

## EXPEDITIONS AND EVENTS – ON THE HORIZON – FEBRUARY 2026 ISSUE

### FIRSTLY, GOOD NEWS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

As you are aware, in the last few years, the Waterhouse Club has navigated through a major Covid epidemic, followed by a period of strained relations with Museum management, but I am delighted to let you know that the storms have calmed, and there is every sign of harmonious sailing ahead!

A strong sense of strategic endeavour is now developing at the Museum, and your Committee has been encouraged by Director Samantha Hamilton to align our activities to support SAM's initiatives – which is, after all, what the Club is here for (in addition to having a good time!).

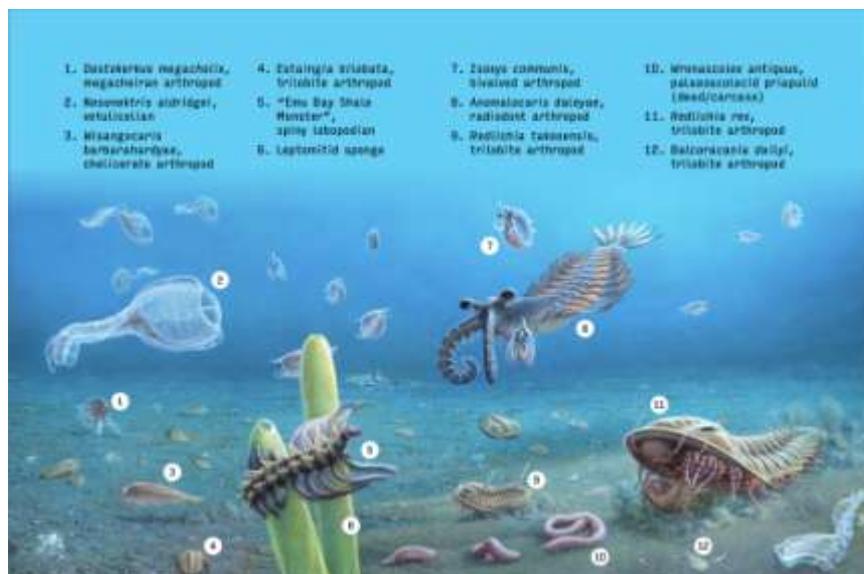
Thus, the WHC and SAM are now in an outstanding position to enter a new era of collaboration and synergy, where we develop events and expeditions that prioritise the needs and requests of the Museum, and capitalise on the participation and expertise of its staff.

As part of this new direction, the Director herself is keen to share her research and understanding of Aboriginal rock art with us, through an expedition to Arnhem Land. In addition, Adam Moriarty, Director of Collections and Research, who many of you have already met, is keen to learn from some of the best new museums in the world (Abu Dhabi, Cairo) how they integrate research, exhibitions and donor support. As well, Steve Zagala, last seen at our Viking event, is keen to gather contemporary material on sinking islands and changing Pacific environments to enliven and modernise the Pacific gallery.

These are all expeditions that fall within our remit where we can make genuine, helpful and productive contributions. You are likely to see a call for expressions of interest for the first of these soon... Watch this space!

Prof Phillip Weinstein, President

### AUSTRALIA POST'S CAMBRIAN FOSSIL STAMPS



The Museum is celebrating the release of a set of Australia Post stamps depicting these iconic Emu Bay Shale Cambrian fossils with an 'Ancient Life' celebration. You can hear more about these fascinating creatures at our evening event on 12 March with Associate Professor Diego Garcia-Bellido – see below.

### **IMPORTANT NULLARBOR CAVE DISCOVERY**

Friend of the Club and renowned invertebrate scientist Dr Jess Marsh's discovery of a previously unknown eyeless wasp featured in the media. Jess and Dr Liz Reed will be the lead scientists in the Nullarbor Cave expedition in September this year. ABC report is at the following link. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2025-06-25/eyeless-wasp-that-lived-in-pitch-black-cavefound-in-nullarbor/105451112>

### **RECENT EXPEDITION REPORTS**

The September 2025 Fire and Spice Expedition Report, including photographs, can be found [here](#).

