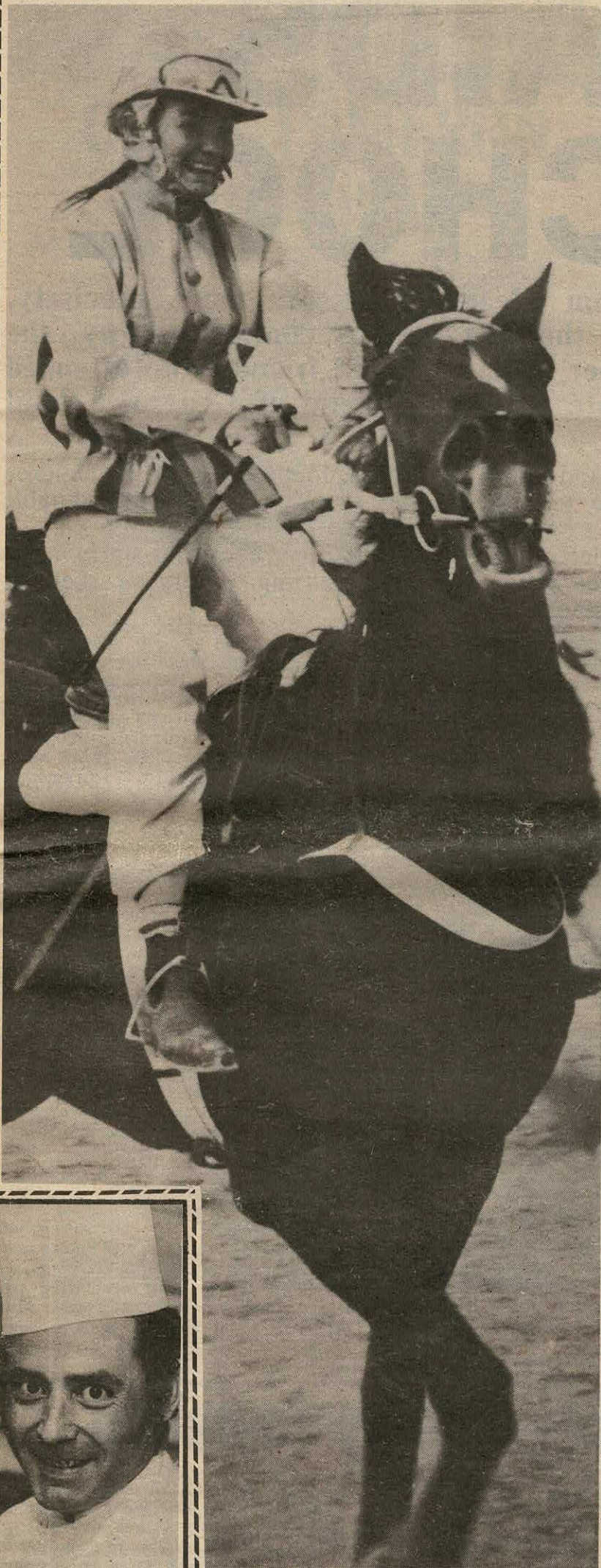


The triumphant winner



European chef specialising in Continental dishes — Bill and Inga provide the finest cuisine in Coober Pedy at the DESERT CAVE, fully licensed restaurant.

The triumphant moment after winning the race. Miss K. Robbins, riding Beautiful Paradise, is seen here returning to the scales. Miss Robbins and her sister both rode for Ian Rankin of Mabel Creek.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY TO SERVE THE OPAL INDUSTRY

OPAL MINERS' Weekly

15c

VOL. 1, NO. 3

1972



CUP MEETING
PAGES 8 & 9

'WE CAN CLEAN UP TOWN'

A cleaner town, fit for women and children to live in happily — that will be the aim of a vital community meeting to be held in Coober Pedy on Thursday, October 26.

Merger meeting Oct. 26

At a recent meeting of members of the Miners' Association and the Coober Pedy Progress Association, plea was made for urgent community effort to achieve this end.

The secretary of the Progress Association, Mr. Ken Jones, said: "We can clean up this town in no time."

"We can live together in this community and not be afraid to bring our wives and children here; but it needs your effort," he said.

The meeting Mr. Jones was addressing was called to investigate the possibility of the two associations merging to become one strong community organisation.

Before Mr. Jones spoke, the meeting was addressed by the president of the Miners' Association, Mr. Stan Kanopka. He said: "I want to talk to you about the combination of the miners in Coober Pedy with the Progress Association."

'Association is miners'

"I was very disappointed when I saw that this was not done before."

people who understandably feel that they have been left out of the activities of the Progress Association. He then told the meeting what his plans were for the annual general meeting of the Progress Association, on Thursday, October 26.

"There have been a lot of untrue reports about 'fiddling' going on," he said.

"I can assure you that I have been on the committee for two and a half years, and everything has been above board."

"Things have been in the interest of the miner, but there has not been enough liaison between the committee and the public," Mr. Jones said.

'Half don't even know'

"Half of you do not even know what the Progress Association has been doing for the town."

Mr. Jones said that in the past the two associations had been trying to achieve the same results, but had been going about it without proper communication.

Right thing for town

"People who want to work and see the right thing done by the town," he said.

Pointing out the advantages of a merger of the two associations, Mr. Jones said: "If we get together as one strong body; as representatives from all sections of the community and work together, we are

Cont. P.10

BABY OF THE WEEK



Opal Miner's bouncing Baby of the Week is Riccardo James Berti.

Riccardo is the one year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Dino Berti.

CONCERT AIDS SCHOOL

"Pennies from Heaven" — or, more precisely, \$2369.40 was the net result contributed by the enormous number of parents and friends who attended the "Penny Vote Concert" in aid of General School Funds.

The enthusiastic and large audience undoubtedly gave the children that extra incentive to perform with great gusto and considerable accomplishment.

The newly completed school grounds on a cool and starry night provided the perfect setting for the amazing variety of sketches performed by the children.

Presenting himself with a fully professional air, Mr. Robin Williams, the com-pere for the evening, coped extremely well in the face of mounting tension and excitement when scores in the voting were pushed to astronomical heights. No professional competition could have been fought with greater ardour. The Change Booths, the control centres of the success of the evening, could only be compared to the activities of a busy bank on a Friday afternoon. They were always busy and the end result shows that they coped admirably under pressure. Mr. Craig Cameron, the headmaster, made the optimistic announcement that promissory notes would be gladly accepted from those who found that their wallets and purses had been sadly depleted during the evening. The concert was launched by the tiny tots, aged three, who described the rhymes they sang with finger play. The evening ended with an almost insurmountable task. Having to make a decision from such a splendid array of performances required no less than Solomon's Judgment. However, a decision had to be made and the judging panel awarded First Prize to the GIRLS' GYMNASTIC DISPLAY, performed by grades 5, 6 and 7, with Second Prize going to Grade 3 for their performance of the play THE DOLLS THAT WERE LOCKED UP.



Pre-schoolers doing "their thing".



GRADE One's Timothy Lange and Terrence Talyer with their rendition of Puff the Magic Dragon.

The two adult performers who contributed much to the success of the evening were Mrs. Sue Davison and Mr. Marn Regan with their professionally polished guitar playing. Mrs. Davison is, of course, well known as a teacher of the guitar. Aply supporting the children was Mr. Douglas Wallace with his organ accompaniment.

CHURCH NEWS

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Church Service held 11.30 a.m. each Sunday morning in Dugout Church.

Sunday School 10.00 a.m. at Rectory and Hospital.

Youth Club 14th October, and each alternate Saturday, 7.30 p.m. Senior Group Grade 7 and Over at G. McCormack's Dugout.

Junior Group Grade 2 to Grade 6 at Rectory, 7.30 p.m.

Bible Study 7.30 p.m. Sunday evening at Rectory.

Ladies' Discussion Group 1.45 p.m. enquire at Rectory.

CATHOLIC INLAND MISSION

Sunday, October 29	Tarcoola	11.30 a.m.
Wednesday, November 1	Andamooka	6.00 p.m.
Sunday, November 5	Coober Pedy	9.30 a.m.
Sunday, November 12	Godnadatta	9.30 a.m.
Sunday, November 19	Coober Pedy	9.30 a.m.
Sunday, November 26	Coober Pedy	9.30 a.m.
Sunday, December 3	Andamooka	6.00 p.m.
Sunday December 10	Coober Pedy	9.30 a.m.
Sunday, December 17	Coober Pedy	9.30 a.m.
Sunday, December 24	Coober Pedy	9.30 a.m.
Christmas Day	Coober Pedy	Midnight and 9.30 a.m.

LUTHERAN

Services at Lutheran Church every Sunday at 10.00 a.m.

New Missionary installed

During the service held on September 27, the District Director of Church Development for the Lutheran Church in S.A., Pastor John Boehm, installed Kevin Schrapel as the new Lay Missionary.

Arriving here two months ago, Kevin and his wife Ruth were formerly based in Alice Springs where they

worked with the Lutheran Mission. Their work there involved them in patrol work and visiting Aborigines living on pastoral properties around the "Centre".

They dealt with a diversity of problems, such as social welfare and community development, apart from their spiritual work.

In Coober Pedy Kevin will not be serving the needs of the Aborigine population, but will be freely available to anyone in need of someone to talk over his problems with.

On the day of Kevin's installation, a further progressive step was taken by the Aboriginal Community.

Following a request for Sunday evening devotions to be held on the reserve, Kevin and Pastor Boehm went to the camp just on sundown.

Approximately thirty people attend the devotions conducted by the new missionary.

