
MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, 8 August 2014

Double Success for Science at the South Australian Museum

The South Australian Museum congratulates two of South Australia's leading science professionals, who won prizes at the Unsung Heroes of SA Science and Science Communicators Awards last night.

The Awards, hosted by Australian Science Communicators, were held at the Adelaide Showgrounds as part of National Science Week.

World-renowned Senior Research Scientist in Palaeontology at the South Australian Museum, Dr Jim Gehling, has won the Unsung Hero of South Australian Science Award.

Dr Gehling specialises in the study of Ediacaran fossils found in the Flinders Ranges. These fossils, representing some of the oldest known multi-celled organisms, are more than 550 million years old. Over a career spanning 40 years, Dr Gehling has published 50 papers – mainly on Ediacaran fossils – as well as on the geology of the Flinders Ranges. He was also a major contributor to the redevelopment of the *First Life: Ediacara Biota Gallery* on Level 3 of the Museum.



Jim Gehling shows Ediacaran fossils to Australian geologists visiting Nilpena, SA.
Photo by Alex Parry.

Dr Gehling worked tirelessly to promote the Ediacaran biota as means to create and name a time period to precede the Cambrian. Through his work with the International Commission on Stratigraphy, Dr Gehling established the Ediacaran as the first new geological period to be introduced in 120 years, and the first Global Time Boundary to be defined anywhere in the Southern Hemisphere.

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The Museum's contracted science theatre performer Michael Mills (aka Professor Flint) has been announced the joint winner of the Unsung Hero of Science Communication Award. Mr Mills participates regularly in the Museum's programming for children, bringing to life the valuable research of our scientists. His company, Heaps Good Productions, is employed at several South Australian locations related to science. Michael Mills is a key fixture in the South Australian Museum's School Holiday and special events programming, providing entertaining and engaging museum theatre for children.



Michael Mills (also known as Professor Flint) working with the South Australian Museum at the 2014 WOMADelaide Festival. Photo by Alex Parry.

South Australian Museum Director Brian Oldman congratulated the two winners.

"The South Australian Museum is extremely proud to have both Jim Gehling and Michael Mills as examples of excellence in the fields of science and science communication.

"The Museum prides itself on world-class research and effective storytelling, so that the community enjoys the benefits of scientific discovery."

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