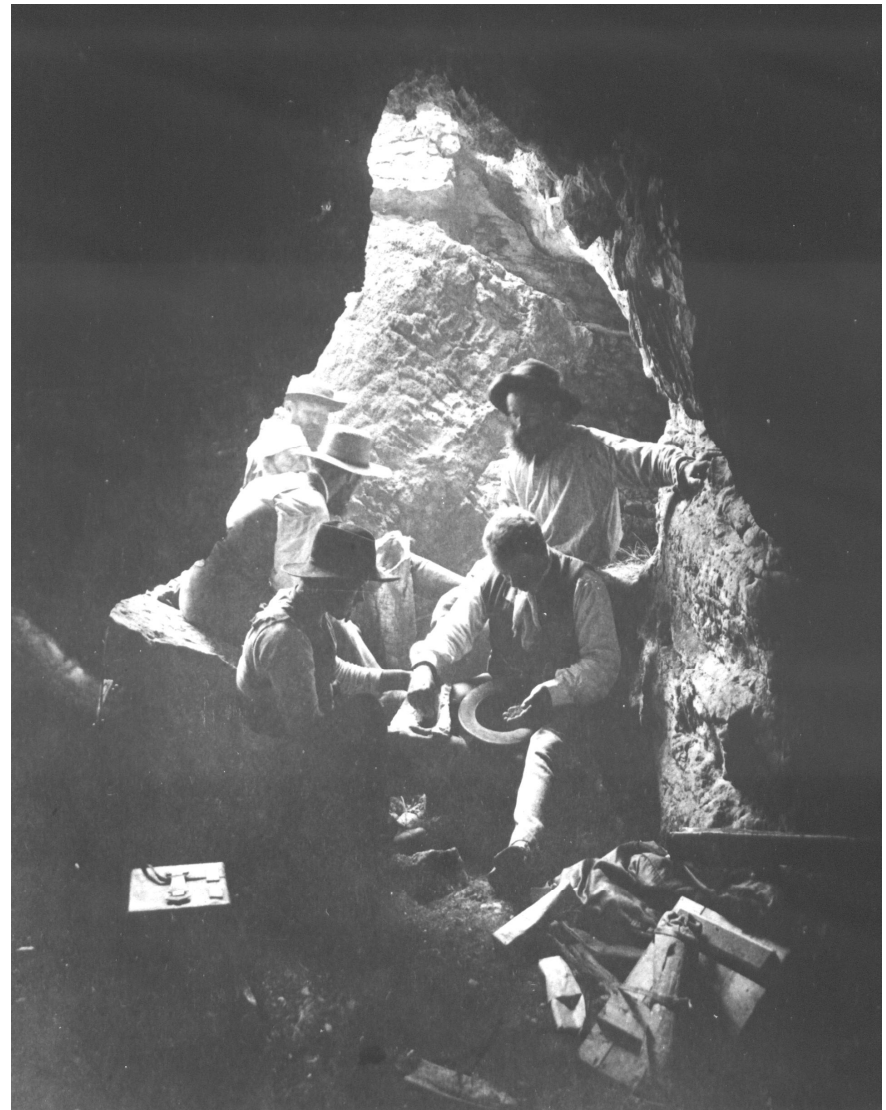


**1.**

**Government geologist James Stirling carried out the first serious exploration of Buchan Caves in 1889. . .**

**This photograph by J.H. Harvey (from National Library of Australia) shows the group digging for fossils in the entrance of Spring Creek Cave.**



2.

## The Exhibition Display . . .





**3.**

**J.H. Harvey was one of the greatest amateur photographers of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In his capacity as an officer of the Public Works Department, He visited Buchan with James Stirling's expedition in 1889 and not only photographed the caves for their report, but became a passionate advocate of Buchan as a tourism destination.**

**Although by that time, dry plates were commonly used, Harvey continued with wet plates, as these enabled him to do rapid development in the field. If he was not satisfied with an image, he would clean the plate and take another photograph. This print is an example of that practice.**



**4.**

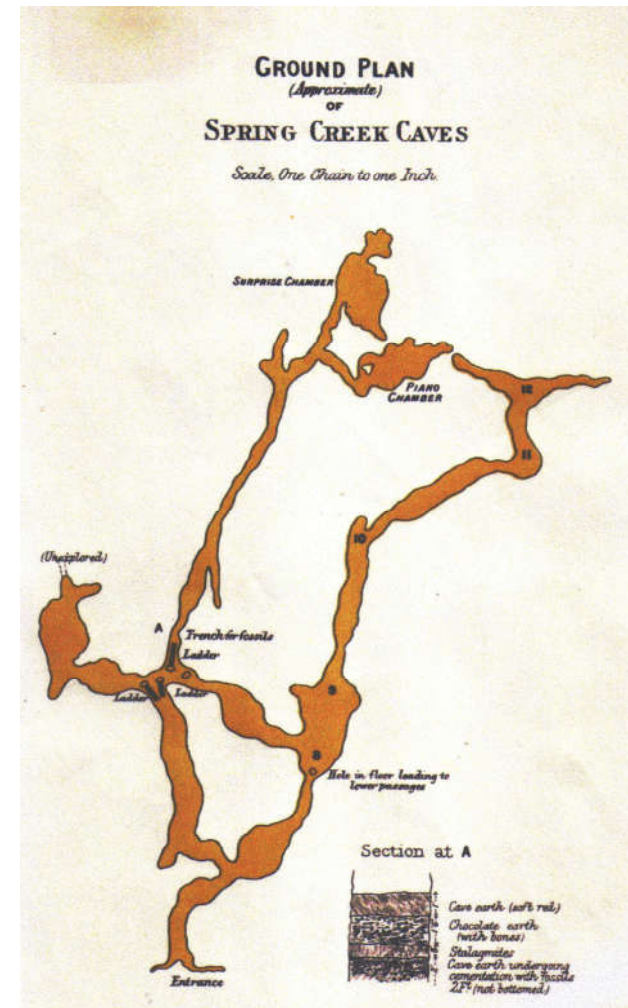
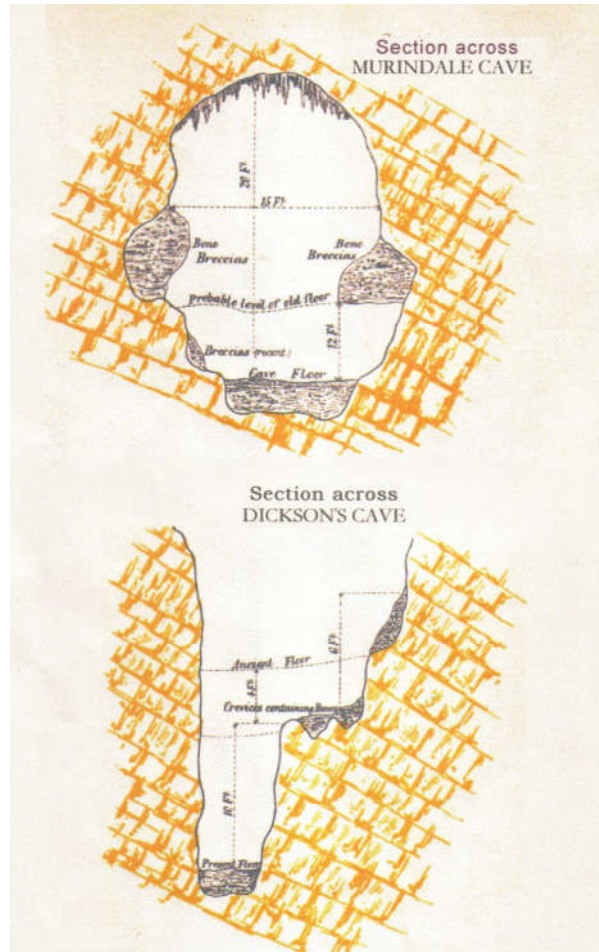
**Four of Harvey's photographs were included in the expedition report.**

**(see *Reports of the Mining Registrars for the quarter ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 1889*, pp. 65-68, with 4 maps and 4 photographs)**

**Two examples of the maps follow below.**



5.



