

# ROCK LEGENDS

A BRIEF INSIGHT INTO THE CAREERS OF MINING AND EXPLORATION INDUSTRY EXPERTS.

## Matt White

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### Q. When did you start?

I graduated from Uni in 1989, so have around 30 years' experience in the resources sector (exploration, mining, research).

### Q. Where did you start?

A few weeks after graduating, I flew down to Tasmania and did a summer season of helicopter-supported exploration work based in Zeehan with RGC, looking for gold and base metals in the mountain ranges of western Tassie. I was then transferred to Queenstown and was part of the discovery team that drilled out the deep zones of high-grade gold mineralisation at the now Henty Gold Mine. It was pretty cool seeing free gold coming up in the diamond drill cores.

### Q. Where have you worked?

I've worked in most states of Australia, plus SE Asia and various Pacific countries. Recent work has been in Myanmar, Fiji and NW QLD. I also did 4 years with Nautilus Minerals exploring the seafloor in PNG and Tongan waters, using remotely operator vehicles (ROVs).

### Q. Companies you've worked for?

Renison Goldfields (RGC) and BHP Billiton in the early days, plus a heap of junior explorers and private companies. Recent work has been with Dome Gold Mines and Multicom Resources.

### Q. How did you get into geology?

I did geology in Year 11 and 12 at high school and loved it, so did an applied geology degree at Uni Technology Sydney (UTS). I picked this course as it included 2 x 6



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month field experience semesters. I was sent out to Mount Morgan in QLD with RGC, and then Norseman in WA with Western Mining. After getting a taste for the industry during my degree, I knew I wanted to go on and become an exploration geologist.

**Q. Favourite place to explore?**

Anywhere new with strong mineral potential. I love the challenge of analysing new geological terranes and new commodities. Myanmar is one of my favourite places to work. It's an under-explored country with great resource opportunities, but also a very challenging place to get things done.

**Q. What can be improved in the exploration and mining industries?**

Better tax/financial incentives to allow juniors to raise more \$ and ride out the lows in our volatile boom/bust industry.

**Q. If you were down to your last drill hole, where would you drill?**

Somewhere completely left-field – an unconventional geological idea that is out-of-the-ordinary. Sometimes these holes can lead to success. Often geologists follow a set recipe, but a bit of “crazy science” can sometimes bring a pleasant surprise.

**Q. Key advice for young geologists out there?**

Exploration is a long winding road with lots of twists and turns. Be positive, persistent and patient and you will eventually find success. Get out of the office and into the field. Get your boots dirty and try to listen to what the rocks are telling you.

**Q. Any exploration companies out there whose projects you like?**

Heaps of great companies out there. Too many to list. I'm an optimist so I like many different companies for different reasons.

**Q. If you could select one type of drill rig, what would it be?**

A brand new universal RC-Diamond rig (that never breaks down). The RC drilling can be done to cover wide areas, then help focus in on the target. The diamond hole can be drilled into the guts of the target.

**Q. I'll never forget...**

Exploring the seafloor with Nautilus Minerals in PNG waters off New Ireland. There were around 100 people on a 120 m long research ship and I was the lead geologist planning the exploration programs using new offshore exploration technologies. During the first few months we discovered several high-grade Copper-Gold deposits on the seafloor at 1600 m water depth. We drilled them out using a remotely operated diamond rig, which was a world-first. I'll never forget that feeling of being in the middle of the Bismarck Sea, applying the latest cutting-edge technology and discovering new ore deposits that nobody had ever seen before.



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