

Rob Lee – Vice Chair Student Development Committee



Rob is the Head of Petrophysics Solutions at Shell, where he has worked for his entire 32 year career in the industry. As Principal Technical Expert for cased hole petrophysics, he's kept busy throughout the Shell group, providing advice, support, and training courses, on all aspects – increasingly abandonment/decommissioning work – in various corners of the world.

In previous years he has been involved with the Continuing Education committee supporting their Well Abandonment seminars, but his passion for teaching drew him towards the SPE Aberdeen Student Development Committee. There, he enjoys supporting all of the chapters throughout Scotland, whether it's simple engagement forums, technical presentations, social events or working as a judge on the bursary panel.

In the Spotlight

What do you think are the benefits of being a member of SPE?

Whilst it's obviously an invaluable resource for connecting young people with experienced technical professionals, there's a great deal of satisfaction to be had in supporting that interest with coaching and mentoring. That's why I joined the SDC. The more you put in the more you get out.

What did you want to be when you were younger?

I wanted to be a pilot. But given the amount of time I spent building stuff as a kid – be it with Lego, Meccano, and then hammer and nails, I think I was just a natural engineer at heart.

What are the main career stepping stones you have taken?

Well I didn't have anything that could be called a conventional career path (that would suggest a plan!). As a naïve youth, I quit university upon discovering wine, women, and music. Eventually, I found myself at Shell. A few years in finance was followed by a short period doing some database design and programming. From there I fell into Petroleum Engineering. Twenty years later I look at my business card that reads "Head of Petrophysics Solutions", and it makes me smile. I've been very fortunate but like to think that I've earned it.

Who has been your greatest influence?

The company, and people I've worked with there, have had a huge impact. When I landed in Petrophysics, I had two bosses that really supported and encouraged my development. They believed I had something to offer and gave me every opportunity to show it.

Otherwise, my parents have always been very good at instilling a need to stay grounded. Show respect, never forget where you come from, and always be grateful for the good things.

Your favourite stress-buster?

Playing guitar. I play in a band and have been doing so since I was 20 years old. I just love music, and it really is the perfect escape from just about everything and anything.

What's your idea of perfect retirement?

I have a plan to ease myself into it, by going through a phase of part-time working, and then maybe some consultancy teaching role. I know I'd be bored if I just tried to stop. During this process, I'd like to work on building my own recording studio. An ideal combination of work and music time.

What's your dream job?

I'm doing it! My 'general' day job is very interesting – also quite demanding, hence the need for the stress release above – but I also get to travel and see a bit of the world. Best of all, I get to teach various technical courses, and I love the classroom (just another audience, another gig to me.) Working with the SDC seemed like a logical choice.

What are you reading, listening to or glued to on TV?

Other than sport or the occasional drama series (Homeland, Elementary), I'm not a typical armchair TV fan. I do love films and have a huge library at home. Particularly a fan of science fiction and war movies.

Where is your favourite place to go on holiday?

There's no one ideal destination. There are many places I like, but I generally love travelling and seeing new countries (one of the reasons I really enjoy cruise holidays). If pushed, I'd say China was up there as one of the most interesting places I've visited.

If you were a character in a TV series or movie who would you be?

Sheldon Cooper (Big Bang Theory). Whilst I may not like to believe that I'm as brutally honest, lacking in empathy, or averse to tenderness as that character, my wife seems to think we're twins in many ways.

Return to [SPE Aberdeen Section website](#).