**6.**

**During the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the first few years of the 20<sup>th</sup>, many Buchan residents provided informal cave guiding services for visitors.**

**One who did so was J. C. Wyatt, a former Cornish tin miner who initially came to East Gippsland hoping to prosper from the Australian craze for mining. He did so, but by providing a hotel for other hopefuls. He would also accompany interested guests to the caves.**

**Riverview House is now known as Homeleigh.**



**7.**

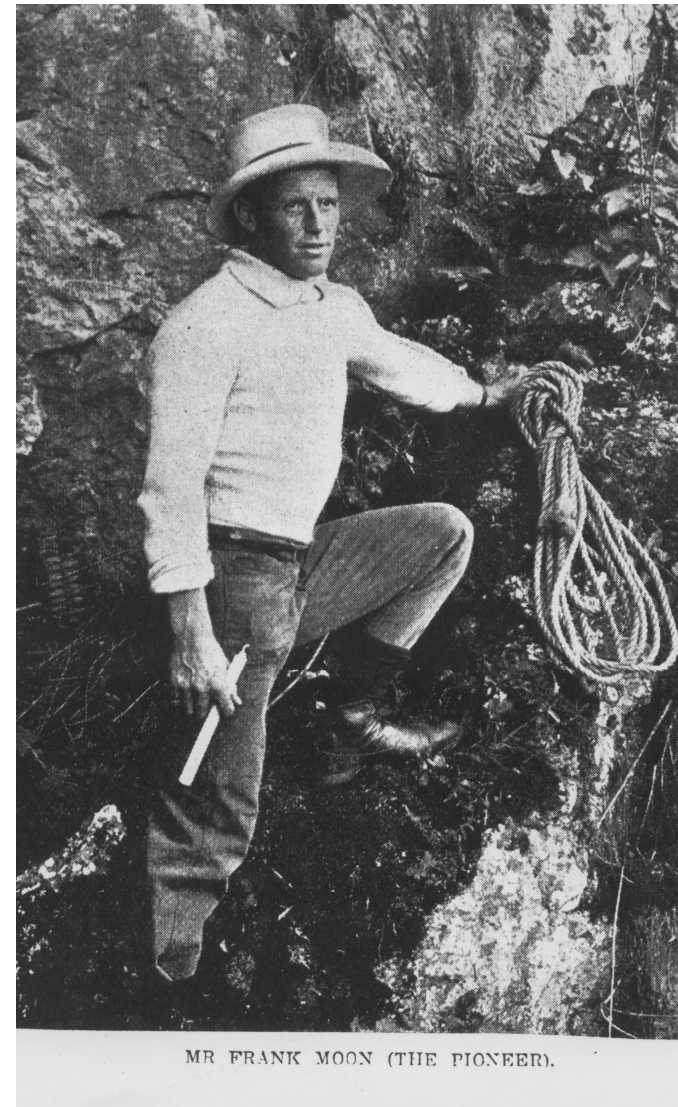
### **Introducing Frank Moon . . .**

**Frank Moon was the son of a local farmer who had gone to Western Australia working as a prospector and miner at Kalgoorlie.**

**In 1906, he won a championship at the long distance bike races that were a feature of life on the goldfields. He decided to use his prize money to return home for a holiday.**

**The caves interested him and he explored a number of them. He decided he wanted to find a cave that would provide a rival to the then-famous caves at Jenolan.**

**On the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 1907, he found his dream cave and named it Fairy Cave.**



MR FRANK MOON (THE PIONEER).



8.

**Verrell Heath produced this delightful photographic booklet describing, the Buchan Caves. It was published on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 1907, actually just after Moon's discovery of Fairy Cave, but regrettably, that story and photographs could not be included.**





**9.**

**A number of photographers gave special attention to the newly discovered and other caves. These included:**

- **John Flynn, later Flynn of the Inland, came to Buchan as a young missionary, and often accompanied Frank on his early explorations. He took many photographs which we used to publicise the caves, and were published as postcards by both Osboldstone & Co of Melbourne and by his sister Rosetta.**
- **Howard Decimus Bulmer, of Lakes Entrance, accompanied Frank Moon to the Fairy Cave immediately after the discovery. He went on to become the leading scenic photographer of Gippsland. Frank actually recommended that he be the only photographer of the Caves, but the Lands and Survey department rejected this.**
- **When the first guidebook (see below) was published, Norman J. Caire, recognised as probably the greatest scenic photographer of the day, was engaged to provide the necessary photographs. He in turn engaged Bulmer, just commencing in the profession, as his assistant.**
- **Bulmer's major rival at that time was James H.A. MacDougall, postmaster at Buchan South and owner of the Walden Studios. He was the first Australian cave photographer to recognise the value of using oblique lighting to enhance his pictures.**
- **George Rose specialised in producing both Stereographs and postcards. He published many thousands of images over many years, and his work is therefore of great historical value.**

**10.**

**John Flynn came to Buchan as a young missionary in 1905-1906. He and Frank became great friends and he took many photographs of the caves. Osboldstone & Co of Melbourne published a series of his images as postcards. His sister Rosetta also published some from their cottage in Buchan.**



**(Photograph from McPheat, W.S. 1964. *John Flynn: Apostle to the Inland*, London: Hodder & Stoughton.**



**Frank Moon in Kitson's Cave**

11.

Again, from the exhibition . . .



## **12. Introducing Howard Bulmer**

**Howard Bulmer was the son of the Rev John Bulmer who played a major role in the care of the Kurnai people of East Gippsland.**

