



## KELLIE'S OUR GIRL

"Fred" is quite a friendly fellow, but Kellie Louise Muller, doesn't want to know him. Kellie, despite that painful look, is still a beautiful babe, and is our Baby of the Week.

The picture was taken at the Mt. Clarence Station, which is managed by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ron Muller.

# SHOTS IN THE NIGHT

SHOTS were fired in the dead of night after three men had allegedly been found illegally working a mine, a Coober Pedy court has been told.

Charges of illegal mining against two men created so much interest that the temporary courthouse — the Lutheran Church — was packed to overflowing.

One man was charged with having mined on mineral lands without being authorised under the Mining Act.

The other was spotted three men in charged with having the headlights of the aided, abetted, counselled or procured the commission of an offence on mineral lands without authorisation under the Mining Act.

After a hearing lasting three days and nights, Mr. J. M. Cramond, SM, adjourned it to the Holden Hill court on October 25.

In each case he fixed bail at \$1000 with a similar surety.

Mr. D. R. Stevenson, representing one of the men, said that because Coober Pedy was a precious stones area, it should no longer be considered a mineral lands area.

But Mr. Cramond overruled him on the grounds that mineral lands were not excluded from the general description of precious stones land.

Mr. Nick Macris told the court that on the night of September 2 he went to the Fifteen Mile opal field with John Nalpanthis and Steve Del-Tedesco to inspect an open-cut mine in which he was a partner.

The party travelled in two cars. On arrival, he drove to the eastern side, and the other car went to the western side.

Mr. Macris said that while he and Steve Del-Tedesco were walking towards the cut, they

Mr. Macris said that when he reached the spot, he asked one man who the other two were in the cut, but he would not tell him.

Mr. Macris said: "Jack Nalpanthis walked to an island between the cut and called to the others to come out. They did not respond, so I fired a few shots."

"Another man then came up and I recognised him immediately."

Mr. Macris identified him in court.

Mr. Macris added that when the man came out, he said: "I needed the money."

Both men were put in Mr. Macris' car and, as they were about to drive away, shots were fired in their direction in the darkness, apparently from an automatic rifle.

They then drove to the police station.

Mr. Nalpanthis said that when he drove to the western side of the cut, his headlights shone on a man lying on the ground.

"We ran to him and asked how many were at the mine," said Mr. Nalpanthis, "and he eventually replied:

• Turn to Page 4.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY TO SERVE THE OPAL INDUSTRY

# OPAL MINERS'

15c

Weekly

## Illegal mining charges

# GYM GIRLS

MRS. Julie Regan and her schoolgirl gymnasts "stole the show" at a fund-raising social at the Opal Hotel, Coober Pedy.

The girls were chosen from the Area School's gymnastic class, which Julie instructs.

The six girls who took part were Suzy Magliani, Jill Vajtauer, Monica Lamz, Christine Braun and Tania Titheradge (all Form Seven) and Donna Naumovic (Form Six). They were dressed in white leotards with red, satin sashes draped around their hips.

Their display took the form of movement-to-music, with a variation of momentarily-held positions and pyramids which were in harmony with Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers".

The social was arranged by the hospital Women's Auxiliary to help

finance its pre-race meeting cocktail party this Friday night. It raised \$130.

During the night, John Smith adopted an attitude of acute agony, and "collapsed" to the floor. Then followed a screamingly-funny "rescue" involving St. John Ambulance men and others. (See pic. Page Two).

One fellow in the crowd — Darby — almost panicked when he saw Smith being jostled, pushed and kneed while being placed on a stretcher.

Darby almost collapsed, too, when he saw Smith tied up with rope and carried down from the hotel upside down on the stretcher.



Mrs. Julie Regan ... she has done a fine job with her young team of gymnasts.

Darby (at right) ... a worried man at first, but eventually broke into his usual, happy smile.





# RESCUE CREW IS READY TO HELP

May be a joke,  
but.....

Coober Pedy now has a responsible body on call for mining accidents — the Mine Rescue Squad.

The inaugural meeting was recently attended by 14 miners who believed such an organisation was long overdue.

Its main functions will be to instruct on the correct use of rescue equipment, and to organise necessary equipment for all types of emergencies.

The original idea was These are on the first those unqualified in

for the squad to have a Sunday of each month. first-aid. Squad members have

representative from Present equipment consists of a specially- been instructed that

each field, but this was made rescue windlass, anybody injured in a

not feasible, because of a stretcher, 12-volt mine must be left un- touched until a trained

members moving from a body unit, safety rope, person is in attend- ance.

This would mean helmets and Oregon planks for decking dan- gerous shafts.

In each field, signs are being erected out- side the homes of squad

Equipment still needed includes a hand 'phone, a Neil Robertson stretcher, everybody will know

This was overcome by appointing honorary members and a harness for where to contact a

from each field, elim- lifting in the shafts. qualified rescue man.

inating the chance of a A suggestion that a vehicle was needed was not accepted; mem- bers agreed a trailer

field being unmanned. would do the job, because all equipment could be set up in it, and a vehicle could be

It is essential to have trained people on hand to go into the mine or shaft with a St. John Ambulance man, and be able to help in the rescue.

The Mines Depart- ment has supplied a temporary shed for the squad's headquarters, in close co-operation with the St. John Am- bulance. The medical

hopes to obtain a per- manent building in the near future. side of a rescue must be

Practice runs are being held to correct any malfunctions. correctly handled by

Attempts are being made to obtain a trans- ceiver on hand at Fif- teen Mile. Miner Lee

Robbins is making one available at Shell Patch, and in March it is hoped a telephone

will be installed at Eight Mile. This would mean

that almost the entire mining area would have a communica- tion system in the event

of accidents. The squad is led by president Dave Genat,

and the secretary-treasurer is Bill McDougall. The committee

consists of Ross McArdle, Tony Lucas, Ted Betteridge, Mal Potter, Darryl Wake and two representa- tives of the Mines

Department, Sid Smart and Roger Wager.



This is a "fun" picture of a mock rescue, and it was taken in Coober Pedy. But the scene would not be much different in the event of a real rescue; only the smiles would be missing. Even so, the picture issues a warning for all safety precautions to be taken in the mines.

## Canless Coober?

A fund-raising campaign for a swimming pool at the Area School has a two-fold effect.

It will also be designed to "Keep Coober Canless."

Site works completed for the school include provision for a 50-ft. by 20-ft. pool, with a 10-ft. section of six-ft. depth.

The other 40-ft. would be three-ft. deep.

Pre-schoolers would also be able to use the pool, because it is intended to provide a removable false bottom to allow them to swim in a safe depth.

The school fiesta

on November 11 is a major event planned to raise funds, but other activities are about to get under- way.

Students will be asking townspeople to sponsor them in a "can" campaign. They will ask them to sign a card, promising one, two or five cents (or more) for every can they pick up.

These will be delivered to a central point, probably near the Youth Centre, where an adult will count the cans and mark and sign the cards accordingly.

The students, at the end of the campaign, will approach their sponsors to collect the amount for which they are committed.

The cans will be placed in a wire-netting model of the pool. It will be the same size and residents will see it gradually fill with the discarded containers.

At the same time, they will no doubt enjoy the sight of a "Canless Coober."

Headmaster Mr Craig Cameron, who believes it's a great idea, says: "I know everybody would

like to see the hundreds of cans litter the street picked up. I hope, therefore, that you will willingly sponsor the children."

School Houses, Eyre, Forrest, Giles and Stuart, are holding a fund-raising competition in their efforts to provide for the pool.

The school, through its council, Welfare Club and Pre-School Mothers' Club, is determined to raise the several thousand dollars necessary for the project.



Three of the men instrumental in forming the squad. From left, secretary-treasurer (Bill McDougall), president (Dave Genat) and committeeman (Ted Betteridge).



# ANYTHING BUT THE

# Truth

## CROATIAN BLINDED BY HIS OWN BOMB

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NO. 4269

★ WHAT motorist could resist her? Dancer Bobby Anne is a real traffic stopper. She's home after a hitch-hike tour of Europe and reports that she had no trouble getting lifts.

By BRYAN JAMESON  
● A CROATIAN has been blinded by a bomb which exploded during a Ustasha training exercise in the use of gelignite. The accident was at Coober Pedy, the opal field in the far north of South Australia. Coober Pedy and another far north opal field, Andamooka, are reported to have become a vast arsenal and training ground for

Contd. Page 3

## SIX SHOPS FOR MAIN STREET

COOBER Pedy is really on the move.

A shopping centre incorporating six modern shops is going up, and will really streamline the main street.

They will be fully air-conditioned and each will have hot-water systems, sinks and toilets. They will range in size from 704 sq. ft. to 928 sq. ft.

The shops will open up a wide spectrum of new shopping facilities, and will just about incorporate the full gambit of retailing.

A local company, Opal Search Pty. Ltd., has undertaken the project, and businessman Tom Van Brugge is handling all inquiries from prospective tenants.

The shops will be available for lease about the middle of next month.

All have been specially designed for Coober Pedy conditions.

It is a big venture, but as Tom says: "The company has great faith in the future of the town. Its development is just 'getting off the ground'."

All walls will be three-inch panels with vinyl steel claddings, and outside walls will be gold on both sides. There will be a main office done out in grained timber.

A four-foot wide canopy done in tawny brown will stretch the full frontage to serve as a sunshade and verandah.

Enormously strong panels will be self-supporting and will withstand winds of up to 130 miles an hour. They are fungus and vermin proof and will not mildew.

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COOBER Pedy's civic leaders have reacted sharply to an article in the Melbourne Truth newspaper which alleged terrorist activities in the district and at Andamooka.

The town is "fed up to the teeth" with the national news media, because the only stories it is interested in from the opal areas are based on sensationalism and scandal.

The Truth article, spread over the front page late last month, claimed that a migrant miner had been blasted by a bomb while being instructed in terrorist activities for the Ustashi.

It went into great lengths about the opal fields being used as training grounds for the so-called Ustashi movement.

The article was under the by-line of Bryan Jameson, who several months ago wrote a series of smearing stories about Coober Pedy in the same paper.

Townpeople who know the facts behind the real story describe Jameson's latest literary effort as "garbage", "balderdash" and "hogwash". Other expressions have been used which cannot be published.

The facts are, they claim, is that the incident referred to happened months ago, and was only a mining accident.

The story that was created from the accident was apparently a

## Another slander

flimsy collection of totally unfounded fact.

Secretary of the Coober Pedy Progress Association, Mr. Ken Jones, said yesterday: "As usual, the sensationalist Press has delighted in misinforming the public, and has again grabbed at an opportunity to paint the opal mining towns as being inhabited by nobody but

thieves and morons."

He said the residents, the big majority of whom were interested only in making the town a decent place in which to live, were extremely upset about continuing adverse and unjust publicity.

"There are certain criminal activities in these areas, as in any other community, but the vast majority are hard-working, law-abiding members of society," said Mr. Jones.

Feeling in the town is that newspapers

should visit the town to investigate stories, rather than invent half-baked accounts of something that was supposed to have happened.

Mr. Jones said considerable harm was being done to the opal industry and the potential tourist trade in the opal search is because of the publication "of such garbage".

Equivalently, that Coober Pedy has an established population



Ken Jones — "I want the city Press to restore the miners' dignity".

ion of more than 4,000, with 380 children at its modern school, but many tourists are afraid to spend the night there, because of impressions gained from the city Press.

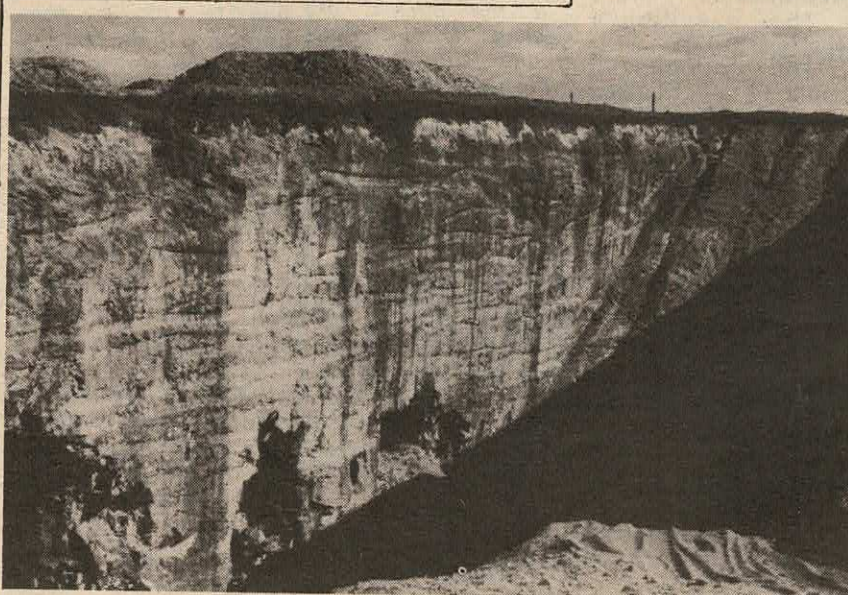
Mr. Jones issued an open invitation to all major newspapers to visit the town and publish factual stories so that the dignity of miners and their families could be restored.

"So far, the only publicity they have received is blatant slander," he said.

The Truth article was really regarded as ignorance when it was stated: "Opal mining is a painstaking job of gouging the earth with an implement the size of a screwdriver. Explosives are rarely used."

Earth-moving equipment used at Coober Pedy is valued at more than \$50-million.

Equivalently, that Coober Pedy has an established population



Would anybody care to estimate how many screwdrivers were used to create this open cut?



# Illegal mining: ACT NOW OR 'WAR'

COOPER Pedy miners will take the law into their own hands, unless the State Government legislates to impose heavy penalties on illegal miners.

This is a warning issued to the Premier, Mr. Don Dunstan, in a joint statement issued by the president of the Coober Pedy Miners' Association, Mr. Stan Konopka, and the secretary of the town's Progress Association, Mr. Ken Jones.

But following the statement — and representation by both men to the Acting Minister of Mines, Mr. Broomhill — an assurance has been given that strong penalties will be incorporated in an Act.

Mr. Konopka and Mr. Jones went to Mr. Broomhill's office armed with a small quantity of opal — 10 troy ounces worth an export price of \$1000 an ounce.

That little handful, worth \$10,000, appeared to shock certain sections of Parliament House into action.

Mr. Konopka and Mr. Jones have told a special meeting of more than 300 Coober Pedy miners that Mr. Broomhill was informed that this amount of opal could be removed from a claim within minutes, despite the fact that it may have taken the miner four years to locate the opal-bearing area — a period in which he probably had no income.

Mr. Jones told the meeting: "I am not a member of the Miners' Association, but I was asked as secretary of the Pro-

gress Association, to join the stand in making the approach.

"We gave Mr. Broomhill a full outline of the activities that are going on at night. It may surprise you, but we have been given every co-operation, both from the police in Coober Pedy and Adelaide, and from many miners in this room.

"After explaining the value of the opal to the Minister, we had his immediate attention, and he and his staff listened closely to every word we said. There was an immediate reaction.

"At last we got the message through — that stealing a handful of opal was not the same as stealing a small amount of iron ore or coal.

"Immediate steps will be taken to have opal stealing put into some Act. There is nothing in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act to say that a miner cannot steal from another registered claim. But there soon will be!"

The audience applauded wildly.

The submission made to Mr. Dunstan — who is also Minister of Mines — also brought spontaneous and sustained applause.

It read:

As you have already been informed by the Member for Eyre, Mr. Graham Gunn, the prevalence of illegal mining at night has reached the stage that we consider a radical change must be effected as soon as possible with relation to penalties prescribed under Section 74 of the Mining Act.

In our opinion, and we speak on behalf of all the honest mining

community, the terminology of this section is far from what is required on an opal field.

