

Jock was born in 1908 at Mt Parry, near Bundaberg, Qld. When he was five years old he moved to Darwin with his father, Harold Nelson (Nelson Terrace) and family.

Territory educated, Jock worked as a jackaroo and a drilling contractor. He then became the representative for Dalgety Stock Agents before Doug Lillicrapp (Lillicrapp Rd) was appointed branch manager in 1947.

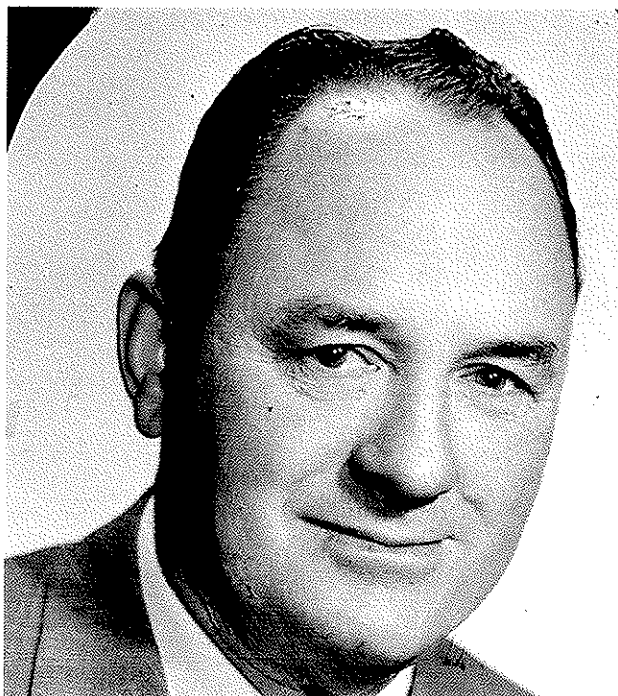
In 1934, Jock married Margaret (Peg) Bloomfield, daughter of Lew Bloomfield (Bloomfield St).

Jock became an integral part of Territory politics in its early years. He was the Member for Stuart from 1947-49 and a foundation member of the NT Legislative Council. He represented the NT as an Australian Labor Party (ALP) Member of the House of Representatives from 1949-66, when he retired.

Interested in pastoral life, Jock became part-owner of Utopia Station with Alec McLeod. When the property was divided in two, Jock bought Harper Springs Station (Harper Ct) which bordered on his side of Utopia, then named his whole block Mt Skinner Station (Skinner St).

He became a part-owner of the *Centralian Advocate* newspaper about 1955.

Jock was elected first Mayor of Alice Springs in 1971. He relinquished this role when he was appointed Administrator of the NT in December 1973, the first Territorian to become the Administrator. He held this position until 1976 and was in office during the



Jock Nelson.  
Photo courtesy Mrs Peg Nelson.

devastating Cyclone Tracy on Christmas Eve 1974 and the aftermath.

Following his arduous political career, Jock retired in 1976 and he and Peg again settled in Alice Springs.

After a long illness, Jock died in June 1991 and was honoured with a State Funeral in Alice Springs.

Prime Minister Bob Hawke, video-taped an address to Jock's relatives and friends in which he said all Territorians owed Jock a debt of gratitude for his selfless service to the country which made him a living legend.

Jock was survived by Peg and their two daughters, Patricia (Patsy, Mrs Bob Barber) and Louanne (Mrs Paul Rosewarne).

The Jock Nelson Centre, which opened in 1991, houses many Commonwealth Government offices.

## JOHANNSEN STREET

### Gerhardt and Mary Otilie Johannsen — *Pioneers.*

Gerhardt Johannsen, a stone mason and builder, came from Denmark to Australia in 1901. He settled in the Barossa Valley and married Miss Otilie Hoffinan.

From 1909-11 he was employed at Hermannsburg Mission. He taught the Aboriginal men to build stockyards and encouraged gardening. Mrs Johannsen taught the women to sew dresses and do craft work. She also fostered a twin baby Aboriginal girl until the child was big enough to return to her family.

From 1911-28 Johannsen held the lease of Deep Well, a stock route well 80 km south of Alice Springs, with a 'camel whip' to water travelling stock. Rate of pay was 2c per head for cattle and 4c for camels.

At times Johannsen employed people to water the stock while he took bush contracts. He and Bill Liddle built the stone police buildings at Arltunga.

Johannsen was guide to the noted geologist, Dr. Keith Ward and Sir Baldwin Spencer in 1923. Dr. Ward sought well sites to make a stock route direct from Loves Creek Station to Deep Well to avoid Alice Springs and shorten the cattle droving route to the Oodnadatta rail head.

The following year, Johannsen again was guide to Dr. Ward who accompanied Canadian Arctic Advisor and explorer, Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, who wished to compare the hot, dry desert of CA with the frozen Arctic.