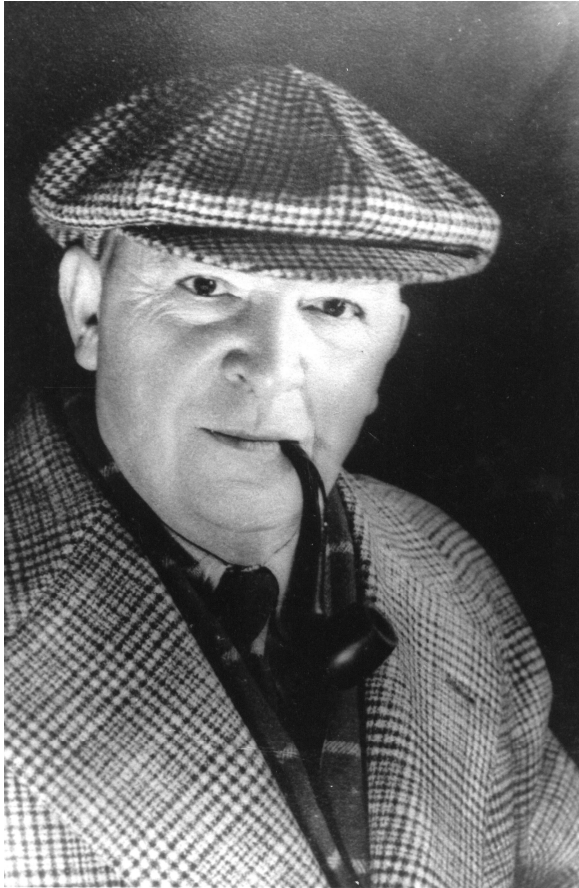
**He had commenced his career as a professional photographer at Lakes Entrance and Bairnsdale in about 1903, and retired in 1950. He was a tireless photographer of the landscapes and other attractions of East Gippsland. He also published postcards, photo souvenirs, and books on East Gippsland.**

**He was on hand when Frank Moon made the most famous discovery at Buchan caves – the Fairy Cave. So his many photographs recorded the story of both Fairy Cave and also Royal Cave, discovered a few years later.**



**(Photograph from Squires, Barraclough & Clothier, 1990. *Gippsland in Focus: A Directory of Photographers to 1950*. Bairnsdale: Kapana Press.)**

**13.**



**(A later photograph provided by the Bulmer Family)**

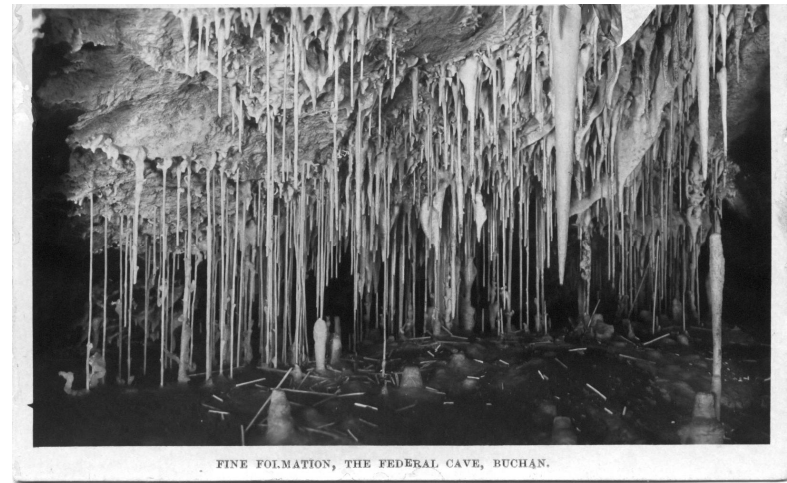
**Some Bulmer Photographs:**



**“Dreams in Fairyland”**



14.



FINE FORMATION, THE FEDERAL CAVE, BUCHAN.





15.

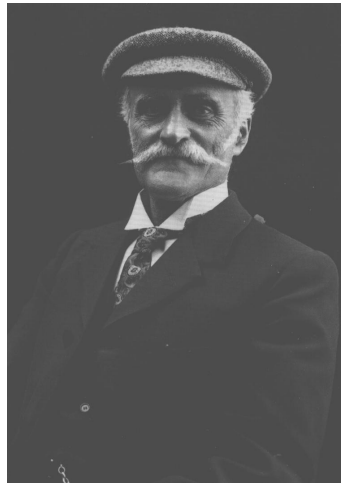
From the exhibition . . .



**16.**

### **Norman J Caire**

**When the first guidebook was to be published, Caire, recognised as the state's greatest scenic photographer, was engaged to provide the necessary photographs. He in turn enlisted the then young Howard Bulmer from Lakes Entrance as his assistant.**



**Norman J Caire (c. 1914) From Pitkethly, A & D.,  
*N.J. Caire: Landscape Photographer.***

**One of the joint photographs, published in the  
Whitcombe Guidebook (see below)**



**17.**

**James H.A. MacDougall**

**At the time, MacDougall was Bulmer's major rival, postmaster at Buchan South and owner of Walden Studios. He was the first Australian cave photographer to recognise the value of using oblique lighting to enhance his pictures.**



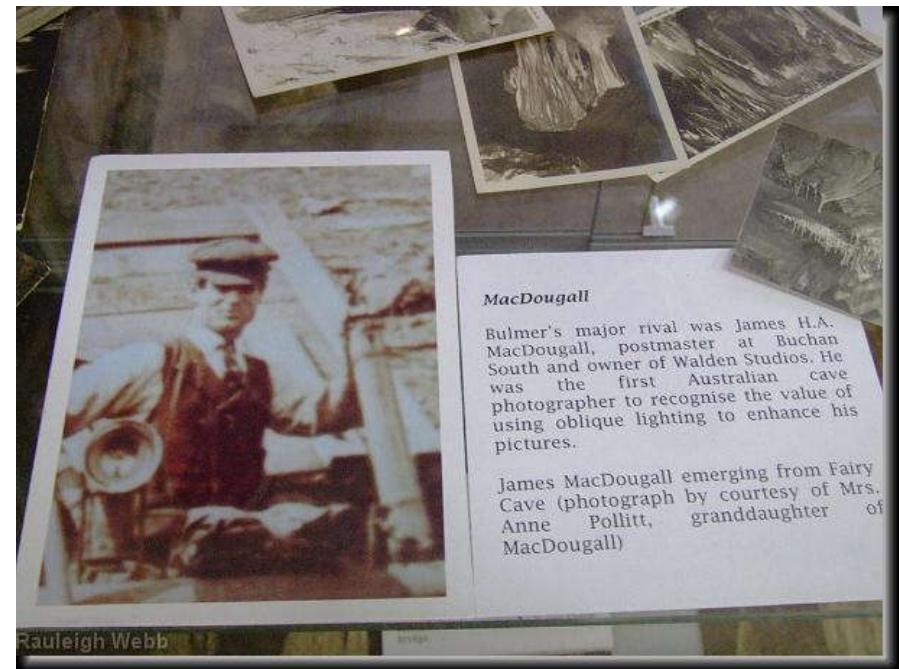
**James MacDougall emerging from Fairy Cave  
(Photograph from his granddaughter, Mrs Anne  
Pollitt of Brisbane)**

**Two of his Buchan Photographs**



18.

And again, from the exhibition . . .



**MacDougall**

Bulmer's major rival was James H.A. MacDougall, postmaster at Buchan South and owner of Walden Studios. He was the first Australian cave photographer to recognise the value of using oblique lighting to enhance his pictures.