As a result of such support these evening devotions will be continued.



Personalities and Profiles around Coober Pedy

CRAIG CAMERON THE "HEAD"



Craig Cameron, our Headmaster, was born in Millicent, South Australia and attended South Eastern schools through to fifth year at Adelaide Boys High School.

He received his professional training at Wattle Park Teachers College during 1958 and 1959.

His first teaching appointment was at Mount Burr in 1960, where he stayed for two years.

He then moved to Kalangadoo for two years and was then transferred to Stockport, a one teacher school near Gawler where he stayed until 1966. At Kalangadoo, where all seven grades were housed in the one classroom Mr. Cameron gained valuable experience by learning to individualise his approach and teaching program.

This type of school has been doing for many years what is nowadays known in modern educational jargon as "open space teaching".

To gain experience in secondary education, Mr. Cameron was transferred to Karoonda Area School in 1967.

In 1969 Craig gained a full time release scholarship to enable him to attend Teachers College in Adelaide for completion of the necessary studies for his Diploma of Teaching.

As Acting Headmaster at the Special School of Andamooka Craig Cameron gained an absorbing interest in education in remote areas, particularly in the teaching of both migrant and aboriginal children.

Realising Craig's particular interest in this special area of teaching, the Education Department transferred him to Ernabella in the far north west in 1971 and to Coober Pedy in the following year.

Mr. Cameron's strong belief in the value of teaching English as a second language was supported by the education program which was undertaken at Ernabella in 1971.

Children at Ernabella are first taught to read and write in Pitjantjatjara and, subsequently, this skill is used to teach them English.

Generally speaking a Pitjantjatjara child is literate in eighteen to twenty-four months, when English is gradually introduced until, at senior levels, teaching is conducted in English only.

At Coober Pedy the situation is similar, though, as is the case with all schools, it is not entirely identical.

At Coober Pedy many languages are spoken and the major difference lies in this very fact.

Modern research, however, indicates that children who speak another language in their home achieve much better results at school if they have a large vocabulary in their own language.

It is, therefore, imperative that parents of both migrant and Aboriginal children teach them their

own language as fully as possible in the home. Simultaneously children must double their efforts to learn English at school and encourage and help their parents to learn it too.

Craig Cameron is adamant that bilinguality will be a necessity in the future and Coober Pedy, having such a cosmopolitan community, has a distinct advantage in this respect.

The special circumstances in Coober Pedy, Craig Cameron believes, afford a unique opportunity of establishing a singular educational process not only in South Australia but in Australia.

The Pre-School being attached to the school and with possible extensions to fourth year in secondary, the Coober Pedy School will span a wider range of ages than any other school.

The educational process will be widened even further when extensions into Adult Education, so far hampered by the lack of electricity, will have been made.

Establishment of adult art, typing, language and other classes are on the drawing board for next year. Currently the school is the centre for adult classes in first aid, Pitjantjatjara and guitar classes.

Education, in the light of the span of ages mentioned above, can then be truly regarded as a continuing process.

The traditional steps or, perhaps, they can be described more fittingly as hurdles, between pre-school education and infant classes, infant and primary, primary to secondary and secondary to adult, continued Mr. Cameron should be broken down and the process of education should be looked at as one unit in which there are no hurdles and movement throughout is easy and uncomplicated.

A burning and ever recurring question at Coober Pedy is "But how will my child go when he or she transfers to Adelaide or elsewhere?"

Craig Cameron concluded his viewpoint by saying that he was confident that the end product of the education process at this school is well equipped to cope with education elsewhere.

Our courses are exactly the same in content but, as with all schools today, the emphasis is placed on differing areas to make the program more realistic, more relevant and more in line with the needs of children in this community.



Mrs. Hanika Coro Mrs. Logal

Civic Pride High in Coober Pedy

Coober Pedy must be very close to setting an Australian record for the numbers of people, proportionate to population, who take an active part and enthusiastic interest in civic affairs.

Recent meetings of the Progress Association, the Miners' Association and a court case have each attracted crowds of well over three hundred people.



Mr. Dudley Brown

The community togetherness was highlighted again recently when 11 men and one woman from overseas proudly accepted Australian citizenship at a ceremony conducted before a capacity crowd at the Italo-Australian Miners' Club.

The presentation of certificates was made by Mr. Dudley Brown, President of the Progress Association.

Those naturalized were:

MR. ISEN SACIPOVIC
MR. PANOGIOTIS PAPADOPOULOS
MR. NIKOLAOS PANAPOULOS
MR ELIAS LIANOS
MRS. DIONISIA BOSI
MR. NIKOLA DUSIC

MR. RUDOLF STRAKA
MR. IVAN MOCILER
MR. PETER HRMO
MR. STIPO KRAJINA
MR. IVAN TOMEK
MR. VINKO TORIC

A Bar-B-Q was held at the Club after the celebrations.



Anna Coro

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO TELEPHONE SUBSCRIBERS

An important message for telephone subscribers in Coober Pedy was received from the District Telephone Office, Central South Australia, on October 23rd.

The District Telephone Manager, Mr. Laurie Wallace, said today that for about four weeks from Monday, October 30th, Coober Pedy telephone subscribers will, on occasions, experience some equipment congestion when trying to make telephone calls.

This is due to the fact that during the next few weeks engineering staff will be modifying existing equipment in the local telephone exchange so that additional subscribers can be connected, Mr. Wallace said.

He said that should subscribers experience difficulties when making a call, they should hang up, wait a few minutes and then try again.

By co-operating in this way, Mr. Wallace continued, the inconvenience caused to callers should be kept to a minimum.

Pre-School Meeting well attended

A good attendance of 44 mothers and their children was recorded at the pre-school meeting convened by Mr. Whitelaw, Assistant Superintendent of Primary Education on Monday September 25.

Also in attendance were Mrs. Neita Brown, the Welfare Officer for Aboriginal Affairs, accompanied by teachers Miss Margaret Halfpenny and Mrs. T. Lange, Aide Mrs. Zeta Boland and Aboriginal mothers and children.

To those who worked so hard last year to prove the need for a pre-school the overflowing staff room was, indeed, a great reward for their labours. The tremendous support from the mothers proved that their theories were right and that the time was right too.

Before handing the meeting over to Mrs. Dawn Telleria, Pre-School President, Mr. Craig Cameron, Headmaster of Coober Pedy Area School, welcomed the mothers and expressed his pleasure at the excellent attendance.

Mrs. Telleria introduced Mr. Whitelaw and Mr. Marsh, District Inspector, and invited Mr. Whitelaw to address the meeting.

In opening his address, Mr. Whitelaw commended the mothers on their obvious interest and enthusiastic support of the pre-school.

SCHOOL UNIQUE

Referring to the wide age span of students at the school, ranging from three to 15 years, Mr. Whitelaw said this constituted a unique situation in the school system. He said that this school was the only one of its kind to be supported by the government.

However, he continued, he was not at the meeting to make speeches, but, rather, to answer questions put to him by mothers regarding the pre-school.

NEW BUILDING

Opening questions, Mrs. Teresa Carroll asked Mr. Whitelaw when funds would be available to provide more substantial and suitable buildings for the pre-school.

Replying to this question, Mr. Whitelaw said that, currently,

all available funds had been allocated to other areas, but predicted that money for the pre-school buildings could possibly be found in 1973 or 1974. In the interim, however, plans showing the various examples of types of buildings used for pre-schools would be sent to Mr. Cameron. These plans would be available for inspection by parents for comment and suggestions.

Mr. Whitelaw wanted to know whether pre-school was providing the requirements for the children's instructions and, if not, what further features would have to be incorporated in future plans. The mothers voiced approval of the program, but expressed some doubt on the toilet facilities. In response to this criticism, Mrs. Telleria said that facilities provided were reasonably good, some problems had, however, been encountered by the toilets being too far from the pre-school. This difficulty had now been overcome. The children now used flush toilets closer to their own building.

REGROUPING

Miss Margaret Halfpenny said that some problems were experienced with formal grouping of the children for morning classes.

This was due to the large number — over 30 — attending. However, they were in the experimental stages of re-grouping the children among the three teachers.

Mothers also brought the fact that the 1971 assessment of children under school age was no longer realistic, to Mr. Whitelaw's attention.

In November of that

year there were 136 children under school age. Owing to the increasing number of children coming into the town and resident children reaching school age, a further survey of children ready to enter pre-school was required. Replying to Mrs. Hanika Coro's question as to whether the Commonwealth Government subsidy for pre-school, based on the number of Aboriginal children attending would be withdrawn if fewer Aboriginal children attended, Mr. Whitelaw said that he considered this extremely unlikely.

GOV. GRANT

The question regarding the mid-year intake of five-year-olds then arose.

Lack of space in Grade One necessitated an advanced pre-school to be formed this year.

In explanation, Mr. Cameron said that he is

currently seeking approval of a scheme which would enable children, considered mature enough, to enter the infants' section. Such a decision would be made by a panel of teachers. Addressing the

Some children, Miss



The boys and girls in the afternoon

mothers on this subject, Miss Halfpenny said, were naturally slow to accept that it was, of course, understandable that mothers would be delighted when their four and a half year old child was sufficiently advancing

NEW GROUND

There was "breaking of new ground"



Chris Lange, Craig Cameron and Mr. Whitelaw



Morning Class is in

with this pre-school, were not permitted to Mr. Whitelaw said, attend every day. and a great deal of Outlining Miss Halfpenny's explanation, Mr. Cameron said that

Mothers and teachers should, therefore, accept dual responsibilities. They should help and co-operate with each other, not only on problems encountered at school but also at home, thereby ensuring even greater success for the school and educational advancement for their children.

