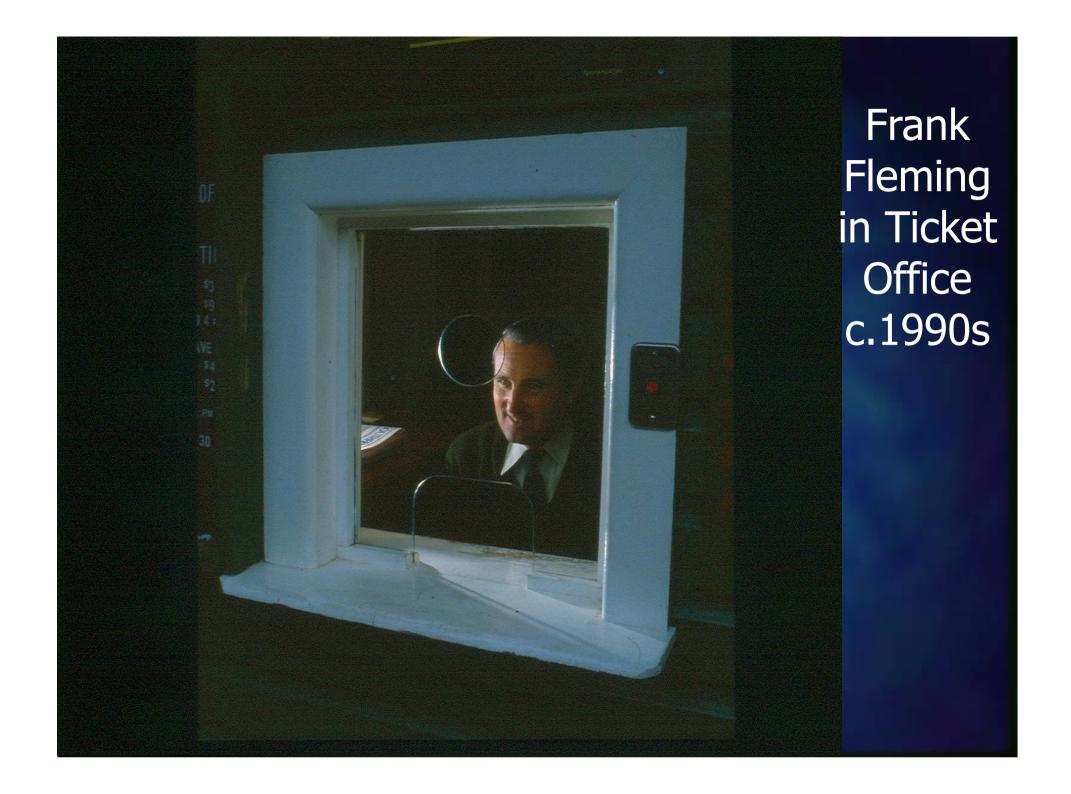


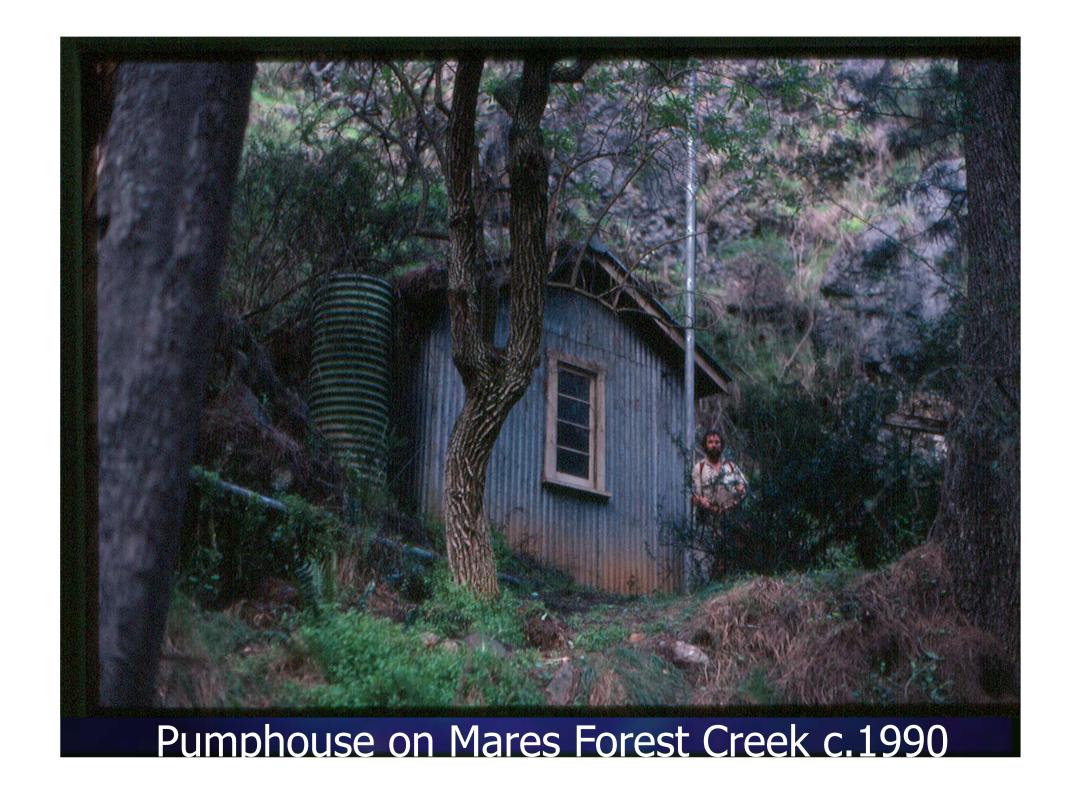
Cabins in the early 1990s











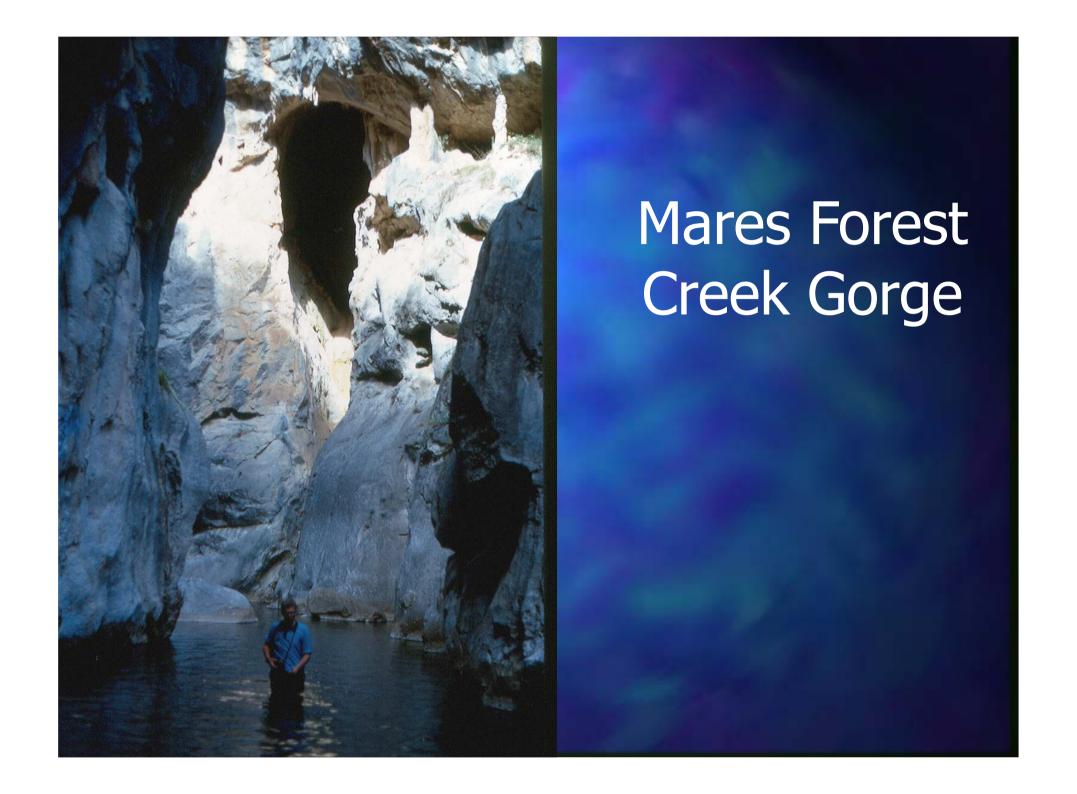


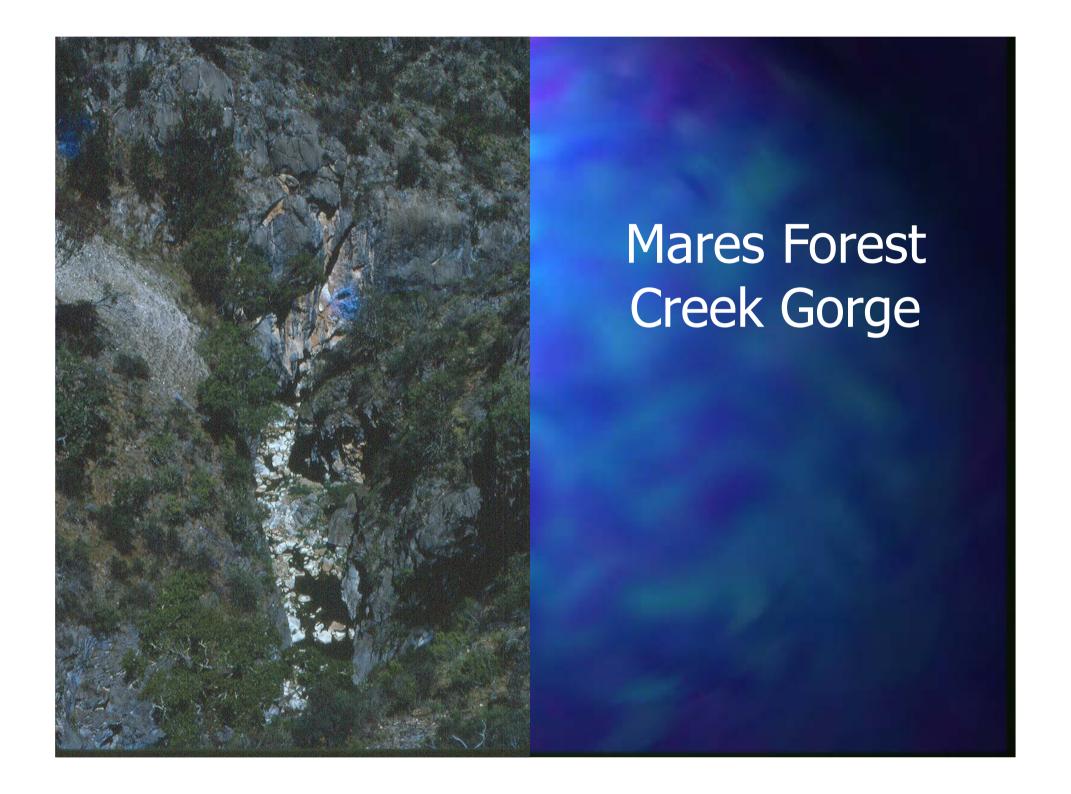


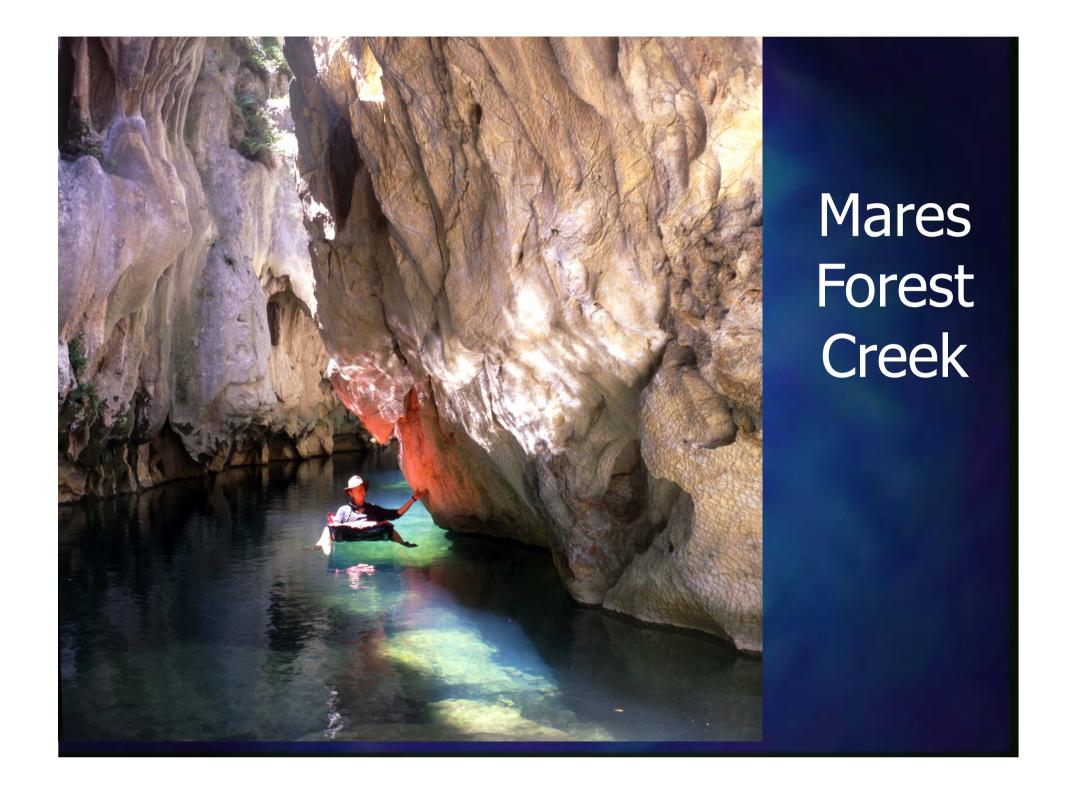
Kui Kiosk, Wombeyan Caves c.1999



Rock Wallaby in Victoria Arch





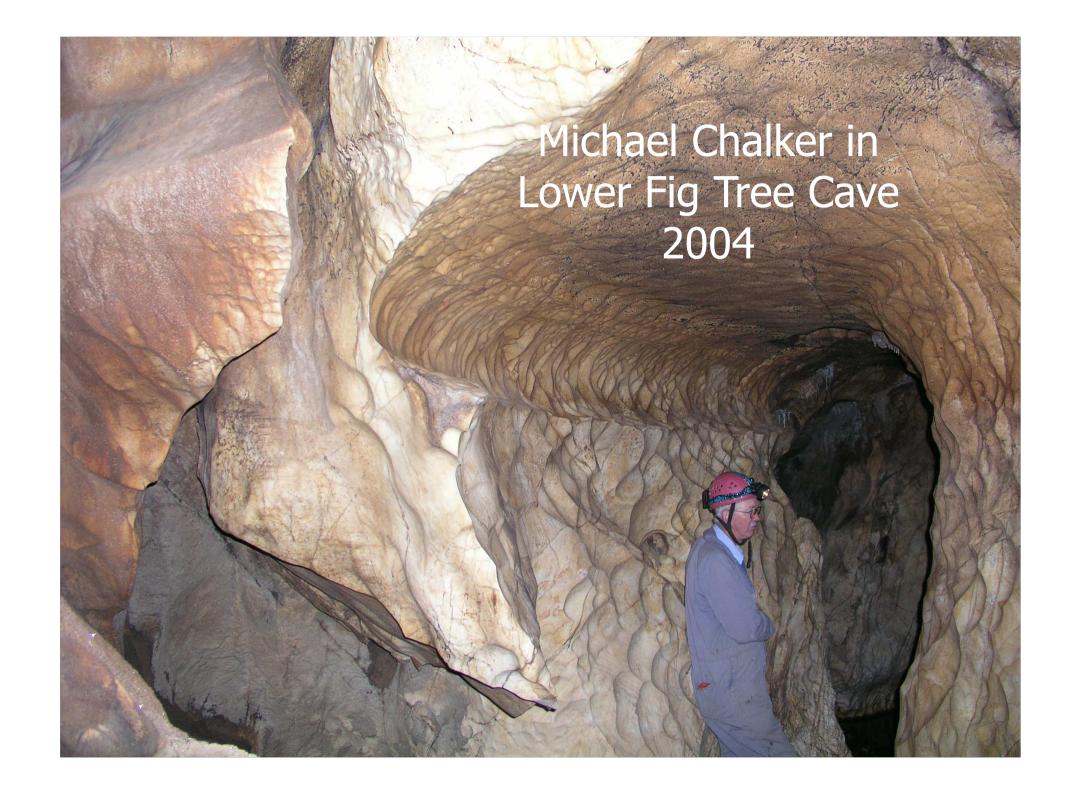


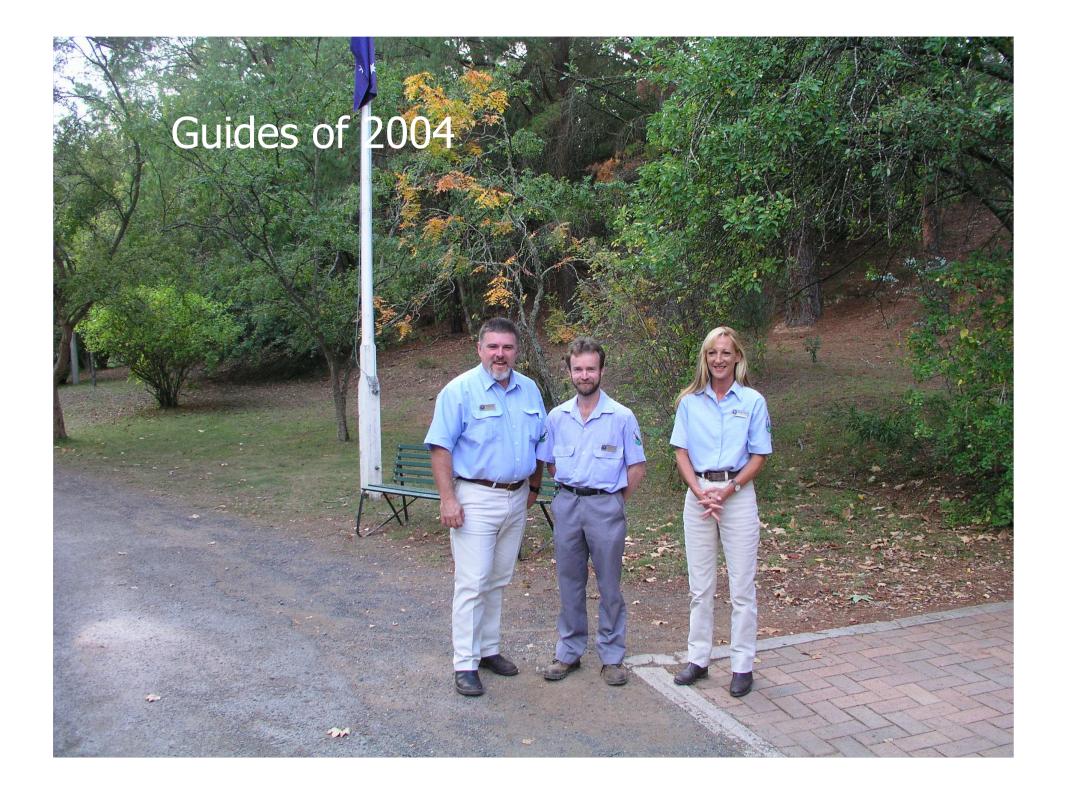


