



Coober Pedy

This hall was refurbished from an original mining site dug in the early 1900's later extended in the 1960's and 1970's
Established as a meeting hall on 12th July 1991



Pastor Deane & Valerie Clee

Deane and I were born in Adelaide South Australia and fellowshipped at the Adelaide Revival Centre. Deane worked as a Chartered Accountant in Adelaide, whilst I was a house wife and mother to 3 girls. Deane came to Coober Pedy in 1971 to help with Tax Matters and his clientele grew to a point that he was up here more than in Adelaide. He would come home with the most fascinating and exciting stories about Coober Pedy and the people here, so, when the children had flown the coop I decided to come up to Coober Pedy to have a look for myself.

I fell in love with the countryside as soon as we had left Port Augusta, why? I didn't have a clue. One of Deane's clients in Coober Pedy was Mick Lucas and Son, one of the local supermarkets. When we arrived in Coober Pedy, Luke Lucas took us out to his mine. 30 metres straight down a ladder we went. He and his mates showed how mining for opal was done with the hair-raising excitement of setting off explosives with the expectation of finding the elusive gem - whilst we were still down in the mine, I might add. I was amazed at the colours of the soil along with the slips, slides and levels. The elusive Opal when found is absolutely exquisite.

We set up home on the edge of town in a dugout and invited people to fellowship with us on Sundays. Over a period of time there were too many people coming for our little lounge room, so we looked around for a hall that we could use for the church meetings. We found 'this' unused condemned mine property.



Deane and I bought it and investigated all the old mine openings. We slid down old shafts in pitch black with only a torch in our hand to discover more old mine tunnels. It was very exciting. We developed our meeting hall and found a pocket of Sea Shells, (we call Cockles) in the ceiling. We opened the Revival Fellowship hall in 1991.

There was another tunnel dug out with an old hand built tunneling machine by a previous owner. It was to be turned into a motel but the machine could only cut to 6 feet (2 metres) high and when they discovered there was a large mine underneath they abandoned it. We decided to continue the development with a machine that could cut 8 feet (2.6 metres) and we opened the Motel with Flag International in 1996. Up to this stage we hadn't found any opal, and we had to rely on our savings and prayers to finish the construction work.

During the first 7 years we had to turn guests away during our busy times. In 1999 we decided that it was time to extend and to make it a viable proposition for anyone wanting to purchase the property at a later stage. We put a fleece out to the Lord that if He felt it was a good idea to do the extensions then I wanted our original tunneling machine operator (Paul Reynolds) to return to Coober Pedy from the Pacific Islands to work in the dust, grease and noise to do the work.

Well, miraculously, he did just that and that was our sign that our plans were going to work out. Paul jumped at the chance and could not wait to finish the job he started five years before. We had lots of annoying little problems that came our way like you find in any building work, but we found little pockets of vertical white opal and discovered little mines (The Bottle Shop), that we didn't know were there. We found green seam opal in room #15, and many colourful skin shells all over the place. Halfway up the ramp we found a pocket of sea shells that the original miners missed by inches. Both large and small shells, snails and ancient coral plants.

Later when tunneling out the back section we found that we had plenty of room between the area that we were digging and the rooms in the lower corridor. Instead of leaving the rooms 7.5 metres long we extended them to 8 metres. In room #21 we hit on the most glorious pocket of solid opalised sea shells we had ever seen. If we left the rooms at 7.5 metres we would have missed them.

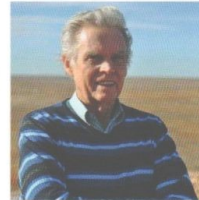


There were 141 pieces of opal in total. All solid crystal opal. 41 were perfectly shaped shells. We were so excited we couldn't work for a week, each day we had to get them out and play, look and glorify God at His wonderful work. Paul said that the pocket could be worth \$100,000 in its raw state. But we decided to hold on to them so our guests could also see, enjoy and purchase one for themselves. Only a few are now on display in the Opal Room due to a robbery in April 2014.