Mr. Whitelaw then proceeded to explain the three points of pre-school education. Firstly, the socialising function, enabling children to share and mix happily with other children, thus developing individuality.

This continued through, secondly, to conceptual development and the formulating of ideas, and then, thirdly, to physical development which involves the child in handling of puzzles and scissors.

LANGUAGE

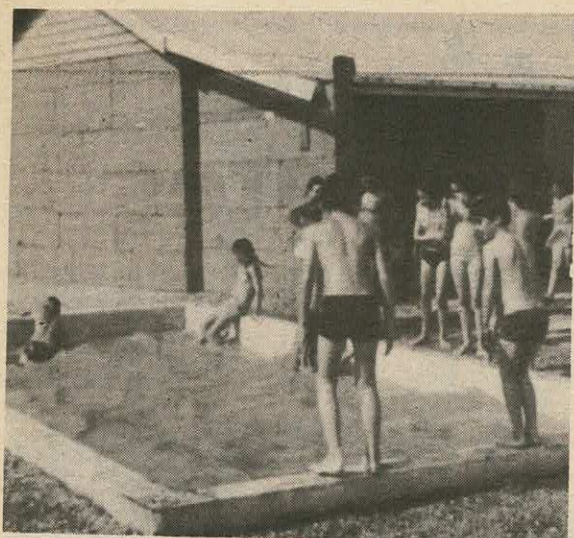
With the development of pre-school, Miss Halfpenny said, While many mothers had given much of their time to help, Miss Halfpenny said, there was still a need for mothers to further contribute to the program with ideas and suggestions. A regular visitor to Coober Pedy, Mr. Marsh added his congratulations to those who had worked so hard in the school development.

There has been great help and co-operation from the mothers, Miss Halfpenny said, although, in the initial stages, there had been disappointments because the children

Referring to the previous comment concerning English when the children come from a non-English speaking home, Mr. Whitelaw advised the parents to enlarge the vocabulary of the child in its own language. It has been experienced, he said, that once the child had a good vocabulary it will more readily gain an understanding of its second language.

Towards the close of the meeting, Miss Halfpenny expressed her delight at the attendance of so many mothers. She added that it was particularly encouraging to see so many different nationalities represented.

In closing the meeting, Mr. Whitelaw promised to watch the future development of the pre-school with keen interest.



Camp at Copper Hills

Prompted by the success of the last youth camp at Six Mile Creek in April, a second camp was held over the last weekend in September.

The venue for this camp was Copper Hills Sheep Station, 110 miles north of Coober Pedy.

Organised by the Bush Church Aid Society Youth Group and Sunday School, the camp was attended by 19 young people aged between 11 and 14.

They were accompanied by six adult leaders.

Transport, provided who, strangely enough, by private cars, was bears a striking resemblance to one of the All five vehicles suffered some damage, the worst, having hit a "Dinki-Di" guikangaroo, finished up with a leaking radiator. The sheep station The camp did not



Camping Equipment



Camp Activities

being comparatively lack its serious aspects. small with 100 square miles, the managers, on the theme "Exploring the Bible" were Frahn, have developed the homestead to cater for passing tourists.

Bush cabins and a caravan provide sleeping quarters, with showers and toilet nearby.

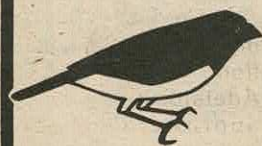
The well organised program of the camp included a paper chase and barbecue along the dry creek bed, which is well filled with gum trees.

Chops and steak were obtained locally from livestock slaughterers on the property.

A lively game of softball on the sandy flats followed by a rest in the swimming pool.

The weekend did not lack its social moment in a shower of rain, and necessitated

The camp concert on Saturday night was the formally opened by Mayoress Pat Hills, in the bush.



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1 Raise the window - locate safety brackets on window sill, place "Finch" in position on brackets.



2 Extend accordion-type side panels to width of window and secure to sides of frame.



3 Tighten mounting to lock "Finch" in place. Lower window sash.



4 Fit decorative timber front, insert three-pin plug into a power outlet and switch on.

When will The Bell toll in Coober Pedy?

The Bell is here and has been cleaned; but what happens now? It is one thing to have a Bell, but what does one do when there is no place to hang it?

GEORGE PASPALIARIS'

OPAL CENTRE

COOBER PEDY

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**GEORGE PASPALIARIS'
OPAL CENTRE**

So, after much discussion and thought, plans were drawn for a magnificent resting place for our Bell.

But, in the end, time ran out on us.

I became impatient, as there was only one week before Father Cresp made his appearance and still we had no tower or even a temporary belfry.

Then, on Sunday night, I found Don Mazzone and Alan Noyes waiting to confer with me about my plan for the tower.

I had drawn a rough diagram of a metal and wood structure which the present priest, Father Hackett, had approved.

This was to be Phase One of the project and would give Coober Pedy a landmark, however austere in its pristine appearance. At least the Bell could be seen and heard by the faithful and tourists. We must continue

the project to its ultimate conclusion but, as well we know, time does not exist in Coober Pedy, and so Phase Two will eventuate some day and there will be a tower which will, who knows, perhaps be as famous as our Dug-Out Church.

In the meantime Don Mazzone, of Caldwell fame, and Alan Noyes, our Bank of NSW manager, together with other willing helpers, are contributing wood, metal and labour to complete Phase One.

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Presentation of Certificates

RECENTLY the Transport Superintendent of the St. Johns Ambulance Upper Eyre Peninsula, Mr. D. Jacquier, visited Coober Pedy to present certificates to successful candidates.

Those who received graduation certificates were Mrs. Jenny Rainsford, Mr. B. H. McDougal, Mr. Anthony Lucas, Miss Gwenda McArdle, Mr. Ted Betteridge and Mr. John Smith.

First Aid classes preparations for the commenced on April festivities, but also 20th this year under the through magnificent experienced guidance of participation.

Mr. Ross McArdle, a qualified ambulance man.

The dream of the ambulance itself started a short time later when the Hospital Auxiliary organised an Ambulance Fund.

It was only 43 days from the Mardi Gras festivities until the ambulance was actually handed over in Coober Pedy, an unprecedented accomplishment in South Australia.

He explained that a patient taken to Port Augusta had to be carried by road ambulance from the airport to the hospital, which entailed a charge of 10 dollars.

A charge of 10 dollars would also be made for the carriage of a patient from the local hospital to the airstrip.

In addition, the cost of the air ambulance from Port Augusta to Adelaide would be approximately 160 dollars.

With an annual contribution of eight dollars, however, the contributor receives full coverage throughout South Australia, with the exception of



Mr. D. Jacquier, Mr. Ross McArdle and Mrs. McArdle

It was decided that a "Mardi Gras" would be the main fund-raising activity for this venture. Under the leadership of the Hospital Auxiliary of the advantages to be gained by the affiliation driver, for their reality, the whole town-ship supporting the Ambulance with the of the St. Johns scheme enthusiastically ambulance of the Upper Ambulance Brigade not only with the Eyre Peninsula.

WHAT better way is there than to advertise your needs in your own newspaper, The Opal Miners Weekly?

No matter what you wish to advertise, the classified advertisements in the Opal Miners Weekly are read by the people you wish to reach.

All you have to do is to fill in the classified Advertisement Form on the left and either take it to the Coober Pedy Office or send it direct to

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\$1.00			



Kathy Robins with the owner of Heart Starter, Ian Rankin, who is president of the Coober Pedy Amateur Racing Club. Mr. Rankin spent a great deal of time organising the two-day meeting, which included many gymkhana events.



Miners are not all rugged he-men. Take lovely Rose Nemes, 19, for instance. She works a mine with her brothers at Coober. But she took time off from the mine to go to the races.



A group of happy racegoers who were also largely responsible for the success of the meeting. Front left: Kathy Robins, Margaret Cahill, David Genat, and Daryl and Margaret Wake.



Len Black is more accomplished as a rigger than a jockey, but he managed to ride "Crem Puff" into third place in the Titheridge Handicap.



Coober's woman smart in her slack suit. Mrs. June Herr, who is also the postmistress, looked particularly smart in her slack suit. She was snapped having a cool drink between races.

CUP M PICT



Mr. Arthur Whyte, the Member of Northern, pres trophies, and described Kathy Robins' horsemanship best piece of riding I have ever seen from a woman j and I'm not inexperienced with horses." Alongside M is his wife.



Kathy Robins with her mother and sister, Judy, 19, the musical chairs event on Patchy Pete, the horse pict

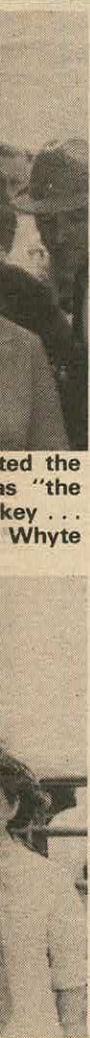
OPAL MINER RECORDS T



EETING ORIAL

THE food for the ball at the Opal Hotel was absolutely sumptuous. An enormously-long smorgasbord table contained every imaginable delicacy. Bepi, the chef, once cooked for the Queen.

One would hardly call the fashion parade a bevy of beauty, but the models' garments were auctioned, and the bizarre function raised a large sum towards hospitals funds. "Trevinor" Weatherall carried gloves and wore a black and silver brocade evening gown, with long-belled sleeves. "She" forgot to shave.



ted the
as "the
key ...
Whyte

who won
ed.



A riotous scene at the pre-race cocktail party, with the fund-raising male mannequins on parade. Many voted it the best night's entertainment ever in the town.

HE EVENT OF THE YEAR

'WE CAN CLEAN UP TOWN'

Cont. from P.1

capable of achieving anything we want.

"This town was built up by miners, now it's time for the miners to get together like they used to."

"We can clean up this town in no time," he said.

"We can live together in this community and not be afraid to bring our wives and children here; but it needs your effort."

Automatic membership

The meeting's reaction to these comments by Mr. Jones was prolonged, enthusiastic applause.

He went on: "Any registered members of the Miners' Association will automatically become a member of the Progress Association."

"If you are not a member of the Progress Association, fill out the form today."

"The annual general meeting is on October 26, so by joining today, you can vote at the meeting and elect the committee you want," he said.

"Talk about it among yourselves — organise yourselves and select someone you want to represent you."

"At the meeting... I will move before any nominations are called, that the committee be expanded to 14, and that it be stated that there must be a representative of each major nationality in Coober Pedy," Mr. Jones said.

"The constitution will be changed if you will vote that way at the meeting."

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

SOME people seem to have all the luck and others never get a break. This is true to life whether you are in the opal business or not.

It makes you wonder whether life is just a game of chance or whether there is some invisible force controlling it all.

The alternatives appear to be blind fate or divine providence. If there is no purpose in life and no future beyond the grave, then we might as well "eat, drink and be merry; for tomorrow we die".

But the picture is quite different if Jesus is right when he said "Even the hairs of your head have all been numbered". This means that every little detail of our lives has been planned.

Despair changes to confidence when we go along with Paul the Apostle who said "In all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose".

Paul had risked his life in the service of Jesus Christ because he reckoned that Christ could be fully trusted to lead him in the right direction.

What are you staking your future on? Going nowhere with the crowd or following Christ with the promise of a full and satisfying life?

KNOW YOUR STARS

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 23): Generally good fortune in almost every matter which interests you, provided you act without undue delay.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 to Nov. 22): Good for affairs of the heart. Also friends will be there if you need them, so don't be afraid to ask their advice. But make sure you follow it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 to Dec. 22): Get plans underway, sign papers, buy, sell and air your opinions confidently. The impression you will create will unlock new doors to opportunity.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 to Jan. 20): Diplomacy is essential. Although people may be moody, consider their feelings. Not the time for plain speaking, especially if love or money is involved.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19): A phase full of great promise, but not without some obstacles. Play safe and keep plans flexible.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20): Financial conditions may not please you, but you could increase your bank balance. Be bold and adventurous — look behind the scenes for hidden knowledge, ways to recover lost ground or outwit your rivals.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to April 20): A relaxing, happy-go-lucky time which will benefit your health and ensure success in your social activities. But beware of trying to force the pace faster than fate decrees.

TAURUS (April 21 to May 21): The week to begin routines you have been considering for some time. You also will be getting more invitations than usual.

GEMINI (May 22 to June 21): This is a phase not only for career or domestic moves, but for putting special artistic or literary flairs into use.

CANCER (June 22 to July 22): A fairly quiet week. But a turn of fortune is due, together with some totally unexpected rewards for past efforts.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 23): Employment or money problems will pick up, but by contrast, home and romantic matters will require care. Always try to see the other person's point of view.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 to Sept. 22): Bids for happiness, more lucrative employment, a loan, or official approval are likely to succeed. Long-distance travel, too, could be particularly rewarding.

BIRTHDAY FORECASTS

SATURDAY, Promise of a much more trouble-free year than last, with money and career matters especially well starred. Travel also signified.

SUNDAY, The trends of the past 12 months seem likely to continue until early autumn. After that, things will get better.

MONDAY, Many detours ahead, but be patient. Luck will turn your way early in 1973. If single, Cupid will be busy.

TUESDAY, Until mid-summer, things are likely to be tricky, but later things improve all round.

WEDNESDAY, Your resources — both physical and financial — will be taxed, but don't worry, its outcome will increase your prestige.

THURSDAY, Apart from a mark-time phase when you will be exasperated at the trouble of getting things moving, this next year should be beneficial and even mildly exciting.

FRIDAY, Unforeseen good fortune which will certainly lighten some rather heavy burdens and relieve an awkward and totally unexpected crisis.

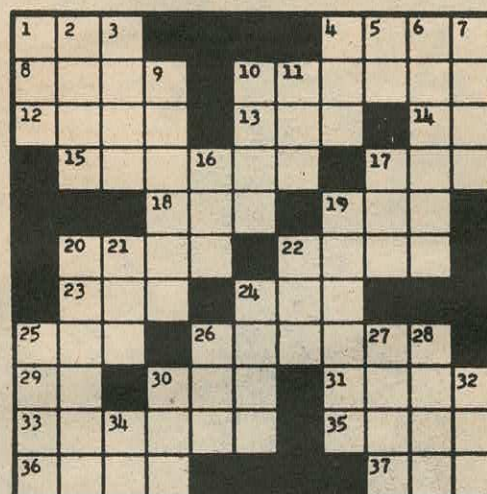
OPAL MINER CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Mischief
- 4 Disunite
- 8 Country in Asia
- 10 Sea duck
- 12 Purpose
- 13 Jump
- 14 Cerium (abbr.)
- 15 Allowable margin
- 17 Time of light
- 18 Water barrier
- 19 Merriment
- 20 Uncivilized
- 22 Four gills
- 23 One who excels
- 24 Play on words
- 25 Suffix: of
- 26 Pauper
- 29 Theoretical force
- 30 Club
- 31 Jewish month
- 33 Term of office
- 35 Irritate
- 36 Fortifies
- 37 Alphabet letter

DOWN

- 1 Belonging to him
- 2 Spoken
- 3 Cook in an oven
- 4 Hit
- 5 Near to
- 6 Take back openly
- 7 Three-spot card
- 9 Sewing instrument
- 10 False
- 11 Shy
- 16 Little mass
- 17 Ask for payment
- 19 Hand part
- 20 Rove
- 21 Frozen dessert
- 22 Small dog
- 24 Boy's name
- 25 Jot
- 26 Rule out
- 27 Dismounted
- 28 Govern
- 30 Motor coach
- 32 Sheltered side
- 34 S.W. State (abbr.)



SOLUTION PAGE 14

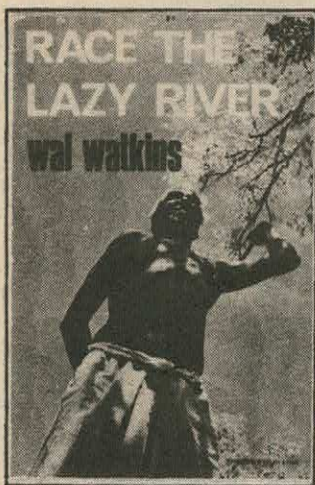
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A fascinating account of her recent trip to Greece has been submitted by 12-years-old PAULINE PASPALIARIS.

We found the "travelogue" so interesting and charmingly written that we reproduce it in full and without alterations.

OPAL MINER believes that our readers will have as much enjoyment reading it as we had.

Perhaps it will also encourage other youthful contributors!

PAULINE'S TRIP TO GREECE

ON Monday June the fifth at seven a.m., we left Adelaide by ANSETT A.N.A., on the first stage of our trip to Greece.

We landed in Sydney and we were taken to the International Airport.

We had to go through customs, where we had our passports and luggage checked.

We left with a Qantas Jumbo Jet at three p.m. The service inside the Jumbo Jet was fabulous.

Films were shown aboard the plane.

We stopped at Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Bahrain.

We had a bomb scare. A bomb had been placed on board the plane at Singapore.

It was found in Kuala Lumpur when we landed.

It was without a fuse. We all had to get off at Kuala Lumpur, and were held up for an hour and a half.

Bahreins Airport was surrounded by army forts.

We landed at Athens 9.30 a.m., on Tuesday morning, Greek time. (Greece is approximately eight hours behind Adelaide time.) It was warm when we landed.

An Olympic bus took us to customs where we had our passports, medical certificates and luggage checked.

It was sad when we met our grandparents and uncles and aunts. They had been watching, through the glass doors at customs but they were not allowed in.

My grandfather was crying because it was the first time he had seen my mother and us and he had not seen my father for 20 years.

After a lot of tears and kisses they helped us put our luggage in cars then we went to one of my uncle's house in Athens.

After refreshments we started off for Karya near Argos, where my father was born. That first night everyone was crying. My grandparents kept on hugging us and kissing us.

Karya is set in the mountains and is a pretty place.

There is cold running water always running down the mountain. Even on the hottest day this water is so cold. It is lovely water to drink.

There are lots of fruit trees, grape, almond and walnut trees. My grandparents had sheep, goats, two donkeys, a horse and chickens. They grow all their own vegetables, make their own oil and their own wine.



At the Acropolis with Paul, Thomas, Mum and two cousins.

We went swimming at many beaches in Greece.

Perhaps one of the most famous beaches of all is the Asteria Beach.

We were also lucky enough to go to Kinetta Private Beach. The water seems much more blue in Greece than in Australia.

You have to pay to go to most of the beaches in Greece, but for this payment there are many benefits. There are chairs and even one lazy boy lounge with each umbrella. There are cement paths along the sand and automatic showers. You have the free use of lockers.

As well as stands which serve refreshments there are open air restaurants on the sand which specialise in fresh sea food.

The water is very, very clean and the reason for this is that tractors go along and take seaweed away from the edge of the water. The seaweed is then taken away by trucks.

We toured all around Greece.

We walked all around the Acropolis, which looks beautiful at night when lit up.

We also went to the Likavito, which is a ruin on a high hill. At night it is lit up, and when you are on top you can see all Athens. We went to many islands in Greece, including Rhodes.

Rhodes is an unusual place, where you have a mixture of the old and new.

Within the Castle of Rhodes is an old city, which has not been changed for many years. The shops are well kept but are not allowed to be modernised. The roads in the Castro are cobble stone paths.

This old city was most fascinating.

Outside of the Castro, Rhodes has modern buildings, including many luxurious hotels.

There is also a place which has thousands of red butterflies.

It is called "THE BUTTERFLIES".

Greece has a lot of night life. Nobody seems to go to sleep.

Shops close during the afternoon for about four hours, when people have their siesta.

Picture theatres, shows and night-clubs do not open before ten o'clock at night.

There are many open air concerts, the best being at the Green Park and the Zapion.

People from all over Europe perform at these places and you see great acts.

You sit at chairs and tables and are served refreshments as the acts are going on.



The author with her two brothers Paul and Thomas in Greek National Dress.

We went to many Greek clubs to see Bouzouki players as well as famous Greek singers.

At one of these places we met my mother's cousin, Litsa Poulea, who has become quite famous as a singer.

We went to the clubs of Marinella, Dionysiou, Pithikotis, Kokotas and famous bousouki players Tsitsanis and the late Papaioannou.

When we went to see Kokotas, two Danish princesses were present. (the sisters of the Queen of Greece).

One of the princesses got on the table and danced a "tsiftitelli".

We went to many theatres, but the one I like the best was at Vembos' theatre which starred the two top actors of Greece, Tolly Voskopoulos and Zoi Laskari.

The scenery on stage was very beautiful and represented a swimming pool and this is how Zoi Laskari made her appearance, by coming out of the swimming pool.

Greece has so many interesting things to see.

To have been to places that I have read about in history, for example, Olympia where the first Olympic games were held, Mount Olympus (where we drank from the goddess Athena's spring) where the 12 gods were supposed to live, Delphi where the Olympic god Apollo lived, Sparta, where Spartan wars were held, where Helen of Troy was taken by Paris, where King Menaleus lived, and so many other historical events, makes me feel proud that I set foot in Greece, and also proud of my Greek heritage.

We left Greece on Saturday night, the second of September. It was sad saying goodbye to my grandparents, my uncles and aunts, and to all my cousins.

My grandmother almost fainted saying goodbye.

On the way back we stopped at New Delhi but we were not allowed to get off the plane.

Our next stop was Bangkok.

We stopped there for 45 minutes. It was very hot and sticky there.

Our next stop was Hong Kong, where we had arranged to stay for three days.

We were checked thoroughly by customs at Hong Kong.

When we were through customs we were taken by taxi to Hong Kong Hotel.

It is a luxurious hotel.

Hong Kong is a fabulous place and at night, with all the neon-lights, it looks like fairyland.

We went on a floating night-club, it was a boat, and were served an eight course meal with drinks.

There was a band playing and people were dancing.

We went on a bus tour of Hong Kong.

We also went on a bridge which is one and a half miles long and is built beneath the sea.

Kowloon and Hong Kong are separate islands and this bridge beneath the sea joins the two.

You can also go by ferry boats across.

We saw the beautiful TIGER BALM GARDENS.

We were taken by our host Mr. Loo, with his wife and son to the Golden Crown nightclub.

We saw Chinese ballet performed, singing, dancing and acrobatics.

We toured a lot of shops and bought many things.

We left Hong Kong on Tuesday night at half past nine by QANTAS.

We landed in Sydney on Wednesday morning, where once again we were thoroughly checked.

We stopped at Melbourne for one hour, then arrived in Adelaide at two o'clock in the afternoon.

We stayed in Adelaide until Friday night then we got on the bus for Coober Pedy.

I was not sorry to come back to Coober Pedy for it is this place which made our trip possible.

'Race the Lazy River'

"You're going to have bloody lovely company," a cattle-man told him. "I don't envy you a bit."

Cameron nodded. "All we need to louse up the trip completely is for the woman to come."

He walked around his blitz, checking tyres and sundry parts. His feelings towards the blitz amounted to loyalty. It had been his for five years, in which time he had put it through sixty thousand miles of plain and sand.

Its enamel, which had long ago faded with the sun, was chipped in so many places that it was hard to tell if it had originally been red or grey. A front mudguard had been torn off in a collision with a strainer post, and the only glass still intact was on the dashboard. Nevertheless, the engine was in perfect running order, fresh from a re-bore, and Cameron had taken it through places where other vehicles had bogged and stalled.

Cameron switched his thoughts back to his passengers. A punch-happy kid and a white collar worker! Well, he'd warned them, and he'd make bloody sure that they pulled their weight if there were any spots up the track where they had to plate their way through sand.

"You goin' Birdsville, boss?"

Cameron turned and looked at the old aboriginal who had spoken.

"Only as far as the mail-truck at Omana."

"I gotta go up an' join a drove at The Bird."

Cameron nodded. "Right-oh; jump on. You sit at back, and keep your things back there, mind."

"Yeah, boss."

Cameron eyed the old man as he gathered up his ragged swag. He was typical of the old ones of the Track. They lived in the past and came only part way to meet civilization. Their hygiene was bad, but their bush-sense was remarkable. So long as he kept to himself, he'd be a handy passenger.

"Don't I know you?" Cameron asked as the bewhiskered aboriginal started to climb aboard. "Your name Johnny, isn't it?"

"That's right, boss."

"All right, Johnny. Right at the back now."

A woman came out of the hotel, with a man following her. Mutlow carried her suitcases, and the man carried a case of his own.

Cameron caught Mutlow's eye and guessed the worst; they were going to come with him, regardless of anything he advised.

"Max," Mutlow said, "this is Anne. She'll look after the inner man for you on the way, won't you, Anne?"

Cameron looked down into her dark, smiling face. Her eyes were brilliantly black and shining.

"You mean cook?" she said. "I try to." Her voice was throaty, and although her accent was strange, Cameron did not find it unpleasant, as he had expected.

"And this is Boris," Mutlow was saying. "He'll shove your blitz out of any trouble you get into—he's strong enough."

Cameron grinned, and shook hands with Boris. The huge, rawboned man gripped his hand like a vice, and looked at Cameron with the small, blank eyes that made him seem older than the thirty-five or so that Cameron had at first thought him to be.

"Glad to know you," Cameron said as the pressure left his hand.

"Glad," Boris replied.

Cameron stepped back from the two newcomers and gestured towards the blitz. "You see that thing there. It's old and it's likely to break down at any time. It goes very slow and it gives you the worst ride you can have. There's a river up there that might swamp us, and if it cuts us off for a couple of weeks we haven't much food to keep us going. So, you see, it'd be a lot better for you if you stayed here until the mail can come down and take you up in comfort. And you might have to wait only a few days."

The blank expression on Boris's face told him that the big man had understood nothing, but Anne gave him a friendly smile.

"Thank you for telling me, Mister Cameron, but I like to go just the same. I live rough many times. I can help when is trouble, too. I go with you."

Cameron turned to Boris, who looked back at him blankly. As he glanced at the woman he had a feeling there was something wrong. She was detached from the man as though she did not know him, yet Boris seemed to regard her almost possessively.

"Excuse please," she said. "He knows not what you say." She spoke to Boris in what Cameron felt sure was not German.

Boris's blank little eyes rested on Cameron. He grunted and nodded. "I go too."

Cameron felt annoyed and defeated. "You can ride with me in the front," he told the woman. "It's the best place."

She blushed slightly. "Thank you. But I take turns with the others on the back if you like."

"No, that won't be necessary."

He watched her climb up. She was a big limbed woman, young and fresh-looking, and there was nothing of the slim waist and fancy high heels he had so often seen on magazine covers. Cameron judged her to be in her late twenties.

Mutlow coughed loudly and Cameron glanced at him and interpreted the impish grin. He scowled at the publican and shook his head.

"I sit front, too," Boris said.

Cameron looked up to him. "Suit yourself. There's room with the dicky seat added."



As the man climbed up and sat beside the woman the oddness of things came to Cameron again. If he could read expressions, the woman was wishing Boris to hell out of it.

He made a final check of his load. Dollard and Cansdale were already seated behind the stores. Johnny sat beside the axle, seemingly gazing into the dream-time.

Cameron climbed up behind the wheel and waved to the group in front of the hotel.

"Good trip," Mutlow called. "Hope you race the river."

Cameron started the motor and pulled slowly away. He took the blitz into second, then into third, and, settling back into the worn upholstery of the seat, listened to the familiar creaks and groans of the body of the blitz.

He crossed the railway line and went on past the small houses of the Afghan settlement. Then the twin tyre-marks that were the Birdsville Track came beneath the truck, running north-east into red bulldust as far as the eye could see. The faded signpost beside the track pointed to the next town: BIRDSVILLE 334 MILES.