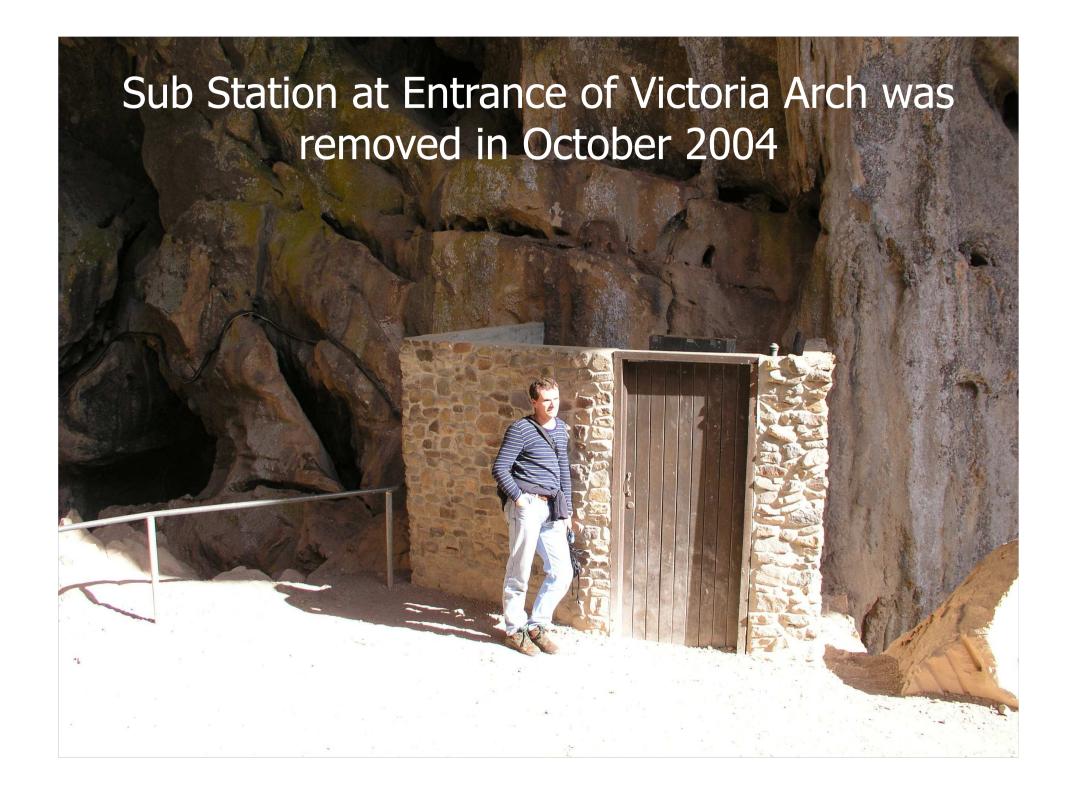


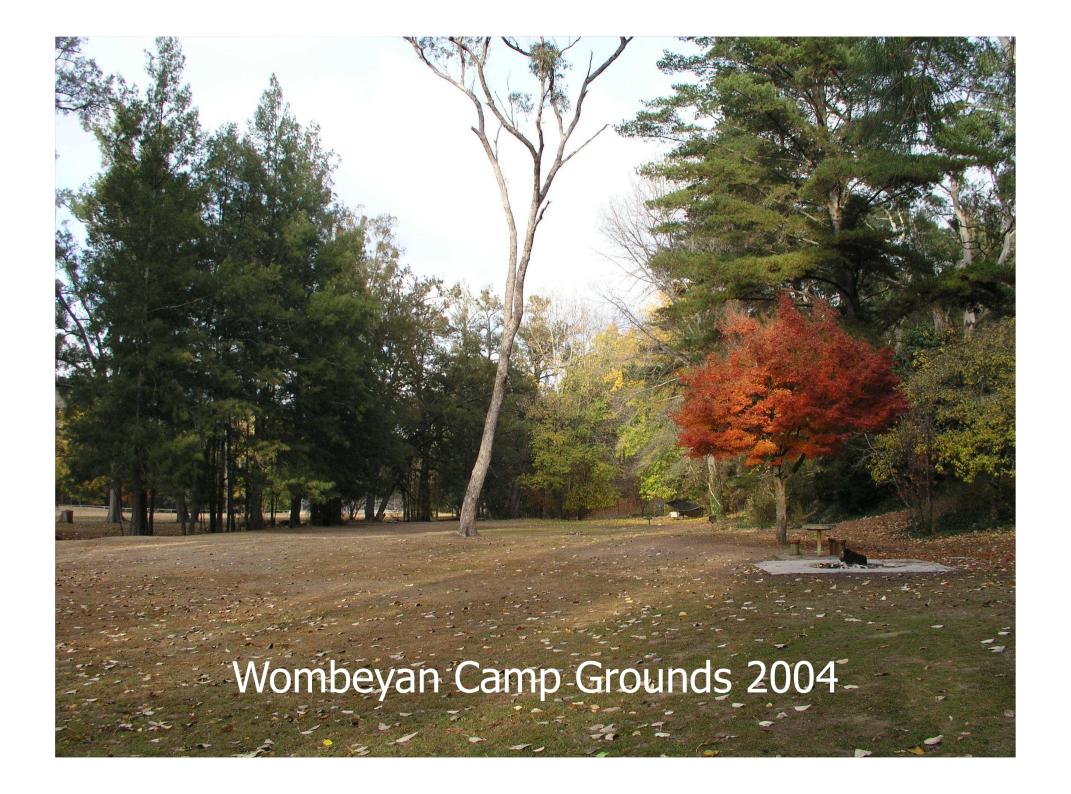


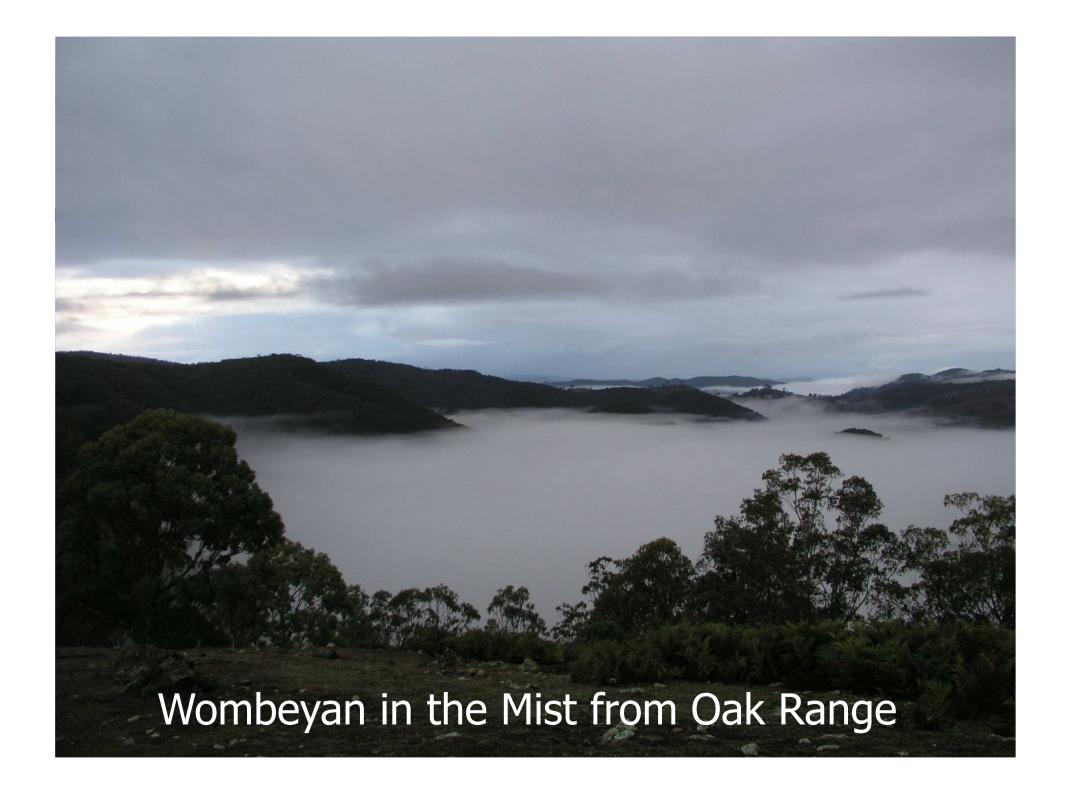


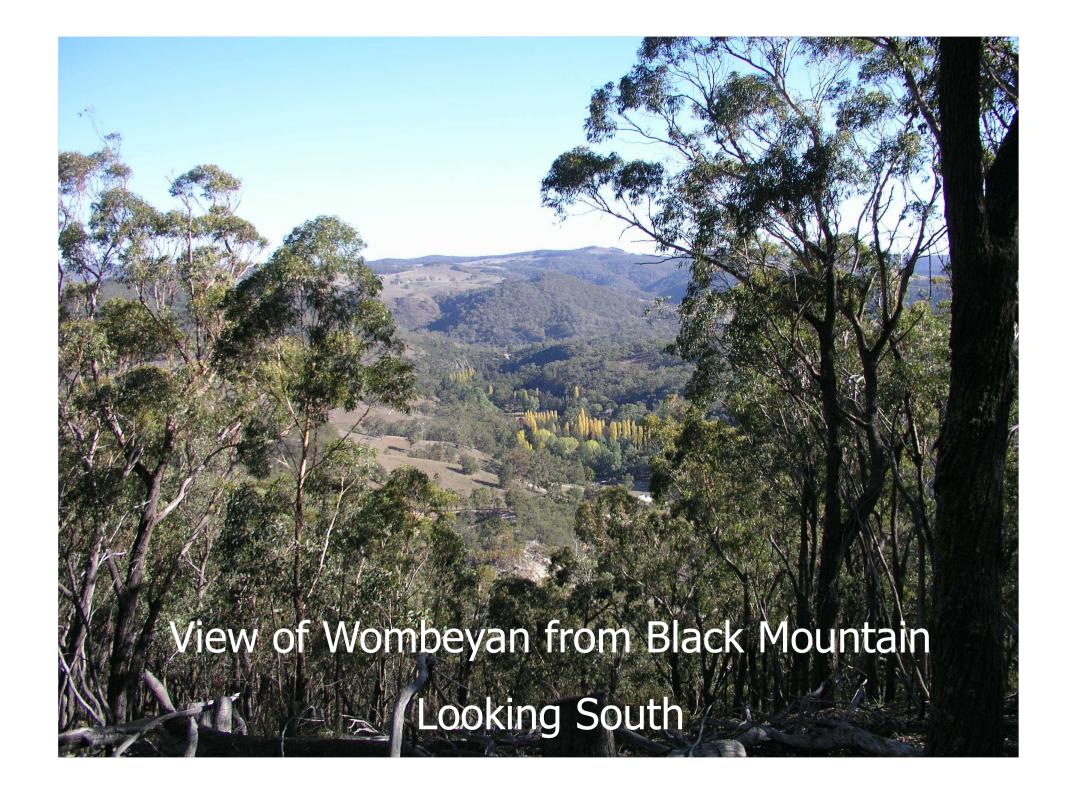












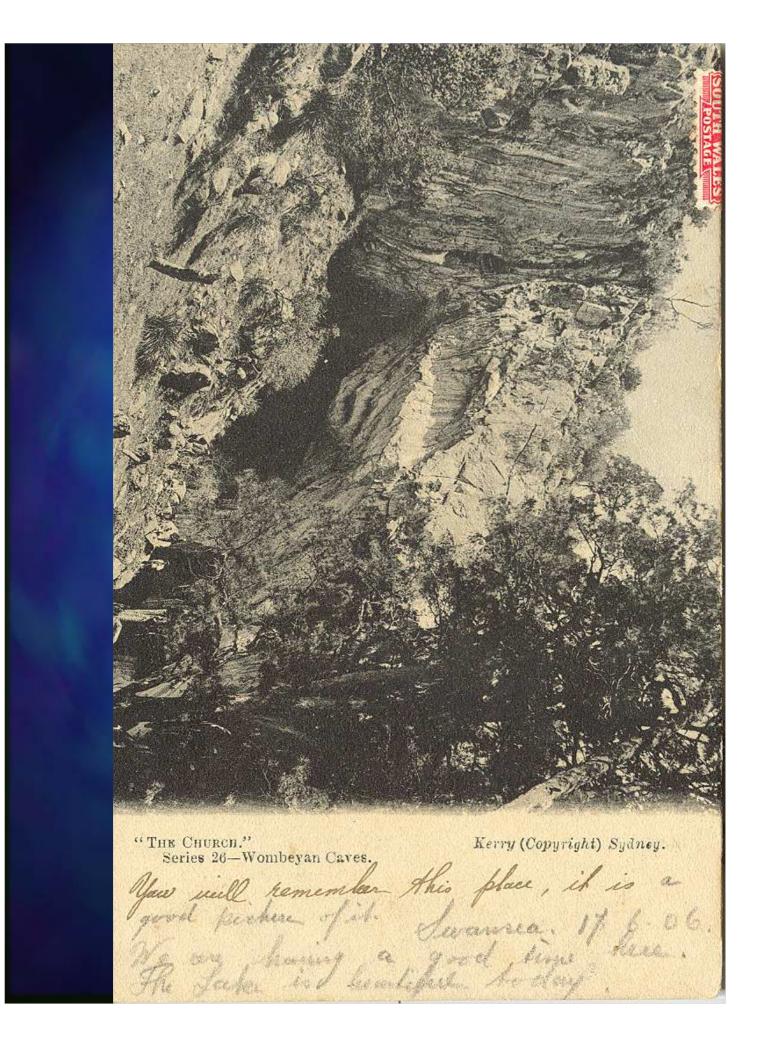


Ezme Croker (nee Brown) and son Ian 2004



Thanks to Ezme
 for the
 contribution of
 many of the
 photos in this
 collection

A Collection of Wombeyan Cave Postcards and Pamphlets from Ezme Croker and Ross Ellis