With our extensions partially finished we opened 7 new rooms in 2001. Since then we have set up our dining room, the Soft Rock Café, lounge, reception and Opal Room. We are hoping to finish the Soft Rock Café area with public toilets and a 'Take a walk through History' mine tour through the original mines beneath the motel.

In April 2017 Deane passed away due to cancer, Praise the Lord it was relatively pain free. We miss him dearly and we will always appreciate the wonderful underground 'castle' he left behind for us to enjoy. Valerie now lives in Adelaide and comes up for visits throughout the year. It is certainly a wonderful blessing to have the daughter, grand daughter & great granddaughter continuing on the family business.

We do hope you enjoy your stay with us and return again soon.



Deane Clee

9-5-44 to 20-4-17

Pastor, Accountant, jack of all trades, Most importantly Husband, Son, Father, Grand Father, Great Grandfather, Friend

Revival Fellowship Hall & Sunday School

This original opal mine is one of the largest open expanses underground in Coober Pedy, measuring approx 18x8mtrs. When we purchased this property squatters had used open fires inside which caused the rock on the roof to blacken. We reversed a flat bed truck inside and chipped off the black soot returning it to its natural colour. Please take your time to look round, turn lights on and please take as many photos as you like. There are pamphlets, free of charge, about our beliefs with Bible references, please help yourself.

1. **Entrance** Turn the lights on to the right behind the door -
2. **Down Lights** These lights were made possible by an extensive line of drilled holes snaking its way from the floor up the walls and long the ceiling. A tissue was attached to a string line then vacuumed through the holes, the electrical wires were then attached to the string and pulled through. Exhausting, time consuming work, but worth the effort.
3. **Rock Wall** These rocks cover up an original mine tunnel that connected through to the Old Timers Mine. Being a man made solid wall you can sometimes hear people on the other side.
4. **Depression holes** The Miners drill an 8 foot long hole and fill it with an explosive 'sausage' which is large enough to crack the surrounding rock, making it easier to remove, without bringing the roof down.
5. **Trap Door** Under the carpet you will find a trap door over an existing mine shaft. This shaft leads down to the Sunday School Cavern and connected to the Old Timers Mine.
6. **Shaft Keyhole** This was an original shaft hand dug by the miners in 1925. The 'keyhole' shape allowed the miner to dig from one side, fill the bucket, lift to the top then do the other side. As they go deeper you can see the foot holes cut, so the miner could climb out if the rope broke.
7. **Sunday School Cavern.** This leads to a deeper mine area.
8. **Mining Tools.** This wheelbarrow was left behind by the miners. This type of hand made equipment was made from scraps, old cars, truck, machinery. Notice there are no support legs, it was easier to roll the bucket and tip it over to empty.
9. **Collapse** This section was water damaged from a leaky water pipe. The water was absorbed by the sandstone which swells and then falls, naturally doming the ceiling making it stronger and safe.
10. **Shaft** Look up! This shaft measures approximately 20 metres to the surface. The window you can see leads to a kitchen a floor above. This shaft was hand dug by Ron Gough using his elbow as a guide to make it round in shape. Ron's grave is at the front of the Old Timers Mine
11. **Shells in Situ** The largest deposit of sea shells was found whilst tunneling out this area. We cannot see any colour from this view point but you never know what is further in the rock. *By turning on the black light and turning off the main lights you can see how they are highlighted. I laid on my back chiseling around the shells to reveal them.
12. **Prophecy Display Boards** These boards contain lots of information about the prophecies held within the bible. Take your time to look them over and check them out in your own bible!
13. **Kitchen Area (Original Soft Rock Cafe)** We now have the Soft Rock Cafe in the motel next door, take a walk through the motel and order a coffee - underground

Please remember to turn off ALL the lights when you are finished.

