

his month we get to know Peter Gunn (Gentleman Geoscientist).

1. For how long have you been a geophysicist?

I built a Geiger counter as part of a Physics 1 laboratory project in 1961, and I did my first prospecting with this instrument.

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

The travel. I have worked all over Australia and onsite in some 30 countries.

3. What are you reading at the moment?

"Land" by Simon Winchester. I have just read the chapter on the Scottish Highland clearances, when in 1813 the English Duke of Sutherland evicted my ancestors from the Vale of Kildonan in the far north of Scotland because he could make more money from raising sheep than get from their rent. As a result, my ancestors, like many other Scots, migrated to Australia, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand. My great grandfather ended up on the Bendigo goldfields in 1852 via the San Francisco goldfields and the Turon goldfields in NSW. He made enough to establish a successful sheep farm. In Winchester's book there is a photo of a stone hut with a sod roof and probably a dirt floor. In the photo there is a group of miserable children outside the hut. They probably lived on porridge and whisky. I have no wish to reclaim my heritage. Interestingly I have another great grandfather who was in Bendigo in 1852. This one was a Croatian who participated in the Eureka Stockade revolt.

4. Your most respected geophysicist?

Me. Read my memoir (Preview April 2015, pp 34-43) and check my recent ASEG presentation explaining virtually everything about the Broken Hill mineral deposit. The link is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRoLP-UMWhQ>

5. What do you do in your spare time?

Swim and talk to people on our local beach.

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

Universities should start teaching exploration geophysics again.



Peter (right) and his assistant of 44 years.