

Farewell David Pickering

It is with great sadness that we have to report that our good friend and colleague David Pickering passed away on Christmas Eve following complications after a serious car accident. David was a founding member of the Dinosaur Dreaming project and before that was involved in excavations at the Dinosaur Cove site in the Otway Ranges. His love of fossils and his natural flare for preparation made him the ideal candidate for the position of Vertebrate Palaeontology Collections Manager at Museum Victoria – a role he expanded to include the supervision of a team of fossil preparation volunteers. He was always happy to show visiting researchers through the Collection and share his depth of knowledge with eager students.

His involvement with the Victorian dinosaur digs began at Dinosaur Cove in 1993 and Tom Rich was so impressed that he asked him to be part of a select group of diggers to return to Dinosaur Cove in 1994. When it became obvious that the fossil layer at Dinosaur Cove was exhausted David naturally joined the team working the Flat Rocks site on the Bass Coast. His easy going but professional approach to the dig made him a favourite with the Dinosaur Dreaming crew, particularly his keen sense of humour and quick wit. His impressions of some of the characters on the team had everyone in stitches.

In 2007 he became co-coordinator of the Dinosaur Dreaming project when Lesley Kool semi-retired. He also took over the arduous task of the preparation of the tiny mammal jaws. A formidable job that no-one else could have tackled. As part of his job as Collections Manager at Museum Victoria David also undertook the delicate acid preparation of limestone blocks from Gogo in Western Australia, where some of the oldest vertebrate fossils have been found. His work with Dr. Erich Fitzgerald on the preparation of the fossil whales of Victoria was also of paramount importance.

He and Lesley led the Dinosaur Dreaming team at Inverloch until 2013 when it was decided that the project should head west to a new site on the Otway Coast – Eric the Red West. Preparations are currently underway for Eric The Red West 2017 and the crew will have the difficult task of adjusting to a dig without David at the helm.

David leaves behind his lovely partner Sarah and his two sons Stephen and Andrew. Our thoughts go out to them all with much love.



David with Natalie Schroeder and Lesley Kool at Dinosaur Cove in 1993. Courtesy of Lesley Kool



David (centre) holding a cast of the arm of Australovenator with AAOD director David Elliott (left) and Dr. Tom Rich (right) at Museum Victoria 2014. Courtesy of David Elliott.



David at his favourite place in front of a microscope at the 2013 Dinosaur Dreaming dig. Courtesy of Peggy Cole.