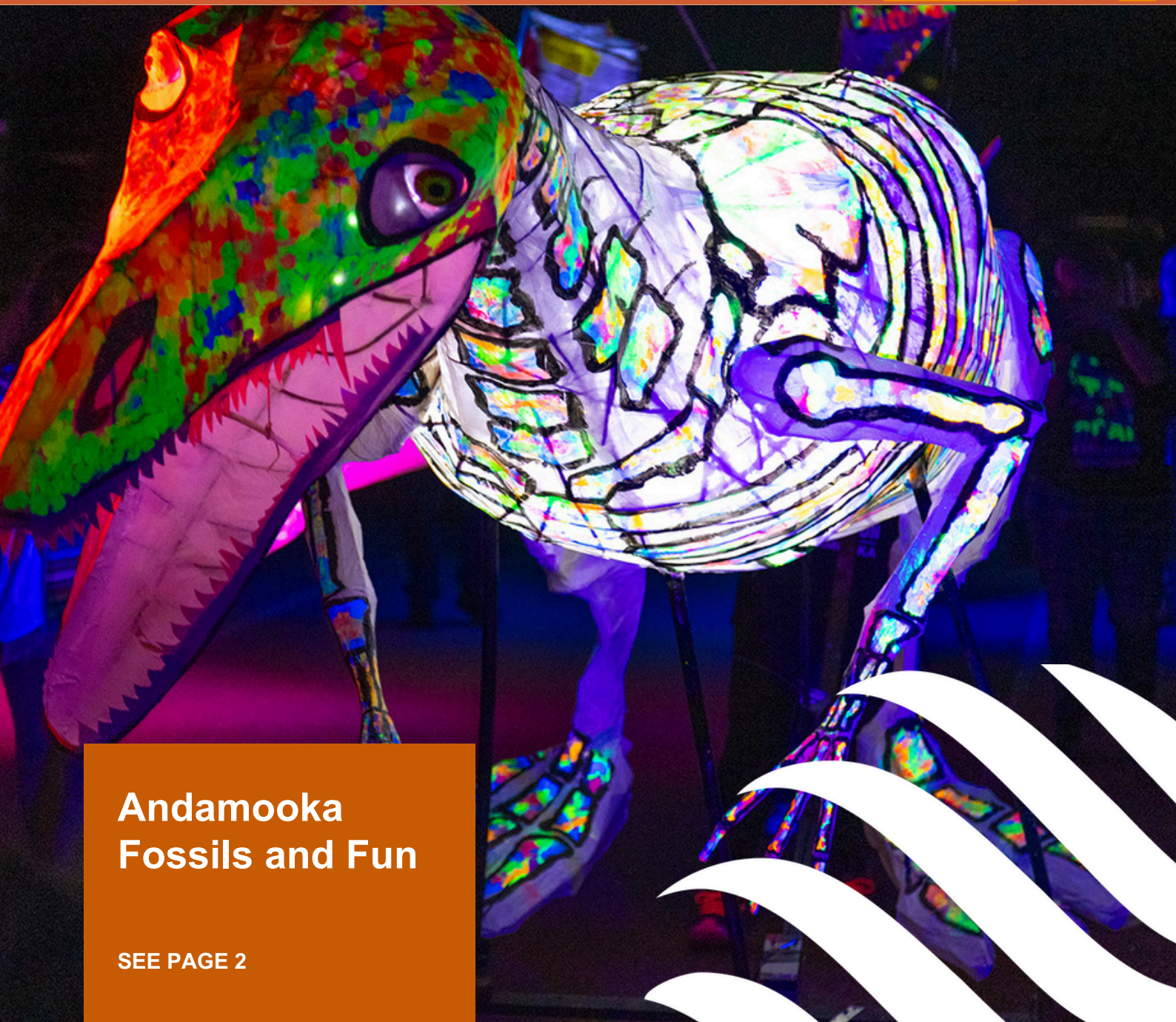


NOVEMBER 2024

# Outback SA Newsletter

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Andamooka  
Fossils and Fun

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# Andamooka Festivities

## ANDAMOOKA SHINES DURING THE OCTOBER LONG WEEKEND!

The OCA was proud to sponsor Andamooka’s Colour Run and Lapidary Club workshops and was delighted to join the festivities in support of these community events.

