



Dr Nilssen is a professional archaeologist with over 30 years experience and most known for his collaborative research at Pinnacle Point which unearthed the world-famous discoveries that contributed to the unfolding story of humanity's origins. Now, however, it is the future of our species that holds Peter's attention. Using the archaeological record as a lens to examine the state of humanity through time, Peter discusses the drivers of human behaviour and how we have shifted from a thriving to a barely surviving species. Beliefs and knowledge systems are key to this unfolding drama of our time. At the core lies connection, coherence and belonging as vital ingredients in shifting human consciousness.

### **Biography - Peter Nilssen**

A few years before obtaining his PhD in archaeology from the University of Cape Town in 2000, Peter Nilssen unwittingly laid the groundwork for his future career and passion. He was the first archaeologist to recognize the research potential of cave 13B and other sites at Pinnacle Point near Mossel Bay during an Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed Pinnacle Point Estate undertaken in 1997.

In 1999, Peter initiated archaeological research at Pinnacle Point with friend and colleague Prof Curtis Marean and was last employed with Curtis in the Institute of Human Origins (Arizona State University) that was founded by Prof Donald Johansen of "Lucy" fame. Cave 13B, the focus of this talk and the main site of the Point of Human Origins tourism initiative that Peter started in 2012, is now a world famous site for discoveries made there that contribute to the unfolding story of humanity's origins. Now, however, it is the future of our species that holds Peter's attention.

Peter resigned from academia in 2007, but has consulted as a professional archaeologist for 30 years' in Environmental Impact Assessments for a wide variety of development projects including alternative energy farms. In addition, he now specialises in communicating archaeology and its underlying value for education and conservation.

Peter is an honorary associate of Iziko, Museums of Cape Town and an accredited Professional member of the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists.