

SI Adelaide February AGM and Business Meeting.

These important club events took place on Monday February 8th 2016.
At our AGM, Donna Coombe was elected President and received the regalia from
outgoing President Sharon Norton.



Our speaker between the meetings, was Elise Lavers, a young woman whom we gave some financial support, to travel to South Africa. Elise won an internship at Oceans Research, in Mossel Baai, South Africa. Elise, a teacher, very keen conservationist and enthusiastic outdoor woman, who had some experiences with sharks whilst out kayaking and she wanted to learn more about them. The internship became part of a visit to South Africa, where she found that she learned about so much more during her solo 9 week trip.

She learned a lot about the role of women, corruption, apartheid, poverty, white privilege, first-world privilege, or just how much the trip would make her realise that teaching is the right path for her to be following at this point in her life. Whilst Elise was studying at Oceans Research, she met other professionals from around the world and from diverse disciplines. Participants were not all marine biologists or associated professions.

One of the first moments in South Africa that really conflicted with her views was seeing the abundance of black house servants who were working to meet every need at the Oceans Research Campus. While the predominantly white office staff, researchers, and interns enjoyed room service, two pools, and 3 cooked meals a day, the black staff worked tirelessly, even on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Years Day to give them luxury.

Another of Elise's great passions, is the environment and renewable energy and this is how we met her first. Three years ago, Elise spoke to our club about the hope of a huge solar power station at Port Augusta. The coal fired Playford B power station has been decommissioned, but no other decision has been made about power generation in Port Augusta. Last year while teaching at Ceduna, Elise was drawn to the beauty of the Great Australian Bight and saw how the local community has built many industries around that incredibly beautiful area. The wealth of those towns comes from tourism, fishing and oysters, which could all be lost with a potential oil spill from proposed drilling for oil in the area. Many will remember the Gulf of Mexico oil spill a few years ago.

Marine ecosystems need our protection and Elise encouraged us to visit the Wilderness Society website www.thewildernesssociety.org, to express our support.



These wonderful experiences Elise has shared with us and the wider understanding she has of the role of women and the interconnected nature of the environment, will be taken into the classroom. This knowledge will enrich Elise's work as a teacher but also of her students.