

Mike Smith

Honorary Membership of the ASEG

Brisbane, February 2012

CITATION

Honorary Membership of the ASEG, for distinguished contributions by a member to the Society and the profession over many years, has been awarded to Mike Smith.

Mike is well known to most members of the ASEG through his exceptional involvement with and contributions to the ASEG, both at State Branch and Federal level for over 30 years, and also for his significant involvement with both the Australian Institute of Geoscientists, and the Australian Geoscience Council.

Mike has made and is still making enormous contributions to Australian geoscience. He applies his infectious energy and enthusiasm to everything he does, particularly as these relate to exploration geophysics and the broader geosciences.

His achievements in the exploration profession are impressive. He has more than 35 years experience in mineral exploration. He has managed operations in Australasia, Asia, Europe and South America and has explored for mineral sands, copper, gold, silver, lead, zinc and uranium. Mike is currently General Manager Exploration for Austpac Resources.

Mike has been a member of the ASEG since 1975, and has always had a strong commitment to local Branch and Federal ASEG activities. He has served as Federal Treasurer, First Vice-President and in 1999 he was the ASEG President. He has always put his hand up to assist with Conferences, and to provide guidance to the Executive on running and managing a healthy and relevant organisation.

Mike has never been backward in advocating a good cause whenever he had the opportunity, and those in attendance at the 2000 ASEG Congress in Perth would not forget Mike's input at the Opening Ceremony. After the Western Australia's Minister for Resources had made the usual benign speech and opened the Congress, Mike immediately seized the opportunity to encourage the Minister to get his act together and co-operate with the Commonwealth on the vexed issue of land access for exploration. And we witnessed a rather lively impromptu debate for the only time we can remember at one of our opening ceremonies.

But that is only a part of the Mike Smith story. He has played an active role in other professional geoscience societies in Australia. From 1993–1996 he was President of the Australian Institute of Geoscientists for three successive terms. During that period he was instrumental in establishing a mechanism for registration of Australian geoscientists and he still chairs AIG's Registration Board.

Mike was also instrumental in re-vitalising the Australian Geoscience Council. Since 1998 he has served continuously on the Council and during that time has been its President and currently is its Chairman.

The AGC is the Peak Council of geoscientists in Australia, representing eight major Australian geoscientific societies with a total membership of over 7000 individuals comprising industry, government and academic professionals in all fields of geoscience. The AGC provides advice to governments on matters involving the geosciences and their application; promotes the development of scientifically sound policies for effective geoscience education and research; and provides the Australian public with a greater appreciation of the economic, environmental and cultural values of the geosciences.

These objectives coincide with Mike's beliefs of what we as geoscientists should be doing outside our disciplinary boxes. He is already planning programs that will bring geosciences to the broader public throughout Australia.

Mike was one of the main drivers to bring the International Geological Congress to Australia this year in Brisbane. The AGC is the formal organising entity for this event.

In his home state Mike has lobbied the Department of Education to include Earth Sciences in the secondary school's curriculum, through the Geological Society of Australia; he did a magnificent job in attracting sponsors to the Sydney Conference in 2010; he introduced geophysics into the Geological Society of Australia's Conventions, and has lobbied parliamentarians in Canberra to promote the value and concerns of geoscientists to Federal politicians.

Mike was awarded the ASEG Service Medal in 2001 for his "extraordinary and outstanding service to the ASEG over many years", followed by the Lindsay Ingall Memorial Award in 2003 for promotion of geophysics to the wider community. Since then, his on-going contributions to the ASEG, his energy and persistence have continued to serve the ASEG well. Mike is a most worthy and distinguished recipient of Honorary Membership of the ASEG.