The September 2025 Ediacaran Expedition report, including photographs, can be found [here](#).

### **EXPRESSING INTEREST**

Note: If you are considering taking part in any of our expeditions, please express interest by email at [waterhouseclub@samuseum.sa.gov.au](mailto:waterhouseclub@samuseum.sa.gov.au) or by telephoning the Club office at 8273 9114. In the lead-up to the expedition, the Club will send an invitation to those on the expression of interest list. The invitation will only be circulated more widely if there are spaces available.

### **EVENT SERIES**

Your Club runs a series of evening events, held approximately every three months, usually on a Tuesday night at the Museum, as well as some other special events, evening and morning. The evening events will continue to feature welcoming wine and canapés, and the morning events will be followed by lunch at the Art Gallery Cafe. Watch for the invitations in your inbox.

### **EVENTS IN 2026**

#### **Daytime Event Tuesday 24th February 2026**

#### **Mawson Polarities with Mark Pharaoh and Faith Gerhard at the Adelaide University Barr Smith Library**

This display, consisting primarily of photographs, will entail a look at the visits made by Sir Douglas Mawson into South Australia and incorporating his excursions to the Antarctic. We will be shown the exhibition and his association with the University of Adelaide (AU) by Mark Pharaoh, Senior Collections Manager at the SA Museum, and Faith Gerhard from Adelaide University. We may also be joined by one or two Adelaide University students who curated the exhibition. The event will conclude with lunch at the Art Gallery Café.

#### **Evening Event. Tuesday 12th March 2026**

**Associate Professor Diego Garcia-Bellido** has entertained, educated and enlightened us on many occasions, and he is back to do it again - this time on the latest updates on Cambrian and Ediacaran fossil discoveries, and the story behind the creation of a series of postage stamps by Australia Post depicting these enigmatic creatures (pictured above).

#### **Evening Event. Tuesday 5th May 2026**

**Dr Cath Kemper** is an old friend the Club and has starred in several memorable outback collecting trips, but the major part of her 40-year career was leading the Museum's marine mammal research group. Cath and honorary researcher Ikuko Tomo will astound you with the size and diversity of SAM's marine mammal collection and the breadth of its research.

### **Evening Event. Tuesday 11th August 2026**

**Brenan Dew** walks like an Egyptian. Before joining SAM he conducted archaeological fieldwork in Egypt and on his days off studied astronomy to understand how the Ancient Egyptians viewed the cosmos. He will enthral you with tales of uncovering Egyptian treasures and the role astronomy played in their conception and construction.

### **Evening Event. November – Date tba**

**Dr Shasta Henry**, the Museum's new 'Bug Doctor', is a passionate entomologist and science communicator. She is the manager of the Terrestrial Invertebrate Collections at the South Australian Museum, and has a species of Amazonian beetle named after her. Her talk showcases the 'Curious Case of an Australian Cockroach', and she will enthusiastically prove why the creatures, and entomology itself, can be fun.

## **EXPEDITIONS IN 2026**

### **Expedition. 19 March 2026**

#### **Hallett Cove and the intertidal zone**

Explore both the geology of the rocks and the creatures that dwell in the shallows of the intertidal reef at low tide. Hallett Cove is one of the best-known geological sites in Australia because of the evidence of an ancient glaciation. The completion of the boardwalk enables us to wander up the southern end of the path with the Club's own geologist, Trevor Ireland, describing the evolution of this awesome landscape.

Since 1997, Reef Watch, with support from the Conservation Council, has been involved in monitoring our marine environment, training volunteers and undertaking citizen science, more important than ever with the continuing algal bloom. Join James Tilly, Marine Biologist, for a safe, fun, and informative guided tour of the intertidal reefs.