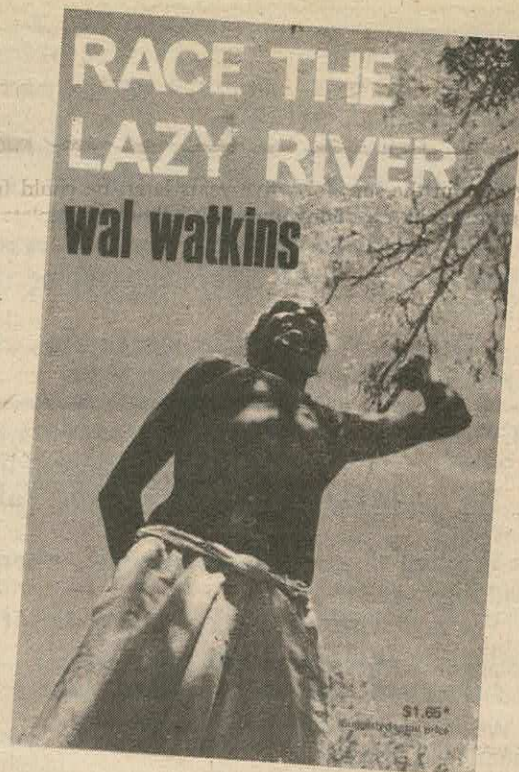
Chapter Two

THE BIG MAIL-TRUCK, an International, stood beside the stockyards at the rear of the Omana store. Its front end was jacked up on blocks, and the near-side front axle had been removed. Dick Hodge lay on the dirt and grease beneath it, inspecting the front suspension.

The afternoon was wearing away and the near-by Natanarie sandhills glared white. Omana was quiet and lifeless; the storekeeper was indoors making tea.

Omana was the only store on the Birdsville Track. Most of its few customers were drovers, taking cattle down to the railhead at Marree from stations up the Track and from the richer properties of south-west Queensland. Apart from these, Mrs Shard had hardly any callers except for Dick Hodge and the station men on their way to Birdsville or Marree.

Years before, Mrs Shard had been on stations with her husband, but since his death she had carried on in the store,



making no secret of the fact that she intended to remain there for the remainder of her life.

Occasional articles in the city press referred to her as an Outback heroine, describing her as active for a woman in her early fifties, and saying that she was neat, tiny, and affectionately known along the Track as "The Little Lady," but all this was of no account to her. She was a woman who lived the life that appealed to her, and to her it seemed that this did nothing to make her anything but an ordinary woman, and certainly no heroine.

Now, when she had made the tea, she set the pot, along with cups, sugar, and a plate piled with hunks of cake, on the kitchen table. Then she went to the screen door, pushed it open, and walked out into the sun, letting the door bang behind her. She paused, then, instead of calling Dick, walked across to where he was working.

She stopped beside the International and tapped the sole of his boot with her toe. "Tea, Dick."

"Tea," Hodge said from under the truck, "you're making me soft." He jabbed the heel of his hand against the suspension in a parting gesture and addressed the truck. "Good. You'll get your axle tomorrow."

He levered himself out backwards, then brushed dirt from his trousers as he walked to the house with her.

"Don't know how I'd live without you," he said when they sat down at the kitchen table. As he picked up his cup he winked at her, an expression of the friendly appreciation of her he had developed early in his six years of association with her on the Track.



She sat down and began to sip her tea and smiled at him. He was a typical outback mailman, seeming to fit into the hard country he traversed. Although he was only of medium height his broad, rock-like shoulders made him seem a big man. In his early thirties, he had lived most of his life as a cartage contractor on South Australian outback roads. He had taken over this most hazardous of runs six years ago and had liked it from the start, adapting himself quickly to the rough living and the long hours it entailed. His round, dark face, which he shaved every Saturday, now showed a bristling mid-week growth of whiskers. He wore patched shirt and trousers, and on the table beside him was the battered hat, its crown thickly coated in grease, that normally protected his matted brown hair from further bleaching.

"Is the truck all ready for the new axle?" Mrs Shard asked as he munched on his piece of cake. **Cont. next week**



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'Andamooka'

Sitting here in the sun, forty-five years later, he could feel it happening again: a sunny day at Gallipoli, his platoon advancing under fire. A shell screaming, then bursting in the air above him; slamming him down into the ground . . .

Only after the Armistice when he returned and joined the rush to the new field at Coober Pedy, did he realise he had been injured. The stiffness and stabbing pains in his back were slight at first. The doctors tried to remedy the damage, but the misplacements in his spine had been too severe. The crippling paralysis spread slowly but relentlessly up his back and across his shoulders, and he found himself bending forward more and more. Then the stiffness went into his arms and down into his hands. There wasn't much pain after that; only the gradual tightening of his joints.

But he continued to work at Coober Pedy, finding always enough opal to live; enough to keep the fire of hope burning inside of him . . . And when Andamooka started, two hundred miles to the south, he shifted his hopes to there. And when his back arched so badly he had to go down his shaft in a frame and truss and crawl to the face of his drive and clutch his pick in faltering hands, he still kept going. Then one day his spine was too crooked to fit into the frame any longer, and his hands too twisted to hold the pick . . .

Yet, he still hadn't given up. Even now, gazing across the heaps of kopi towards Lunatic Hill, he hoped with the same fervour of sixty years ago, and planned with the same cunning . . .

It's there, he thought again. And I'll get it out one day. I'll find someone who's got faith in Lunatic Hill and I'll let him work my claim on shares. Even ten per cent will be a fortune for an old cripple like me.

If only these young blokes would listen to my advice, he thought irritably. I tell them it's there and I tell them how to reach it. But they don't hear me or they don't believe me. They lose faith and come in and dig on that phony New Hill. Or they stop searching and start using those new fangled machines like that damned great bulldozer up there. They tear up the ground and bury more opal than they'll ever find. Or they sink shafts with big drills and hope to bottom on opal. The idiots. You can't find opal that way—you've got to search for it. They're trying to tap nature's treasure chest with a key that doesn't fit the lock . . .

"Hey, Clarrie, you got two bob?"

Clarrie raised his eyes and squinted at the part aborigine boy who stood barefooted in front of him. "No, I ain't got two bob, Dipso. And why don't you wash sometimes?"

The urchin stood on one leg and raked the big toe nail of his other foot down his shin. "You got one bob then?"

"No."

The boy dug into the pocket of his shorts and brought out a stone. "What about this, Clarrie?"

Clarrie took the stone and turned it over in the sunlight, watched the colour reflect in the narrow strip that was sandwiched between sandstone. He gave it back to the boy. "It's just old potch. There's no more colour in it than there is in your grubby face."

"I'll ask Fats," the boy said. "He might give me ten bob for it."

"I told you it's not worth nothing. Where'd you noodle it?"



"On Treloar's."

"You're wasting your time. Why don't you go over on Lunatic?"

"I'm no lunatic," Dipso said. "Has Fats got any beer?"

"No, he drunk it all last night."

"I'll see if he did."

The boy walked inside the house and Clarrie narrowed his eyes and stared up the hill. Some boy, he thought. He'd never seen a boy so grown up as that one, not even in the good old days at The Ridge. The kid was ten years old. He

had a half-caste father and a full blood mother, both of them too lazy even to noodle. They lived off the boy's begging—that was if they got the money before he spent it on liquor.

The boy came out and looked at Clarrie.

"Well?" Clarrie said.

"He wouldn't buy it."

"Well, I told you he wouldn't."

"But he give me a bottle o' beer."

"So."

"So you're an old liar, Clarrie. You said he'd drunk it all last night."



Clarrie grunted. "Go home, Dipso."

The boy walked away a few yards and urinated down the bank of the creek. He buttoned his fly and scratched himself.

"What's Fats doing with the wall?"

"I dunno, it's a secret."

The boy walked up to the street and went off singing, slapping his hands against his thighs.

two

FATS MUELLER's friends heard in the field about the demolition going on at his house, and lost no time before investigating. As soon as they knocked off work in the afternoon, they went to Fats's house and sat drinking beer at his big kitchen table.

Fats sold them the beer at three shillings for a thirteen ounce bottle, which was sixpence cheaper than at the Digger's Dive restaurant where Janosh, the Czech proprietor overcharged on everything.

It was true that Fats Mueller was a notorious sly grogger, known to the policemen from Woomera who occasionally visited the town. But it was also true that he was a very generous exponent of this racket. His profit margin was so small that it hardly covered the wear and tear costs involved through drinking sessions. But Fats didn't mind this at all for, as he admitted to everyone, "I not want make profit; I just want make friends."

Fats had a lot of friends, but the real close ones—the regulars who drank each night at his house—were those known to the better type citizens of the town as "the no-hopers," "the dipsoes," "the trouble makers."

This night as they drank they were plying Fats with questions about the hole in the wall, but were getting nowhere. Fats was at the stove preparing goulash for a meal. Oil was simmering in a saucepan on the burner and he was chopping steak and pork into little squares. "Tomorrow I tell you what it is," he kept telling them. "Tomorrow, Gerhardt and me start building and you will see what big change comes to my house; you all be very happy."

Dusty Walker, the white man who was married to Nelly, the tribal aborigine, got up and helped himself to another round of bottles from the refrigerator. He put the payment for the beer in the old tobacco tin on the sink and sat down beside Nelly again. "Well, whatever it is you're building, Fats, I'll bet it's a good idea, eh Nell?"

"Yeah, what Fats do always good," Nelly said, talking through her broad nose.

Dusty passed the bottles around the table. He scratched thoughtfully at his wiry black beard. "I'll tell you what I think. We all ought to take the day off tomorrow and help Fats build the thing, whatever it is."

There was a pause while everyone considered this excellent suggestion. Then Jimmy Sneed said loudly, "Gawd strewth, that's a good idea. Come to think of it we wouldn't be mates of his if we let him and Gerhardt build it on their own. It was the same in the army during the war—one bloke's problem was everyone's problem."

ANDAMOOKA wal watkins



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Lucky Barton, the half-caste, lit a cigarette and blew smoke across the table. "Well, it suits me. The sooner we get the thing built the better."

His half-caste wife, Laura, banged her fist on the table. "Yeah, that's what I say, too. An' we all better be in it, less someone's looking for trouble." She glared around the table as if daring anyone to oppose the idea.

Ivor Durgan swilled the beer around in his bottle, drank noisily, and stared at Laura for a moment. "All right, count me in as well. I'm tired of driving that bloody 'dozer anyway."

There was only Lex Durgan, Ivor's twin brother, to come, and everyone except Fats looked at him expectantly.

Lex took a clean hanky from his pocket and blew his nose. "I'm sorry, but I've got an appointment with a seller at my place at eleven o'clock tomorrow morning and another one at two in the afternoon."

"Ahr hell, that can wait," Laura Barton snarled. "What's the matter with you? Trouble with the whites, they don't stick together—all too bloody mean to share like the blacks do."

Ignoring her, Lex turned to Fats. "I'm sorry, but I can't be here."

Fats tipped the chopped meat into the saucepan and reached for a turnip and a carrot on the sink. "No matter; plenty others help; you got seller coming, you must see him."

"Ahr like hell he must," Laura rasped. She nudged Lucky with her elbow. "It's all bull about him buyin' opal, isn't it Lucky?"

Lucky ignored her and had a drink.

Lex Durgan, the only opal buyer in the group, went out, and Laura sat glaring around the table. "Lex won't help, but he drinks Fats's beer just the same. He's gettin' too proud to work since he built that big house on the hill. What's 'e come 'ere for anyway if he thinks he's better'n us?" She stared at Ivor Durgan as she finished speaking.

Ivor stared back at her, glanced at Lucky. "Why don't you button her lip, Lucky?"

Lucky gave him a smouldering look. Given a few more drinks he would have made trouble from the remark. Ivor knew it; everyone knew it . . .

"All right, it's settled," Gerhardt Krautgartner said. "All of us will help Fats tomorrow."

The group chorused agreement. Fats added curry to the goulash and turned the flame up high. "You all good friends and you not be sorry."

Sitting in the corner of the room on his bed, Clarrie Sorrell watched and listened and smiled faintly at the way things were progressing. All of them missing a day's work and none of them knowing why, he was thinking. I've never known a crazier bunch, not even at The Ridge. Well, that was what came of having an open field where everyone had the right to dig when and where they liked. All they needed to make them knock off was the thought of free beer. Crazy, the lot of them. Those fortunes they all hoped to find could wait a day, a week, months; but Fats Mueller's house had to be done tomorrow . . .

When the stew was cooked, Fats ladled out platefuls for Clarrie, Nelly, and himself. Fats didn't usually feed his friends, but lately he'd made an exception of Nelly. She and Dusty

Cont. next week



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MINERS FALL INTO TRAP

BEWARE — MANY MINERS HAVE FALLEN INTO THE TRAP BY SIGNING THE INFAMOUS APPLICATION FORM FOR ENTRY INTO THE WOOMERA RANGE SECTION OF THE DECLARED OPAL FIELD.

Because the Woomera officials announced that they would be handing out forms for a few days, many miners who contemplated going south sometime in the future, applied for permits.

However, if no claim is pegged within twenty nine days of making the application, permits will be revoked.

The Commonwealth will be able to keep out miners legally by stating that they had permits but failed to use them.

The miner must not only peg his claim; he must also work it or face cancellation of the claim by the Mines Department, thus leaving himself open to his permit being

revoked.

Another complication faces miners with an eye to the south. In future no permits will be issued until a radio is available on the site.

The only difficulty encountered with this demand is how to get a radio to the site if no permit has been obtained, thus precluding the miner to get himself and his

radio there.

The authorities further demand that the miner be blessed with extra-sensory perception or be in possession of an operating crystal ball. Otherwise he could not comply with the demand of stating exactly where he is going to be.

Alternately, he just takes pot luck, nominates an area, pegs a claim and, abracadabra! Finds opal.

It is sometimes difficult to believe that the Commonwealth authorities have ever heard of prospecting!

Now comes the big question for that Champion of the Aboriginal, our Minister for Mines, who doesn't care about the miners, the

Minister for Tourism, who is terribly upset about the French nuclear tests but is unconcerned about the safety of tourists travelling the Stuart Highway, and the one and only Mr. Don Dunstan.

If he considers that miners must have a special type of radio to warn him of impending threats, what is he doing to safeguard the poor Aboriginal who is wandering around the land of his ancestors?

THIS WEEK'S

H	O	B		P	A	R	T
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THE PLACE FOR RELAXATION

THE Italo-Australian Miners' Club (formerly known as the Italian Miners' Association), was founded towards the end of 1963, when the miners decided that it was time to have a place of their own where they could meet each other for a quiet drink.

The Club was built by the miners themselves. Anyone who had money, no matter how little, contributed, and the first Club was formed. It was, actually, little more than a shack.

This did an excellent job as a Club and lasted from 1963 until 1968. Original foundation members numbered some two dozen.

The sporting side was not neglected and a soccer ground, on which members played Greek and Hungarian teams, adjoined the Club.

In 1968 the Club was forced to move because it was situated outside the town area.

The new Italo-Australian Miners' Club is now situated on a site overlooking the town.

It currently boasts a membership of 260 and there is a long list of those waiting for membership.

For 18 months the old Club was left untouched, when, suddenly, someone remembered finding slight opal traces while digging the fence hole posts for the old Club.

So they went back and found more traces. Heavy machinery was then brought in, which resulted in a large find of opal.

Opals to the total value of approximately \$200,000 were found on the site.

The new Club is of a brick construction.

Apart from the main lounge where members can enjoy a game of cards with their drink, the Club also has a games room with facilities for billiards on the two tables, as well as darts.

Dinner is available every night of the week, catering being done from the Club's own kitchen.

Night life has not been neglected in the Club and every Saturday night members can enjoy a dinner dance to the swinging accompaniment of a three piece band.

At the moment the necessary luxury of air-conditioning only covers the main lounge and the kitchen. By the end of the year, however, the entire Club will be air-conditioned.

Outside facilities of the Club comprise two bowling greens with flood lighting, a playground for the children and ample car parking space.

The Club building, measuring 40ft. by 110 ft. is sited on a large 220 ft. square block.

The running of the Club is the responsibility of the President and six Committee Members, with the day to day operating responsibility resting with the full time Manager.

As is the custom with many social Clubs, children are not neglected.

A Christmas Party is held annually and all children have a good time with drinks, ice cream and even a present from Father Christmas.

A little flutter every Tuesday night, when members get together

for a game of Bingo, aids the local school. Last year \$2,000 was raised, which is a commendable effort.

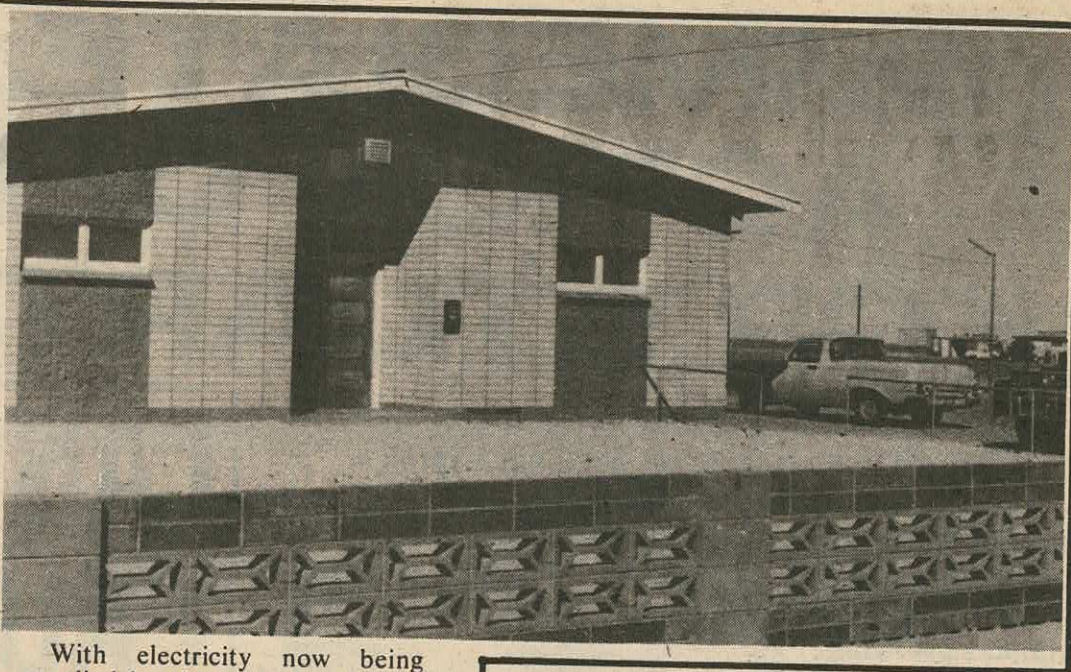
The proceeds from a Fancy Dress Ball held last July were also donated to the local school.

A colourful event with many original and beautiful costumes, designed and made by the ladies themselves, raised \$700, to which the Miners' Club added another \$50.

While a 10,000 dollar loan was required for the building of the Club, this amount does not, by any means, represent the total cost.

Voluntary work and many donations were of great assistance to the Club and made the project a viable proposition.

The Committee and members have not, however, decided to rest on their laurels.



MT PENRYN FIASCO

FOLLOWING the recent Miners' meeting, Mr. Ken Jones reported that he had telephoned Mr. Auburn at Woomera to advise him of miners' reaction regarding the implementation of Special Entry Permits to work in the Mt. Penryn area.

While Mr. Auburn was very sympathetic towards the objections raised, he stressed that such permits were necessary in the interests of safety. He also advised that the Mt. Penryn area had been selected as the fall-out area for the testing of a few long range versions of the Skylark missile.

