



Media Release – August 2009

Welcome Your Excellency!

Fun for all ages, on **September 12 -13**, Jenolan Caves is hosting the annual ‘**Welcome Your Excellency!**’ weekend. **Colourful characters** will return to life. Tour the **Jersey Cave** and **Wilkinson’s Passage**, both **rarely visited**. Deep underground, experience haunting harmonies from the time of Louis XIV. Enjoy **19th century arias plus dinner** fit for a lord.

What does this grand occasion commemorate? On a freezing wet September day in 1887, Lady Cecelia Carrington, tired but determined, gripped her horse’s tail as she climbed the Black Ranges on the Six Foot Track. When she and her husband, Lord Carrington, Governor of New South Wales, reached the fabled Jenolan Caves, they were met by Jeremiah Wilson, ‘The Keeper of the Caves’, under a large banner proclaiming “Welcome Your Excellency!”.

On both Saturday and Sunday, visitors can experience the 1880s, on fun cave tours led by charismatic characters from Jenolan’s rich past. ‘*Katie Webb*’, fearless cave explorer, will show how she discovered the underground ‘*Katies Bower*’. ‘*Jeremiah Wilson*’, ‘Keeper of the Caves’, will take visitors into the *Jubilee Cave* - opened in honour of Queen Victoria’s diamond jubilee in 1897. Both will reveal secrets kept under wraps for nearly 130 years!

A very special treat awaits the adventurous – doffing his Vice Regal outfit, ‘*Lord Carrington*’ will show the rarely seen *Jersey Cave*, largely unchanged since it opened for the Earl of Jersey’s visit in 1891. Using caving lamps, visitors will travel back in time. Old clothes and flexibility will be needed to wriggle through the narrow squeezes. Ask Lord Carrington about the skeleton of the Tasmanian Tiger, embedded in the crystal floor.

At 4pm on Saturday afternoon, go underground for something most unusual - **Sophie Ardiét**, on **baroque flute**, and **James Holland**, on **theorbo** (an ancient stringed instrument similar to a lute), will perform a haunting program of French music from around the time of Louis XIV.

Early Saturday evening, *Caves House* guests can relax and enjoy a complimentary wine and cheese reception in historic *Caves House*.

The evening’s highlight will be a magnificent dinner in Edwardian splendour, with a unique menu, reminiscent of the days of the British Empire. Lord Carrington’s favourite dish, roast pheasant breast, will be on the menu! Dinner will feature a special appearance by the late ‘*Madame Adelina Patti*’, famed 19th century opera star. Diners are encouraged to dress in 19th century costume, for this annual extravaganza to ‘Welcome Your Excellency’.

To book, call 1300 76 33 11. For more information, visit www.jenolancaves.org.au.

For media information or interviews, please contact Dennis Winchester on 0418 462 271 or email dennis.winchester@jenolancaves.org.au .

For media images, please download from

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More information about Lord Carrington

Charles Robert Wynne-Carrington, (Lord Carrington) was Governor of NSW from 1885 to 1890. He and his wife were popular, genial and generous, a contrast to the minor aristocrats usually dispatched to perform Vice Regal duties. Baroness Cecelia Margaret Carrington was instrumental in setting up a fund to help the families of those killed in the Bulli mining disaster of 1887. When they left, tearful crowds threw flowers into the path of their carriage.

When he returned to Britain, Lord Carrington continued to embrace progressive causes, including the extension of voting eligibility and the role of democracy in politics. Of Carrington it was said “He has come to the conclusion that if the rule of democracy is inevitable, the policy of the aristocracy is to make the best of the situation.”.

Did he muse upon the suggestion made to him that he become the first President of an Australian Republic? Who can tell?



Jenolan Caves House



Touring the rarely seen Jersey Cave



Lord & Lady Carrington