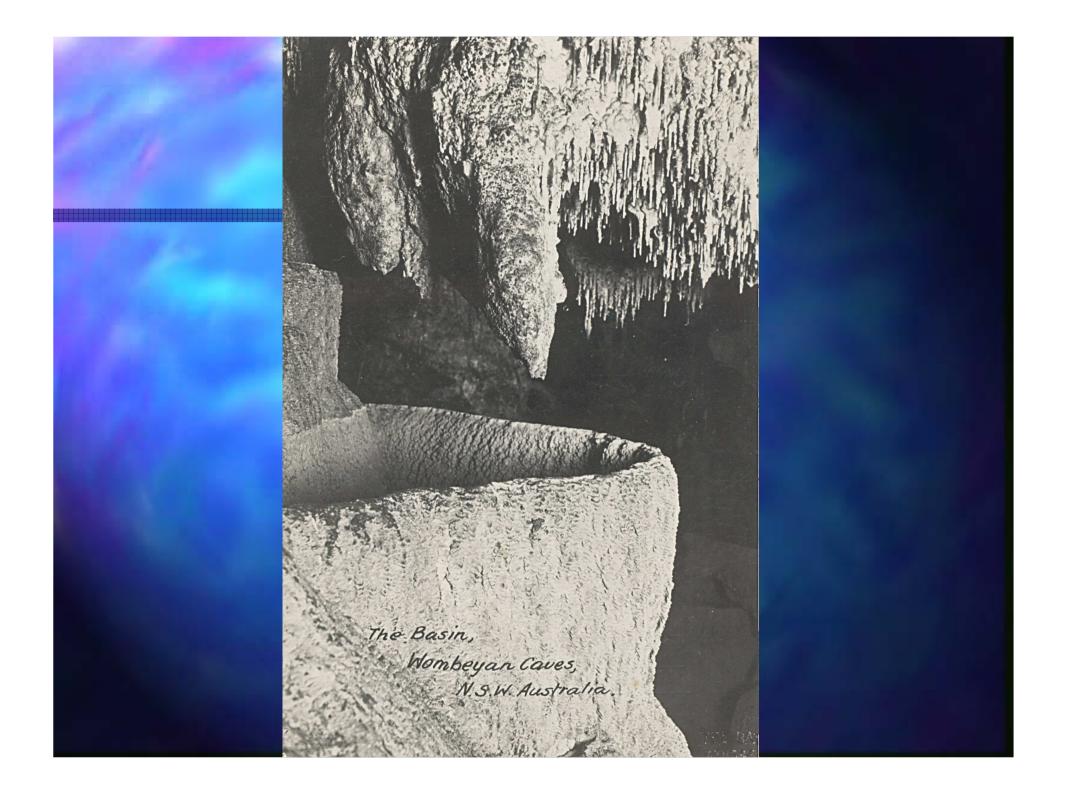


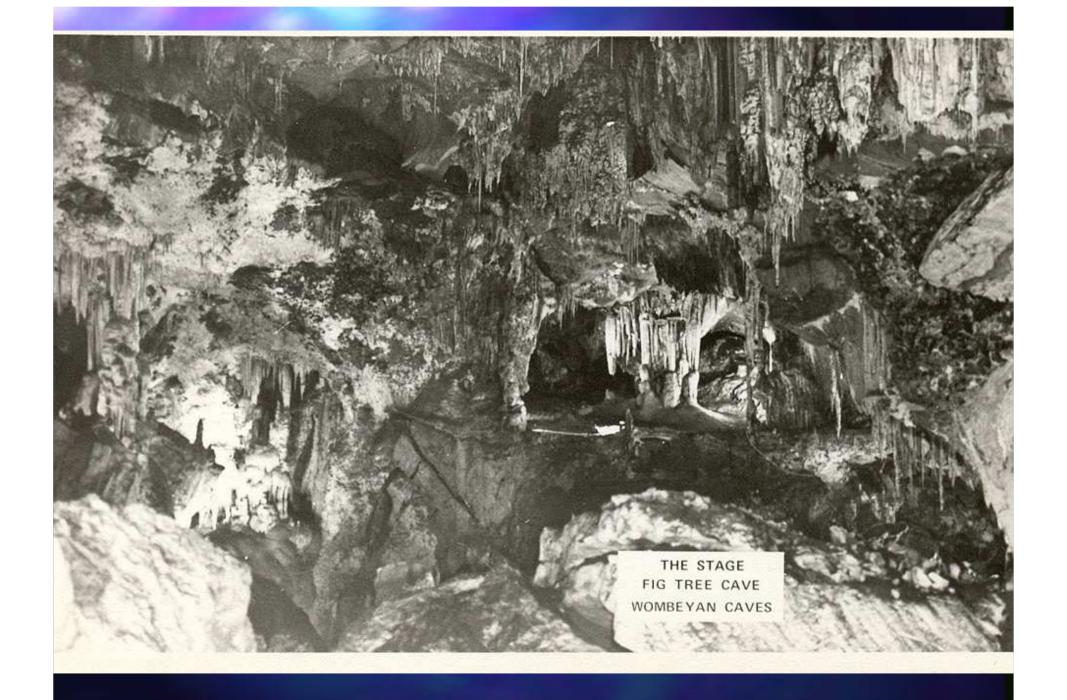


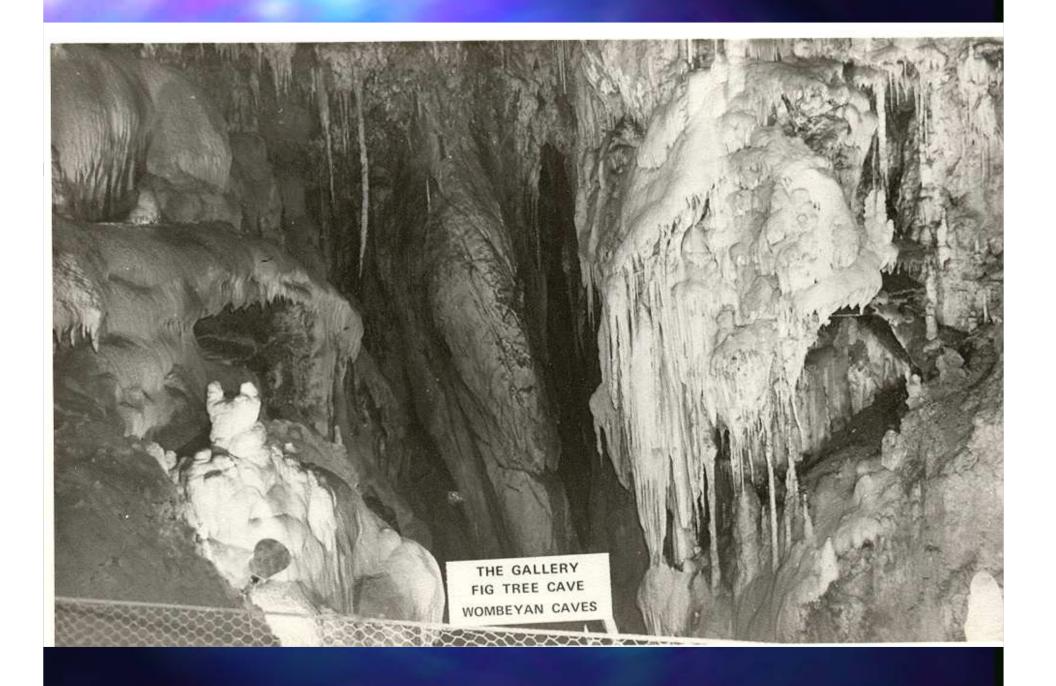




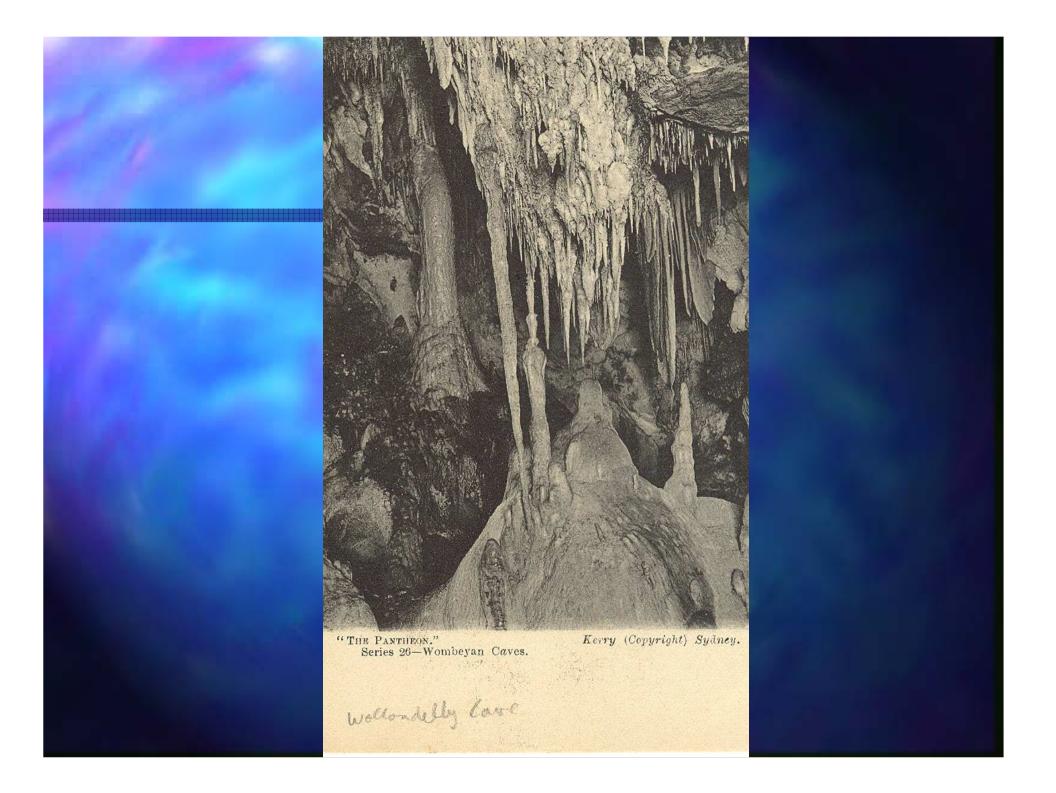


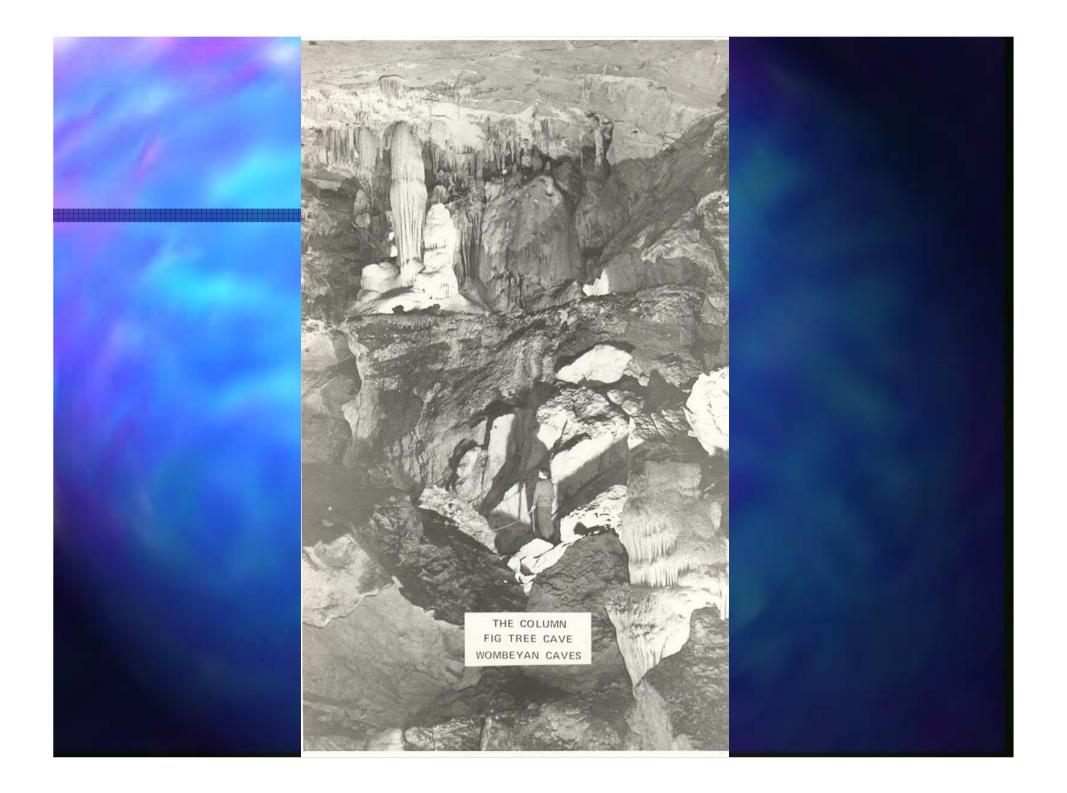


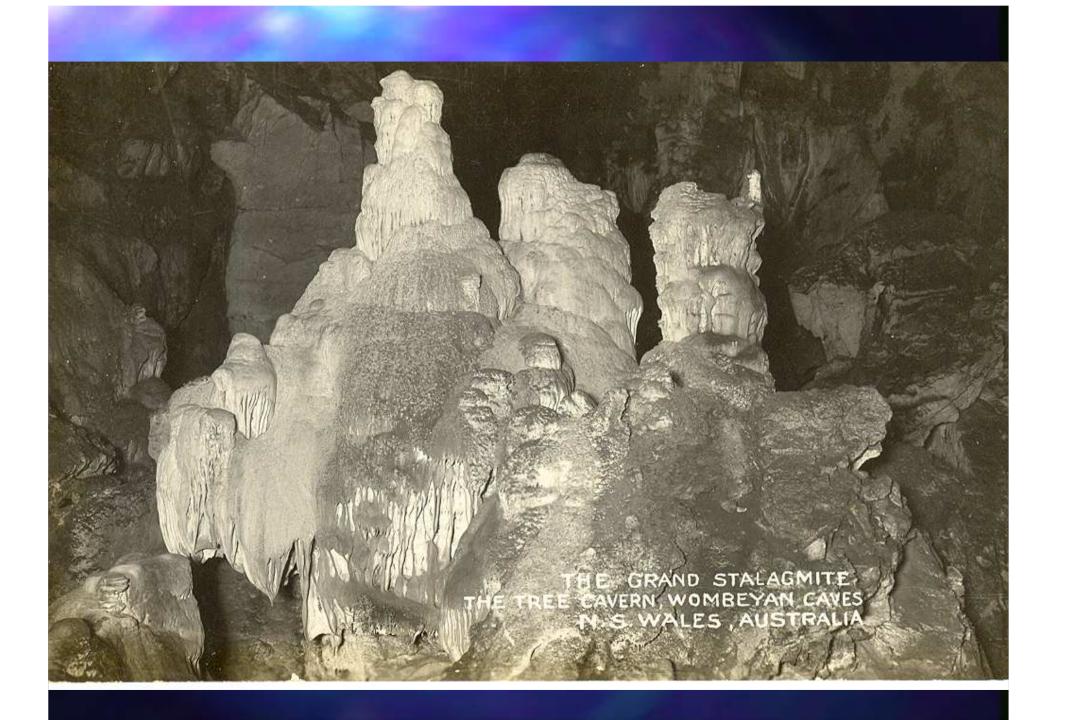


