

James Patrick (Pat) Cunneen
THE LINDSAY INGALL MEMORIAL AWARD
Melbourne August 2013

CITATION

The Lindsay Ingall Memorial Award honours the memory of Lindsay Ingall for his capacity to cross geoscience boundaries and for his enduring commitment to assist geoscientists across Australia. It is awarded to an individual who has actively promoted geophysics to the wider community.

The Lindsay Ingall Memorial Award for 2013 is made to Pat Cunneen, who is well known to all Australian geoscientists primarily as a corporate leader and innovator in airborne geophysics, but he is just as well known through the broader community as a passionate advocate and promoter of geophysics and the resources industry.

Pat commenced his career in geophysics at age 20 working on geophysical ground crews as a field-technician. He soon found a keen interest in the potential of airborne geophysics through his work with AMEG and Scintrex. This led to creation of Aerodata in 1977 where he was Managing Director. The company became a world leader in airborne geophysics acquisition and interpretation. Pat was passionate about the use of airborne geophysics for all sorts of applications, not just the mineral industry. He projected this passion as well as innovation and a can-do attitude to staff, clients and the wider community which created a strong innovative culture at Aerodata and its subsidiary World Geoscience Corporation.

In 1995 Pat was responsible for bringing together leading airborne geophysical companies into the International Airborne Geophysics Safety Association (IAGSA), a non-profit association supported by its members, and whose mandate is to promote and enhance safety in the airborne geophysics survey industry

Pat also strongly advocated the promotion of geophysics to students. When asked to sponsor the 1995 ASEG Conference, Pat instead offered to create and sponsor the first ASEG student day. This student day has continued since at every conference, and helped fulfil Pat's ambition to promote geophysics to young people for the future development of the profession.

Environmental work especially saw Pat promoting the value of geophysics to politicians, governments, the media and environmentalists. Pat never missed an opportunity to talk to the media. Perhaps the classic moment was a well-publicised offer to survey Muroroa Atoll for radioactive fallout following the French nuclear tests. His offer was debated in Federal Parliament and reported on the nightly news. The French declined the offer, but the British nuclear test site at Maralinga was flown, with the startling radiometric results published in full colour in *The Age* newspaper.

Throughout the years at World Geoscience Pat projected his passion for the use of geophysics in the fight against salinity. He would harangue scientists, farmers as well as state and federal politicians on the benefits of airborne geophysics to map the causes of salinity. He also saw the advantages of geophysics in the search for fresh water and spoke to numerous governments on how airborne geophysics was a

tool for water exploration. Pat saw no limit to the use of geophysics and recognised the lack of utilisation of airborne geophysics in the oil and gas industry in the 1990s.

Throughout his career, Pat has been devoted to the development and promotion of airborne and ground geophysics to the non-geophysical community. He has promoted the science endlessly across the world to a diversity of people from the geologist, to the student, the farmer, the media, the engineer, the hydrologist, the environmentalist, as well as to politicians and governments, and even to the person quietly sitting having a beer at the bar. And every time they would get a lesson in geophysics and how it could be used to help benefit their lives, new ways geophysics could be applied or solve a problem they may have.

Through Pat's leadership, his companies Aerodata Holdings and World Geoscience Corporation received numerous community awards, including: Western Australian Company of the Year 1993; Western Australian Exporter of the year (Services) 1994; Australian Exporter of the Year (Services) 1994; Australian Landcare Research Award 1995; and Diggers and Dealers Technical Services Award 1996.

Pat was awarded the Cecil Green Enterprise Award in 2002 by SEG, recognizing the importance of an individual enterprise to the economic vitality of our industry. It is now fitting that, through the Lindsay Ingall Memorial Award 2013, the ASEG acknowledges Pat Cunneen's significant achievements to our profession and his continued support and promotion of geophysics to the broad community.