



Caves House at Yarrangobilly reopens after half a century closed

After being closed for almost half a century the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has reopened Yarrangobilly Caves House in Kosciuszko National Park for overnight accommodation.

The last time Caves House accommodated people for overnight visitors was in the mid 1960's. The NPWS took responsibility for the site when it was established as the State's primary conservation agency in 1967.

NPWS South West Slopes Regional Manager, Steve Horsley, said that from this point the dream of reopening Caves House was a long way off.

"By 1967 the place was simply uninhabitable for a number of reasons most notably the cost of bringing the place up to an appropriate level of safety. But we never lost sight of the fact that it could be done given proper resources.

"In the last decade many obstacles had to be overcome before we could think about restoration of the building. The primary difficulty was the absence of an effective sewerage treatment system in a sensitive catchment and this was critical to longer term plans to reopen Caves House for accommodation.

"Finally about 18 months ago we were able to address this problem by building a small sewerage treatment plant and then we were able to look further afield towards restoration of the building.

"Since then and with the dedication of numerous staff and successive site managers we have at last completed what I believe will be stage one in a continuing process to complete the rest of Caves House.

"It has been a large task and not without significant challenges. We had to ensure that a building constructed over a century ago met today's rigorous building standards. We have installed a fire suppression sprinkler system as well as smoke alarms. The building has been fully furnished complete with new curtains. A substantial effort also went towards ensuring a supply of potable water and provision of dependable electricity."

Many people may not be aware that Yarrangobilly Caves House electricity is supplied from a hydro plant located on site. The initial plant was installed in 1926".

We have now completely restored the single storey section containing two wings which provide seven and nine beds respectively. Each wing has a fully equipped kitchen.

Bookings are open and can be obtained through the Tumut Visitor Centre (69477025) but a formal opening will take place on October 7.

"This is a great boost for Yarrangobilly and the local tourism industry.

"The site receives about 40,000 visitors annually but I expect the addition of good quality accommodation will boost visitation especially during the colder months when camping is far less agreeable," Mr Horsley said.

Media Contact: Stuart Cohen
Your number: 02 62980311 or
0418 820504
After Hours: (02) 9995 5347

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