



THE GHOST TOUR

JENOLAN CAVES

The Jenolan Ghost Tour

Many people believe ghosts are the lost souls of those who have met a sudden death, yet at Jenolan this doesn't seem to be the case. Visitors come to Jenolan and fall in love with the beauty of the caves. Some visitors find themselves constantly drawn back to Jenolan. Some choose to work here and find, even when they finish working, they cannot completely leave. It is as if Jenolan has a hold of their souls, so strong that even in death their spirit returns. It is the spirits of these people who love the caves and cannot bear to be parted with them, that possibly we meet at Jenolan. There are different types of ghosts stories. Some are sensations, sightings or sounds which re-occur. Other stories are one off events which have never occurred since. A few stories have even been made up, either to entertain visitors or to scare new members of staff. One thing that many of the stories have in common is that they have been handed down from generation to generation of guides. The ghost tour, whether the participants choose to believe or not, serves to perpetuate the stories which makes Jenolan so special. Whether the stories are real or fictional, Jenolan is a wonderful, captivating place where spirits are free to roam the caves and valleys. Enjoy your evenings tour, and if you feel or see something on your tour, do not worry, it is only one of the many ghosts at Jenolan.

Miss Chisolm - Most Famous Ghost of Caves House The Caves House dining room is named "Chisolm's" after Jenolan's best known ghost, Miss Chisolm. Miss Chisolm worked in Caves House for many years, finally leaving in 1965. For many people she was an intrinsic part of a visit to Jenolan. Possibly it is for this reason that people say it is the ghost of Miss Chisolm which is responsible for many of the odd and unexplained happenings around Caves House. The problem is that many of these odd happenings occurred during Miss Chisolm's time

too, and in fact she even experienced certain ghostly happenings. Usually people who see an apparition describe a woman who is dressed as though from the late 1800's. For this reason it is thought that maybe the ghost is actually Lucinda Wilson, wife of Jenolan's first caretaker, Jeremiah Wilson. Jeremiah and Lucinda established the first Caves House back in 1880 and it fell to Lucinda to look after the guest house whilst Jeremiah entertained the guests underground. It does not seem entirely unreasonable then that Lucinda continues to keep an eye over all subsequent guests in Caves House.

Chisolm's Dining Room - Miss Chisolm's presence at Caves House is commemorated in the naming of the dining room after her. In days gone by staff would set the tables for breakfast at the end of the evening and then lock the room, stretching a chain through the door handles to prevent entry during the night. On a number of occasions, upon opening the dining room the next morning, staff have found the table in the far right corner to be rearranged, presumably by Miss Chisolm. Miss Chisolm has also been known to draw drapes that were left open. Another time, some staff were standing outside the dining room long after all the guests had left. The doors to the dining room are heavy and hard to open. Startled staff watched as the doors strained against the chain, whilst trying to open.

Miss Chisolm's Dog - Every now and then a dog is sighted in the Cambridge car park. Jenolan is a nature reserve, so the ranger is called to remove the dog but it always disappears before the ranger arrives. On the nights that the dog has been sighted, strange occurrences have also happened in the dining room. No-one associated the two occurrences until a photo of Miss Chisolm was found, and beside her, in the photo, the dog.

Sleeping in Caves House - One of the guides was staying in Caves House in a room on the second floor above the dining room. He was having a lot of trouble sleeping and had been lying awake in bed for some time. Suddenly the bed covers were drawn tightly over his head,

as though a house maid was making the bed. After a few seconds, the covers were pulled back as though the maid had realised her mistake

Caves House Painters - In the mid 1990's, Caves House was extensively renovated. Part of this work involved repainting the house, inside and out. As the painters stood on a scaffold, one painter turned to see a lady dressed in clothes from the turn of the century. When he called out to the other painters to look they were able to turn around just in time to see her fading from view. The ghosts must have enjoyed playing with the painters since they had more experiences. Whilst they performed their work they stored their supplies in Room 123, the room frequently referred to as Miss Chisolm's room. On one night guests complained of hearing a lot of noise coming from the room although no one was seen entering or leaving the room. Next morning when the painters came to work they discovered that the room they had left scattered with supplies was now tidied. Paint cans were neatly ordered along one wall ranging down in sizes. Some say it was Caves House staff trying to scare the painters whilst others insist it was Miss Chisolm once again!