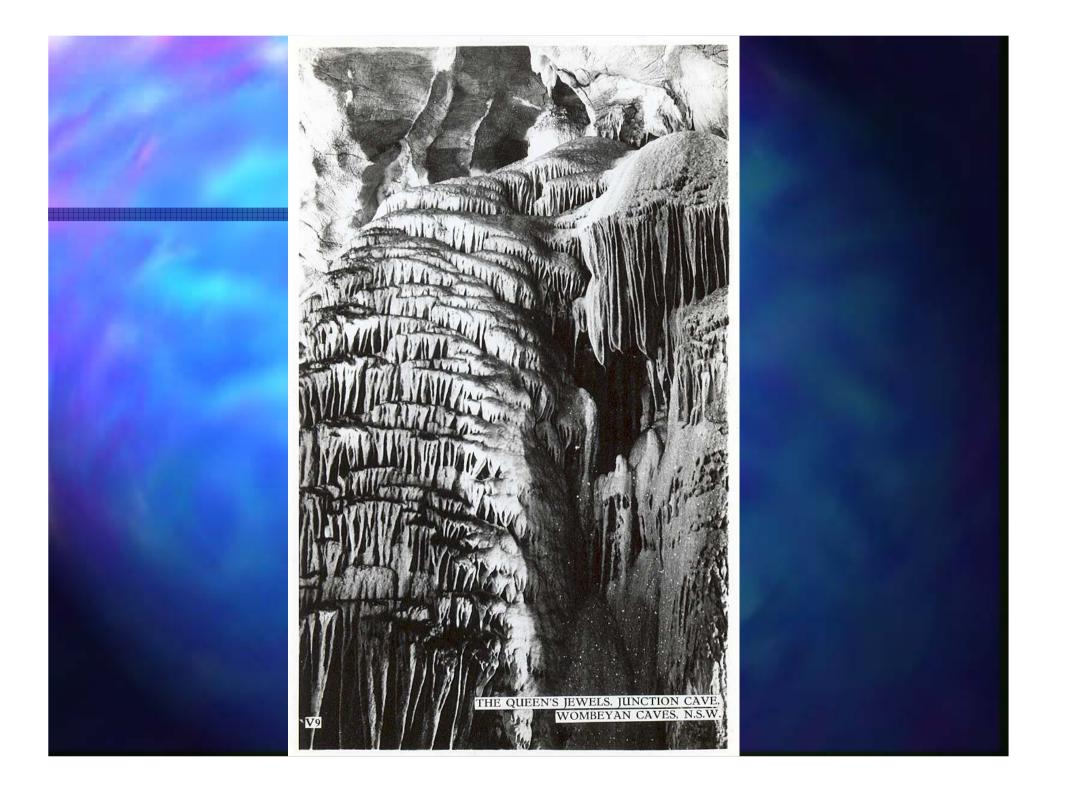


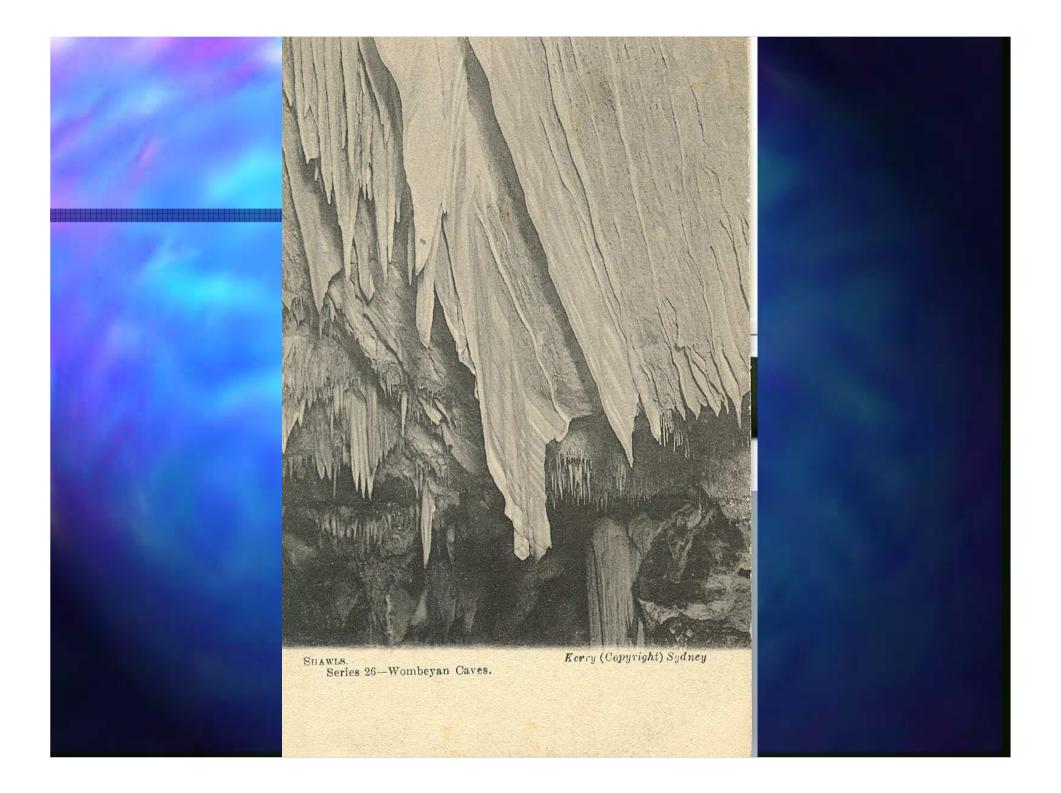


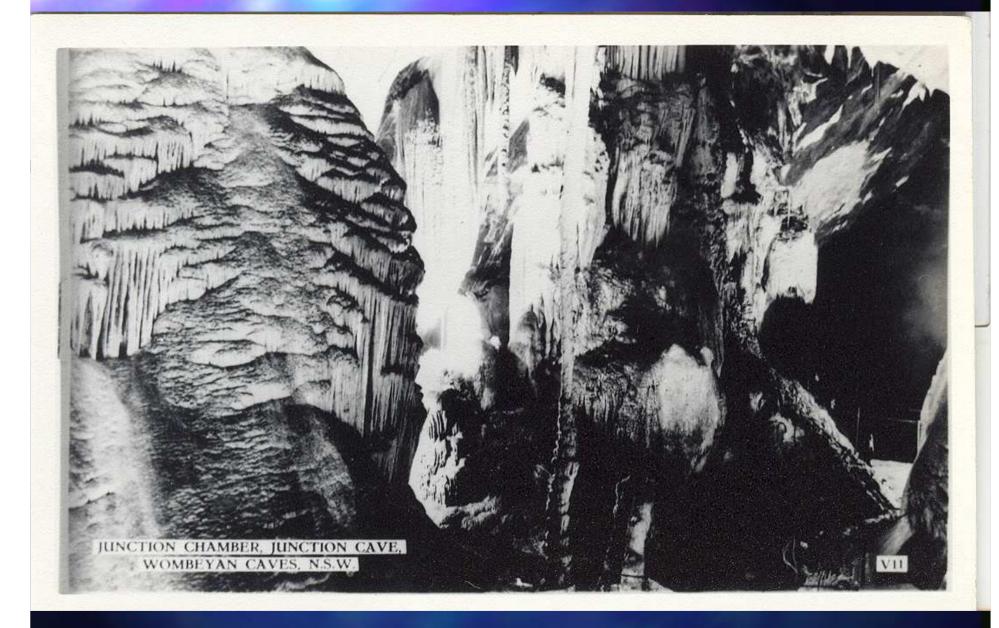




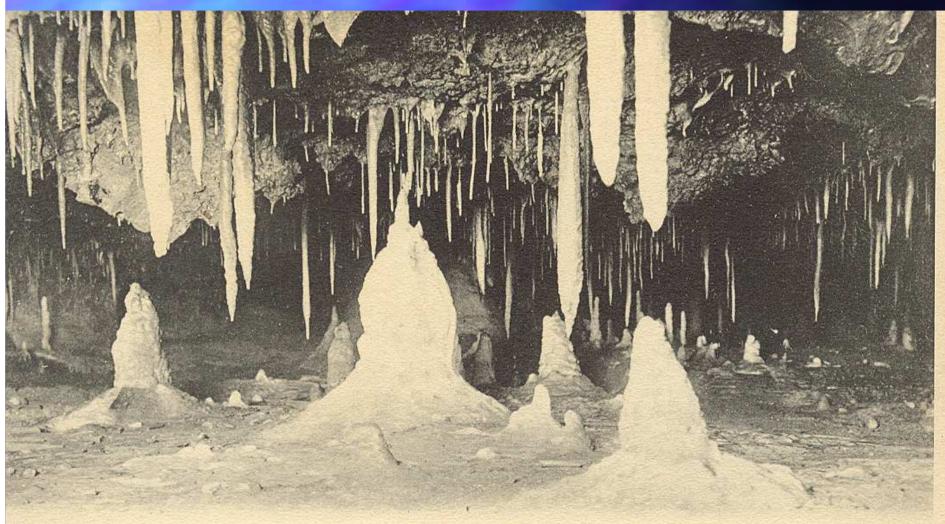






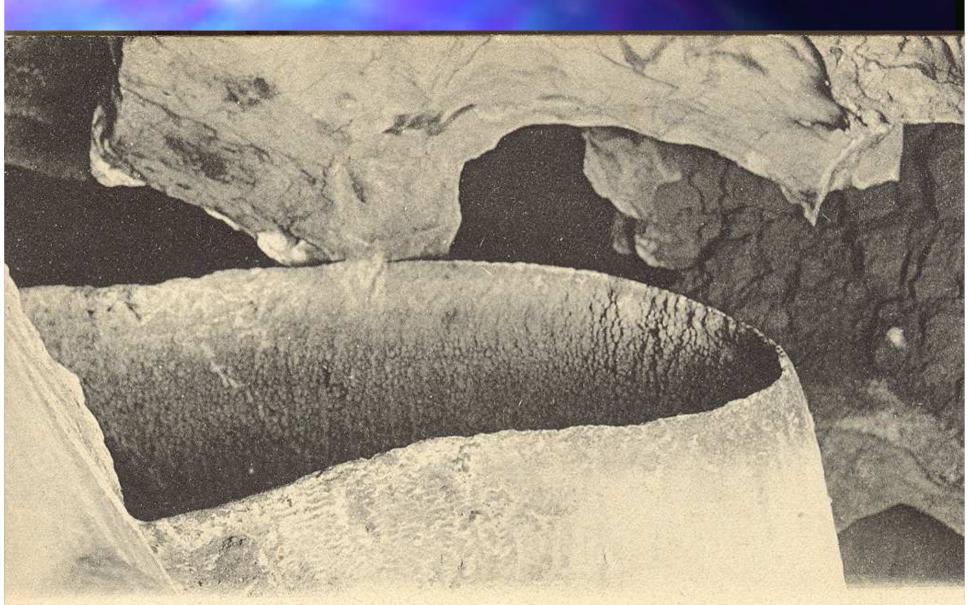






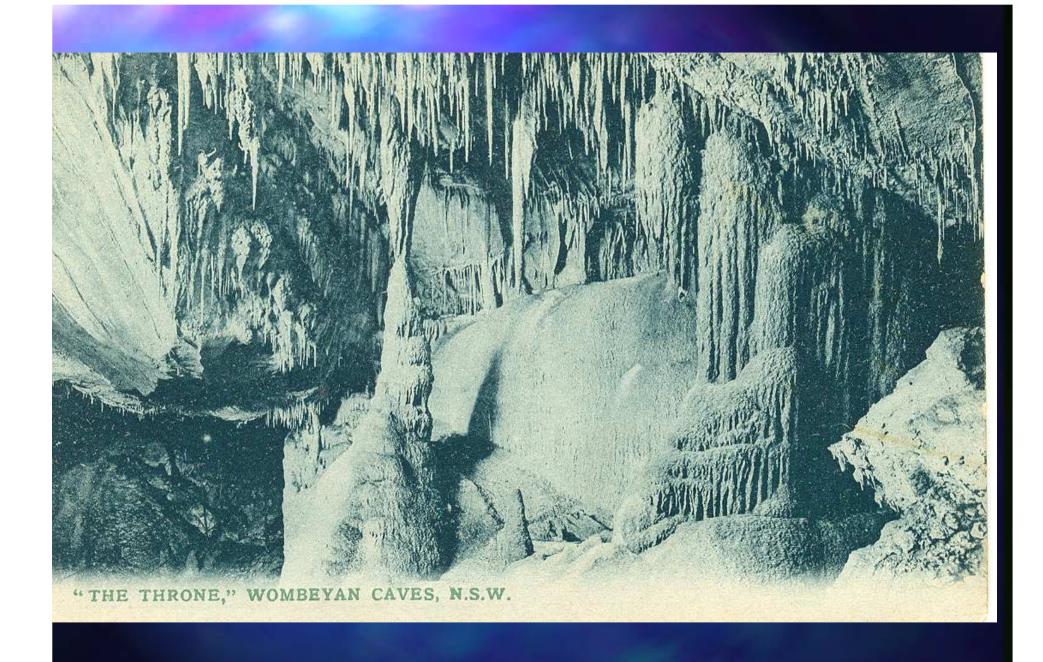
