



Update from the Chair – Mary Lou Simpson OAM, December 2022

Developments at the Nilpena Ediacara National Park (Park) and Donor Visit to the Park

A group of donors visited the Park in August with Department for Water and the Environment (DEW) Foundation Board Observer, Stuart Paul, together with Anne Marie Lush, the DEW Project Manager for the Park. Our guides were Dr Mary-Anne Binnie from the South Australian Museum, a palaeontologist who does research at the Park, and Ross Fargher. The aim was to show donors how their contributions had been spent and the result was enormous satisfaction and pride in a project with such significance for our State. The goodwill and co-operation between our Foundation and DEW was evident.

Since the visit there have been significant developments on the historic pastoral buildings. At the Woolshed, work has been done to brace and repair internal structural timbers and roof replacement has commenced. Works are underway to install a new kitchen in the Shearers' Quarters and to upgrade the power supply to the Blacksmith's Shop. Fossil bed stabilisation works are progressing.

DEW is making progress towards engaging a new Ranger to manage day to day operations at the Park. Importantly DEW is defining a visitor access model prior to the Park opening to visitors, hopefully in April next year.

The Work of the Foundation

Our fundraising campaign this year to raise money for the much-needed stabilisation of the fossil beds and support of educational resources for our schools has been very successful. Through your contributions five of the 40 excavated beds will be stabilised by July 2023 and much needed support has been given to the production of Ediacaran resource material for our teachers.

In early December the State STEM Conference of the South Australian Science Teachers Association was held at the UniSA Magill campus. Our Foundation organised two sessions on Ediacara.

Seymour College teamed up with a curriculum writer for the Department for Education and they gave a workshop on how Ediacara can be taught to Year 8 Science students, following the national curriculum guidelines. They talked also about the many career paths Ediacara could inspire. They have created an electronic resource booklet which will become available to teachers early next year. Our Foundation has provided much needed financial support for this production.

The other session was very ably run by Tory Botha, a PhD candidate in Ediacaran palaeontology, jointly supervised by Professor Mary Droser and Associate Professor Diego Garcia-Bellido. She demonstrated how Ediacara could be taught to Year 6 through to Year 10 science students, following the national curriculum. Tory also announced that the UniSA Project Live on a virtual tour of the Flinders Ranges and part of the World Heritage submission had just been launched.

[Click here](#) to view an InDaily article about this virtual project and the Year 8 teaching resource.