

This issue we get to know Glen McFadzean, geophysics manager at Santos Ltd. If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else to feature in the Member Spotlight please contact communications@aseg.org.au.

1. What is your current role?

Manager Geophysics at Santos Ltd.

2. For how long have you been a geophysicist?

I have been a Geophysicist for 25 years, starting my career as a graduate at Santos Ltd in the Operations Geophysics department in 1994.

After a few years I transferred into an Exploration & Development Team working across the Cooper Basin.

In the early 2000's I moved to Woodside in Perth where I worked (as the geophysicist) in Field Development Teams, primarily in the Australian Oil Division.

Next posting was Tripoli for a 3 year stint exploring Libya. After returning from Libya in 2009, I joined Hess Corporation initially based in Perth and then KL Malaysia, where I was seconded into Carigarli-Hess as the Leader of Geophysics. In 2014, I returned to Santos Ltd in Adelaide, back where it all started for me.

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

The thing I enjoy most about being a geophysicist is the challenge of battling with non-unique seismic solutions.

Over my career I have really enjoyed working in multi-discipline sub-surface teams. Incorporating all possible data from other discipline experts to fine-tune a range of models and estimate the uncertainty and risk.

4. If you weren't a geophysicist what would you be?

Director of a Youth Science Discovery Centre or a Professional Tennis Player

5. What is your best interview tip?

It's a small industry, Be honest

6. What's one thing that we wouldn't know about you?

I met my wife on a plane returning from a wellsite geology job. I was an exhausted young Geo and she was an Angel (aka the flight attendant delivering me a nice cold beer after weeks in the hot desert)

7. Tell us about your best field meal?

I have had many. I used to love the greasy burgers delivered to the rig in the early hours of the morning when I was supervising logging jobs. As a skinny young kid anything delivered to me tasted great.

8. Where was your best sunrise location?

Tripoli Libya 2007. With a beautiful sunrise bursting over the desert horizon (and a big time difference with Oz) the AFL Grand Final was live on TV.

Port Adelaide v Geelong. The biggest losing margin in AFL GF history, poor Port.

9. What made you decide to be a geophysicist?

I was a little undecided on what to do next when I completed my BSc at Adelaide University. I was considering a job in mining.

A friend of mine was interviewing for a honours scholarship at the NCPGG (National Centre for Petroleum Geology and Geophysics), so I tagged along for the walk down to the Thebarton Campus.

Whilst my friend was being interviewed, I met the Director of the NCPGG in the hallway. He strongly encouraged me to sit down and have a chat with him about my future.

Ultimately we both got offered scholarships, so another year of study and a vacation job with Santos Ltd that led to a 25 year career.

10. Your funniest or worst field memory?

Getting slightly lost driving from one drilling rig to the next, when I was working in the field as a Wellsite Geo.

After driving around 'a bit lost' (but never in any harm) I spotted another rig on the horizon that I could ask for directions.

Unfortunately for me it was the same rig that I had just left. This gave everyone a great laugh.

By the time I finally arrived at the 2nd rig, word had already spread about the 'green' wellsite Geo on his way.

The joke went on for my entire hitch. "Need me to show you where the Geo shack is again mate?" was the favourite gag.

11. Your geophysical idol?

I don't have a geophysical idol but I have luckily had many great influences and mentors over my career. In my early years at Santos Ltd J. Hughes and N. Gibbins were geophysicists I respected. I learned a lot about basic seismic acquisition, processing, the fundamentals of seismic interpretation, mapping and exploration from these guys.

At Woodside Darryl Harris and Steve Abernethy both supported and mentored me as I refined my skills in geophysical uncertainty analysis and offshore oil field development planning.

At Hess J.P. Blangy and V. Ball were big influences in further developing my quantitative geophysics experience, and leading geophysical teams.

Now back at Santos Ltd my current leader Bill Ovenden continues this support and keeps me on my toes with constant technical challenge to get the most out of our seismic data.