Andamooka is always a joy to visit - it is a landscape like no other, characterised by mounds and holes, with a great community at its heart. This year’s Colour Run, organised by APOMA, Donna Waters and Rebecca Parker, had 97 participants – twice as many as last year. The participants raced a course while trying to avoid, or submit to, a cavalcade of foam from fire trucks and coloured slime. It was an extremely fun and energetic start to the day that brought many visitors to the town.

In the evening, a gathering with music and a bar in the Town Hub served as the entrée for the long weekend’s new signature event, the Opal Evolution Festival. It was a riot, led by a glowing dinosaur, Kakuru Kujani, a carnivorous theropod found as fossilised opal nearby. Using UV black-lights and fluorescent paint, the dinosaurs illuminated the town.

It was a very beautiful spectacle and a promising beginning for what festival organiser and OCA Board Member Leila Day envisions as a multi-year project, culminating in hosting the International Opal Symposium in 2026.



Images: (banner) The inflatable plesiosaur was a hit in the evening parade. (top) Ramsey from Roxby Downs got a great dowsing in the Colour Run. (above) Fossil-related artworks were projected on the hill behind the parade.

# Andamooka Lapidary Club is Thriving

THE ANDAMOOKA LAPIDARY CLUB SHED OFFERS A POWERFUL SENSORY EXPERIENCE!



Images: (bottom left) Lapidary Club leaders Mash Clifford and Doug Bowman. (top right) Cheryl Penrose refines a stone she has found.



The Lapidary Club was in full swing during the October long weekend! The air filled with the buzzing of grinding wheels, while club members and tourists rotated through the shed for their chance to refine opals and other stones they had brought.

For club leaders Mash Clifford and Greg Bowman, the Club combines the creative joys of lapidary with community service and engagement. As Mash says, “people walking along the street say ‘What is Lapidary?’ And we say ‘Come in and find out’ – so they do, they come in and they walk out with a stone around their neck.”

“We’re like a big family here” says Doug. “Even if they don’t have a stone to muck around with, we supply them with something so they can have a go on the machines.”

As both Mash and Doug note, the lapidary club has even acted as a recruitment mechanism for the town, with visitors enjoying their experience so much it leads them to investigate the real estate market in town.

For Cheryl Penrose, lapidary and fossicking were the gateway that convinced her to buy a property in Andamooka. With property prices much lower than other regional areas, she bought a house last year, and “every spare minute I get I come up here – renovating and opal hunting and bringing stones down here, it’s given me purpose, I love it!”

The popularity of the Club has convinced Mash and Doug to expand their infrastructure and services. “Shortly we will be opening up another building, and we will be making stone beads, stone bangles. We do silver and goldsmithing in here as well, and we’re going to get into enamelling and pottery. It’s expanding and expanding all the time” says Doug.

As any visitor can see just by looking at the nature of the buildings, Andamooka is an extremely creative town, a creativity borne of necessity. “When people came here, they didn’t have very much” says Mash. “You can see they improvised and made things.” It is that creative spirit that drives the Lapidary Club, many of whom, like Mash herself, are artists. “There are so many people in this town, the crafts that they can make are incredible, you cannot fault them.”

The Lapidary Club is located opposite the Town Hub on Opal Boulevard and is open to the public every Saturday from 10am – 2pm.

# Vet Clinic for Oodnadatta



A free vet clinic will be visiting Oodnadatta!

MONDAY  
25 NOV 2024  
Book now!

outbackSA Outback Communities Authority

On Monday, 25 November Dr Phil Taylor will be providing a veterinary service to community members of Oodnadatta & the surrounding region.

The vet service will be available at the Dunjiba Community Council from 8:30am.

