

Faye Nayler - her story

In the Easter of 1961 Faye Nayler, a friend and her dog Whisky, arrived in her ancient Vanguard utility, to take up the position of cooks at Brewster's "Madas Motel" on the Opal Field of Coober Pedy nestled in the foot hills of the Stuart Ranges, in central South Australia.

Faye believed that her stay would be only for the tourist season (April until August) when coaches stayed overnight at the Madas motel. She ended her nominated stay, with a fierce love for the dusty desert mining town and stayed for a period of 22 years.

Faye was a member of the Progress Association when the town voted to build a Hospital for the Mining Field. She was also a -

Founding Member - Hospital Auxiliary, President for three years
Founding Member - Coober Pedy Opal Field Golf Club
Committee Member four years
Founding Member - Miss Australia Quest committee in Coober Pedy
President for three years, raising money for the
"Coober Pedy Council of America"
Founding Member - Australian Long Distance coach crew Association
Committee Member, Three Years
Member of Coober Pedy S.E.S.
Welfare Officer, For two years.

Faye retired because of ill health and sold "The Opal Cave" in 1982.
Then in 1988 she bought "The Enduring Heart" in Ladby, Queensland. Where she managed and planned many events including an Octoberfest to celebrate the birth centenary and to celebrate the origin of the first building. She sold the Heart and retired in 2001.
Since her retirement Faye keeps herself busy with writing and music - composing music and lyrics sometimes singing in aged people's homes.

She has written a book - "Warm in my Heart" Ballads and Stories of the Opal Field.
Published by Faye Publishing 1998

She composed the music and lyrics - "Faye's Musical". As yet to be staged
- "Like no Place Else" The musical is based on returning the land of Ayres Rock (Faye) to the indigenous owners, and about the journey of a child owner who finds himself in Coober Pedy searching for opal.

Published Music and Lyrics
- "Woodshed Wally" Recorded on

Country Tapes "Dynamic Drive" Vocals - Dyan Rae "Nightlight Studios" K&B01

CD - "Country Downunder" VOL.2 Vocals - Dyan Rae "Spiral Recordings" BIC0002

CD - "Country Downunder" VOL.4 Vocals - Dyan Rae "Spiral Recordings" BIC0004

CD - "Country Downunder" VOL.4 Vocals - Dyan Rae "Spiral Recordings" BIC0004

CD - "Shades of Country" Faye's selection - Heather Birtles "West Audio Productions"

- "Gandy Queens of the Deep" Vocals - Faye Naylor "Air Play recording Studio"

Country Tapes - " - " Vocals - Faye Naylor "Air Play recording Studio"

Unpublished work not staged

- Musical "Like no place else"
Music and lyrics © Faye Naylor 1982-1997

was responsible for building the first Cafe in Coober Pedy in the latter mid she named the Windlass. It was severely damaged when a Tornado razed most in December of 1961. Picking up the pieces she continued until she sold the cafe suggested that she pick a hill - and build herself a dugout (an underground mining friend loaned her a compressor and two jack hammers, a wheel barrow, shovel and an auger. She only had enough money to purchase her water ration, a baghetti, potatoes, onions and diesel for the compressor and gelignite and fuse to the hill she had selected. Mining friends taught her to make up the shots and to the holes she had augured in the hard sandstone. Then they would come and \$ at the end of the day, leaving the fumes to dissipate during the night, then shovelbarrow, pick and shovel she cleaned out the mullock, trimmed the face, and shots to blow the next section. It was a long laborious task which she finished in ur months.

time the dugout was finished all thoughts of a cafe had disappeared.

Tourists were braving the rough Stuart Highway full of potholes and sandy bulldust, looking for adventure in the vast outback land. Faye saw the potential of the emerging Tourist Industry. More and more tourist ventured up the track and with a dream, hard work and 13 shillings (\$1.30 cents) "The Opal Cave" was born.