THE LONG CORRIDOR. Series 26—Wombeyan Caves.

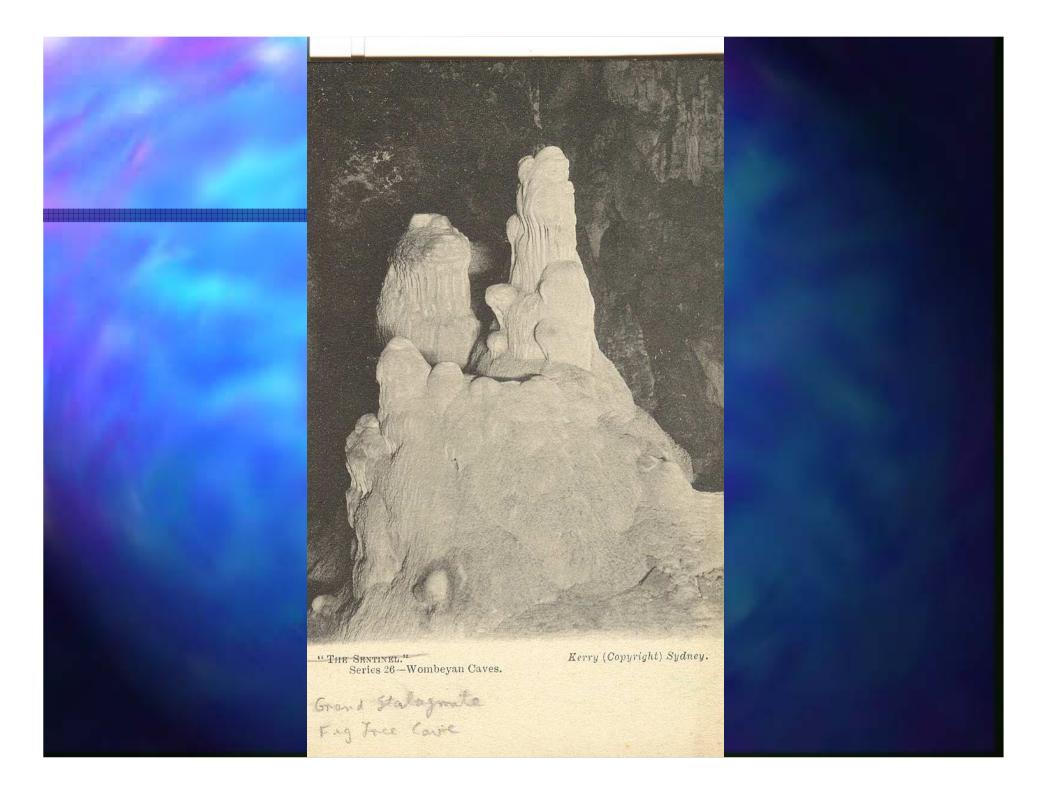
Kerry (Copyright) Sydney.

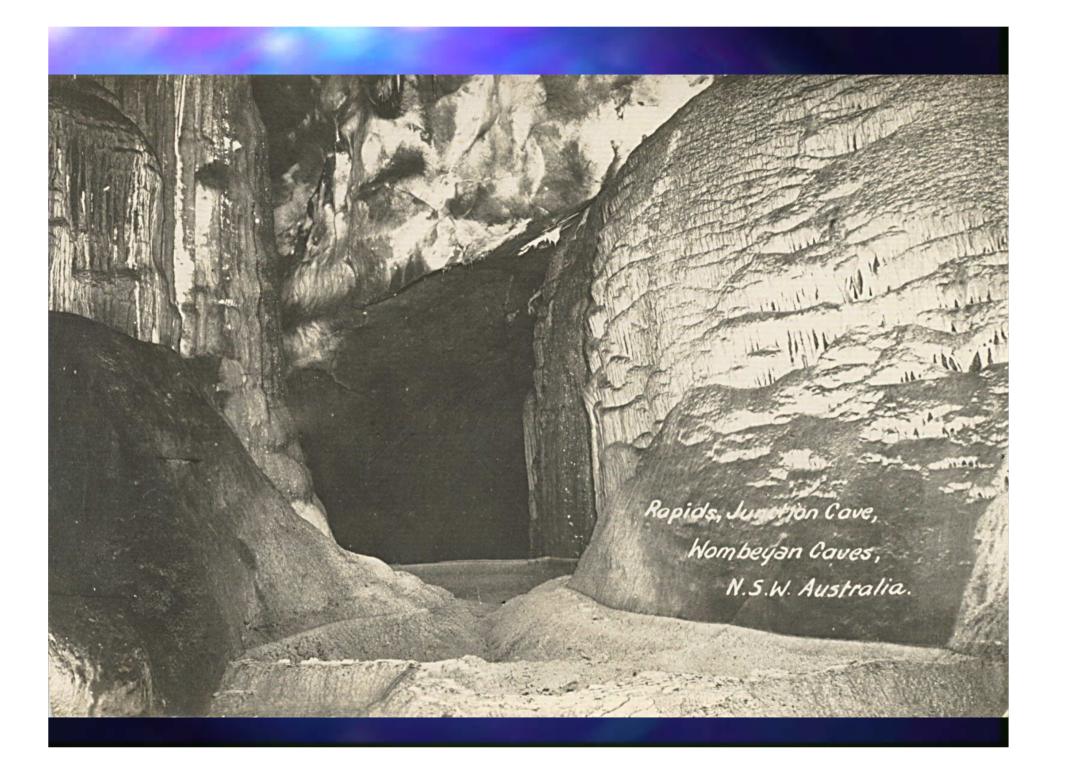


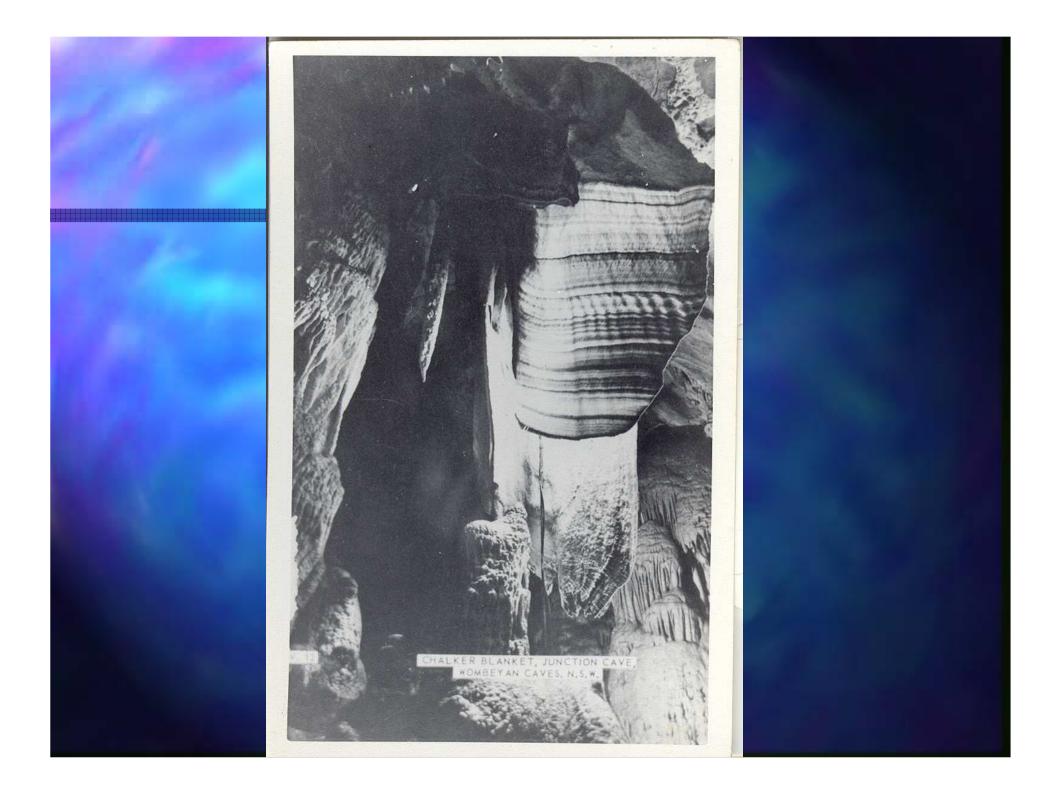
"THE ROYAL BATH."
Series 26—Wombeyan Caves.

