

Media Release

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2008 Australian Prospector & Miners Hall of Fame Annual Inductee Announcements!

Last night at the Duxton Hotel in Perth, the successful 2008 Mining Hall of Fame Inductees were announced and celebrated!

Prospectors and Miners, Scientists and Directors, Educators and Investors have all played an integral part in Australia's mining development. Their pioneering spirit, their colourful personalities, their powers of observation and painstaking research have all helped shape the character and spirit of this nation.

The Australian Prospectors & Miners Hall of Fame seeks to recognise the significant contribution made by individuals or groups of people to the Mining industry by inducting them into the Mining Hall of Fame. An advisory board of mining historians, researchers and experts analyses the applications and after careful consideration makes recommendations to the Hall of Fame Board on the individuals to be inducted each year.

The 2008 Inductees are...

Mr Albert Arthur Charles Mason (1914 – 2000)

Recognised in the category of Directors and Management for his achievements in the fields of mineral exploration and the development and management of mining operations in Australia.

Bert Mason qualified as a Mining Engineer, Geologist from Melbourne Technical College in 1946.

Amongst Bert Mason's many achievements was his involvement in the Telfer project from the initial exploration and discovery through design and construction to production.

In 1961 he was appointed manager of ATDP, a consortium of four companies involved in the tin mining industry. He produced a paper on the future of tin mining in Australia which had at the time greatly influenced the future of the Tin Industry in Australia...

In 1981 Bert Mason was awarded the Presidents Award by the Australian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy and is the subject of their publication 'No Two the Same', an autobiographical, social and mining history 1914-1992 on the life and times of mining engineer AAC (Bert) Mason.

Mr Edward Norman Milligan (1932 – 1999)

Nominated in the category of Prospectors & Discoverers Ted Milligan was born in Auckland, New Zealand and educated as a geologist at the University of Auckland.

In 1960 Ted joined the Bureau of Mineral Resources in Canberra and spent several seasons undertaking the regional stratigraphic mapping and stratigraphic drilling in the Georgina Basin. In 1967 Ted Milligan joined Utah and remained with them and its successor BHP until his retirement in 1996.

Ted Milligan was the most successful coal exploration geologist of his time. His unsurpassed knowledge of the worlds known coal bearing basins and his forensic approach to exploration, led him to the discovery of entirely

new Australian coal-bearing basins and to the successful development of eight major coal mines in Australia and Indonesia.

Ted Milligan was elected to a Fellow of AusIMM in 1974

Emeritus Professor John Robert de Laeter AC (1933-)

John de Laeter was nominated in the category of Technologists and Scientists for his contribution to science education and to the development of scientific and technological research particularly in relation to mineral science.

John was born and educated in Western Australia; He has degrees in Physics and Education, a PhD from UWA in 1966, a DSc from UWA in 1985 and Honorary Doctorates from both Curtin and UWA universities.

John's distinguished career has included contributions to nuclear physics, atomic weights, mass spectrometry, astrophysics, education and business. In particular, he is best known for his work in geochronology (the science of dating and determining the time sequence of events in the history of the Earth) That Australia is at the forefront of geochronological research and technology is largely due to the work of Professor John de Laeter.

Professor de Laeter's awards and list of publications are too numerous to mention here but perhaps the most unusual is that he has a planet named after him, in recognition of his important contribution to Western Australia's astronomy community, Minor Planet de Laeter 3893, a main asteroid orbiting between Mars and Jupiter.

Professor Geoffrey Norman Blainey AC (1930_)

Nominated in the category of Government and Educators: Professor Blainey was educated at Ballarat High School, Wesley College and Queens College University, He was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Melbourne University in 2007.

Professor Geoffrey Blainey has undoubtedly been amongst the vanguard of historians working in Australian Mining History. His early works included undertakings of a very broad scope; among them was the groundbreaking *The Rush that never ended; A History of Australian Mining* in 1963.

A contemporary Professor Geoffrey Bolton described Professor Blainey's work as history characterised by "skills in interpreting technological change in admirably lucid narratives that appealed to both the specialist and non specialist audiences"

Professor Blainey's work on Australian mining history cannot be separated from his broader contribution to local, cultural, economic and world history. By noting the detail of particular developments in Australian mining and providing a more general framework for those developments in the context of other local, national and international developments, Professor Blainey has invited a broader audience to come to a richer understanding of those particular developments.

Geoffrey's work has not however been limited to the field of academic or even scholarly history. He has been an active contributor to public debate and a fearless advocate of the interests of the mining industry. Of equal import has been the great number of practical contributions to public life and cultural development that have come from Professor Blainey's participation in a range of institutions and activities.

Alfred Alexander Smith (1903 – 1984)

Nominated in the category of Hero, Alfred Smith was awarded the Royal Humane Society Silver Medal for Bravery in a Mining Accident in July 1943 for bravely rescuing one man and attempting to save three others in a dangerous situation.

Four men had been overcome by fumes and in winze on the 1900 level of the Great Boulder Mine, two had collapsed then two others had tried to help and also collapsed. Alf Smith was the Senior Underground Foreman at the mine and as soon as he was notified of the mishap, he immediately reacted to the scene.

On seeing what the situation was – without hesitation – risking his own life he donned a crude Puretha mask and tied the rope around himself, then climbed down 70 feet of chain ladder to attempt to rescue the 4 persons below.

On arrival at the bottom of the winze he found 3 men all collapsed together on the ground and another hanging out of a Kibble a few feet above them. He checked the pulse of the man hanging from the kibble and then two others below him, noting one man still alive but deeply unconscious.

He tied a rope around that man (Edward Graham) so he could be pulled to the top of the winze by people above. He then found he had to take off the mask to make the men at the top of the winze hear him. On doing so Alf

called to them to pull up the man he had tied to the rope and as soon as they started to do so Alf turned back down to the others to again attempt to find any sign of life in any of them but this was in vain. Alfred then looked up and saw that the man he had tied to the rope had been swung by momentum into a side cutting and was caught there. Alf immediately took off his mask and again called to the men to stop pulling, he climbed up and freed Graham, calling for the pulling to continue once again, this time climbing the chain ladder to hold Graham clear of the ladder and any more snags. By the time they reached the top of the winze Alf was very distressed and had to be helped from the ladders onto the level. Edward Graham was checked over by the doctor who had since arrived at the site and both Graham and Smith were sent to hospital; both were well enough to be discharged the next day. Edward Graham was forever grateful to Alfred Smith for saving his life. Alfred like all brave men never considered himself a Hero, he believed he had done what anyone would do. His medal and citation are displayed as a testament to the Bravery of Alfred Smith and also to commend the many other brave men who helped or tried to help their fellow workers (mates) at times of adversity.

It is a great honour for these individuals to be recognized by their peers in the mining industry. Inductees are honoured with a plaque in the Australian Prospectors and Miners Hall of Fame and information and images of each inductee can be found on touch screen terminals in the gallery and on the website www.mininghall.com

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