The conditions on the form which has to be signed are fine for the township of Woomera. They are, however, equally as ridiculous for the middle of the desert in a Declared Opal Mining Area.

Mr. Jones also raised the question of opal security when miners had to leave the area with Mr. Auburn.

Mr. Auburn gave Mr. Jones an assurance that the area would be patrolled by Woomera security men in helicopters while testing was in progress. This would provide security by ensuring that no persons entered the area during those times.

There would be approximately one firing a week, Mr. Auburn said, and seven days notice would be given prior to these dates with a final warning 24 hours before firing.

Miners would only be required to vacate the test area for 24 hours during firing periods, Mr. Auburn said.

He also gave Mr. Jones an assurance that any miner wishing to work in any other area of the range would be given a permit to do so, provided the area selected was not being used for testing.

This, as a whole, is a reasonable and acceptable explanation more by Mr. Auburn.

Opal Miners Weekly recognises this, but still has some reservations about a number of matters.

This, as a whole, is a reasonable and acceptable explanation by Mr. Auburn.

Opal Miners Weekly recognises this, but still has some reservations about a number of matters.

If there is a danger at Mt. Penryn, it must, surely, be in a very restricted section.

Alternatively the Stuart Highway, only two and a half miles away, would be equally endangered.

Why, then, is it necessary to have a permit for the Declared Opal Field 25 miles away from the testing area and only 10 miles away from Coober Pedy?

One man has already set up a transceiver and a number of others have been issued with permits on the basis of this radio.

The Commonwealth claims that it is not necessary for each person to have a transceiver.

However, if the owner of the set decides to move 10 miles away, or even out of the district, the remaining miners would either have to buy another radio or pull up

Snippets from Lightning Ridge

JUST how many people do live in Lightning Ridge? No one seems to know and it is very hard to guess at anywhere near the actual figure.

The official number stands at around the 400 mark.

Last weekend work started on an actual estimation of the residents. In two streets alone and a portion of the bald hill area the figure stands at 300!

There were at least 10 camps visited where the occupants were not at home but habitation was evident. This will be a long job but all will agree, that the results will prove vital in getting something done to improve the town.

Although Lightning Ridge is not flat and there are trees, it experiences some of the worst dust storms seen.

It is no exaggeration to be able to say you could not see across the street as this is entirely true.

There are only three roads which are bitumen and the rest are of the worst type of dirt roads imaginable.

Graders only seem to make more dust and the people living in some areas such as those along Gem Street are prone to the worst of it. This road never seems to be improved and these people may as well live in the worst polluted city in the world.

The Bush Nursing Association in Lightning Ridge has seen well over 1000 people in the last three months, and the majority of these people are suffering from the effects of the dust.

If the roads are not to be bitumen then water trucks should be used every day in an effort to combat the dust.

One's first impression of Lightning Ridge is quite ghastly with the almost treeless streets and the forever present dust rising up in greeting.

Lightning Ridge has a soccer team which could well be described as the United Nations Team.

At the last game at Lightning Ridge there was not one Australian to be seen on the field. It appears there is only one but he comes from Walgett and was not there that day.

How these boys run around in temperatures well into the 40 degree Celsius is unbelievable.

However there is also a junior team and these kids get a big kick out of the game.

One interesting thing about the teams is the choice of colours. The juniors wear red shirts and black shorts — red on black — little gems??

The Seniors wear blue shirts and black shorts — blue on black — big muggies??

The price of good quality black opal is at its all time high and one wonders just where it will finish.

Opal miners are bemoaning the fact that last year's stones would have fetched triple the price today if they had kept them.

A "gem" quality black opal, is snapped up these days almost before it leaves the cutter's hands.

IMMEDIATE FEDERAL ACTION DEMANDED FOR STUART HIGHWAY

The Prohibited Area of the Woomera Rocket Range is on the direct route from Adelaide to Alice Springs.

There is an all weather road built with Australian taxpayers money which follows this direct route, a road, however, which is not available to the man who paid for it, the Australian motorist, unless special circumstances prevail.

Instead of travelling on 100 miles of good road, motorists to Coober Pedy, Ayers Rock and Alice Springs are forced to use approximately 160 miles of rough road.

On the surface of things, the reasons given for placing this extra burden on the people of the north are sound enough. Security and safety are alleged to be the underlying factors.

However, the Stuart Highway, too, is in the prohibited area and a similar risk is prevalent only two miles from this highway.

Since both roads are subject to the same security regulations, surely they should have equal accessibility.

Notwithstanding all this and conceding that the security of our nation forces motorists to travel an extra 60 odd miles, there remain many other aspects which require close scrutiny and investigation.

Financial help to pioneering areas was promised by the Federal Government in the budget recently brought down in parliament.

Coober Pedy must surely rank very highly as a pioneering area, yet every bit of merchandise, every piece of building material and all food is subject to higher prices owing to the higher transportation costs brought about by the longer distances and the time consuming rougher road. Some 200,000 tourists per year are expected to travel the Stuart Highway in future. They must all bear the burden of extra cost.

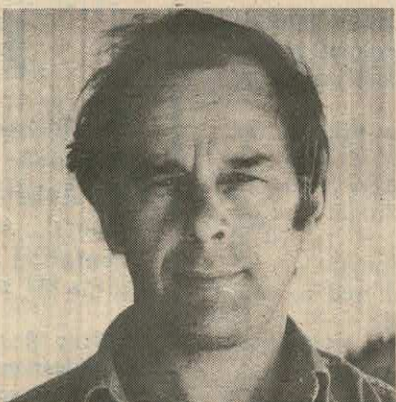
The Federal Government is committed to encourage and promote tourism in Australia.

Ayers Rock, Alice Springs and Coober Pedy rate very highly on the tourist agenda.

Despite the Federal Government's commitments and promises in these two fields, they throw the responsibility of the Highway into the lap of the State.

While the State, committed to the same objectives, could and should do more than it is doing, the responsibility of providing us with a good main highway must rest squarely upon the shoulders of the Federal Government, who forced us to travel the extra distance. They should and must make the existing road available to all motorists.

We all know that farmers receive subsidies, decentralised industries are financially supported and shipping and railways are propped up by taxpayers monies.



Mr. Kelvin Sheils

Coober Pedy has no shipping and no railway. Nevertheless we contribute to their upkeep as any other taxpayer does.

Simple Australian fairness would, therefore, expect motorists using the Stuart Highway to be subsidised or compensated for the extra distance they are forced to travel.

Mr. Kelvin Sheils, who travels to Coober Pedy from the south several times a year, has made many written representations to the government regarding the extra distance he is required to travel and, in particular, about the poor state of the road.

The Commonwealth, in frequent written replies, throws the matter back into the State's court.

In turn, the State claims to have no finances for such a project and refers the matter back to the Commonwealth.

Mr. Sheils is extremely disturbed at the large number of cars that have turned over or got into strife owing to the poor state of the Stuart Highway.

Abandoned cars on the highway are ample evidence of the many cars that didn't make it.

The haphazard selection of the Woomera Rocket Range site particularly incenses Mr. Sheils. A little more consideration by more competent people at the time would have prevented the present seeming impasse, he says.

This disastrous state of affairs does not only affect those who depend on their livelihood to travel the Stuart Highway.

Recently 32 tourist buses were stranded in Coober Pedy owing to washed out roads north and south.

This placed an almost intolerable burden on the town's resources at a time when normal supplies could not get through.

LAND DEPARTMENT AUCTIONS LAND Licenses Lost

The Lands Department conducted a land auction in Coober Pedy on September 29th, 1972.

The land had been held under annual licence by individual owners. Without giving present occupiers the right of first option to buy, licenses were cancelled at one month's notice.

Explaining the reasons for taking back the land, a spokesman for the Lands Department explained that this decision was made following the visit of a survey team who visited Coober Pedy to examine the licensed land.

As a result of this investigation it was decided to grant freeholds only to those who had built on their land in the surveyed area and to cancel licenses of those who had not.

People who had vacant land should have built on it, the spokesman stated. Consequently, the prudent licence holder who, wisely, required the security of freehold before further investing in building, has been penalised. He has lost his land.

This blatantly contradicts the entire structure of home finance throughout Australia, where the cornerstone of security is freehold.

To cap this obvious injustice, people who have built on their land since this secretive survey have not been spared. They, too, lost their land.

Contrary to normal procedure, only three weeks notice was given for the auction and this was done in such an inadequate fashion that most people in Coober Pedy did not know about the sale until five days before the memorable event.

A further reason given by the Department for repossessing the land was to prevent overseas owners from tying up the land. Special conditions to prevent this would be made.

However, no such conditions or rulings were made during the auction and overseas buyers are free to tie up the land if they wish to do so.

Despite all this, the auction was well conducted and a large crowd attended the sale.

A total of 21 blocks were auctioned and prices ranged from \$280 to \$1150 for home sites, with a caravan site bringing \$3210. The top home block bringing \$1150 has a frontage of 42 feet.

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No Phones for Coober Pedy

It's impossible at present to have the telephone connected at Coober Pedy.

Rapid growth in the number of subscribers in the past few months has exhausted all available numbers.

District telephone manager, Mr. Wallace says that if intending applicants apply now, additional equipment will be installed as soon as available within a possible, but the reasonable waiting problem is to determine how much will be needed to meet early planning of requirements in the cable work involved.

About three weeks before residents and services are business firms to installed, applicants apply immediately will have to pay a at the post office, or connection fee of to write to the \$50 — a once-only district telephone payment — manager. Third together with Floor, 38 Currie St., \$13.50 for the first Adelaide. six months rental.

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