James MacDougall emerging from Fairy Cave (photograph by courtesy of Mrs. Anne Pollitt, granddaughter of MacDougall)

Rauleigh Webb

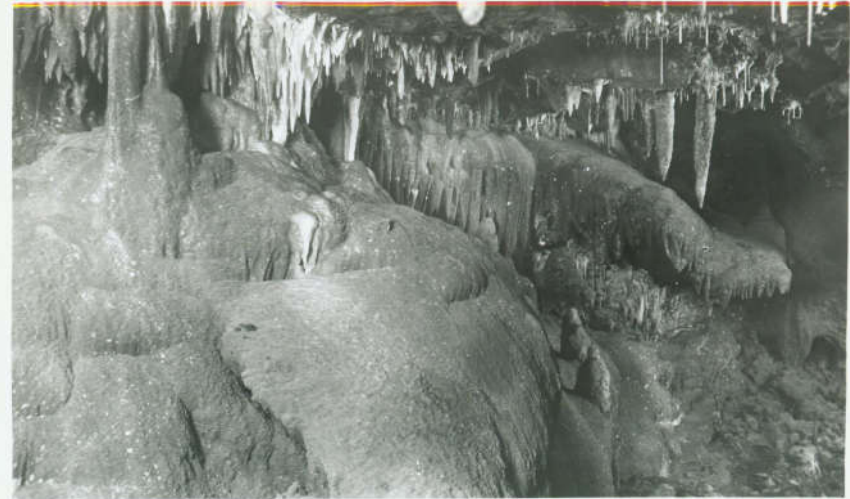


**19.**

**George Rose**

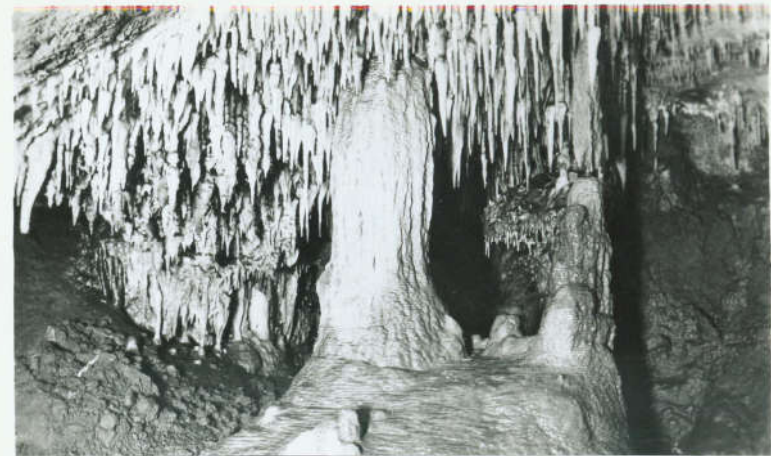


**George Rose specialised in producing both stereographs and postcards. He published literally many thousands of images over many subjects and many years, so his work is of considerable historic value.  
(Photo from Rose Sterograph Co.)**



THE ROSE SERIES, P. 605  
Copyright

THE ENTRANCE CHAMBER, ROYAL CAVE, BUCHAN, VIC.



THE ROSE SERIES, P. 31

THE CHRISTMAS TREE, FAIRY CAVE, BUCHAN

20.

**George Rose and his stereographs from the exhibition**



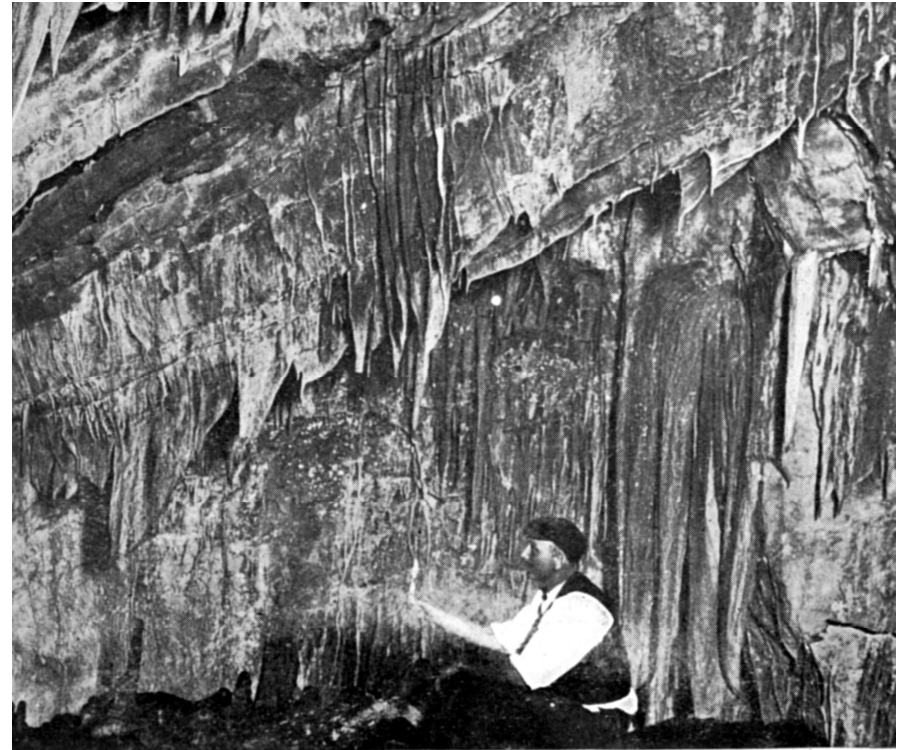


**21.**

**Frederick Wilson, formerly manager of Jenolan Caves, was appointed to develop the cave for visitors and to manage it.**

**He was a visionary with a great sensitivity to the natural world, laid an excellent foundation.**

**The protective netting that he used to keep visitors from damaging the cave served its purpose extremely well, ensuring that both Jenolan and Buchan suffered little damage.**



**22.**

**Frederick Wilson's Protective netting has stood the test of time and still protects particularly sensitive parts of the caves.**



**23.**

**The official opening of Fairy Cave on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1907 by the Governor, Sir Reginald Talbot, KCB (centre) with Frank Moon and Frederick Wilson at the top of the stairs.**



**24.**

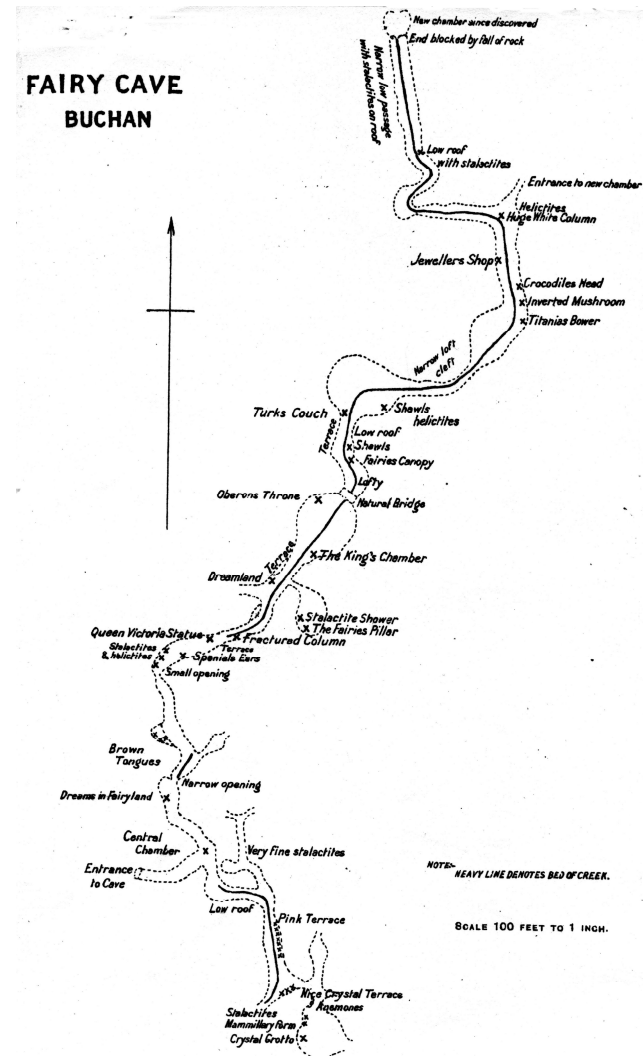
**Wilson then entertained the Governor in Wilson's Cave (named after the land-owner).**

**The young man with his back to the camera is his son John, who continued the family interest in caves, but did not make it his occupation.**



25.