We strongly urge that the offence of opal stealing from a registered claim which at present is not covered by any Act, be included in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, as larceny of opal from a registered claim.

We believe that the average layman has no conception of the value of opal. We offer here a small quantity of opal to stress our point.

Having seen this, you should now realise the seriousness of the offence of stealing opal, and the understandably violent reaction of a miner when he discovers his mine has been entered and opal stolen.

The miners are angered to the point that if nothing is done to rectify existing laws, there is no doubt they will take the law into their own hands!

If the offence of stealing is included in the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, and a minimum penalty of two years' imprisonment is imposed, we believe this will provide an adequate deterrent to would-be thieves.

In addition, we request that once convicted, a person be banned from any State opal field for life, and be refrained from holding or obtaining a miner's right or opal prospecting permit for life.

Should the person return to an opal field, or breach the ban imposed, we suggest a further term of imprisonment.

# Safety first, awards later

For instance, at the Opal Hotel the other night, first-aid certificates were presented to Mrs. Jenny Rainsford, Miss Gwenda McArdle, Bill McDougall, Anthony Lucas, Ted Betteridge and John Smith.

The presentations, by Mr. D. Jacquier, superintendent of the St. John Ambulance Upper Eyre Peninsula, were the culmination of classes started on April 20 by Mr. Ross McArdle, a fully-qualified ambulance man.

Mr. Jacquier spoke of the advantages to be gained by the affiliation of the Coober Pedy

Ambulance with that of the Upper Eyre Peninsula.

He explained that a patient who is taken to Port Augusta still has to be carried by road ambulance from the airport to the hospital, for a fee of \$10.

In addition, the cost of the air ambulance from Pt. Augusta to Adelaide would be about \$160. But by a yearly contribution of \$8, the contributor received complete coverage throughout South Australia, with the exception of Streaky Bay.

Mr. McArdle was assisted in the training classes by his wife, who is a qualified ambulance driver.



Mrs. Jenny Rainsford — just about the nicest first-aider in the business — receives her certificate from Mr. Jacquier.

## SHOTS IN THE NIGHT

• From Page One

"You go and have a look; if anybody's there, you tell me."

"I then ran to the south end, and a short way down saw the silhouette of a man crouching in the cut."

"I shone my torch and saw two men on the western side of the cut. One was about half way up the northern end and the other was crawling on the ground. I ran to where I saw the man crawling, and told him to stand up. I found a large, light torch."

Mr. Nalpanitis alleged that when he accompanied the man out of the cut, he said: "I came here only for chips; I needed the money badly. I am sorry, I know I broke the law, but I couldn't do it any other way. I have bills."

Mr. Nalpanitis said he would not tell him at all the previous night.

Const. J. McKenna said that the second man charged had confessed to being down in the cut.

He claimed the man told him: "Look, I like my life; I don't tell you, and maybe I get five years' gaol, but at least I'm alive."

"I needed the money, because I have a bill to pay for \$500. I have no money."

Const. McKenna said the man told him he had been working on a claim, and that from opal obtained a couple of days previously, he had got a share of \$400 from defendant. He had just found him out there.

According to Const. McKenna, the second man then changed his story, claiming that "I only walked past the man had allegedly said: cut that night."

## DESERT CAVE MOTEL

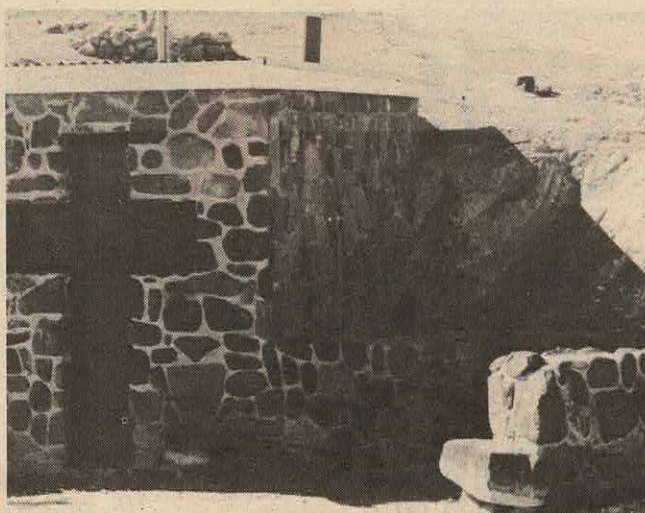
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The bell in its belfry in Sydney.



A tower will be built near the dugout church for the new showpiece.



It was the focal point of interest on its arrival at Coober Pedy.

# BELL WILL TOLL FOR FR. CRESP

THE memory of Father Frank Cresp will be re-lived each time a church bell rings in Coober Pedy.

Townpeople are working on a tower for the bell, which commemorates Father Cresp, a much-loved man and Roman Catholic priest in the parish for six years.

He left the district almost 12 months ago, but the community found it most difficult to settle on a suitable tribute.

He had helped to plan and build the famous dugout church and was a great help to people in need or in distress.

People of all denominations discussed the problem of a tribute, and collections were taken. It was decided to give his successor, the Rev. Father Jack-ett, a church bell, so that by its sound the memory of the previous priest would live on.

And that presented a real problem; where to find a bell!

Several disappointments followed, and the task appeared hopeless.

Then it happened! Parish member Laurie Collier was discussing the problem over dinner with Michael Costello, of the Opal

Centre, and he promised to use his influence — at home and overseas — to obtain a bell from another parish.

Three weeks later Mike called Laurie, and said: "A Monsignor Duffy in Sydney says there's a bell available in the suburbs, but we will have to remove it from its belfry, and transport it to Coober Pedy."

The bell was going for free, but the town council concerned said that under the Local Government Act its agents would have to remove it, provided the Coober parish forwarded a cheque for \$98.

This would be reimbursed as a gift to the church.

After all that, parish members went out to the airstrip, and collected their "tribute". It

had all been done with councillors of the help of Mike Cos-council concerned, Chinese Presbyterian tello, Monsignor Ansett Airlines and Church, and is said to be more than 100 years



## \$2,030 from festival

THE enormously successful Opal Festival at Lightning Ridge raised \$2,030.

It will be distributed as follows:

\$400 — Parents and Citizens' Club; Lightning Ridge Olympic Pool Association;

\$200 — Bush Nursing Association; Ambulance; Hospital Foundation Fund; Emergency Foundation Fund;

\$100 — Youth Club, Aero Club, Boy Scouts, Soccer Club;

\$10 — Black Opal Lodge; Women's Auxiliary and Catholic Church for use of carpet.

## U.F.O. left them spellbound

ABOUT 50 people in Coober Pedy have been startled by an unidentified flying object which they studied for up to 20 minutes.

They watched spellbound as the bright object — about 40 to 60 feet long — hovered above the ground in between shooting up and down vertically.

It was first seen by a miner leaving a card game in a dugout, but he asked to remain anonymous, because he thought he would be ridiculed.

But at least 50 other then down again, so fellows have confirmed closing the triangle. It the sighting, made this pattern

The card player, about 10 times, named John, said he John said he was so was walking up the excited he went back steps of the dugout into the dugout and when he saw a "big, called his friends, and shooting star with blue seven of them watched light falling down and as the brightly-lit streaking the sky from object continued to east to west". form the pattern. The

He said: "It was colored lights continued to blink. about 150 feet from the ground and had come to a dead stop. It then shot straight up at something like 1,000 miles an hour, hovering at 500 to 600 yards.

"Its shape was outlined by a huge, yellow light.

"I watched alone for three or four minutes and then, on top of the light, saw a brighter light that appeared to be flashing on and off.

"It was like a light-house and was, in fact, swinging around. Colors thrown from the swinging arc were purple, green and orange.

"Then the object began to move in a triangular pattern, up to a central point, and for another 15 minutes.

There was a house-warming party in the next dugout, and these people were also invited to watch the phenomenon. They watched the last stages of the object's antics and were too excited to speak for several minutes.