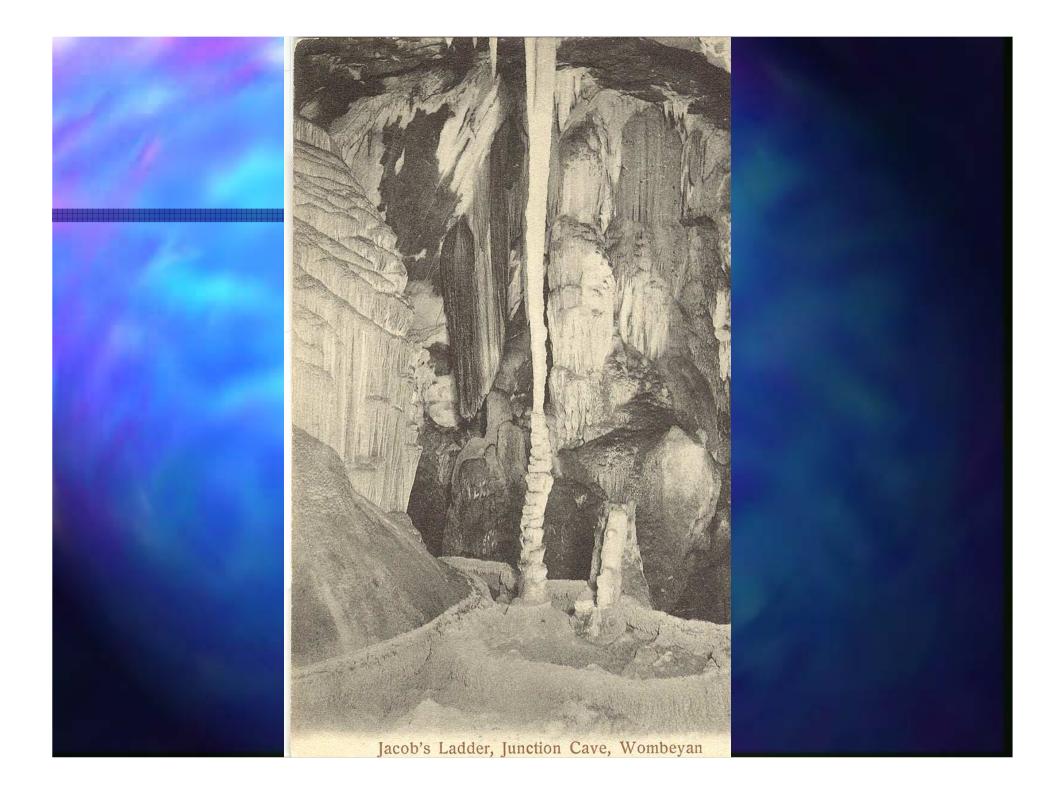
Kerry (Copyright) Sydney

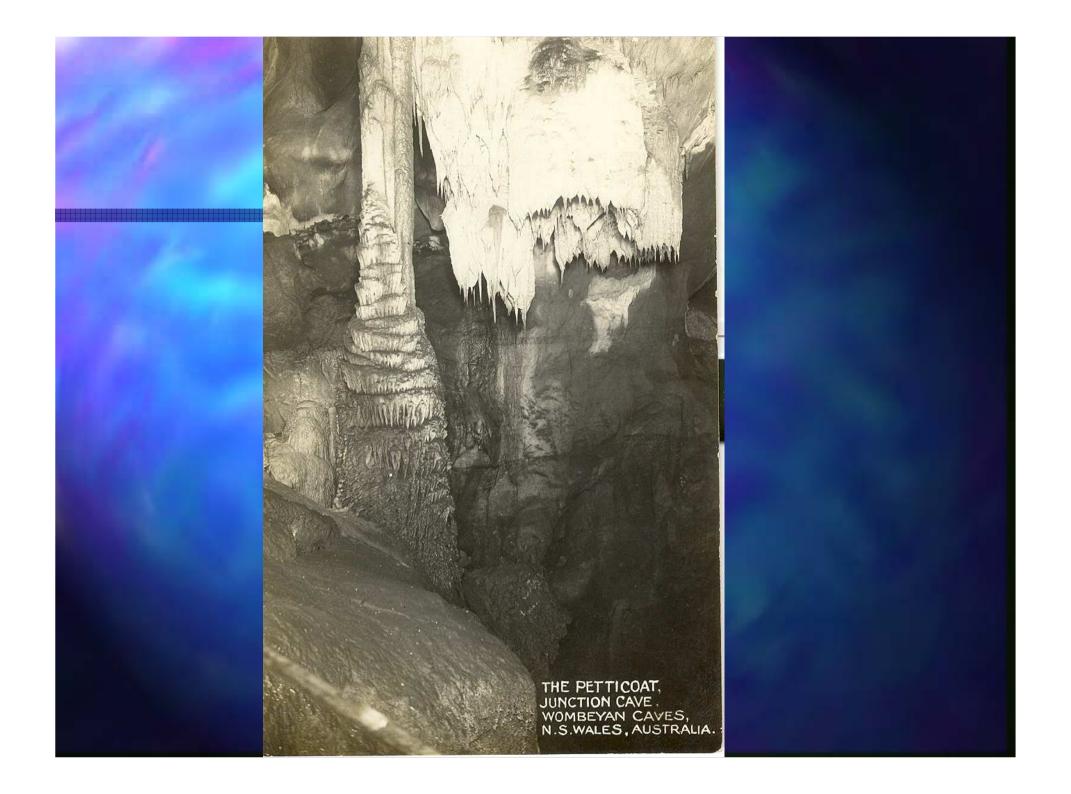




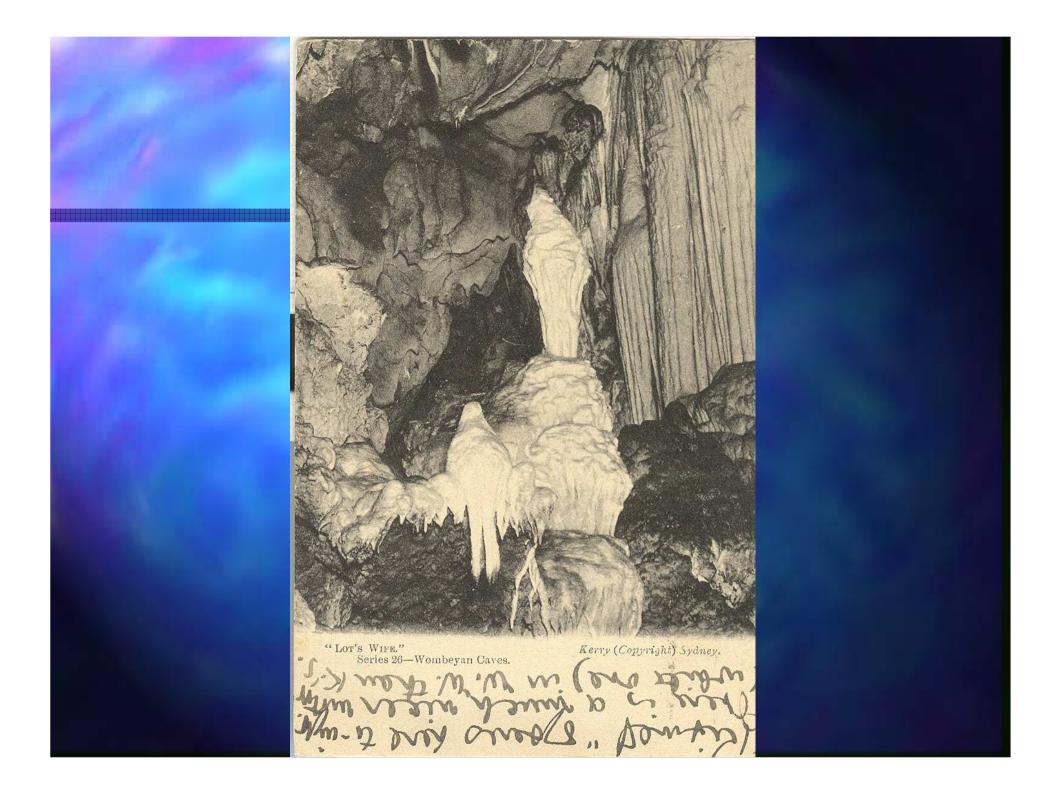




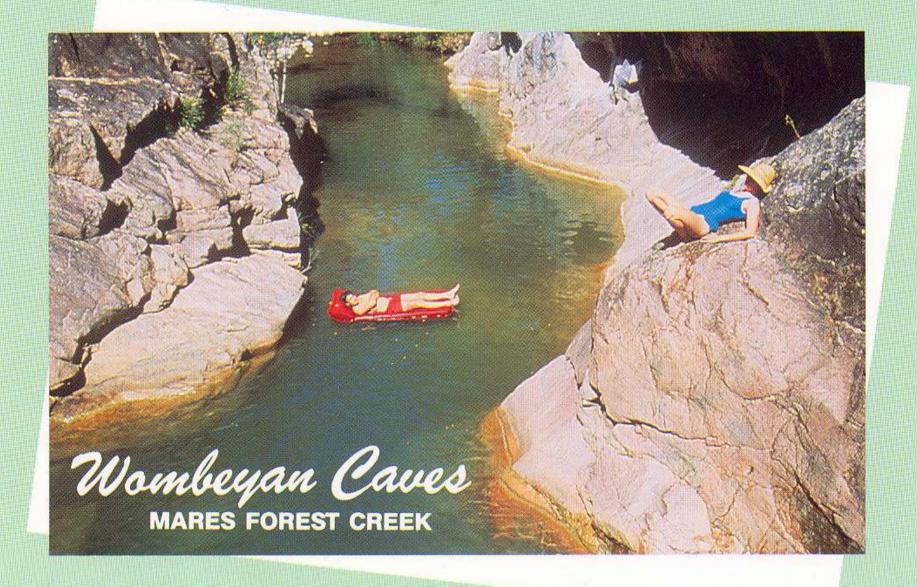


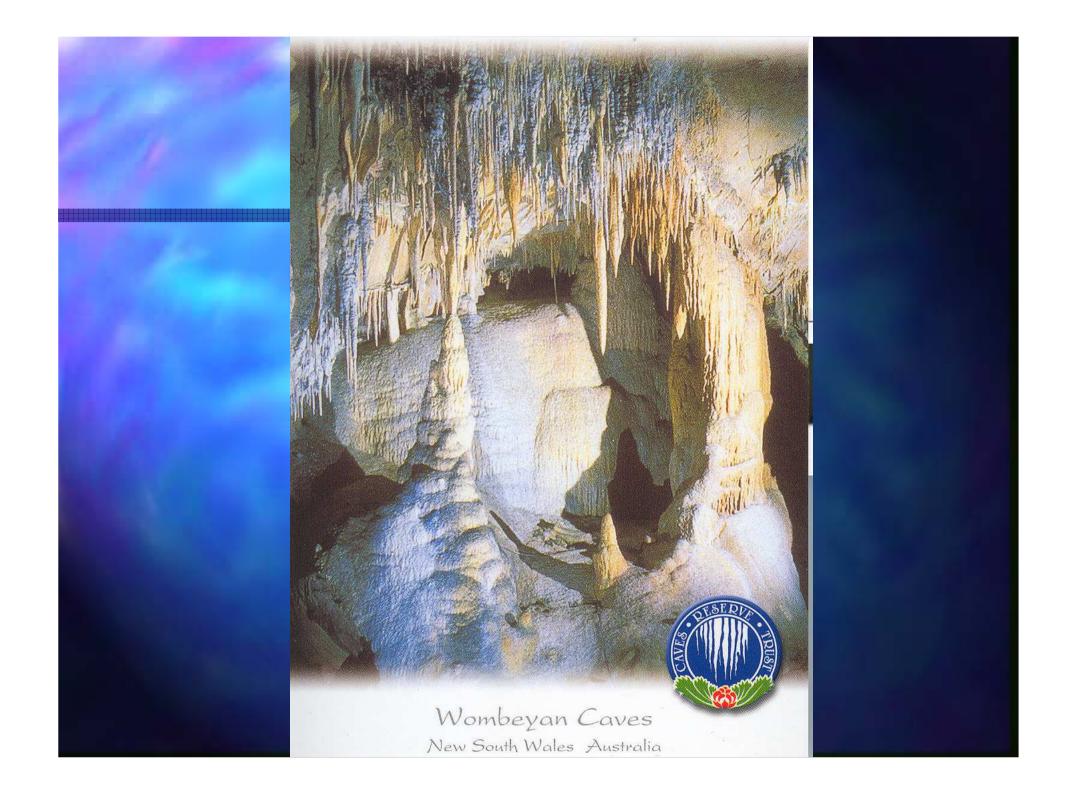






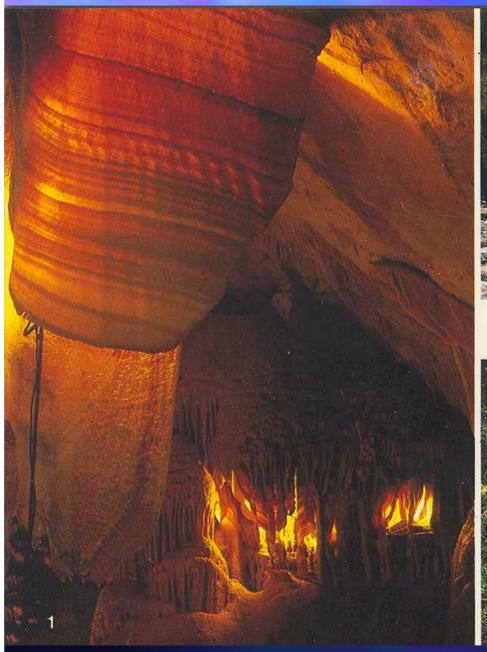


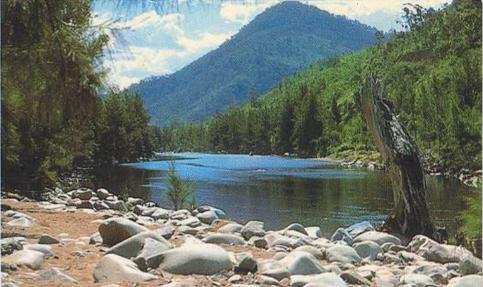




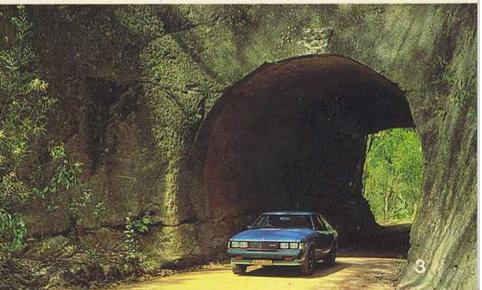


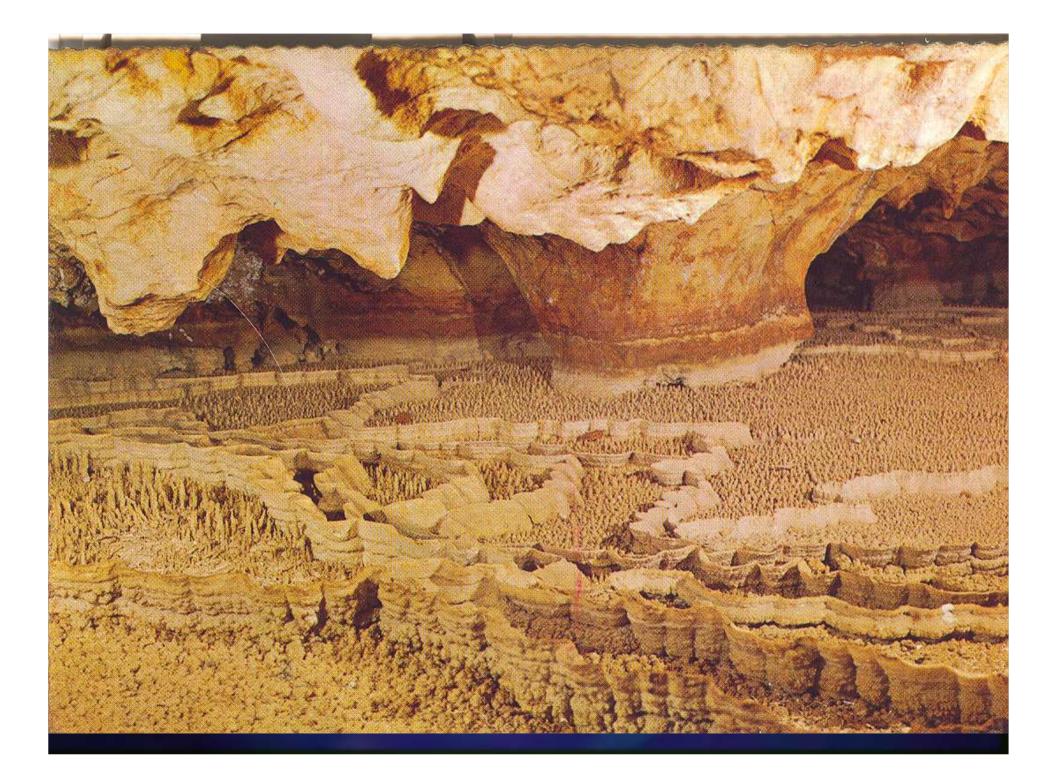


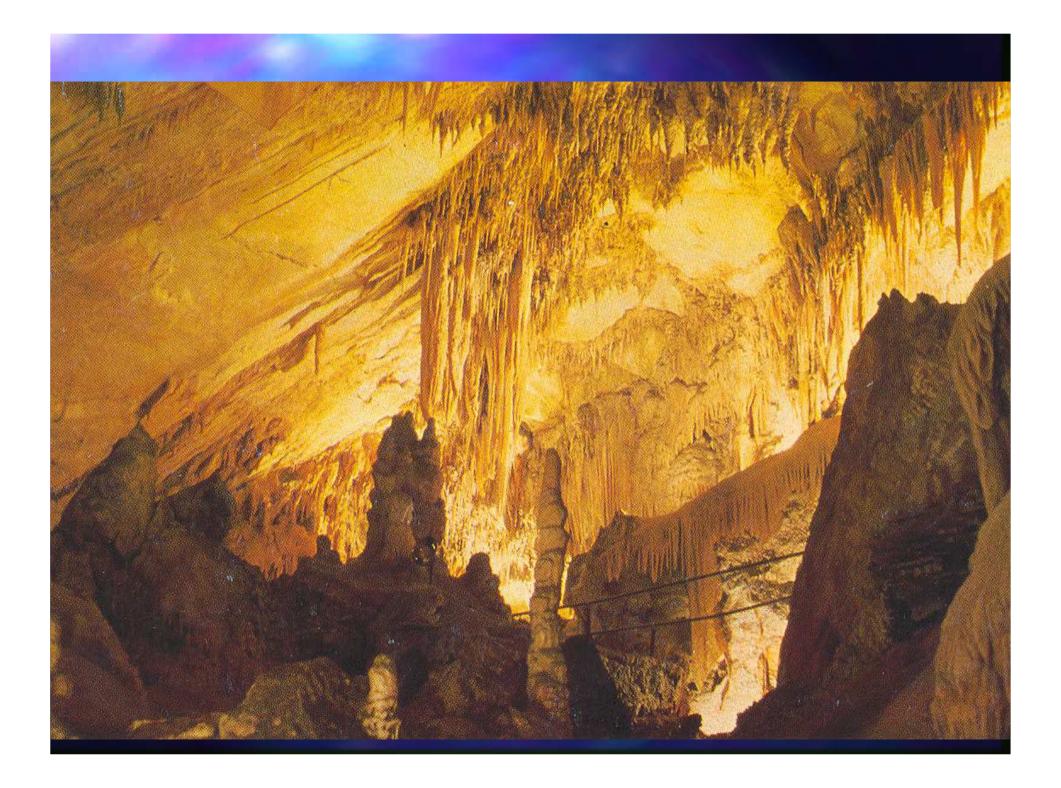




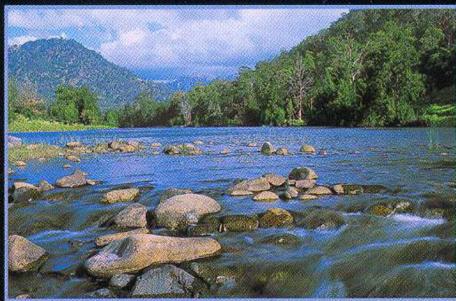
WOMBEYAN CAUES N.S.W.

