

## Editor's desk



We are delighted to present you with this Christmas issue of *Preview* and to inform you that, once again, we have been blessed by Don Emerson. He has crafted a feature on Haematite – the bloodstone, and is challenging our thinking about the physical properties of this most common but elusive mineral. On a more prosaic note, Michael Asten (*Education matters*) has put together a mini-feature on theses completed by geophysical students in Australia in 2017. This compilation is a compelling read for all of us interested in the future of our profession, and it would seem that our President (*President's piece*) is not alone in thinking that a broad-based training in the geosciences is important for job security in the exploration industry. We also say goodbye to Marion Rose (*Vale Marion Elisabeth Rose*). David Denham (*Canberra observed*) takes the opportunity to share his concerns about the decline in Australian research investment. Mike Hatch (*Environmental geophysics*) ruminates on low induction number approximation. Terry Harvey (*Mineral geophysics*) reminds us that if something appears to be too good to be true, it probably is, and 'Santa' Mick Micenko (*Seismic window*) introduces, or in some cases re-introduces, readers to spectral decomposition.

As this is the last issue for 2017 I would like to thank all *Preview* contributors and, in particular, the *Preview* editorial team for their unflagging support over the past 12 months. Your magazine would be nothing if not for their efforts. I would also like to thank the *Preview* production team, particularly for their patience – it can't be easy working with a bunch of amateurs who have difficulty staying focused on the job at hand. I think Helen has heard just about every imaginable excuse for missed deadlines. I am not

sure, but I think she may have even heard the one about the dog...

Whilst on that topic, *Preview* may have made it onto your screens and into your letterboxes a little later than you have come to expect, but this time around I really do have a good excuse. I had only intermittent internet connection for most of November as I was trekking in Nepal with a group of colleagues interested in the ongoing evolution of the Annapurna Range and the consequent development of natural hazards, particularly landslide hazards – that was our rationale anyway! The group was led by Professor Monique Fort from the Université Paris, Diderot. Monique has been working in Nepal for over 40 years. When she started she had to walk for days, if not weeks, to reach areas that we were able to reach in days courtesy of the 'new silk road' being

built from Tibet across Nepal and into India by the Chinese. The road is being hacked out of the mountains and is under constant threat from landslides, which are often triggered by earthquakes. After being bounced over rocks at an average speed of 10 km/h and then facing daunting climbs up steep mountainsides, it struck me that this was a terrain in which drone technology could really come into its own – particularly if that technology borrowed from Mars research and incorporated some sort of sampling mechanism. Now there is a Christmas challenge for the gadget builders amongst you!

A safe and happy festive season to you all!!

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The Editor at Tatopani in Nepal at the start of a trek into the Higher Himalaya.