The "Five Mile" - Some of the guides working at Jenolan live in houses off the winding road leading into Jenolan. This section of the road is known as the "Five Mile". On one occasion, a guide decided to walk home after work. Part of the way up the road the guide saw a man with a suitcase walking towards him, dressed as though from another era. When the guide looked closer, the man had disappeared. Unnerved by the experience, the guide asked a fellow worker to walk home with him the following evening. At the same spot, the man carrying the suitcase appeared and then vanished. It was the last time that the guide concerned walked home.

The "Two Mile" - The road which leads from Caves House, up the hill past the Carlotta car park and on to the top of the hill before continuing to Oberon is known as the Two Mile. The road was surveyed and then constructed by Henry Cambridge. One account of

the discovery of the Imperial Cave credits Cambridge as being the first to enter the cave. If you follow the road past the Carlotta car park you will soon come to a sharp hair pin corner referred by some people as Red Bend and others as Cambridge's corner. It has been suggested that Cambridge's ghosts waits at this bend, waiting to stop the occasional traveller. A number of people claim that as they have driven by this bend their car has inexplicably stopped. Some say that it is on account of how sharp the bend is that the cars stall. It has also been said that some people are so concerned about meeting Cambridge's ghost that when they are unable to start their cars they prefer to stay inside their cars and wait for morning rather than risk stepping outside and having a supernatural encounter.

The Police Station - A few of the houses in the valley were built before the turn of the century one of which used to be the Jenolan Police Station. A number of occupants have reported strange happenings in the house. It is told that at one time a prisoner that was held in the lockup passed away while in custody. Some people claim that now and then the prisoner can still be heard calling out from his cell during the night.

"The Nest" - "The Nest" was home to Robert Bailey who helped James Wiburd explore the caves. Many people who have stayed in the Nest claim to have encountered a ghost believed to be Robert's wife Catherine. On one occasion, a person who was watching television, got up, went into the kitchen and on return saw a woman from the waist up, standing in the middle of the lounge-room. The woman held her hands out in front of her, in a peaceful gesture, and then faded from view. A number of people who have lived in the Nest have stated that they have been sitting in the living room comfortably when suddenly the room becomes bitterly cold without explanation. Is this the ghost of Catherine passing through?

The Devil's Coach House - The Devil's Coach House received it's name through an incident connected to a cattle thief who spent a night

in the cave. Having spent his night on a drinking binge, Luke White made his way into the Coachhouse and settled down to sleep. In the middle of the night he was awakened by a loud clattering noise. Looking up he was startled to see six large horses drawing a coach around the cave driven by Satan, no less. Terrified at the sight, Luke got up and ran. After telling others of what he had seen the cave soon got the name of the Devils Coachhouse.

Wiburd in the Coach House - Leaving work one evening, one of the guides felt compelled to stop in the Grand Arch. Once out of their car, they felt drawn into the Devil's Coach House. Inside the Coach House they saw the ghost of James Wiburd rising to the ceiling. As he floated upwards, ashes trailed from his feet, significant as James Wiburd had been cremated. The guide raced back to the office so the other guides could come and see. When the other guides reached the Coach House, the ghost had vanished, but the ashes trailing from Wiburd's feet were scattered all over the floor.

Lost on Lucas Rocks - It is believed that this story was made up in the 1950/60's to discourage visitors from going off exploring caves by themselves. Two students decided to look for caves on Lucas Rocks. They were aware they needed a permit to go caving but proceeded anyway. Neither student was familiar with the area. They found a small cave and started to explore. The further into the cave they went, the smaller the cave became until they could go no further. One student managed to get out, but the other student who went first was stuck and could not move. After several attempts to free his friend, the other student went back to the guides office for help. Several guides set out to help but the student could not remember where on Lucas Rocks he had left his friend. Much searching failed to find the cave, so the missing student was left, stuck in a cave, somewhere on Lucas Rocks. As stated this story was made up and never actually happened.

Which ghost is which -Of the caves shown at Jenolan, The Chifley, Imperial and Jubilee caves were discovered by Jeremiah Wilson. The

River, Cerberus, Orient, Temple of Baal and Ribbon caves were discovered by James Wiburd. For that reason, if a ghostly experience occurs in a cave north of the Grand Arch it is attributed to Jeremiah Wilson, whilst James Wiburd roams the caves to the south of the Grand Arch. Some people, as they pass through the caves, feel a tap on the shoulder but no-one is behind them. Knowing what cave they are in might help work out who it may be.