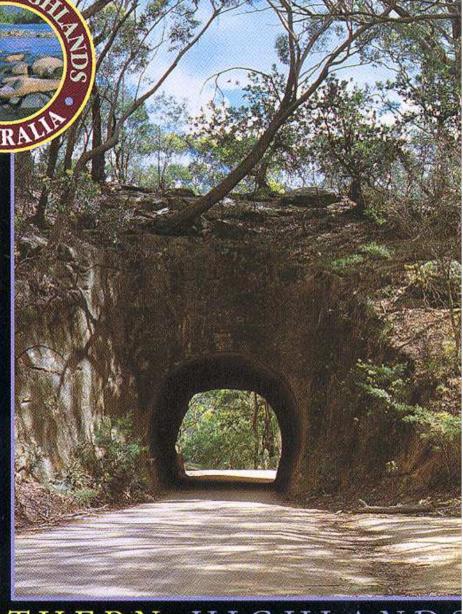




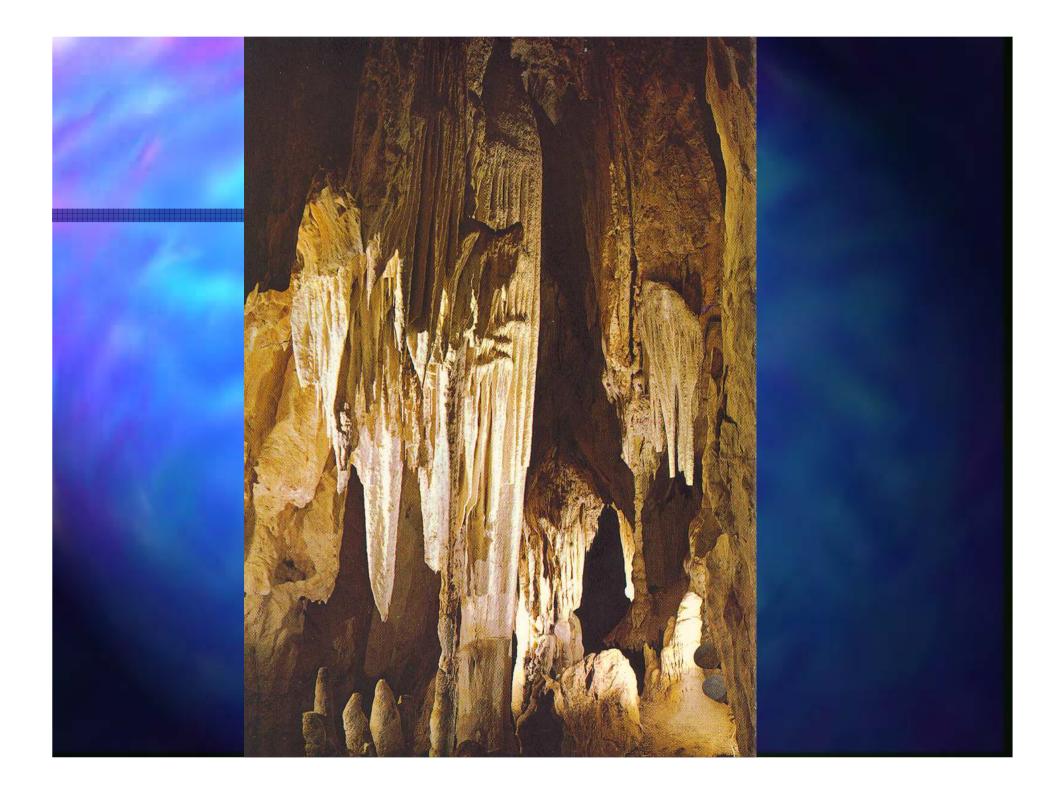


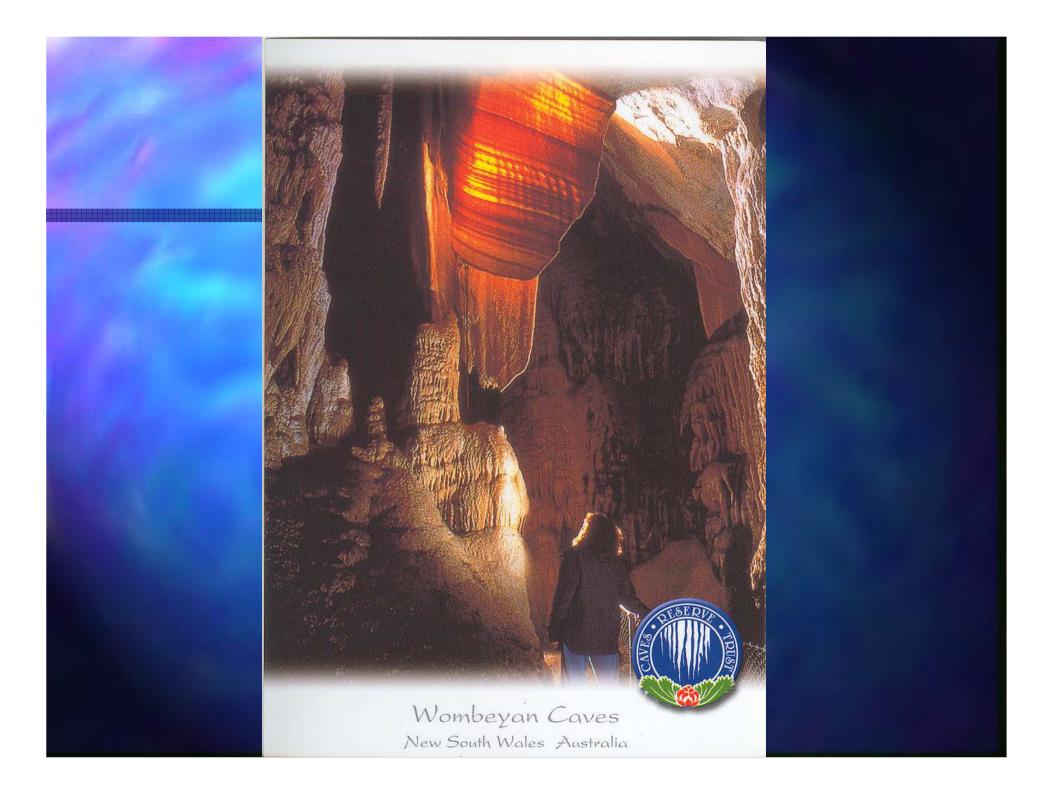


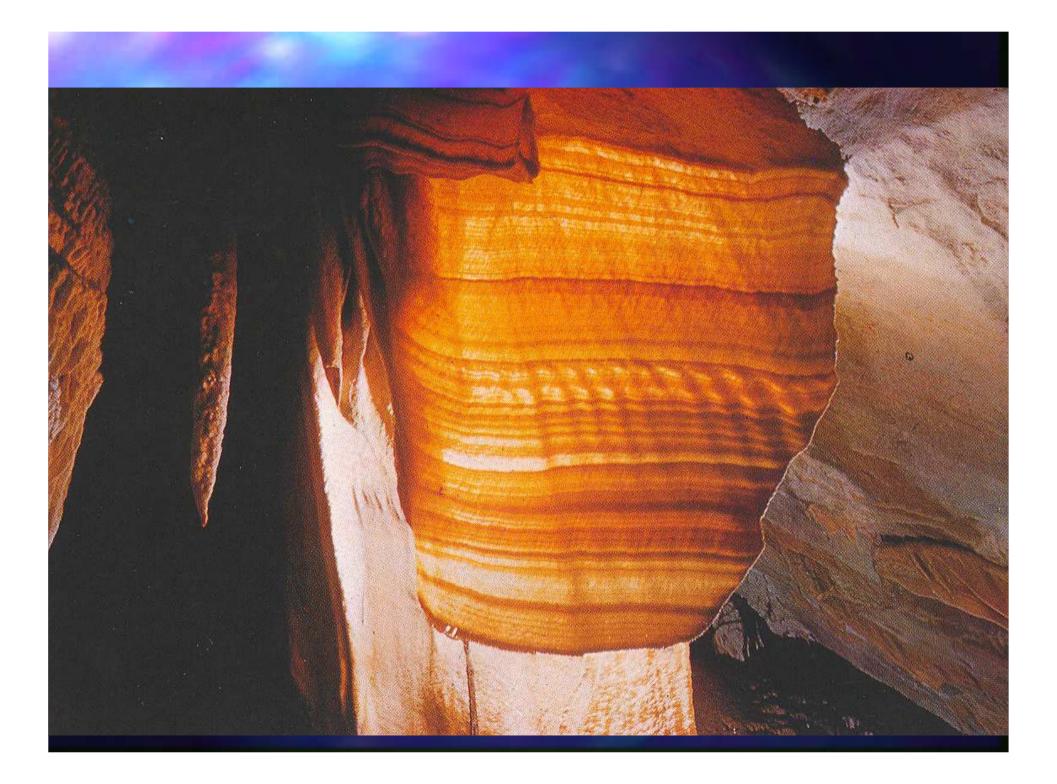


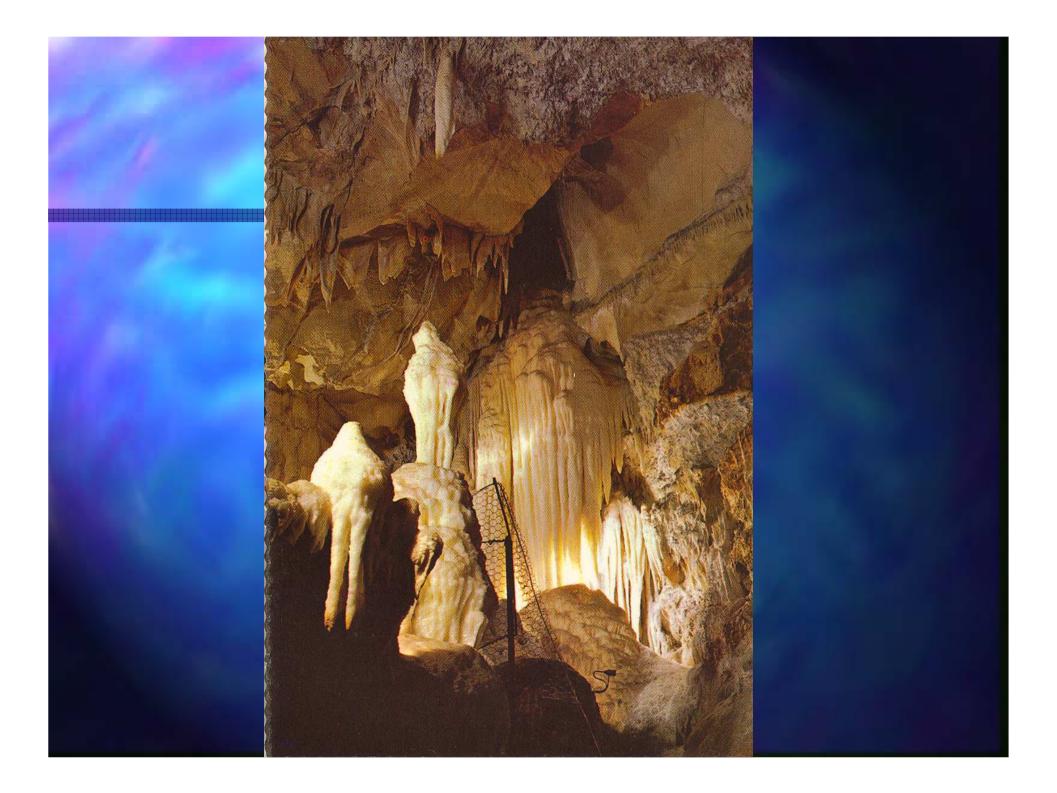


COUNTRYSIDE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS









History of Wombeyan Caves

The limestone caves at Wombeyan were discovered in 1828 by the explorer John Oxley, then the New South Wales Suveyor General, and John Macarthur, pioneer of the Australian wool industry.

The Oxley-Macarthur party were in search of grazing land. They left Berrima and travelled almost the same route from Mittagong to Wombeyan that tourists take today. On the fifth night out the party camped on the flat area adjacent to the Victoria Arch and near the place where the kiosk is now situated. During the night their horses strayed to the Archway, where they were caught next morning. The party did not, however, enter any of the caves. The expedition terminated at Richlands Estate, which subsequently became a Macarthur property.

The first white man known to have entered the Caves was a clergyman named Denning. It is believed that the Reverend Denning explored the creek section of this cave, which we now know as Fig Tree Cave.

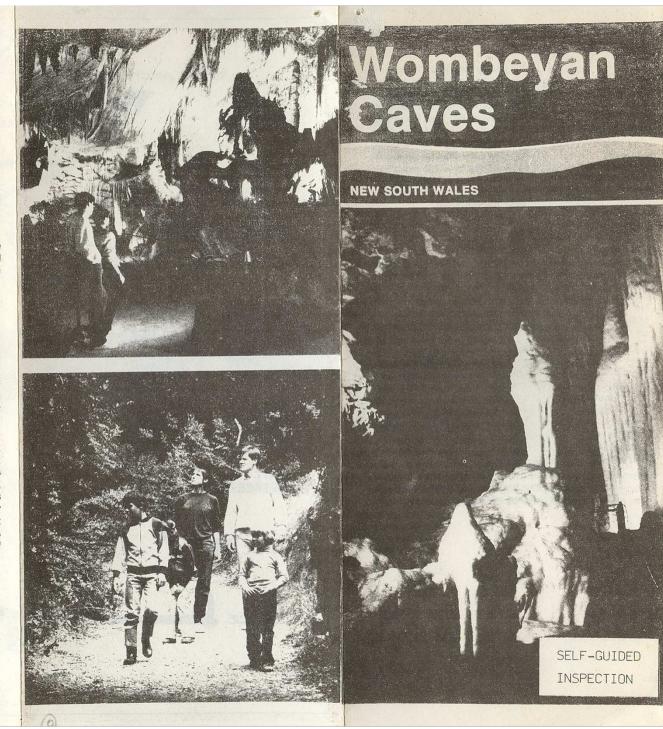
The first caretaker appointed by the Government was Charles Chalker, who made a major contribution towards the development of the Caves.

In 1865 Chalker discovered three of the main caves at Wombeyan—the Wollondilly, Kooringa and Mulwaree Caves. The Mulwaree was opened for public inspection shortly afterwards, the Kooringa was opened in 1875 and the Wollondilly in 1885. The Junction Cave was discovered in 1897 and opened to the public in 1906. The Fig Tree Cave was open for public inspection from 1870 until 1928.

The Caves were originally shown to visitors by candlelight and magnesium flares. In 1928, for the first time, three of the caves were lit by electricity, but because of difficulties involved in maintaining lights and paths in the creek section of the Fig Tree Cave, this cave was not illuminated at that time and was closed to the public. It was reopened in 1968 after considerable construction work had been carried out (provision of suspended pathways, steps, handrails and viewing platforms as well as the installation of electric lighting).

*FOR SOUND, PRESS THE YELLOW SWITCH BUTTON





LIMESTONE **MARVELS**

Although it may seem fantastic to the visitor who has driven through the rolling, blue-misted mountains of the Southern Highlands to reach them, the limestone belt in which the Wombeyan Caves are formed was once a coral atoll.

Geological changes over millions of years subjected the atoll to tremendous heat and pressure which converted the original coral to beautiful, yellow-veined white marble. (The floor of the Hall of Memories in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra is paved with Wombeyan marble, which also lines the Pitt-street fover of the Sydney G.P.O.)

Through this water-soluble marble, or limestone, strong-flowing rivers carved their way, boring deep underground and forming vast caverns in the barrier blocking their dash to the sea.

Through the ages the climate changed, subduing the violence of the rivers until they became gentle streams, while rainwater gradually percolated through the porous limestone from above, carrying some of it in solution.

Ceaselessly dripping, this limestone-impregnated water formed the fluted columns, cornices and canopies, frozen cascades, tinted and translucent shawls and the other delicate formations which have made the Jenolan, Wombeyan, Yarrangobilly and Abercrombie Caves of New South Wales famous





HOW TO GET TO WOMBEYAN CAVES

