

Member Spotlight

A monthly highlight featuring an ASEG member. All past member spotlights can be found in our newsletter [archive](#).



We welcome **Darren Hunt** under the spotlight in this issue as he shares his enlightening story! Darren is not a new face to ASEG, especially to the WA Branch, as he has been volunteering since 2020 and was on its committee as the WA branch president for 2022. Darren is currently a principal geophysicist at Terra Resources.



General questions

1. For how long have you been studying geophysics?

23 years. I started my career doing ground-mag acquisition back in 2001.

2. What do you like most about being a geophysicist?

I love that I can get out of my office chair (every so often) and go to remote field sites to work. Few and far between these days, but it feels like a paid holiday for me. Ground EM (Loupe) in Port Lincoln for graphite exploration was my latest chance to get back out in the field.

3. Tell us about your best field meal?

Eating Khuushuur cooked on an open fire next to the Tuul River in Mongolia, and then walking back to camp in bright sunshine at 10 pm.

4. Where was your best sunrise/sunset location?

NW-QLD in the wet season has the most amazing sunsets and, if you're lucky, can be enjoyed whilst sitting back sipping on a cold beer. This is perhaps the only positive to being in NWQLD in the wet.

5. What's one thing you wish someone had told you when you were at university?

Having ridden out quite a few of the ups and downs of the exploration cycle, I wish that the industry's cyclical nature was explained clearly to us when we were naive students. There's not much that we can do about it, but it would have been good to discuss with students some strategies to cope when the inevitable downturns arrive.

6. What's your most treasured textbook?

Geophysics for the Mineral Exploration Geoscientist by Dentith and Mudge. It's the textbook I wish I had at university – lots of petrophysics and relevant case studies to put all the mathematical equations in context.

7. What is your funniest or worst field memory?

Taking my snake-phobic Canadian boss on a field visit to Cloncurry and coming within inches of stepping on an enormous eastern brown. We both managed to see the funny side after managing to avoid getting bitten.

8. What do you do in your spare time?

I'm an amateur photographer in my spare time and have had the opportunity to photograph some unique sights whilst lugging my camera around on geophysical field trips. Recently I got to test my skills in a different setting as the official conference photographer for the MAG22 conference.

9. What is a challenge that you see in geoscience today, and how do you see the community overcoming it?

It's been talked about a lot – the lack of new graduates coming into the industry. First and foremost, it's a lack of awareness of exploration as a career option, and in particular, geophysics. I have had the chance to attend career nights representing the ASEG, and it's rare to meet anyone who has even heard of geophysics before. But it's easy to appeal to students with an interest in science when you describe what geophysics is about. The key, I think, is to raise awareness amongst high school-age students, which ASEG is working hard on addressing.

10. What aspect of geophysics do you enjoy most?

Opening a new dataset for the first time, especially when it's a red-hot prospect, and it's a survey you have designed and supervised (and even better when you do the acquisition yourself). I feel like a kid on Christmas morning; it's the buzz that keeps me going.