

Teachers for Tough Jobs

By A Staff Reporter

A stocky, fair 22 year old Ukrainian migrant has volunteered for SA's toughest teaching job.

He is Anatolij Waniarcha, of Nunyah Avenue, Parkholme, who will go next year to the first school to be opened on arid Coober Pedy opal fields, six hundred miles north-west of Adelaide.

Anatolij will help another volunteer, Mr G. Byrne, now teaching at Coobowie, near Edithburgh to "break in" fifteen part-Aboriginal children of various ages, who have never been to school.

They will also teach a dozen white children, who previously depended on Ceduna School of the Air, conducted by the Bush Church Aid Society's Flying Medical Service.

Like Malcolm Cowan, 19, Payneham, who has volunteered to teach 40 white and Aboriginal children at Andamooka opal field, Anatolij has just completed training at Wattle Park Teachers College.

Anatolij said yesterday, "When volunteers for the new Coober Pedy school, to open in February, were called for, I felt that this was an adventurous challenge I'd gladly accept.

"I expect to live in a cliff dugout like most Coober Pedy opal-gougers."

Malcolm Cowan will help Mr Rowland J. Bills, who has conducted Andamooka School alone since it was open in 1947. Andamooka is about 70 miles north of Woomers.

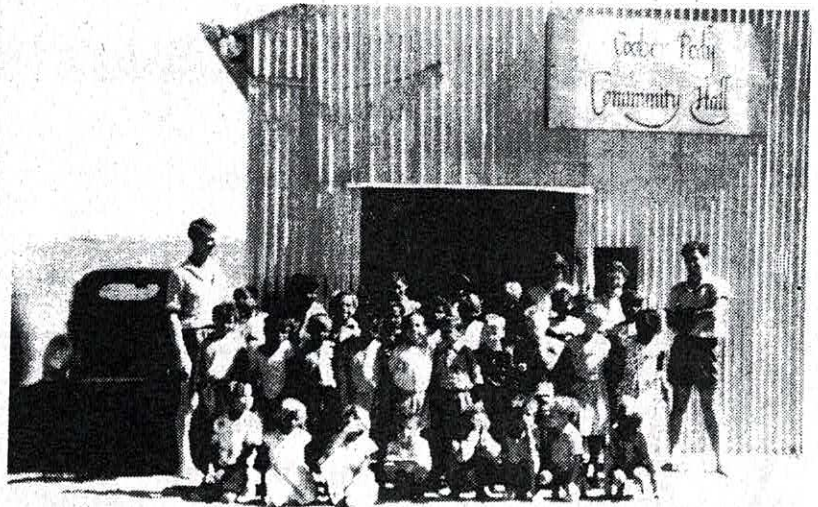


Mr. Malcolm Cowan (left) and Mr. Anatolij Waniarcha conferring yesterday.

TEACHING AT COOBER PEDY.

"Challenging, stimulating, unique", comments on teaching at Coober Pedy by today's teachers. Essentially teaching at Coober Pedy has not changed over the years, though the description 'SA's toughest teaching job' no longer applies, if it ever did!

The article "Teachers for Tough Jobs" was written in 1959 before the school was set up in 1960 at the Progress Hall (near where Traces Resturant now stands) by Geoff Byrnes and Anatolij Waniarcha. In 1961 the school was transferred to a new transportable building on the present school grounds.



The first school. Photo taken in 1991 when Geoff Byrnes & Sid Allen were teaching. Photo courtesy Geoff Byrnes.