Services available will include:

- General dog and cat health checks
- Vaccinations (hepatitis, distemper, parvo)
- Desexing & microchipping of dogs and cats
- Treatment for worms, fleas and mange

Bookings are essential! To make a booking please contact the OCA Office on (08) 8648 5970.

## Small Projects Funding

Recipients of Small Projects funding in Round 1 for 2024-25 were recently advised of their success and are listed below. Small Projects funding is awarded for projects that improve the liveability of communities in Outback SA. Congratulations to all the successful applicants!

**Aroona Aboriginal Council: \$5,139**

For development of an interactive native garden, with edible plants endemic to the Flinders Ranges region.

**Blinman Progress Association: \$18,048**

For the replacement of rainwater tanks and pump equipment on significant Blinman community buildings.

**Copley & Districts Progress Association: \$7,323**

For an expansion to solar power infrastructure for the Copley Community Hall.

**Oodnadatta Progress Association: \$5,726**

For equipment to upgrade and reinvigorate the Oodnadatta Outdoor Cinema.

**Parachilna Community Association: \$6,672**

For installation of a water meter to enable irrigation and landscaping in the Town Square.

**William Creek Gymkhana Club: \$26,871**

For the installation of a new shed at the William Creek Gymkhana grounds to replace dilapidated infrastructure.

## Dog and Cat Management Plan

A new **Dog and Cat Management Plan** for Outback SA has been approved by the Dog and Cat Management Board. If you are a pet owner in the region, please [download the plan from the OCA website](#).

# Powerful Storm Brings Power Outages

THE STORMS THAT HIT THE REGION ON THE EVENING OF THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER HAD A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON PEOPLE'S LIVES, BUILDINGS AND THE ENVIRONMENT ACROSS OUTBACK SA.



Images: The damage around Leigh Creek has been extensive.



As these images from Leigh Creek demonstrate, the region has sustained considerable damage, with fallen trees, crushed buildings, and damaged infrastructure in many areas. While power was restored fairly quickly in the Southern Flinders areas, much of the Northern Flinders region lost power for days. Although Marree and Andamooka have an independent source of power, these towns were without power for some time due to storm damage to local equipment. Residents of Pimba and Woomera were also without power for an extended period.

The OCA's Works and Assets Manager Kath Lockwood, based in Leigh Creek, spent the day after the storm assessing the scope of the damage in the town as well as at the Aerodrome. "The high winds were even powerful enough to move and crumple large gable markers from the runways out at the Aerodrome. A cleanup process was activated as quickly as possible to ensure everyone's safety."

Due to the extensive damage across the region, the Zone Emergency Management Committee for the Far North, of which the OCA is a member, convened the Zone Emergency Support Team (ZEST). The Department of Energy and Mining took the lead, recognising that restoring the power supply was a critical priority. Since Friday 18 October, OCA Director Marg Howard has attended eight meetings where ZEST canvassed issues across the region and sought solutions to issues with power, telecommunications, food supply chains and the state of the roads.

One of the key issues identified soon after the storm was the spoiling of food in fridges and freezers from extended periods without power. Uniting Country SA, contracted to deliver social and community services in the outback, was approached for assistance and generously allocated funds from their Emergency Relief program to help residents during this crisis.

Since Wednesday 23 October, when emergency relief funding was made available, Kath Lockwood in Leigh Creek has distributed \$25,800 in food vouchers to households in the Northern Flinders region. "Many people have expressed their appreciation for the food vouchers that they have received" she said. "It was nice to be here on the ground being actively involved in providing financial support to the region and uplifting the community's spirit." Uniting Country SA has also assisted residents in Hawker and Pimba.



**Outback Communities Authority**

26 Mildred Street

PO Box 3326

Port Augusta West SA 5700

**T** 08 8648 5970

**E** [oca@sa.gov.au](mailto:oca@sa.gov.au)

[www.oca.sa.gov.au](http://www.oca.sa.gov.au)



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