The first map of Fairy Cave . . .

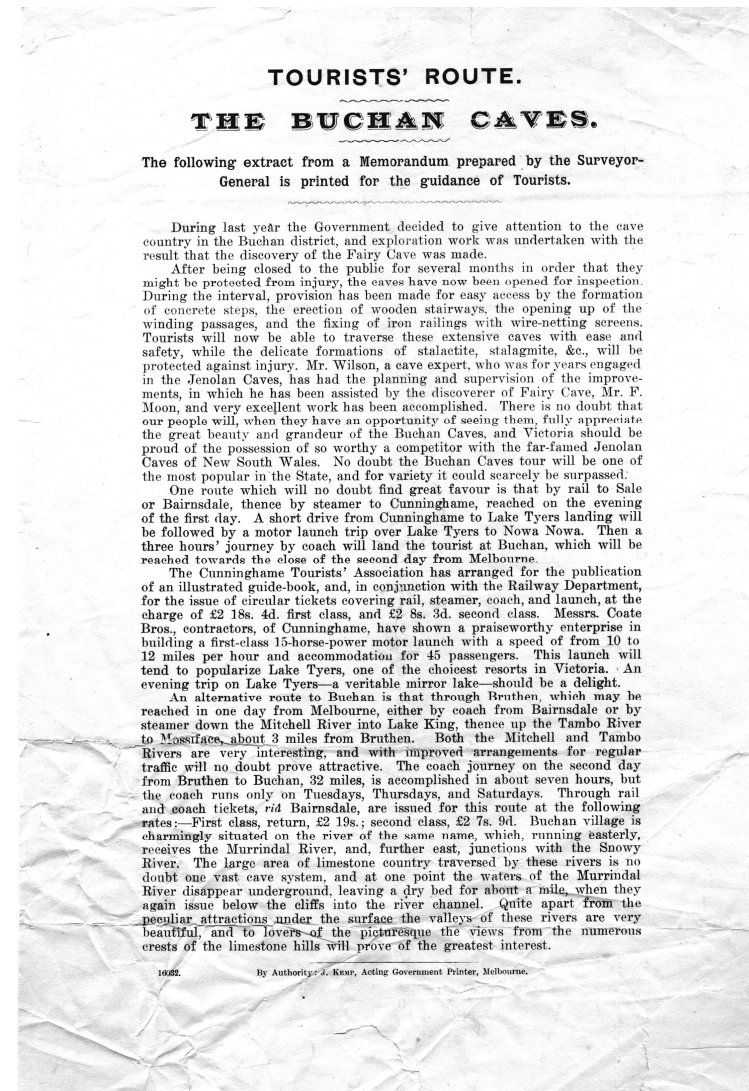


26.

**This was the first formal “brochure” advertising Fairy Cave to the public. Its simplicity is a great contrast to the veritable flood of publicity that then emerged.**

**Newspapers regularly printed stories and photograph, particularly in the lead-up to the Christmas holiday season.**

**Other examples follow below.**





27.

***Guide to the Gippsland Lakes and Buchan Caves*** was produced by the Cunninghame Progressive Association in 1908. It was one of the finest local tourist guides ever published in Australia. Frank Whitcombe wrote it and the photographs were by Norman J. Caire, recognised as probably Victoria's greatest photographer, and Howard D. Bulmer, then at the beginning of his long and productive career.

It described the journey via Cunninghame, now Lakes Entrance.



**28.**

**Visitors generally travelled by train to Sale, then  
caught the steamer to Cunninghame (now Lakes  
Entrance)**



**29.**

**Another boat trip took them across the lakes to Nowa Nowa and from there they were taken by coach to Buchan.**


**(Photograph from Sears & C.E. Harvey, *Beautiful Victoria*, Melbourne: Osboldstone & Co.)**

**J.A. Sears was a commercial photographer but took an immense number of pictures for Victorian railways, including many of the railway carriage photographs (see further below). He also made extensive use of a panoramic camera for spectacular landscape views and was one of the few to use it in vertical format, thus producing this wonderful picture of the Buchan Coach crossing the Boggy Creek Bridge. . .**



30.

**And, of course, some even kept the admission ticket as a souvenir . . .**

Book 16 E.  R. No. 187


**BUCHAN CAVES.**

**AUTHORITY FOR ADMISSION.**

April 27 1900

Name, Mr Moran

Fee Paid—One Shilling and Sixpence.



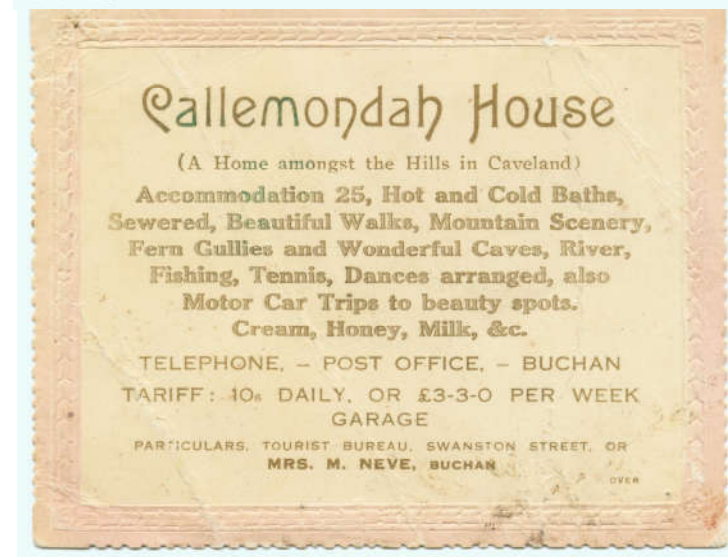
Caretaker.

NOTE.—Available for date of issue only.



31.

