

Your Outback Communities Newspaper - Serving the Mid to Far North Communities and the Opal Capital of the World since 1982

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**Opal Festival 2009**  
 Easter Saturday  
**11th April**

**Cooper Pedy**

Fireworks  
 Air Show  
 Street Parade  
 Live Band  
 Events  
 Cash Prizes

**Be there!**  
[www.opalfestival.com.au](http://www.opalfestival.com.au)

# Where Are They Now?

## Peter Christianos (Jnr)

A host of hardy opal men and women will remember scenes like this one below featuring Emmanuel and Peter Christianos with other friends as they worked together on the sun drenched opal fields in Cooper Pedy from the 50s.

A phenomenon had occurred in the harsh desert opal fields, post

war and as a result of the depression years which caused scarcity of work, forcing skilled workers, (many of them migrants) to abandon cities destitute of employment and carve a new era in what became the evolution of the opal industry in Australia.

The Christianos family were very much part of

that early 'make or break' survival period.

Love of opal remains in the Christianos family. The beautiful, illusive opal is still their life's passion. It was this self motivating occupation that saved many from what might have been a bleak existence had they not been prepared to put in those hard yards in difficult times.



Emmanuel (left), Peter Christianos Snr (right) and crew, hard at work on Cooper Pedy's 8 Mile opal field from the late 50s

Let's freeze the frame here and fast forward the scene to Peter Christianos Junior as a new era began with the offspring of our pioneers when Peter Snr met and married his wife, Lilo.

Peter Junior was born

into opal in 1970 and from an early age until today has known little else but the opal industry.

Peter's grandparents are George and Zoë Christianos and together the family dug for opal at the 8 Mile. Eventually Emmanuel went to live

and work in Mintabie.

Peter remembers spending his childhood up until his late teens going to Cooper Pedy for weekends and holidays and recalls his dad, Peter building the futuristic UFO in Cooper Pedy next to the Italian Club.

**Miss Universe Australian 2009 Preliminary Townsville Final: 7.30pm Saturday 28 February**

Australian resident single female entrants aged between 18 - 27 years will be competing for the opportunity to be chosen to represent Qld in the national MUA final at the Sydney Hilton 22 April. Prizes will be awarded for the 3 best dressed entrants in day wear, swim wear & evening wear with the chosen winner to receive a return trip to Sydney, 3 nights stay/meals at Hilton + a stunning opal jewellery pendant.

**NOMA \$100,000 Opal Fashion Bash: Thursday 16 - Sunday 19 April**

This event is Australia's richest student fashion challenge attracting over 500 entrants to Townsville during the Qld Autumn school holidays. It's competition program includes fashion challenges in the following: Fashion Design, Wearable Art, Drawing & Design, Amateur Photography, Modelling & Team Dancing.

Anyone can purchase a Fashion 4 ticket which offers the final show free to attend. More details contact Box Office Ticketing Hotline: 07 4773 8889. More info on Opal Fashion Bash log on to [www.fashionbash.com.au](http://www.fashionbash.com.au)

**YOUTH OF THIS NATION FASHION FUND**  
[www.fashionbash.com.au](http://www.fashionbash.com.au)

Help us support these youth fashion events

Miss Universe Australian 2009 Preliminary Townsville Final ♦ 2009 Townsville World Models Day Celebrations ♦ 2009 NOMA \$100,000 Opal Fashion Bash

# Peter Christianos Jnr - Where Are They Now?



Left:  
Peter as a  
little Coober  
Pedy kid,  
playing ball  
outside the  
family  
dugout



Peter  
Christianos  
Jnr  
practicing  
to be an  
entrepreneur  
in his dad's  
chair



Right:  
Peter at work as a  
professional opal  
cutter

Below: Peter's  
Opals Information  
Website (preview)

Peter Christianos (above) of "Opaline" based in Winton is now 38 years old and the proud father of two. He lives near Noosa with his family.

Peter said, "my passion always was in Opal and it remains my career and my challenge to help popularise our magnificent Gem.

My life's ambition is to promote opal although

I am not a miner, but have never enjoyed my life so much as when I pretend to be one - the thrill of finding our 'precious stone' having no equal."

Peter who is a cutter by profession, told us, "I have had the privilege of cutting \$30m worth of Boulder Opal besides a \$1m or two of Black and Crystal, since I was 7 years old and first learnt to cut (or rather

burn myself on the metho lamp at my uncle Emmanuel's home in Coober Pedy).

I work with my dad and Opaline is our business which is based in Winton and we are, withstanding the market conditions, in the best position to produce Opal that we have ever been perhaps since my father and Grandpa's finds in the late 50's and 60's".



Pictured above: are Niko Athanasiadis, Peter Christianos Jnr, Gianni Athanasiadis, Peter's mum Lilo, Mike Saj-Rynes and John Rynes at the 7th Australian Opal Exhibition held at the Gold Coast in 2008. 300 visitors attended this exhibition from all over the world.

Exhibitors displayed the largest range of opal ever seen in one location and came from all corners of Australia including Lightning Ridge, Coober Pedy, Adelaide, Winton, Quilpie and overseas.

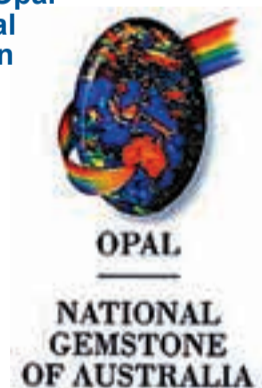


<http://www.opalsinformation.com>

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**Dorothea MacKellar (1885-1968) - 'My Country'**

"An Opal hearted country a wilful lavish land, all those who have not loved her you will not understand."

Australia's National Gemstone - a fitting emblem of this vibrant young nation!

**Opal Fields Weather**

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**About Opal**  
**Australia's National Gemstone**

Opal was proclaimed Australia's National Gemstone by Governor General Bill Hayden on the 27th of July 1993.

Opal is a fitting symbol of a spirited and diverse nation, 'an opal hearted country' which is home to 95% of the world's Precious Opal.

The hugely successful Australian National Women's Basketball team is affectionately known as 'The Opals'.

Opal is the official Gemstone of the State of South Australia.

Black Opal was proclaimed the State Gemstone and new Emblem of New South Wales on the 7th of May 2008.

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