**Expedition leaders:** Gill Sneddon and Gary Sjoberg

### **Expedition. 8-15 September 2026**

#### **Exploring the amazing world of the Nullarbor Caves (rescheduled from 2025)**

The Nullarbor Caves are internationally famous places where you can find evidence of past and present biodiversity, including highly specialised insect species which are the particular interest of Dr Jess Marsh, the co-lead scientist of this expedition. We will also be accompanied by cave fossil expert Dr Liz Reed, and as a bonus, Assoc Prof Diego Garcia-Bellido. Expeditioners will help the scientists document past and present biodiversity, record cave habitat features, and record threats, such as the presence of foxes. In addition, there will be two expert cavers, Dr Steve Milner and Andrew Stempel, who will assist with cave access and expeditioner safety. Expeditioners will help collect and examine material, such as invertebrate specimens, bones and remains of vertebrates, and sediment samples. These specimens will allow the scientists to investigate recent historical changes to biodiversity, learn more about the climate when they occurred, and help predict future changes.

You will not need to abseil or don an aqualung for this expedition, but you will need a very good level of fitness and agility. It will be a self-drive expedition with motel accommodation and catering. The expedition will start and finish at the Nullarbor Roadhouse west of Ceduna.

**Expedition Leaders:** Alastair and Rose Dow

### **Expedition. Late September (date to be finalised)**

#### **Behind the Scenes at the New Museum Storage Facility, Walkley Heights**

The Museum is embarking on the relocation of around 5 million collection items, from fossils to indigenous artefacts to skeletons and more. This herculean task is due for completion in the second half of the year, and the Waterhouse Club will be one of the first groups to get exclusive access to it. This half-day occasion will be followed by lunch at a location to be decided.

### **Expedition 3 - 10 October 2026**

#### **Where ancient knowledge meets living culture**

The Paspaley Pearl is a luxury small ship scheduled to sail from Darwin to Yirrkala (Gove), stopping at remote indigenous communities with a focus on art centres, rock art sites, pearl farms, and other unique attractions seldom visited due to the remoteness and land access

restrictions. Accompanying and informing us on this trip will be Dr Samantha Hamilton, SA Museum Director, whose research interests centre around Indigenous Art.

### **Expedition. 31 October - 07 November 2026**

#### **Lord Howe Island, World Heritage Area (wait list only)**

A week of fauna, flora and geology on this beautiful Island. Activities will be orchestrated by resident naturalist and conservationist Ian Hutton OAM. He has a 45-year relationship with the island and has been involved in the initiation of several conservation projects, including weed eradication, rodent eradication and studies of climate change. He is currently the Director of the LHI Museum.

Activities will include walking to explore the plant and bird life, snorkelling or a glass-bottomed boat experience and a boat trip. We have offered to be involved in any conservation activities that are current. There will also be some spare time just to enjoy the atmosphere and be involved in other activities, such as golf, or very fit walkers may like to make private arrangements to walk up Mount Gower, which requires an accredited guide and will take a full day.

The expedition will start and end in Sydney. The flight from Sydney is early, so expeditioners will need to arrange accommodation for the night of 30<sup>th</sup> October.

**Expedition Leaders:** Gill Sneddon and Gary Sjoberg

## **EXPEDITIONS IN 2027**

### **Expedition. Early Spring 2027**

#### **Port Lincoln and Coffin Bay.**

A proposed expedition with Dr Ben Parslow and Dr Philip Jones to search for an elusive forebear to the one and only Dinosaur Ant held in a jar at SAM that was recently recovered from the depths of the SAM collection.

The ant's parentage is apparently from the Coffin Bay area, where we hope to look for any of his family that has hidden from the scientists for many years. Philip Jones has some interesting stories on GF Angus' fourth journey to Port Lincoln in 1845 that we hope to delve into.

**Expedition Leader:** TBA

**All of the above dates and arrangements may be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.**

**Expressions of interest for any of the above events and expeditions are invited by email to [waterhouseclub@samuseum.sa.gov.au](mailto:waterhouseclub@samuseum.sa.gov.au) or by telephoning the Club office on 8273 9114. Early expressions of interest assist the Club to plan with confidence.**

Where there is a high level of interest expressed when invitations are distributed, we will hold bookings open for at least one week and if more requests for bookings are received than the number of places available a ballot will be held to determine participants, with a wait list created to fill any cancellations.

Please note the Club's Vaccination Policy

In the interest of protecting the health and well-being of members and Museum staff, the Club strongly encourages all event and expedition participants to be fully vaccinated against Covid and Influenza.