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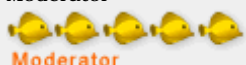


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Lightning Ridge - Town Information - English



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Autor	Nachricht
<p>Crocodile Dundee Moderator</p>   <p>Anmeldungsdatum: 28.02.2003 Beiträge: 152 Wohnort: Outback</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Verfasst am: 01.04.03 - 13:02 Titel: Lightning Ridge - Town Information - English  zitat</p> <hr/> <p>Occupied for forty years by Sid and George Graham, who extended their endless "verandah hospitality", the hut was built in 1932 by Albert Spicer when he struck opal. His son Mal still visits the Ridge and has presented the Society with original photos of his father and their camp at the 3 Mile.</p> <p>Known today as Heritage Cottage, the hut offers tourist information and select handcrafted items are for sale in an historical setting. The bark dividing walls, dirt floors and kerosene tin chimney are typical of early Ridge architecture. The original wood stove may belt out heat, sending up whiffs of smoke, on a cold winter's morn!</p> <p>In the backyard of the Reserve is the relocated Cottage Hospital, presently under restoration. This modest 3 room Federation structure was built after Lightning Ridge opened the eleventh Bush Nurse Association in NSW, October 1914.</p> <p>This rural health program was patterned after one Lady Dudley, wife of the Governor General of the day, had established in Ireland, and was supported mainly by community funding. The BNA at Lightning Ridge was the longest serving in NSW, and the only one still able to support two nurses, when the scheme was absorbed by the Health Commission January 1, 1975. .</p> <p>Built of locally available cypress pine (white ant resistant), the Cottage Hospital is of a reverse construction (framework on the outside for economy). It was erected by volunteers at no cost, according to the Walgett Spectator, presumably under the direction of Tom Urwin and Ronald McDonald, local builders of the day.</p> <p>* 1900</p> <p>Opal found late in the year by Jack Murray, boundary rider on Dunumbral Run, Bundinbarrina Station. He got fired from his job for digging up the land rather than looking after it!</p> <p>* 1901</p> <p>First registered miner, Jack Murray, was reported by Mr. Andrews, Inspector of Mines in his 1902 report. Other early miners on the field were Nat Hennessey, Peter Ferguson, Ted Bishop, and the Canfell Brothers - Tom, Mick, and Jim.</p> <p>* 1902</p> <p>Late that year, Charlie Nettleton, the first professional prospector with experience on the goldfields and at White Cliffs, began to sink a shaft at McDonald's 6-Mile, then on Angledool Station. Joe Beckett of</p>

Weetalibah Hotel, northend of the Walgett to Angledool road, and a syndicate of businessmen sponsored his efforts. Interestingly, the Manager of Angledool Station wasn't part of it. Apparently, back in the 1880s, opal specimens he had sent to Sydney were returned as valueless.

* 1903

Nettleton's Shaft proved to be a duffer, and he mined over on Dunumbral Run near Murray. After a parcel of opal was returned to the syndicate from Sydney due to the paltry offer, the two miners teamed up. Later in the year, they walked a parcel of black opal to White Cliffs, where the market was based on light opal. This unusual nodular dark opal brought but a pittance from E F Murphy, who was willing to take the risk, promising a supplement to follow with the approval of his principal. Tullie Wollaston in Adelaide was enthusiastic. He deserves the credit for developing the world market for black opal. The first mineral lease applied for in Walgett was 22 1/2 acres near Angledool village.

* 1905

The first opal rush on Sims Hill named Ted Bishop "Opal King". He took his parcel to Sydney, prompted by a suspicious sale of one big stone in Angledool village. The Western Lands Minister of Mines was amazed at the good quality, in view of former information. Bishop sold his other big opal in Adelaide and made up his losses!

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* 1906

Wallangulla settlement began forming near the Wallangilla Tank, the closest waterhole on Dunumbral Run. Tenders were called for the sinking of a government tank for the fluctuating community as the farmers weren't cooperative with letting miners use their tanks. Hammond Hill at the Grawin discovered. The first Council of Walgett Shire formed.

* 1907

New Town and the Cemetery were surveyed on land least likely to be opal bearing. Hence Wallangulla, where the school and post office had already opened, became known as Old Town. Tanksinker Fred Dowdle was working. His family is still represented in the town. E F Murphy, opalbuyer, relocated to Old Town from White Cliffs.

* 1908

Nettleton or 3-Mile Flat settlement sprang up in a gully just three miles west of Sims Hill, when a new rush broke out nearby, on the same long **ridge**. The government tank didn't get quite finished, but it soon rained and filled. The Great Opal Robbery caused a stir. A local was convicted, based on the witness Ernie Smith, mail contractor. His son and namesake "Sonny" of Walgett will be 90 next year. The George Brown family arrived - grandson Bob Molyneux is still resident. The Dominick Brothers cycled from White Cliffs - two grandchildren still here. Charlie Dunstan found two huge opals, "Fire Queen" and "Queen of the Earth", at Angledool diggings. The railhead was completed to Walgett.

* 1909

In its heyday, probably 1200 people, mostly single men, lived on the 3 Mile, an independent community to Old Town. Ion Idriess, miner and well known author, describes the situation in his "**Lightning Ridge**", published 1940. The first accommodation, the Imperial Hotel, opened December 1909 in the New Town, when Bradys, opalbuyers from White Cliffs, also moved into their home (Walford's today, up from Festival IGA today). The Bruce family arrived on the opalfields from Cobar, as did the ABJ "Pappa" Francis family -

some grandchildren are still here! Pappa, as well as Ernie Sherman, both Cliffs' opalbuyers, relocated, as production there fell. Mrs ABJ "Kitty" Francis was the only lady opalbuyer, as reported in the Walgett Spectator. The Vice Regal, Sir Harry Rawson, and his daughter visited Walgett and the **Ridge**. The Kite Brothers, Temora, came north shearing, later settling permanently at the 9 Mile.

* 1910

Population on the Wallangulla Opalfields was larger than Walgett. A call by the miners for permanent water - a bore - to be sunk, fell on deaf ears! First Billiardroom opened across from the Hotel in Morilla Street (where Shell is). Charlie Dunstan was the first reported suicide. A post office agency was established at 3 Mile Flat, and the first New Town post office opened in November, Morilla Street. The first girl baby in the main street was christened Morilla, "Milly" Canfell, by her father Mick. A tender went out for a school at New Town. Mick Donnelly built a nice house - burnt down in Opal Street 1993. Dances were held in Martin's Hall (behind where Terry Barclay lives today).

Climate:

Maximum and minimum Temperature in the

Lightning Ridge and Walgett area

All figures is in Celsius

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV FEB

MAX 34.7 34.0 31.5 27.8 22.3 19.1 18.2 20.4 24.0 28.1 31.5 34.4

MIN 20.6 20.2 17.3 12.8 8.6 5.7 4.2 5.8 8.7 12.9 16.2 18.8

Rainfall on average in millimetres

and number of rainfall days

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV FEB

In mm 45 36 28 22 30 29 22 21 19 29 31 35

Raindays 5 5 5 3 4 5 5 4 4 5 5 5

More Information: <http://www.wj.com.au>

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