The Exhibition Chamber - Numerous ghostly experiences have occurred in the Exhibition Chamber. On one occasion a group at the top of 'The Slide' could hear another group below in the Exhibition Chamber. On reaching the chamber they could not find anyone. Subsequent checking revealed they were the only group in the Lucas Cave at that time. On another occasion a group was in the chamber when they saw a candle being carried by someone across the rock pile in the Exhibition Chamber. The chamber is quite large and the person was hard to distinguish and did not respond when called out to. When investigated closer, the stranger and the candle had disappeared. Once again, no-one else was in the cave at the time. On other occasions, a group has been walking up the steps to the Mafeking Branch of the Lucas Cave. The last person up the stairs has often felt someone walking behind them, sometimes even tapping them on the shoulder.

The Orient and Temple of Baal Gates - Both the Orient and the Temple of Baal Caves connect to the River Cave via the Mud Tunnels. At the point where the Orient and Temple of Baal tours end, a gate is across the path to stop tours walking too far. Guides working in both the Orient and the Temple of Baal caves have reported the gates clanging for no apparent reason. In the Orient Cave, the gate normally clangs when staff are in the cave doing maintenance. In the Temple of Baal Cave, the gate has also clanged when there are groups in the cave. One guide had it happen so frequently to him in the Temple of Baal, that the gate had to be chained shut to stop it clanging.

The Invisible Group in the River Cave - To stop the caves getting a build up of lint and dust, they are regularly water cleaned. Normally when this happens, the cave is closed because there is a large quantity of water sprayed. On two occasions guides were in the River Cave cleaning when they heard a group of visitors climbing the stairs at Queen's Canopy. The guides stopped work to allow the group to pass. They could hear the group coming closer and then fading away. No-one passed the guides cleaning and later checking revealed that no group had been in the cave at that time.

The Woolshed - An Imperial tour group entered the first chamber of the tour - the Woolshed. Standing in the middle of the chamber was a girl dressed as though from a tour party from days gone by. As the Imperial tour group watched, the girl drifted backwards and down the stairs out of sight. No-one on the Imperial tour wanted to continue and all immediately left the cave.

The Beast in the Chifley - Some new guides are told stories to unnerve them. One of the stories concerns the beast that lurks in Katie's Bower in the Chifley Cave. As the guide walks through the passage leading to the Flich of Bacon, they become aware of something following them. Initially it can be heard walking behind them. As they hurry to get away, the beast keeps pace. The new guide starts to run for the gate, the beast racing just behind them. The guide only just reaches the gate and locks it behind them. Of course what they heard is the echo of their footsteps, only noticeable when there are no other people around.

The Imperial River - A visit to the underground river is the last stop on the tour of the Imperial Cave. As visitors start back up the stairs, they are reminded by their guide to turn right to head out of the cave. On a number of occasions the guide has ascended the steps and heard two women talking and laughing on the path to the left. Thinking that they have made a wrong turn, the guide walks up the path to check and

the voices have stopped. There are no lights on and no groups above in the Chifley Cave. The women have disappeared.

The Invisible Group in the Jubilee - A group was in the Jubilee Cave when they became aware of another group approaching. This was peculiar as there is only ever one group in the Jubilee Cave at a time, and there are no other caves nearby that the noise could be coming from. As they waited, the group came closer and then walked straight by. No-one could be seen, only footsteps and conversation heard. Everyone on the tour admitted they had heard it, but no explanation was given.

The ‘Mud Tunnels - Work was being performed by the maintenance staff in the Mud Tunnels in the River Cave. A tool box had been carried in and left at the top of the stairs near where the path meets the track to Queen Esther’s Chamber. The maintenance staff went down the Mud Tunnels to check what work was required and when they returned, James Wiburd was found sitting near the tool box.

The Lost Tour in the Elder Cave - Many visitors ask the guides if anyone has been lost in the caves and never found. Fortunately, no-one has been lost permanently at Jenolan, though one group came very close. It was in the Elder Cave during the 1870’s. They must have been sufficiently lost that they started to draw up a memorial to themselves, writing on the cave wall. Visible to this day, the inscription reads “Sacred to the memory of...” followed by the names on the party. We know they made it out of the caves, for mention of party members has been found many years later in the local newspaper.

Noises in the Elder Cave - In the Elder Cave are many old inscriptions, left by early explorers and visitors on the walls. One of the guides was working in the Elder Cave after the last tour party had left, photographing the inscriptions. With him was an associate who definitely did not believe in ghosts. Working deep in the cave they

suddenly heard a roaring noise, somewhat like a strong wind, except there was not the slightest hint of a breeze. It was apparent from the look in the disbeliever's face, that he was quickly becoming a believer.