The most scenic and direct route to Wombeyan from Sydney is via the Hume Highway to the Wombeyan turnoff two and a half miles south of Mittagong. From here the road runs for about 40 miles through spectacular mountain country, passing the Burragorang Lookout, through the Sandstone Tunnel and over the bridge across the Wollondilly River. This road is narrow, with sharp bends, and drivers should proceed

The other route is via Goulburn, Taralga (22 miles from the Caves and the nearest hotel accommodation) and Richlands, and follows a good road all the way.

Distances from Sydney are: via Mittagong 120 miles; via Goulburn 189 miles.

COVER PICTURE is of the Lot's Wife and Cockatoo formation, in the Wollondilly Cave.

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WOMBEYAN CAVES

NEW SOUTH WALES



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Relax at Wonbeyan Caves Reserve

Holiday makers are well catered for at the Wombeyan Caves Reserve.

COTTAGE: Three bedrooms, accommodates five. Fully equipped apart from linen.

CARAVAN PARK: Powered sites, modern amenities block with washing machines and dryers. (Disabled facilities).

CABIN UNITS: With en-suites, five berth fully equipped.

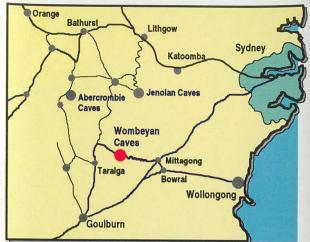
ON-SITE VANS: Six berth, fully equipped. (Please note that linen is not supplied with the above accommodation, however linen hire is available).

Dormitory or group accommodation is available, this accommodation is ideal for larger groups. (Linen or sleeping bags required).

Bookings for all on-site accommodation is essential.

CAMP SITES: There is an abundance of camp-sites at Wombeyan. Bookings for sites is not necessary.





Other Facilities

Other facilities include a community kitchen with refrigeration, cooking facilities and ample eating areas.

A kiosk supplying take-away food, confectionery, souvenirs, ice, etc.

Tennis courts and cricket pitch.

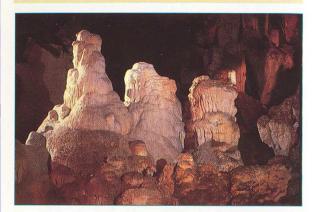
Children's playground.

There are three excellent bushwalks at Wombeyan, which offer spectacular views of limestone canyons, waterfalls and rugged mountain scenery. The limestone canyon is an excellent swimming area.

For enquiries and bookings please contact the Wombeyan Caves Visitors Centre PO Box 18, Taralga NSW 2580.
Telephone(048) 43 5976 Facsimile (048) 43 5988



A World of Difference



GRAND STALAGMITES FIGTREE CAVE

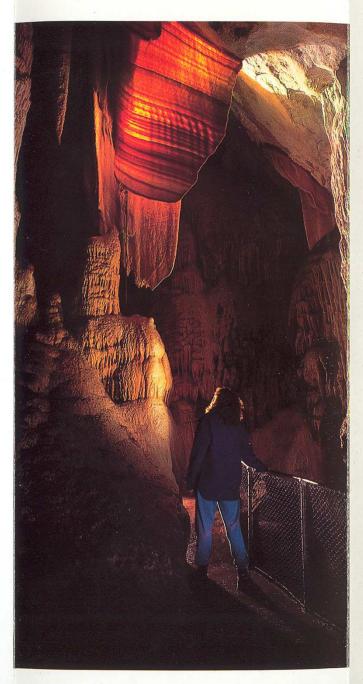
The Wombeyan Caves are located in the Southern Highlands of N.S.W. The caves are renowned for their beauty and spectacular limestone formations.

Wombeyan has four guided tours, the Wollondilly, Junction, Mulwaree and Kooringa caves. Tours are undertaken every day on a regular basis with informative guides.

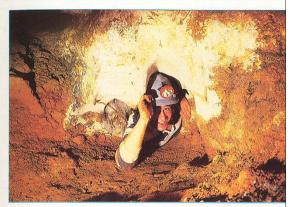
The magnificent Figtree cave is a "SELF GUIDED CAVE" open between the hours of 8.30am to 5.00pm daily. The cave is easily negotiated by all ages with interpretative displays and commentary's activated by the visitor.

Many pleasant hours may be spent strolling around the reserve observing the wild life which include the grey kangaroo, rock wallabies, wombats, enchidna's and a variety of birdlife.

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF S.J. BABKA



Exciting Cave Tours

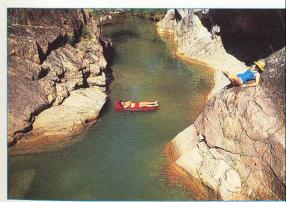


THE EXCITMENT OF WILD CAVIN

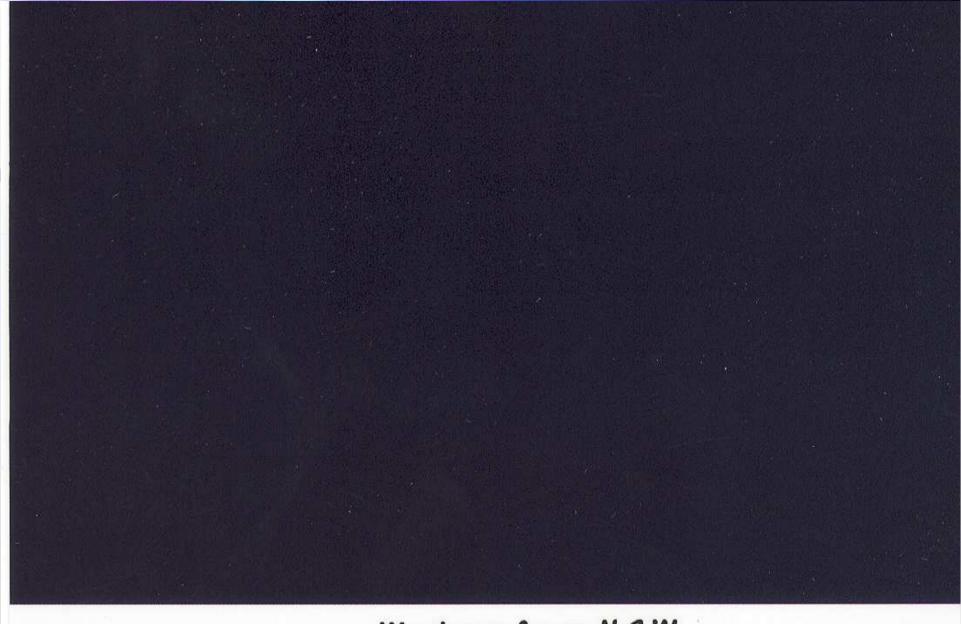
ADVENTURE TOUR: A full day wild cave trip. T negotiate the cave, crawling, squeezing (optional and climbing techniques must be used. The emphasis is on safety and fun.

HISTORICAL TOURS: A three hour tour through spectacular cave by torch light. The tour is no difficult as pathways exist.

Pre-booking is required for specialty tours.



LIMESTONE CANYON SWIMMING ARE



Wombeyan Caves N.S.W.

BY NIGHT!

Acknowledgements and thanks to the people that supplied the photos that made this presentation possible

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