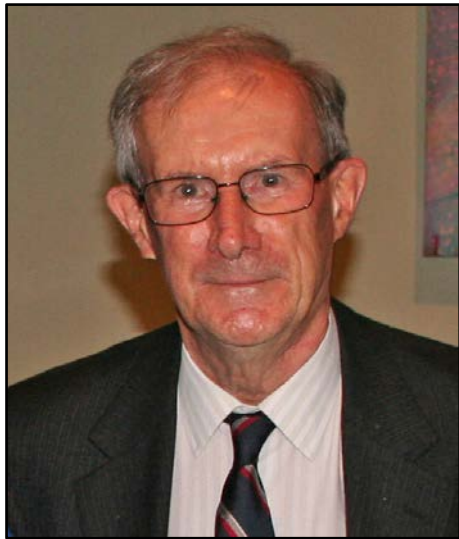


JOHN WARDELL – A FOUNDATION MEMBER OF ASEG



John Wardell in 2018

The ASEG was formed in 1970 and John Wardell was a member of the first executive committee. He became Secretary within a few months of the formation of the Society, when the first Secretary (Jim Sundquist) returned to the USA, and he held that position until 1974. He was a conscientious Secretary and signed up new members from his employer; Geophysical Service Inc. (GSI). John was one of the eight signatories to the *Memorandum and Articles of Association of the ASEG* promulgated in June 1971. For more about this period in the ASEG's history see "A Brief History of the Formation of the ASEG" on the ASEG website <https://www.aseg.org.au/about-aseg/aseg-formation>.

Academically, John holds a BSc (1958) in physics, maths and geology, a Diploma in Applied Geophysics and a PhD in Geophysics (1964), all from the University of Leeds. John joined GSI in London in 1963 at a time when seismic exploration was beginning to change from analogue to digital recording and processing. He was transferred to Sydney in 1968 as Area Geophysicist with technical responsibility for GSI's land and marine data acquisition and processing. He spent two years in Houston and then in Calgary, before returning to Sydney in 1979 - when 3D seismic was being introduced. He retired in 1989.



John in the western Libyan desert after a snowstorm in 1966

John was awarded Honorary Membership of the ASEG in 1991, and remains a member after 48 years. Unfortunately the citation for this award cannot be retrieved, but the



John receiving ASEG Honorary Membership from Lindsay Ingall in Sydney in 1991.

correspondence from the proposers is available. The initial proposal appears to be from Jim Frazer of Santos, Adelaide, and then SA Branch President. In June 1990, Jim sent his proposal in a letter to the then President of the Society, Dr Brian Embleton. It was supported by effusive letters from Keeva Vozoff of Macquarie University, Ian Criss from Esso and Terry Allen of Haliburton Geophysical Services.

Ian Criss advised that John was a “technical cornerstone of seismic processing technology in Australia for over 20 years”, which included “his contribution to the design of the first 3D seismic surveys in Australia” commencing in the Gippsland Basin in 1980. Terry Allen provided a list of papers John published in the course of his career, 17 in all. These include a contributed or co-authored paper at every ASEG Conference from the third to the seventh (1983-89), on a range of topics from vibrator technology and marine seismic recording to modelling and interpretation. John also gave six papers at APEA conferences from 1969 to 1988.

In addition to being an expert in seismic acquisition and processing, John was actively involved in training other geophysicists, via in-house courses, seminars and training videos, for over 20 years. He was also involved in formal university education, and Keeva Vozoff found him of great assistance at Macquarie University where he “willingly gave lectures”, provided real-world examples for students to practice on, and showed them through the GSI data centre. John provided a similar service to other universities.

To conclude with John’s own words, “As someone who was always interested in science and technology, I feel fortunate to have been involved in seismic exploration during a period of such major development, from 24 channel, 6 and 12 fold analogue surveys, to 1000 channel systems, 48 fold and more coverage, and 3 dimensional processing and interpretation systems. As a ‘side effect’, a career in geophysics also amply satisfied my long-time desire to travel and see many of those places I used to read about in *National Geographic!*”

Roger Henderson, September 2018