Working at Jenolan - As well as showing people through the caves, guides are responsible for cleaning visitor areas and other general maintenance duties. One of the more intimidating duties of the guides is walking through the caves alone to pick up any litter. Some guides will refuse to enter certain caves alone. The feeling that 'something' is there is so strong they insist that someone else is present. On other occasions, guides have been walking through the caves alone and have found that they cannot pass a certain point. It is not so much fear, but the consciousness of a force pushing them back. It is not uncommon for guides to talk of the caves as having personalities. Don't be too surprised if a guide tells you that a particular cave is always friendly when you enter it!

The Dark Figure - A guide, whilst walking through the Lucas Cave collecting litter, decided to pause for a while in the Cathedral. As he checked some of the tracks on the CD he became aware of a dark figure on the other side of the chamber. The figure made no acknowledgement of the guide and when the guide shone his torch at the figure the light mysteriously died. Turning the light away from the figure, the guide then found his torch started to work once more. It was at this point that he started to realise that the figure was not human but more ghostly. As he progressed through the cave, the figure followed in the distance. Each time the guide shone his torch in the direction of the figure, the light would die, yet as soon as he faced the opposite direction the light would start working again. This happened throughout the cave, with the guide accepting that it was simply one of Jenolan's ghosts keeping an eye on him.

His Big Fright In the late 1940's, only one guide was really interested in exploring the caves. This particular guide would frequently go off exploring by himself and made a number of small finds. This all came

to a stop when he experienced what he called his 'big fright'. He would never elaborate on what it was, but he would never go caving again.

The Ladder in the Cathedral - Many visitors wonder what it is like to climb the ladders in the Cathedral. The Ladder in front of the Cathedral Windows is the hardest of the two because the crystal formation is in front of the ladder in one section. This necessitates a bit of twisting by the climber to climb past the formation. On one occasion a guide was climbing the ladder and as he made his way past the obstructing formation, he lost his grip and started to fall. As he fell backwards, someone caught him and pushed him back onto the ladder. The Cathedral Windows In the early 1900's, it was common practise for the guides to write their names in the area above the Cathedral windows. These are now of historic interest and a number of people have tried to photograph them. Some people claim that when they try to take photos, something has tried to push them back. Those who have persevered have often found the photos blurred and useless.

Lights in the Cathedral - Above the track out of the Cathedral can be seen a rock shelf. There is nothing special about this shelf and consequently is not spot lighted. A number of visitors have seen a blue light or glow around this shelf, the source of which is unknown.

An Unexpected Stranger - Most ghost stories usually refer to someone who has passed away. It would appear though that this is not always the case. A group was making their way towards the Cerberus Cave and were just coming up to the first bridge at the base of the steps up to the River Cave. The first gentleman on the tour started to walk across the bridge only to discover someone coming back across the second bridge, walking towards the group. This was unexpected but as the gentleman looked at the stranger closer he was shocked to see that the stranger was looking at was in fact himself. The origin of this story is unknown although it probably has its origins in something

commenting upon the mirror like qualities of the water when the lights reflect off it towards the second bridge.

The Orient Singer - The Orient Cave, in common with most of the caves at Jenolan require the group to inspect the cave and then retrace their route in order to leave the cave. A group were standing in the Indian Chamber as their guide recounted stories of explorer James Wiburd. As the guide paused for breath a woman could be heard singing in the distance, possibly in the Persian Chamber. All present heard the singing. Initially it was put down to one of the female guides bringing another group. Consequently, on the way out, a female guide leading another group in was somewhat surprised when she was constantly asked by the departing group if she was the one singing. Subsequent questioning of all the guides underground at the time, not just in the Orient but all south side caves failed to find the mysterious singer. Possibly there was someone in the Orient Cave but as it happened, one of the guides was doing work in the Lucas at the same time. He reported strange noises with no explanation whilst in the Exhibition Chamber. Could there have been a connection, or just coincidence?

Lights at the Imperial Streamway - A ghost tour was being conducted through the Imperial Cave with the aid of miners lamps. A descent was made to the Imperial Stream with the guide in the lead. Nearing the bottom the guide noticed a light shining on the path some distance ahead which vanished as he approached. His initial reaction was to suspect that it was merely the light of someone further up the steps, shining through one of the many holes which lead down in this area. This thought changed though as he passed by where the light had been shining as there were no holes for the light to have shone through.