The night was calm and clear, with barely a breath of wind, but there was no sound from what was obviously a machine.

The witnesses says it came within 200 yards of them, and then travelled slowly in the direction of Ryan's Hill and on toward Eight Mile. It was still continuing its pattern.

OPAL MINERS' WEEKLY — Page 5



# Now, that's the way to end an argument!



*All smiles again and the best of mates. From left, George Papadopolous and his wife with Johnny Roufos.*

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TWO well-known Coober Pedy personalities have "buried the hatchet" after a fued lasting for more than six months.

George Papadopolous and Johnny Roufos celebrated their new bond of friendship with two nights of first-class entertainment at the restaurant that bears the name "Roufos", but is owned by Mr. Papadopolous.

As a present to George, Johnny arranged for a group of entertainers to appear at the restaurant, on both nights.

George Petracopoulos, a highly-rated buzouki player led the Zorba Group, whose performance was enhanced by the beautiful and vivacious singer, Mary Poly.

Mr. Petracopoulos made no charge, because he is a close family friend from the same village in Greece as Johnny Roufos. But the enthusiastic gathering of more than 300 people each night showered the players with enough money to make their visit worthwhile.

The buzouki is a Greek instrument similar to an electric guitar. People of many nationalities danced the kalamatano and tsamiko in groups, the hasapiko in fives or groups, and the zebekiko solo to the music of the buzouki.



*Lovely singer Mary Poly, who delighted her audiences, in harmony with George Petracopoulos.*

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# DOES COOBER NEED A DOCTOR?

Want a say about the life around you? The Page Seven Forum is designed to let you do exactly that. It will be a regular feature on controversial matters.

The bigger the noise you make, the more you are likely to achieve.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of The Opal Miners' Weekly.

The question-of-the-moment is:

## RESIDENT

— says Inga Fueg

**AFTER** living in Coober Pedy for several years, I strongly believe there is a need for a resident doctor.

The town has grown rapidly in the past few years, and there are now many families with children.

And there is a big chance of serious accidents, because miners are working with explosives and in shafts and in deep open-cuts.

### Does not compensate

This is why it's obvious a doctor is needed for emergencies.

Although the Flying Doctor can give explicit instructions over the radio when emergency cases arise, it does not compensate for a doctor being on the spot.

It takes up to two hours for the Flying Doctor to arrive — and that could be two hours too late.

People ask where a doctor would live, where he would consult, and where funds would be raised to provide him with medical instruments.

### Why different here?

The miners realise the need for a resident doctor, and surely they would build a house, without charging wages.

As for paying consultation fees, one has to pay them in Adelaide or any other town, so why should it be different here? One has to pay for services rendered.

There are surely smaller towns than Coober Pedy that have a resident doctor, and I feel sure that he would be consulted more in Coober Pedy than a town of the same size elsewhere.

### Added advantage

Money is spent like water for entertainment and pictures, and the townspeople themselves have raised money for an ambulance and extensions and equipment for the hospital, so surely they can raise money for another worthy cause — doctor's equipment.

Many people say that we will lose the Flying Doctor Service. So we will, but initially residents who contribute to it will still be flown out in cases of emergencies.

They would also have the added advantage of having the resident doctor on hand, until the Flying Doctor arrived.

## NON-RESIDENT

— says Mrs D. Najauer

**At present, Coober Pedy does not need a doctor.**

We had a few upsets at the start of the year when the Flying Doctor did not arrive on schedule due to circumstances beyond his control, but it appears these problems have been ironed out.

If a doctor was persuaded to become resident, we have no guarantee he would stay, as many other country towns have discovered to their cost. In our present situation we have the choice of two doctors and the R. F. D. S. is working all the time to improve its services. We have a doctor who can be contacted several days a week.

A resident doctor would need his Saturday afternoons off and Sundays plus public holidays (although this applies also to our medical centre, it works only in theory and certainly not in fact).

During my days of suburban living I once 'phoned six different doctors before finding one who would come out on a weekend emergency call.

Our medical centre is staffed with fully trained and experienced sisters who are dedicated, and not here just "to see what it's like".

Dedication is, I believe, not the main consideration of the medical profession and the romance (if there ever was any) of "doctoring" in the outback is a thing of the past.

What would we do if we found ourselves with a resident doctor who decided he has had enough of the heat and dust (or his wife has) and departed for softer (and more lucrative?) climes, and we no longer had the services of the R. F. D. S. to call on?

It could be a year or more before another doctor could be found. A couple of hours wait for the R. F. D. S. may seem a long time, but a 600 mile trip by road would seem infinitely longer.

It's no good saying we could always go back to the R. F. D. — he would have his own patients to look after and Coober Pedy would run a poor second.

There have been complaints that the doctor is "always late" for clinics, and patients have to wait for some time. Doctors are always late, whether here or in North Terrace.

A resident doctor would be no guarantee that you could see him the minute you arrived in surgery — he might be out "checking" behind his part-owned 'dozer or "delivering" Mrs. Yzpxt's latest.

If you want all the so-called benefits of this modern age then Coober Pedy is not the place for you; a little box in suburbia and a nine-to-five would obviously suit you better. I prefer pot-holes to bitumen.

I also prefer the R. F. D. S.





## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Everyone wants to be happy but only a few people seem to enjoy true happiness. Behind many a smiling face there is an aching heart.

Lots of people expect money to make them happy and so spend all their time and energy working for it. Making a fast dollar and finding a fortune in opal have a strong appeal.

But whilst it is true that there is no pleasure in poverty, it also needs to be said that riches bring many anxieties and problems.

King Solomon, who was well known for his wisdom and understanding, said in one of his proverbs:

"Do not toil to acquire wealth . . . for suddenly it takes to itself wings."

One reason for its quick disappearance is that a rich person has many friends who will help him spend his money.

There's no excuse for anyone being a "bludger", lazily doing nothing and expecting everyone to help him.

Jesus said, "Do not save riches here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. Instead, save riches in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. For your heart will always be where your riches are."

This means that spiritual values, like a good Christian character, are lasting and more important than material possessions which we must leave behind when we go to meet our Maker.

The Rev. Barry Rainsford,  
Church of England.

## What a gem!

JEAN Simpson, of Sydney, wanted to come to Coober Pedy this weekend for the race meeting and its associated activities.

But, hang it all, she couldn't get away from her modelling engagements.

However, when she's got a free weekend, the boss will bring her up personally.

How's that, chaps!

## KNOW YOUR STARS

**GEMINI (May 22 to June 21):** Exciting prospects for those who enjoy plenty of social activity. They could find their interest turning to new persons.

**CANCER (June 22 to July 22):** Though things may appear dreary and tiresome, a special reward is coming your way and a personal ambition seems likely to be fulfilled.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 23):** Fortunate for all domestic matters, especially if you want to make changes or correct a misunderstanding. Don't tire yourself out with extra housework.

**VIRGO (Aug. 24 to Sept. 22):** Beware of over-impulsive actions. You may view things very differently when you have had time to think matters over.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 23):** Be ready to cope with the unforeseen. Cash gains are quite possible. Favorable for making up a quarrel, especially if you take the initiative.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24 to Nov. 22):** Life should move quite pleasantly, without any big surprises. However, the heart-free should not make new attachments because disillusionment will follow.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 to Dec. 22):** Quite good for romantic affairs, social or family gatherings and travel, but a marking time period for financial investment and shaping new careers. Signs of marked improvement well in evidence.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 to Jan. 20):** Decisions as regards your future will be wise and they should mature sooner than you think.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19):** Despite the attraction of new interests, try to concentrate on existing issues and stick to tried friends, to your future benefit.

**PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20):** Ideal time to make changes in your routine. You will achieve greater personal freedom and lose previous feelings of boredom.

**ARIES (Mar. 21 to April 20):** Be ready to face some formidable competition in all your activities. If you accept fate's challenge, you will come out on top.

**TAURUS (April 21 to May 21):** Surprises probable, and most of them pleasant. Health signs for the ailing much brighter. One warning: beware of incurring big debts.

