

This Woman has fascinating career

A woman who has a fascinating career in a business field normally dominated by men has left her artistic mark on Alice Springs. She got to know and to like many Alice folk during her brief period of duty in the Centre.

She is former nursing sister, air hostess, radio broadcaster and now interior decorator Mrs. Freda Kidman, of Perth, W.A.

Mrs. Kidman — known as Freddie to her many new Alice Springs acquaintances — is Hotel Interiors Officer for The Swan Brewery Co. Ltd, and as such has a routine which takes her to hotels new and old from Darwin to Albany and from Carnamah to Alice.

She has planned and supervised the decoration and furnishing — or re-decorating and re-furnishing — of more than 60 hotels in Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Truly a fascinating task!

Mrs. Kidman came to Alice Springs to supervise the decoration of the brewery's latest project, the Stuart Arms Hotel.

STARTED PROJECT LAST APRIL

Mrs. Kidman first started working on architects' drawings of the hotel last April, to get ideas for decoration.

Going to Germany

The R. Albrechts are leaving Alice Springs next Monday on their way to Germany.

They will be away for 3 months.

Amazed at Spirit of Centre

To The Editor:

Three of my family and myself recently made a car trip through Central Australia and were horrified at what we saw of the drought conditions you people are suffering at this time.

Although we have travelled extensively, we have never seen such harsh conditions as prevail on many of the cattle stations of the Centre.

Yet, despite all the discomfort of a dusty and rainless life and the heartbreak of seeing cattle and other livestock perish in desert-like conditions, as well as gardens and irreplaceable climate-hardened trees die, we found no despair on our travels, although a certain and quite natural sadness and a wondering about the future.

We also found an amazing spirit of friendliness and hospitality, and the grit to grin and bear it — and to go on trying.

We salute this spirit of the cattle people, thank you all for an unforgettable experience, and wish you well for the future; and — above all — rain.

JACK FLEMMING,
Pinjarra, W.A.

How did a woman come to hold such a position in the world of brewing and hotels, a field traditionally dominated by men?

Mrs. Kidman's story begins in Australia with her arrival from Scotland at the age of seven — and she is proud that her accent still indicates her birthplace.

After schooling she entered nursing and became a fully qualified nursing sister; then she left this field to become one of the original air hostesses with the then fledgling Australian National Airlines.

She married, had two children and then was widowed, so she entered radio broadcasting — mainly children's sessions—to support her young family.

Mrs. Kidman then joined the secretarial staff at Swan and in the course of her duties her pertinent comments on the decor of many hotels revealed to the management her flair for interior decoration.

She was promptly sent to a major interior decorating school in New York to fully qualify her for this work and on her return in 1951 was attached to the company's property department.

HER DUTIES ARE MANY

Since then her duties have become more and more complex to the extent that she now begins work on a project with the architects and also, in the case of remodeling projects, the licensee at the initial planning stage.

Her field even includes planning the kitchen and bar equipment; she selects her own floor coverings, curtain fabrics and furniture designs from all over the world, sometimes designs her own carpets and fabrics to achieve special effects.

What effect does an interior decorator seek to obtain in hotel furnishing?

Mrs. Kidman says: "We try to achieve a quiet, cool and restful effect conducive to good conversation.

"The surroundings must never dominate the guests, and we try to achieve this by using a comparatively neutral approach with an occasional highlight to lend individuality to the hotel."

The planning of gardens for new hotels is also Mrs. Kidman's responsibility and here again she is well qualified.

Gardening is her weekend hobby and her home (she has married again) in the Perth suburb of Darlington is a gardeners' showplace.

Of course Darlington is in the hills and gardening there is a very different proposition from home gardening in Alice Springs.

KIDDY TOGS

WISHES ALL THEIR CLIENTS AND
FRIENDS A PROSPEROUS AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR