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▶ **Students get to grips with our geology**
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By: Stéfán Delatovic

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Students get to grips with our geology

By Stefan Delatovic

Broken Hill was the place to be if you wanted to teach the difficult aspects of geology, according to Senior Lecturer of Tectonics and Structural Geology at Monash University Peter Betts.

Mr Betts, along with Ian Roach, Lecturer in Regolith Geology at ANU, and Steve Hill, who is Regolith Lecturer at the University of Adelaide, have brought together about 150 university students to study the city's unique building blocks.

The students are studying geology through their various institutions: the Melbourne, Monash, Adelaide and Australian National Universities.

They are here in two groups but came together at the Junction Mine to 'read the orebody'.

Mr Roach said the Junction Mine was a choice location to view the

line of lode's 'regolith', the weathered outcrop sticking out of the ground.

"(The students) have all seen fresh examples in the classroom, but never a weathered example of it," he said.

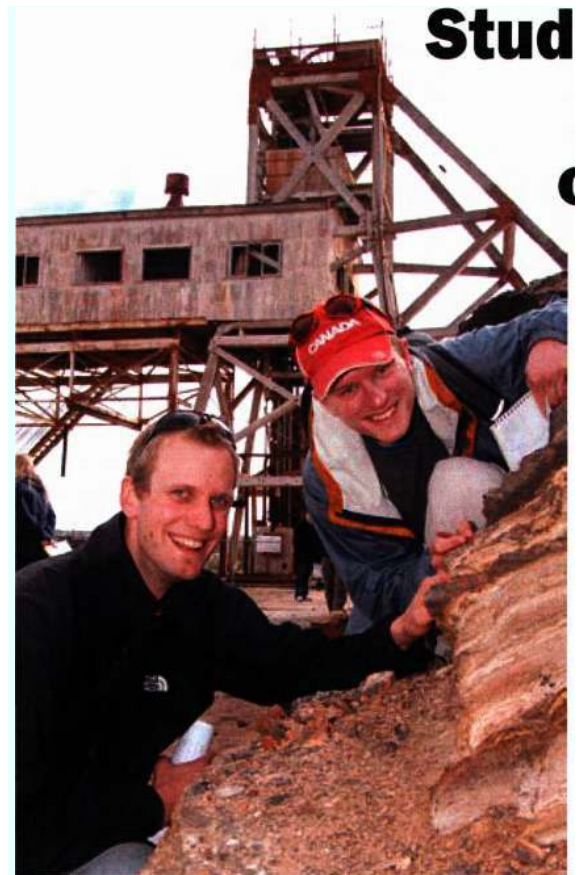
"When they finish their course and they're standing on top of an oil rig - which they'll do, it's like a right of passage - what are they going to do?"

Getting up close to the regolith would teach them a great deal, he said.

Mr Betts said the trip was held annually whenever possible, as Broken Hill was a great natural laboratory, with a mix of geological formations including outcrops and bedrock, both weathered and covered.

On top of that, it's all right in the city, taking much of the hassle out of finding accommodation.

"If you want to teach difficult geology, you come to Broken Hill. Out here its sink or swim," he said.



* Geology students Christian Jailer and Kyle Rebyna at the Junction Mine