## BIRTHDAY FORECASTS

**SATURDAY, Oct. 7:** Ideal for the investor and those whose savings permit them to strike out on their own. Emotionally, less propitious.

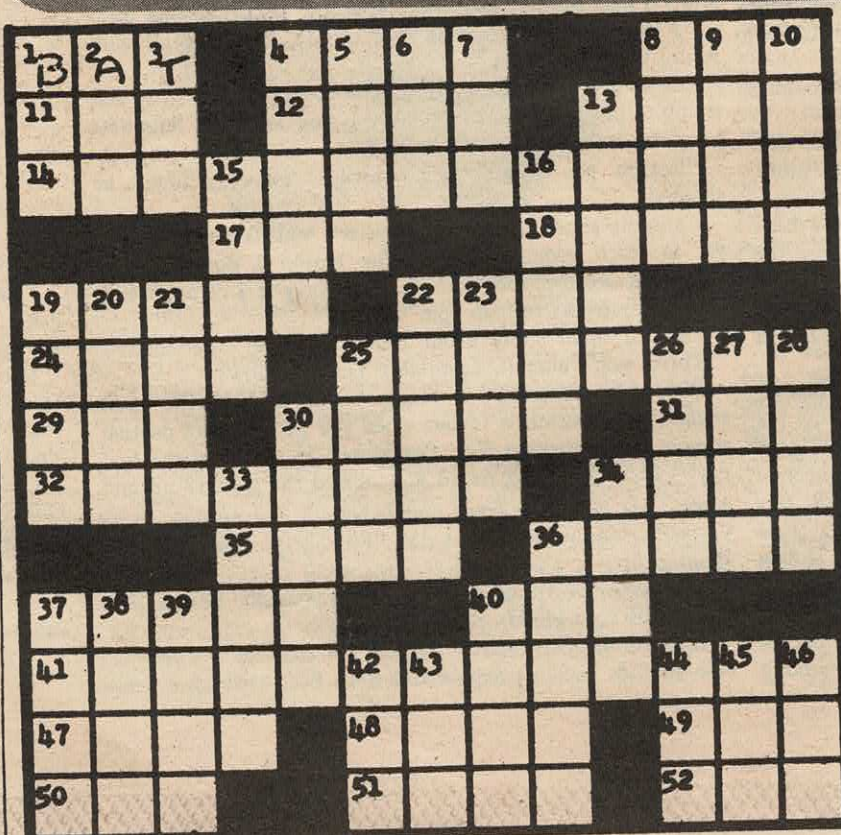
**SUNDAY, Oct. 8:** Highly eventful year, including some profitable moves and the achievement of a long-cherished ambition. Travel not unlikely.

**MONDAY, Oct. 9:** A few exciting advances towards your objectives will come when you almost despair of success. If single, romance.

**TUESDAY, Oct. 10:** Restrictions to mid-summer; after that, improved conditions in your private life, bigger pay and prestige in your working sphere.

**WEDNESDAY, Oct. 11:** Splendid chance to develop your plans will occur, particularly if you use energy, originality and personality. Gains may be much greater than anticipated.

## OPAL MINER CROSSWORD



### ACROSS

- 1 Baseball stick
- 4 Fellow
- 8 Time zoner (abbr.)
- 11 Girl's name
- 12 First-class (2 wds.)
- 13 Auction, e.g.
- 14 Proof
- 17 Wager
- 18 Fragments
- 19 Satisfies fully
- 22 Mast
- 24 Frolic
- 25 Frightens
- 29 Boat propeller
- 30 On ship's left
- 31 Mined material
- 32 Cherish
- 34 Fail to win
- 35 Fence material
- 36 Tardier
- 37 In advance
- 40 Transgression
- 41 Letter writer
- 47 Musical sound
- 48 Stocking
- 49 Foot digit
- 50 Sainte (abb.)
- 51 Short jacket
- 52 Land measure

### DOWN

- 1 Sleeping place
- 2 Hail!

- 3 Cap with a tassel
- 4 Walking sticks
- 5 Throng
- 6 Burrowing insect
- 7 By means of
- 8 Two of a kind
- 9 Coin hole
- 10 Playing card (pl.)
- 13 Begin
- 15 Comply with
- 16 Independently
- 19 Blot
- 20 Winglike
- 21 Weight allowance
- 22 Shop
- 23 Cut off the rind
- 25 Goad to action
- 26 Plunder
- 27 Scottish Gaelic
- 28 Prophet
- 30 Out of the way
- 33 Conscious
- 34 Go ashore
- 36 Flax cloth
- 37 Deeds
- 38 Owl's cry
- 39 Sea eagle
- 40 Middling (colloq.)
- 42 That woman
- 43 Cooking vessel
- 44 Greek letter
- 45 And not
- 46 Golf peg



## They're coming in droves to see the underground dwellers

# THERE'S NO TELLY

THE only thing missing from a Coober Pedy home is a television set.

This, despite the fact that most live underground.

The homes vary from a one-room establishment to areas between 15 and 27 squares.

Many are quite elaborate with carpets, modern furniture, radiograms, electric and gas cookers and other modern conveniences one would find in suburbia.

Although the majority are underground, many people live above the ground. Establishments above ground include government departments, schools, the medical centre, hospitals, police station, stores and the motels.

This is not the only aspect which makes Coober Pedy a unique tourist attraction.

Tourists have a fair run of the town. The Italo-Australian Miners' Club is open to visitors.

Another unique feature is the drive-in theatre, in view of the fact that it is owned by

the people, under the control of the Progress Association.

It is up-to-date electronically and shows all the modern films.

Stuck out there in the desert is a wide cosmopolitan populace with an atmosphere which could not be matched anywhere else in the world.

The fact that most of the miners are of different nationalities brings about a varied way of life.



For instance, the town has four licensed restaurants, and each has a chef of a different nationality.

Sport is controlled by a special committee which organises football, soccer and cricket matches. Tennis courts are being built.

Then there's the annual race meeting, which was staged this

weekend, and attracted visitors from hundreds of miles around.

Unfortunately for private tourists, they are unable to go on conducted tours, unless they engage Tom and Pat Campagna's taxi service, or if they're in town when tourist coaches are making special trips.

All aspects of opals are explained to tourists at the Opal Cave, run by Faye Nayler. She says the tragedy of the Australian opal industry is the fact that overseas tourists know more about our national gem than our own countrymen.

Faye says: "This is a tragedy, because the opal to us is as much of the Australian scene as koala bears, kangaroos and didgeridoos."

Coober Pedy is fast growing up as a tourist port-of-call, because

of constant improvement to amenities.

There is a tourist caravan park operated by Bull's Bus Service and a coach camping area at the Opal Cave, both which are equipped with hot showers, toilets, 240-volt power, and clean camping accommodation comparable with that of any other tourist amenities.



Accommodation is of such a high standard that tourists find no difficulty in finding the lodgings they are used to in the city. Most motel units are completely air-conditioned and self-contained.

The selling of opals is by no means restricted to the Opal Cave. There's Aladdin's Cave and Radika's, and most of the stores carry opals.

Faye Nayler practises the principle of instructing the people about opals before selling to them.

She can remember back to 1961, when the town was lucky to have four coaches a week pass through. This has progressed to the stage where an amazing 9,500 tourists recently visited the Opal

Cave in a three-week period.

Coaches operating throughout the Centre include most of the national companies, including Murray Valley, Centralian, Cobb and Co., Pioneer, Greyhound, Pleasure Tours, Ferns, Lewis Bros. and Sundowner Safaris.

These companies operate on a basis of either once a week, fortnightly or monthly, which has meant a substantial increase in the number of tourists.

Faye believes that tourism in Coober Pedy is only in its embryo.

"It hasn't even cracked the egg yet," she says.

"In the next five years the Centre will be subjected to such a rise in the number of tourists that I doubt facilities will cope with them.

"When I first came to Coober Pedy, summer tours were unheard of. But now tourist promoters realise they will lose custom if they do not provide tours in this part of the

country during the big holiday season.

"The number of jet-air or air-conditioned coaches is increasing all the time.

"The major part of the tourist season had been from April to November, but it's now a non-stop industry. Who can estimate its potential?"

The Opal Cave, which also gives opal-cutting demonstrations, plans to put in eight showers and toilets before summer.

This would allow tourists to shower any time of the day and night.



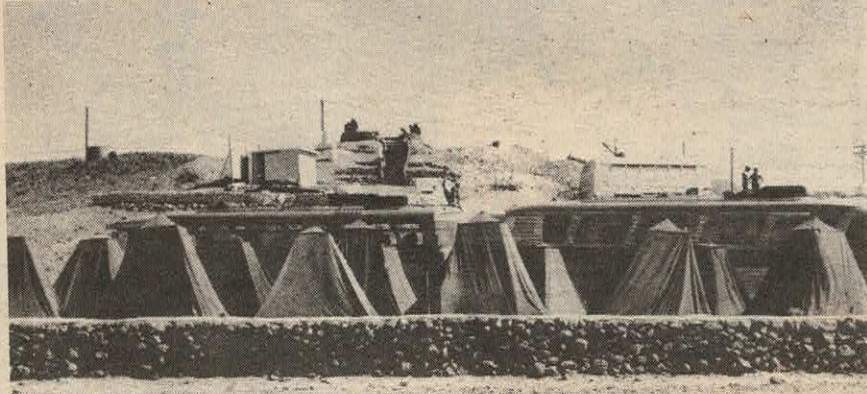
Coaches hold between 35 and 47 passengers. Four years ago, rain washed out the roads, and the Opal Cave had 33 coaches as its guest for three days.

It looked like Custer's Last Stand.

The largest number of coaches that the Opal Cave has had to cope with in one day is 19. This year, coaches have been running at one an hour through the Opal Cave, from 8 a.m. until 9.30 p.m.



Faye Nayler, who runs the Opal Cave, naturally takes a great interest in the tourist side of Coober Pedy. "Tourism is only in its embryo," she says.



That's not an Indian reservation but the normal camp-site scene outside the Opal Cave. Coach lines provide the tents for passengers' overnight accommodation.





FAYE NAYLER'S underground Opal Cave is one of the big tourist attractions at Coober Pedy. Its long, stone counter has a wonderful display of variously colored opals.

This interior shot (below) of Tom Van Brugge's underground home is a perfect example of how attractive these abodes can be made.

## DUG OUT HOMES CHEAP TO RUN

LET'S take a look at the homes of the underground dwellers . . . the people of Coober Pedy who went below ground to escape the searing heat

City slickers cringe at the thought of having to live under such conditions . . . those, that is, who have never seen the homes.

In some ways the underground dwellers are better off. They do not have to install cooling systems or insulation.

There are no maintenance costs, such as re-tiling, re-painting, and replacing weatherboards.

Most of the homes are extremely clean, neat and tidy.





## TOURISTS HAVE A 'SWINGING' NIGHT OUT

*TOURISTS are encouraged to attend functions in Coober Pedy.*

*Tickets are held in reserve for tourists for special events, such as the race meeting activities this weekend.*

*Because Coober is in the outback, it does not mean people attend functions in any old gear.*

*If it's an occasion for getting dressed up, they get dressed up. Women wear ball gowns and, for the men, it's dinner jackets or tuxedos.*

*Shorts are definitely not the order of the day.*

*Coober Pedy is no hick place when it comes to entertainment. When functions aren't being held, the motels and hotel do their best to engage entertainment and a band.*

*There are many more males than females in the district, but a lot of girls come through on the coaches. So it doesn't take long to get a dance, or some other form of entertainment under way.*

*The girls talk, drink and dance with the local chaps, and get the feeling of Coober.*



ROSS McARDLE and his wife are always in the forefront when it comes to promoting the town as a tourist centre. Ross is the manager of Bull's caravan park.

### **Don't go** **empty** **handed**

**TOURISTS** going to Coober Pedy on a digging holiday should bear three things in mind:

- They must take their own tent;
- Be equipped with their own mining equipment, and
- Be prepared to mine in a relatively small way.

There is no value in them believing they will be the big-time miner, because this requires a good deal of machinery and knowledge.

But there is no reason why a fully self-supporting holiday-maker can't have a pleasant holiday and enjoy the hospitality of townspeople.

Others who think they can go to Coober and find immediate employment have been given a wrong steer. Everybody, except those who work in the stores, are self-employed.

*Three drink waitresses line up for orders at a bar of the Opal Hotel. Business is usually brisk, because Coober Pedy is so socially-minded. Those who do not enjoy themselves are most hard to please. It places great influence on hospitality.*





# COOBER PEDY-THE TOURIST CENTRE

*Another view of the neat and tidy Van Brugge home, which is cool in summer and warm in winter.*

## TOWN IS NOT A "TOUCH"

MANY tourists have the impression that Coober Pedy is a real tourist centre where they expect to be "touched".

Traders are making an intelligent attempt to educate people to opals.

There are times when the opal sellers feel they just can't win.

Often tourists come armed with \$100 to spend on the stones, but when they are told it would be more advisable to buy an opal worth \$25, they believe they are being offered junk.



It is hard to get through to them that there's a big difference between buying an opal at Coober and a city store.

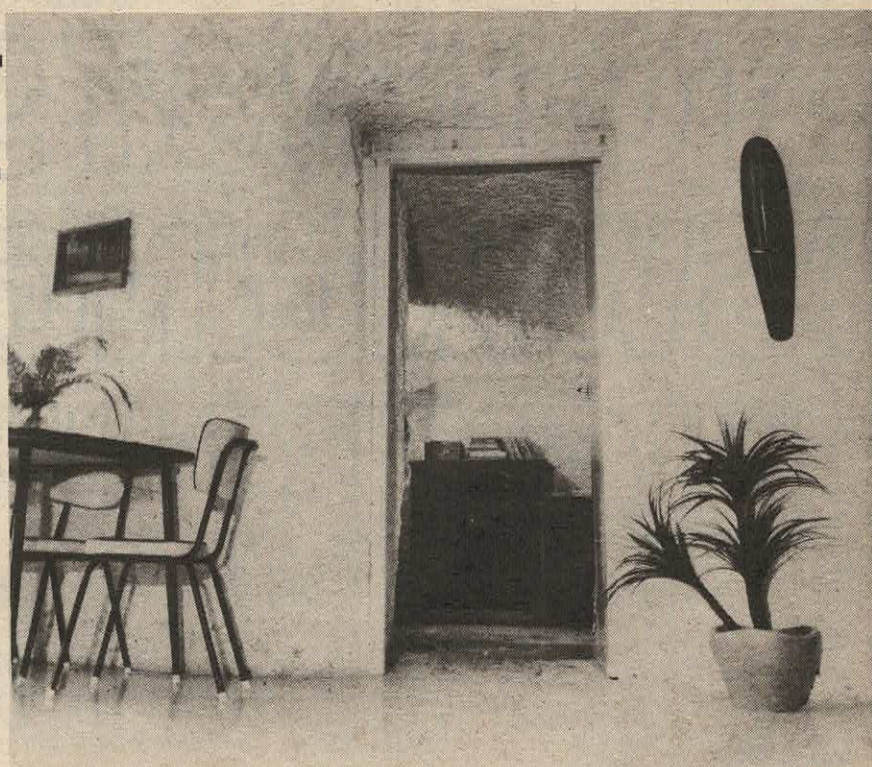
In other cases, they claim they are being asked to pay too much.

It is difficult to convince them that the sellers have a set of values which does not involve "fleecing" people.