**Hotels and guesthouses issued delightful business cards to advertise their offerings**



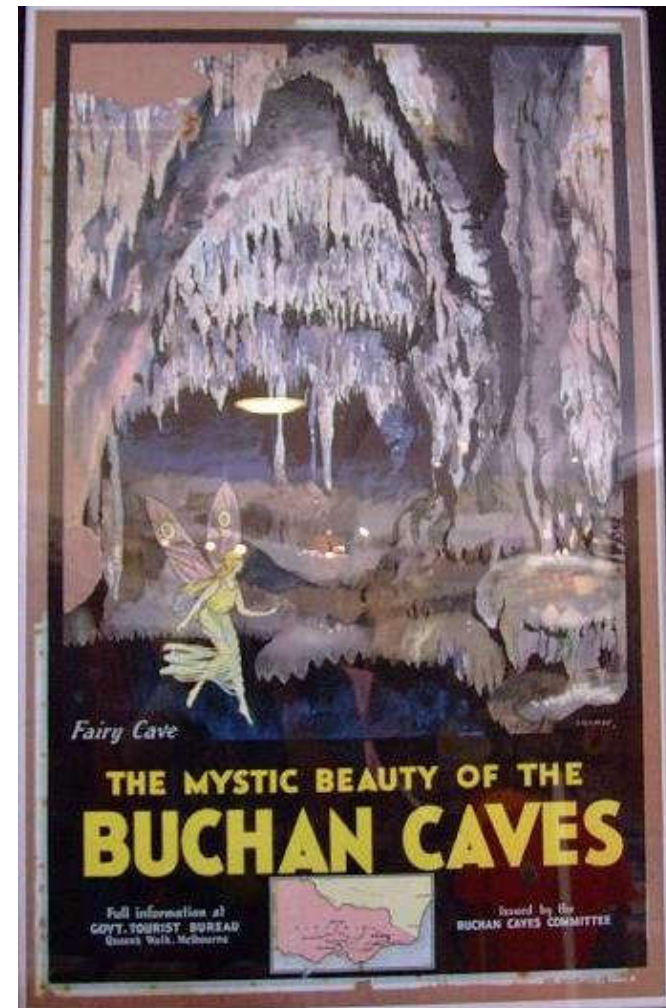
**32.**

**Meanwhile, the hotels prospered . . .**



33.

**A grand poster, designed by artist Percy Trompf, was pasted up at every railway station**



**34.**


**And Buchan Caves were featured in the magnificent photographs displayed in every railway carriage**





35.

**The Victorian Railways published *Picturesque Victoria*, an annual guide to the best destinations, and Buchan caves were always featured. This example is from the 1928 edition.**



Interior of  
ROYAL CAVE, BUCHAN

### BUCHAN CAVES

*Train from Melbourne to Nowa Nowa, 207 miles,  
thence motor car, 17 miles*

**T**HESE wonderful mystery caverns lie within the limestone hills around the township of Buchan. They are filled with numberless examples of Nature's exquisite handiwork, and should be visited by all lovers of the weird and beautiful.

The Caves possess a powerful fascination for the tourist, and the rugged grandeur of the surrounding hills and the peaceful beauty of the Buchan River Valley cannot fail to charm the visitor. The rivers are well stocked with trout.

Some of these Caves are great caverns, while others are tiny grottoes, which resemble glittering treasure chests.

Fanciful combinations of shapes and colors suggest all sorts of quaint figures. There are curious galleries, winding passages and spacious compartments, which all combine to produce a wonderful effect. Stalactites bejewel the roofs, alabaster stalagmites rise like pillars from the floor, while radiant helictites scintillate upon the walls. Electric light is installed in the principal caverns or chambers, and by this aid some very weird and wonderful effects are obtained.

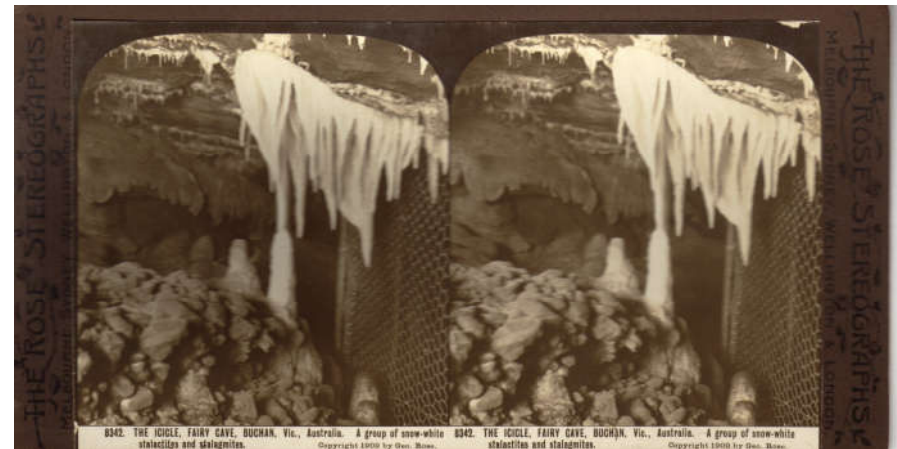
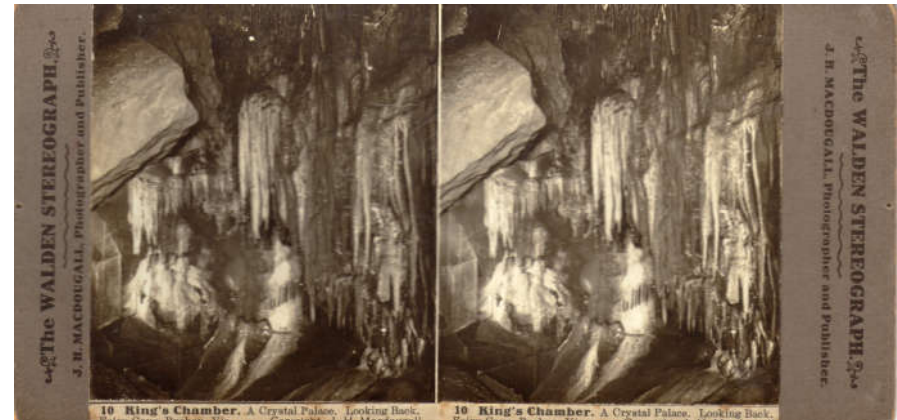
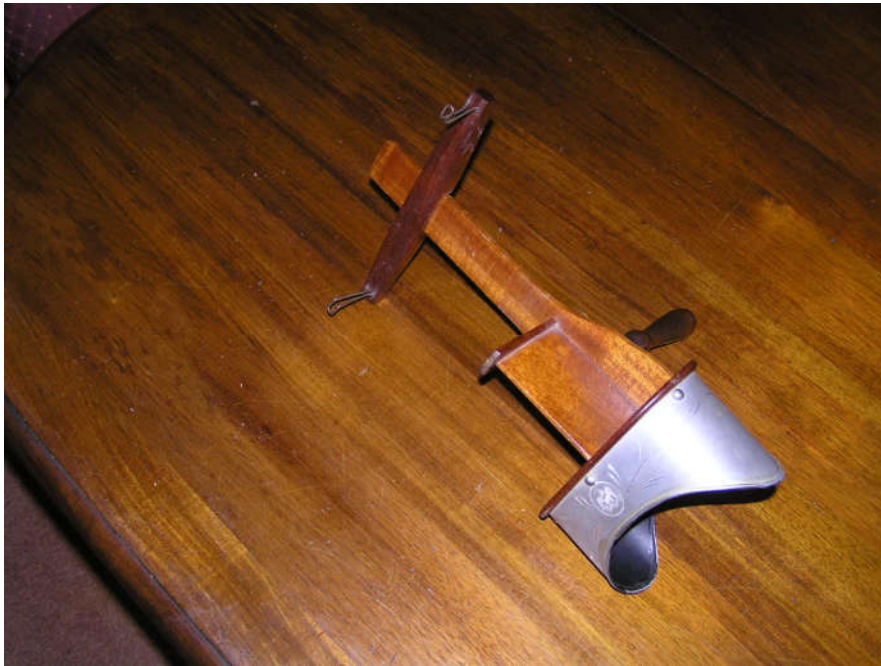
The trip to Buchan may be made by rail to Nowa Nowa, thence by connecting motor car for a distance of about 17 miles. The drive from Nowa Nowa to Buchan is particularly delightful, passing over the foothills of the Tara Range, and through fern gullies up and down timbered slopes, where heath and bush flowers bloom.