Johannsen obtained contracts to work on Government wells in the Deep Well area.

When Pastor Carl Strehlow (Strehlow St) left Hermannsburg a very sick man and died at Horseshoe Bend in 1922, Johannsen was appointed Mission manager until the new Superintendent, Pastor Friedrich Albrecht arrived in 1926.

Johannsen started a tanning industry and encouraged gardening again. Mrs Johannsen and her daughter, Elsa (Mrs Bill Petrick), gave further sewing and craft lessons.

When Pastor and Mrs Albrecht reached Oodnadatta, Johannsen drove them to the Mission in his Dodge utility.

After the family returned to Deep Well, Johannsen contracted polio myelitis, during an epidemic. Mrs Johannsen nursed him for three months using treatment prescribed in her German homeopathic medical books. When he could travel south to hospital by train, Sam Irvine (Irvine St) took him by mail truck to Oodnadatta, he was away a year.

During his years at Deep Well, Johannsen sank about 100 bore holes, each about 30 metres deep, used a hand boring plant, but struck no water.

Drought caused the family to move to Alice Springs about 1928. Between bush contracts, Gerhardt built the family home in Todd St (Mall).

During the 1930's he pioneered the first mail truck to Arltunga and became interested in gold mining at the adjacent field, Winnecke.

The army moved into Alice Springs in World War II. Military authorities commandeered the hospital and used the Johannsen home for sisters' quarters.

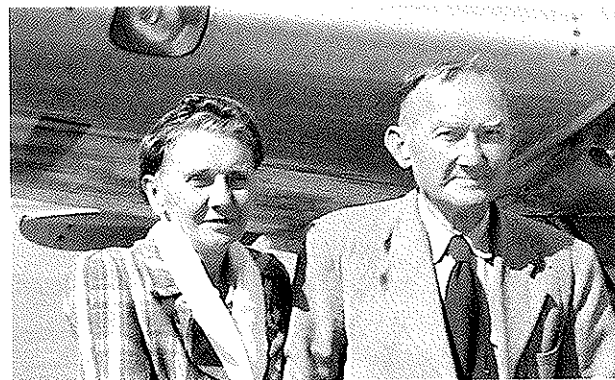
The family moved to Strangways Ranges, north of Alice Springs, to mine phlogopite mica, which Johannsen's son, Kurt (Kurt Johannsen Pavilion) had discovered. This mica was needed urgently for aircraft spark plugs. The Government took over the mine and employed miners and women, including Johannsen's daughters, to cut and pack the mica leaves.

After the war, the family returned to their home. Following an accident at Winnecke, Johannsen retired from bush work but remained an active member of the Alice Springs community.

Mr Johannsen died in 1951 and Mrs Johannsen in 1959.

Their children were Elsa (Mrs Bill Petrick, dec'd), Trudy (Mrs Alan Hayes), Kurt, Randall, Mona (Mrs Des Byrnes) and Myrtle (Mrs Bert Noske).

Their gracious home was sold to Connair Pty. Ltd. for offices. Later the home was demolished over night and with it the beautiful Jacaranda tree that towered over the town and the sweetly perfumed Jasmine hedge which Miss Pink ensured was watered regularly by the Connair female staff. The site became the National Australia Bank building.



Mr and Mrs Johannsen. Photo courtesy of Mrs Myrtle Noske.

## JOHN BLAKEMAN BRIDGE

**John Blakeman, MBE — First manager of the Old Timers, community service enthusiast and horticulturalist.**

The John Blakeman Bridge which spans the Todd River at Ross River Highway, commemorates one of the town's most active 'Old Timers' almost within sight of his garden.

John Blakeman and his wife Margaret, came to Alice Springs in 1962 when John was appointed first manager of the Old Timers.

CA suffered a drought, but John broadcast a monthly horticultural programme on the ABC, which he continued for 15 years. He was a member of the Farmers Association for 14 years and held executive offices. He entered hundreds of exhibits in the Alice Springs Show, helped competitors with their entries and was a Show Steward. He was a foundation member of the Alice Springs Society for Growing Australian Plants and Chairman of Trustees of the Olive Pink Botanic Reserve.

John organised and was secretary of the committee to apply for a memorial to pioneer cameleers and their camels who made outback settlement possible. The memorial, a curved garden seat, was built on the Town Council lawns.

For years John was an executive member of the Alice Springs Regional Tourist Association. He was elected the first and only Life Member of the Association and was Deputy Chairman on retirement in 1979.

When John retired as Old Timers' manager, the Uniting Church built in the grounds, 'The Blakeman Cottage' for him and Margaret, in appreciation of their 11 years service.

John then became a Foundation Member and executive officer of the Senior Citizens Association.