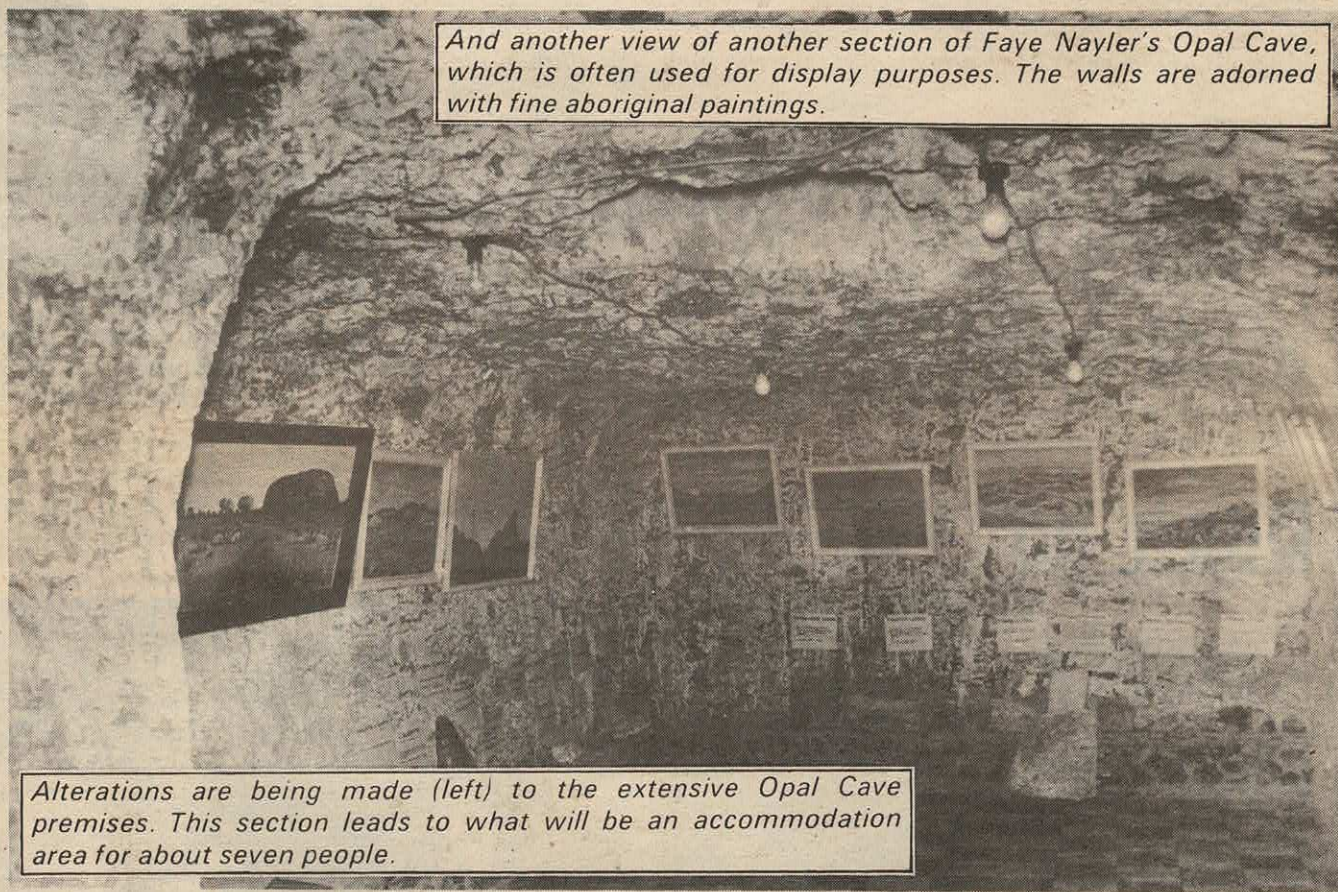
Faye Nayler says: "There are many in Coober Pedy who go out of their way to give the tourist a fair deal.

"It is important that we get across to tourists that the town is not out to take everything and give nothing in return.

"I certainly hope it never comes to that stage."



*And another view of another section of Faye Nayler's Opal Cave, which is often used for display purposes. The walls are adorned with fine aboriginal paintings.*



*Alterations are being made (left) to the extensive Opal Cave premises. This section leads to what will be an accommodation area for about seven people.*

## Beware the invasion

SCHOOL holidays isn't the recommended time for private tourists to visit Coober Pedy.

When the kids are on hols., thousands of them head by coach to Coober. One bus company alone has 53 additional coaches added to its normal operations.

It's conceivable for 15 to 16 coaches to visit the town each day during these times.

All camping accommodation is booked out and toilets and showers are used at a maximum.

The big majority of children are members of charter groups, which are really looked after by the tourist-conscious people of the town.

They regard the youngsters

as the adult tourists of tomorrow, and they hope they'll return in later years.

The Opal Cave runs every school tour as an educational program. More opal-cutting demonstrations — and facts and

figures — are probably given to the students than to adults.

Coach companies arrange the tours, knowing that the town has the facilities to cope with the students. The trips are fun-loving and educational.

## Women active

WOMEN settling on the opal fields soon find plenty of community activities they can get "their teeth into".

They can join the Coober Pedy branch of the Country Women's Association and strong school and welfare groups attached to the school.

There are women's groups

attached to the various churches and the hospital auxiliary, which is a fund-raising committee.

It arranges money-making functions incorporating single people and married couples.

It depends on the woman herself; there is no reason why she should have a dull moment.



# BIG MACHINES

## Brought change to the fields

# MOVE IN ON FIELDS

It was only a little more than five years ago that the first automatic hoist was seen in Lightning Ridge.

Until then, opal mining was done with the windlass. It was a tedious job, and only the most dedicated miner put up with the back-breaking job.

The windlass hook had three to five prongs on it, and the miner would fill as many buckets as he wished, climb up and, with the help of a mirror, hook on to the handles one at a time, and then wind them up.

The automatic hoist was a revolution in opal mining. When speed was of importance, it eliminated the use of a second man. A single miner could achieve two or three times what two miners could do with a windlass.

Alan Vroom and George Bodewes, working from ideas of Eric Catterall, brought the first fully automatic hoist on to the field.

They had a race to see who could build one first. George made his in Sydney and brought it back to The Ridge, where it pulled up a couple of buckets, and stopped.

### Painted

Alan's hoist was finished soon after and, at midnight one night, the first fully-operational automatic hoist was christened.

It was painted blue and can be seen when entering the first gate to the Three Mile Field. It still works well.

Some still prefer the old way, but these are veteran miners, who will never change their habits.

For instance, there's Neville Bell, who two years ago found the famous "Red Robbin" stone at the Six Mile Field. He has always preferred to work alone with his wind-

lass, but he is a true prospector, having been at Lightning Ridge for many years.

Sinking one hole after another, and working with the windlass, pick and candles, he bottomed on one of the best stones ever seen.

The "Red Robbin" was named after the little birds that were always around when he was sinking that vital hole.

Since then, the times have changed drastically; the really big machinery has moved in. They dig holes or trenches for the miners and even open-cut the mines.

There has always been argument against the machines, but people are starting to realise that the ground is just too honey-combed to be safely mined the old way.

Huge cracks appearing near the top are the result of 50 years of intensive mining.

Many of the older mines have just fallen in, and it's a miracle that nobody has been killed.

Greedy miners who have taken all the opal clay possible have left huge "ballrooms", and the use of machinery is the only way to get to reserves left in the best-producing mines.

It is in areas such as these that the big machines like the 977K of

Jim Abignan and the Kato of Michael Sulc's, are moving into.

Kato excavators are popular at the Three Mile flat area, where the ground is from five to 20 feet in depth, before reaching the opal clay.

Some prefer just a trench or a huge hole, depending on the solidity of the ground. The charge is \$30 an hour, but prices do vary on the amount of work to be done. The Kato removes about two-thirds of a yard at a time.

### Capable

In areas where opal clay is down to 50-ft. or more, it is necessary to open cut, and this is where the Catapilla 977K is found. It is capable of moving 100 yards of dirt a day, and in one scoop, can move three and a third yards.

The hiring of this machine is \$20 an hour, which includes the charge of the operator. The final cost of an open cut would depend on the size of the claim, and the depth before the formation of opal clay.