An alternative to this route is to break the journey at either Sale or Bairnsdale, and continue by car or steamer through the beautiful Gippsland Lakes to Lakes Entrance, and thence continue the journey by motor. This trip is preferred by many tourists on account of its variety of travel and enchanting scenery through what is called "Victoria's Wonderful Lake and Cave Country."

*Page Nine*

36.

Many households had their own stereo viewer and a collection of stereographs. Both MacDougall and Rose produced many stereographs of the Buchan Caves.



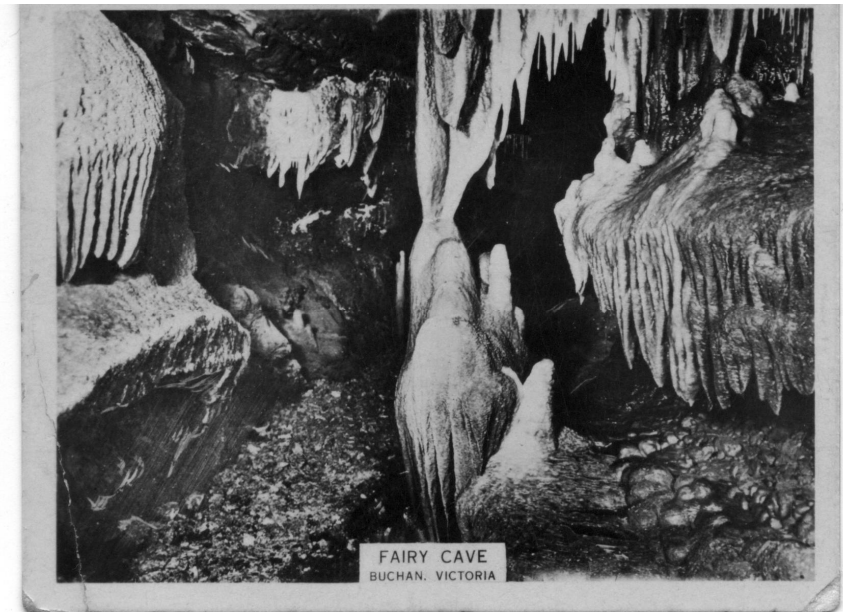
**37.**

**Both Bulmer and the Victorian Railways produced packs of miniature photographs. They were carried by the guides and sold to visitors at the conclusion of each tour. Then they were often placed in the family album.**



**38.**

**Buchan Caves even appeared on the ubiquitous cigarette cards . . .**





39.

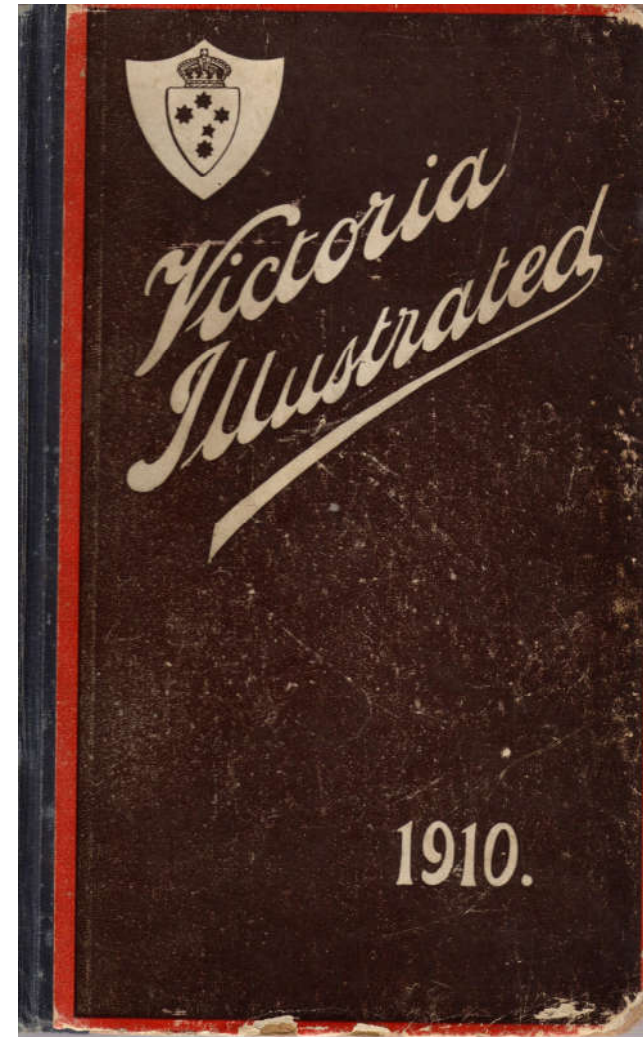
**Bulmer (and other photographers) also published photographic albums and mailing folders showing either the caves or the region as a whole.**

**Undoubtedly, the best of these were the *Beautiful East Gippsland* series produced by Bulmer.**

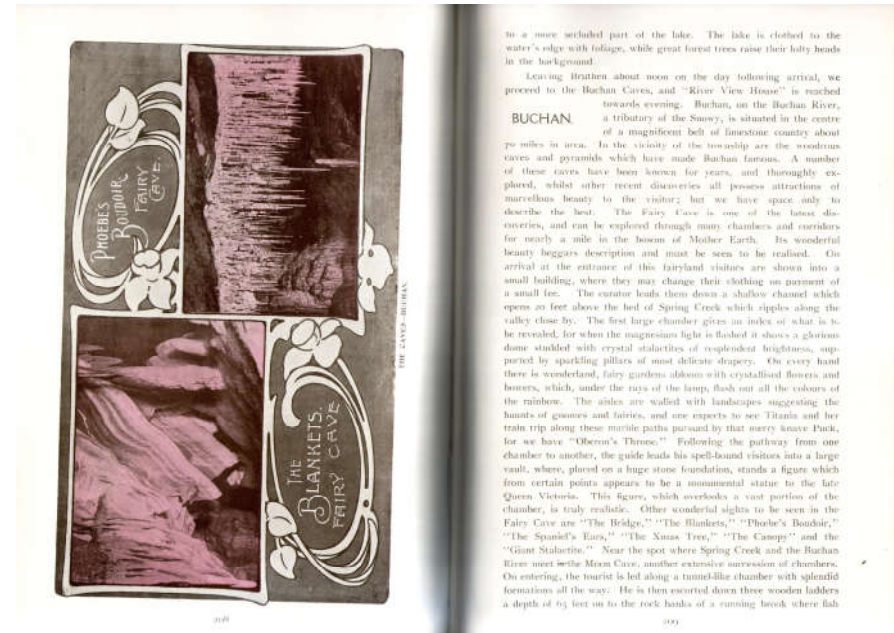


40.