Using all of the skills she had acquired while working for the Y.W.C.A, Faye started the first town tours in Coober Pedy. With microphone in hand she boarded the coaches, showing the people the main points of interest and sharing the many stories of miners, their fortunes and heart break and the history of the mining field also taking them to view her Underground Home. At the end of the tour they would come back to the Opal Cave where she would lecture them on Opal and show them how opals were cut and polished and selling the odd cut stone, bottles of opal chips or, hand made souvenirs.

By 1962 Tour companies were conducting Camping Tours - erecting tents at road-side stops. The Opal Cave now developed a camping ground where the coaches could camp, pitching Tents or using the three corrugated iron sheds built to provide shelter from the wind and dust. Facilities were unique. Toilets built over deep shafts, there was no water, it was hauled in by tanker and rationed - fires were lit under two half cut diesel drums and was ladled out to the tourists (half a bucket of hot - half a bucket of cold) it was the first shower that they had since Ayres Rock or Port Augusta. The water was tipped into a bucket with a shower rose and tap on the bottom and pulled up on a chain, hooked on to the wall in the shower rooms and peopled showered.

Primitive as it was, the tourist thought it was heaven: it was the best we could do in those early days.

We generated our own electricity using wind generators and diesel engines and batteries. The lights went out when the diesel was turned off.

With the advent of town power in early 70's Faye had four underground dormitories excavated under her hill and cover for the camping tour cooks who traveled with the coaches providing meals for the passengers. By this time the Opal Cave had a staff of 10 - Tour Guides, Lecturers, cleaners, yard and Maintaince man - working with 753 tourist Coaches a year.

Her home which she shared with two girl friends, was extended by buying the dugout next door, hiring a couple of miners and all working together extended and built on an underground flat, another bedroom - wine cellar, lounge, bar and Jasper Fire place. A Building contractor faced the dugout hill and built a large cement block verandah with a swimming pool at one end - with water hauled in from a salty bore and filtered through sand! It was another first! A swimming pool in Coober Pedy and many friends and their children learned to swim in the salt water pool.

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President for three years, raising money for the
"Cerebral Palsy Council of Australia"
 - Founding Member - Australian Long Distance coach crews Association
Committee Member. Three Years
- Member of Coober Pedy S.E.S.
Welfare Officer. For two years.

Faye retired because of ill health and sold "The Opal Cave" in 1982.
Then In 1983 she bought "The Exchange Hotel" in Laidley, Queensland Where she managed and planned many events including an October-fest to celebrate the hotels centenary and to celebrate the origins of the first builders. She sold the Hotel and retired in 2001.
Since her retirement Faye keeps herself busy with writing and music - composing music and lyric sometimes singing in aged people's homes.

She has written a book -: "Warm in my Heart" Ballads and Stories of the Opal Field.
Published by Pinto Publishing 1998

Has composed the music and libretto -: For a Musical - As yet to be staged
-: "Like no Place Else" The musical is based on returning the land at Ayres Rock (Uluru) to the indigenous owners, and about the journey of a chalet owner who finds himself in Coober Pedy searching for opal.

Published Music and Lyrics

- "Woolshed Waltz" Recorded on _

Cassette Tape- "Dynamic Dyna" Vocals - Dyna Rae "Nightlight Studios" R&R01
CD - "Country Downunder" VOL2 Vocals - Dyna Rae "Birubi Recordings" Bircd002
CD - "Country Downunder" VOL 4 Vocals - Dyna Rae "Birubi Recordings" Birc0006
CD- "Cottage Country Selection Vocals - Desley McDonald "Spartek Studios" Birc0031
CD- "Shades of Country" Piano accordion – Heather Botica "Reel Audio Productions"
▪ "Gentle Giants of the Deep"
Cassette Tape- " -: " Vocals - Faye Nayler "Air Play recording Studio"
CD - Vocals - Faye Nayler "Air Play recording Studio"

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Music and libretto © Faye Nayler 1982-1997