### Overhead

The largest open cut in the area cost \$12,000, but while the owner was walking behind the Cat, he picked up a stone which almost paid his overhead.

That's all part of the luck in opal mining.

A minority believes it is dangerous to open-cut, but if the job is

done properly, it is quite safe.

Nobody appears to mind now if a miner does open-cut, provided it doesn't affect adjoining claims.

But the miners of Lightning Ridge are bitterly opposed to any company trying to take over an area.



An automatic hoist in action at Lightning Ridge. They have revolutionised the opal fields.

## Nearly a sour note for "The Tuner"

ALTHOUGH the Three Mile is one of the oldest fields in Lightning Ridge, it is still among the most popular.

It's hard to say how many miners work the area, but it could be as high as 40 per cent of the miners at The Ridge.

It covers such areas as Lunatic Hill, Three Mile Flat, Western Fall and Eastern Fall.

Most tourists flock to the Three Mile, because it is easy to find, and is about the only place of which they have heard in the district.

In the 1920s, the population of Lightning Ridge was about 3,000, and the actual township was at the Three Mile. That is difficult to believe now, because the only traders are the occasional opal stall-holders.

The mines have been worked and re-worked until only the pillars are left. In one part of the Three Mile, near the top, it is so honey-combed that you can climb down one hole and come up half a mile away.

If you know the way, that is!

The sight in some mines leaves one quite breathless. In one claim alone there are so many props it looks

like a forest. In an adjoining claim the props have been driven into the ground, because of the pressure.

They are about 15-in. thick and up to 22-ft. in height. Some have snapped like matchsticks.

In the past four months, there have been two cracks on the surface, which the miners have watched in dread. The cracks are growing larger and run downhill.

### Pressure

One has almost made a U-turn and is becoming wider.

It's in this area that the miners refer to "weeping" or "talking" of the mines. This is when pieces of sandstone or opal clay explode from pressure.

If a miner ignores these warnings, he is a fool. It is just a matter of time before the lot goes.

There is a badly-cracked shaft near the famous Scots mine,

about six claims from where the surface cave-in. A gap has appeared about 15-ft. down the wall of the shaft, and the side has moved in about 12 inches.

Some of the best quality black opal has been found in the vicinity, and the miners are most reluctant to give it up.

Last week, however, portion of a claim almost next to the Scots mine caved in.

Nobody was down the shaft.

A miner known as "The Tuner" had been working the claim, and he knew the time was near for the collapse. He had decided to give it away for a while, because of previous, minor falls.

The mine was like a huge "ballroom", 150-ft. by 70-ft., and 60-ft. deep.

It appears that when "The Tuner" originally worked the claim, he had a safety area to Armidale.

But the safety area was the first section to go!

It is only in the best claims that the "ballrooms" are created, because most miners leave pillars for support. However, when good color and traces are found, the pillars are replaced by props.

### Expense

"The Tuner" did not have props; only roof bolts, which may not have been good enough. The area was so vast that nobody could understand how it stayed up so long.

One miner was heard to remark: "The Tuner" has already saved a good deal of expense towards open cutting."

Police and a mining warden have inspected the area, and forwarded reports to the mines engineer at Armidale.



## Croatian miners split up

# POLICE IN ON BOMB THREAT

THE police are investigating an alleged bomb threat involving a Glengarry claim owned by two Croatians.

According to the police, the Croatians are disputing ownership.

The miners are said to have split up, and one wants to sell the claim to a third Croat.

The alleged trouble really started when a note was received by a neighbor of the third party. It advised that "a bomb has been placed in your claim, and adjoining claims will be blown down."

The neighbor's involvement in the affair was apparently restricted to the fact that he knew all parties involved.

The note, found under his door, said a bomb would destroy the mine that morning.

Miners were evacuated from the fields, but no bomb was found, although the three mines named were searched.

## Mr Stone had them guessing

BEING an opal miner, Mr. J. Stone was aptly named.

And apparently he has made a "pretty penny" from opal mining, partly because of a well-kept secret.

He was the man who discovered the Glengarry field 45 miles from Lightning Ridge and seven miles from the well-known Grawin fields.

That was in October, 1970, but it was kept secret until the following January, although Lightning Ridge miners had heard about the strike.

Many attempts to follow the Glengarry miners failed until they were eventually trailed by aeroplane.

At the start, huge quantities of opal were being brought from Glengarry and, as miners left The Ridge to try their luck, the population in the new centre passed the 1000 mark.

There was a fear that Lightning Ridge would become a ghost town overnight as makeshift stores opened up, telephone lines were installed, and an airstrip was provided for light aircraft.

Many miners from Gilgandra were there to try their luck, and the field adopted a real pioneering outlook.

As drilling rigs sank shaft after shaft, it became apparent there would be only a dozen really good claims, and these would be mainly in the gully area.

The average depth to

opal-bearing country was 10 feet, and the opal was found in seams, not nobbies.

Some of the good quality stones could pass for Lightning Ridge opal, but a lot had a film or haze over it, and did not have that certain sharpness.

Initially, Glengarry opal was classed as only second or third grade opal, and the miner had to be content with poor prices.

However, the stigma has disappeared, and prices are now equal with those of The Ridge.

NO NEED FOR A LANTERN

## OPAL MINERS' Weekly



Here's a picture to hang in one of those "ballrooms" at the Three Mile. Cheryl Andrews, a Sydney lass, would brighten up any claim.

## Yo-yos or opals?

A DIRECT quote from "Lois Starr", ace reporter of the "Lightning Flash", in the last issue of that lively little paper:

"I took shelter (in the pub) during the sudden dust storm, and heard two miners discussing the mining game."

"One said anything would be better than being an opal miner. The other agreed, saying even a job as a yo-yo salesman would be better."

"The first miner reflected a little, shook his head, and said: 'Ah, no mate, even that would have its ups and downs and with a few strings attached.'"

## Christening for a road

AT long last the bitumen is down on the Castlereagh Highway to the Lightning Ridge turn-off.

To celebrate, the Department of Main Roads boys put on an 18-gallon keg.

Then the miners had a quick whip around and "Kicked in" for a second "Eighteen".

They all sat around at the turn-off and "christened" the road, which will greatly benefit The Ridge.

They drank the lot during a very merry spree.

When news reached town that the bitumen was down, nobody believed it; after all, it had taken years.

It now means that residents and visitors can get through without being bogged during heavy rains and storms.

There had been 10

miles of dirt road which was impossible to travel on with the slightest rain.

Work started on the road from Walgett to Lightning Ridge five and a half years ago. The bitumen stopped eight miles out of Walgett, the travellers then had a nightmarish 33 miles to travel to The Ridge.

The road is going on to the Gogdooga turn-off, but that's of little interest to anyone, because the main highway traffic heads for Lightning Ridge.

Many have spent a night sleeping in the car, because of the impassable road. Many a tourist has made a belated rush out of Lightning Ridge when black

clouds suddenly appeared.

Mail services were non-existent when it rained, and the situation became really serious when school students had to stay home during final examinations.

During last year's floods, the town was completely cut off, and food supplies were flown in. Housewives started to bake their own bread, as there was no bakery in the town, and the bread from Coonamble and Walgett did not arrive.

There are still five miles of dirt to travel before the bitumen, but this is an excellent section rarely affected by rain.

### LAST WEEK'S

ODOR	SPOT
FIVE	CARAT
FEET	ON ROC
TRIPLE	TOO
RED	SALT
SPREE	SENSE
ARID	CON
NOD	SOLACE
END	AM TALL
GLARE	OSLO
EXIT	REAP

### THIS WEEK'S

BAT	CHAP	PST
EVA	AONE	SALE
DEMON	STRATION	
BET	PARTS	
SATES	SPAR	
PLAY	STARTLES	
OAR	APORT	ORE
TREASURE	LOSE	
WIRE	LATER	
AHEAD	SIN	
CORRESPONDENT		
STONE	HOSE	TOE
STE	ETON	ARE