**The Buchan Caves even appeared in publications designed to attract immigrants. Lorck's *Victoria Illustrated* was distributed free from Australia House in London on behalf of the Closer Settlement Board.**



**The entry on Buchan covered some 8 pages and included 14 photographs!**



**42.**

## **China Souvenirs**

**Special china utensils and trinkets have been very popular tourism souvenirs for many years. They often attract notice to other people and may often be bought as gifts for family and friends**

**The black and white ware comes from Czechoslovakia. Those with the brown picture are Shelley china from Great Britain. The design of both is from Howard Bulmer's photograph of Frank Moon looking at the Blankets in Fairy Cave. Then there are the modern colored pieces.**





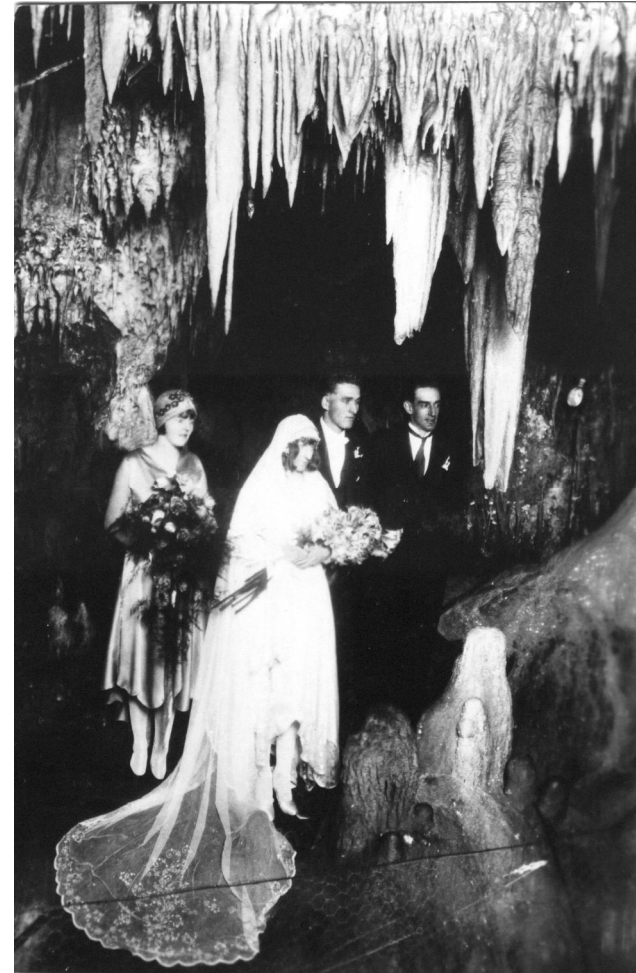
43.



**44.**

**It was particularly appropriate, given the commitment of the family to the caves, that Fairy Moon and Frank Hansford celebrated their wedding in the Fairy Cave.**

**14<sup>th</sup> April 1930**



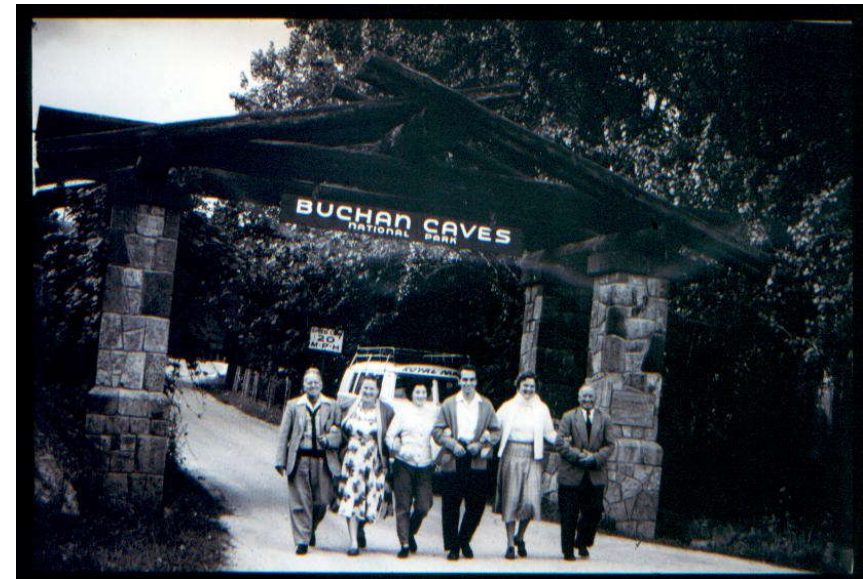
**45.**

### **The National Park**

**In 1938, the Minister for Lands, Albert Lind, designated a number of parks as National Parks. In doing this, he believed that such parks should offer a diversity of recreational facilities. This was also the period when family holidays by car were rapidly increasing and caravans were also becoming more common.**

**So, Buchan gained a formal entrance, swimming pool, children's playground, and tennis courts. The caravan park was provided with camp kitchen, a car wash area, barbeques and other conveniences. The formal opening took place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1938.**

**Increased tree planting was also provided, with the park reaching its prime in the late 1950s and 1960s.**



**46.**

**Developments included:**

**A new kitchen**



**An improved camping area**





**47.**

**To attract Caravan owners**



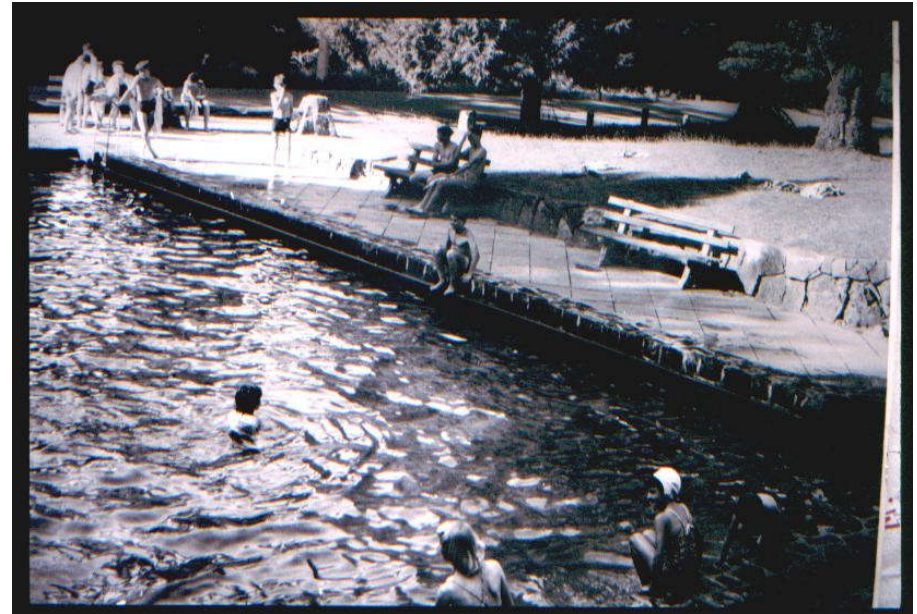
**With a carwash area**





**48.**

**And most importantly, a swimming pool fed with  
very cold water from the caves**



49.

**Not surprisingly, the new National Park was launched by the Minister on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 1938, with all due ceremony and publicity**



Rauleigh Webb

**50.**

**A major tree planting program, initially designed by Howard Linaker, was instituted in the early 1930s. It was supplemented and repaired at various times receiving special attention with the 1938 change in status, and really came to its peak of development in the 1960s.**

**A full restoration program is now being implemented.**

