

**Victoria Division,  
21 Bedford Street,  
North Melbourne, 3051**

**Ballarat Group  
Chairperson: Ross Proud**

**Secretary: Gary Bunn  
Wye.choir@gmail.com**



**ENGINEERS  
AUSTRALIA  
Ballarat Group  
Victoria Division**

## ***Message from the Chair***

In 1970 as a young student full of excitement and enthusiasm for the prospects that lay ahead I joined the Institute of Engineers Australia as a student member. In those days the only contact with the organization was the annual membership renewal, and reading the monthly Engineers Australia magazine. Branches were largely inactive and the state and national organizations were remote, aloof and largely irrelevant to regionally based practicing engineers.

Over the years individual circumstances have changed dramatically as has the professional working environment and the world of business and employment.

At the risk of sounding nostalgic, my generation have seen probably some of the most dramatic changes to our profession ever experienced and probably ever will experience by any later generation.

My career started with manual telephone exchanges and is ending with mobile phones with Satellite navigation capability.

Analytical work was carried out using manual techniques (Moment Distribution, etc.), 7 figure log tables and slide rules, in fact we were prohibited from even taking a personal calculator into the exams and the only concept of a computer was the main frame we had no direct access to and that took up a whole room.

I don't have to reflect on what capability we have today.

Back then the concept of working in Ballarat, or any other location and working on projects as far afield as the other side of the world or the other side of the country and communicate as if you were in the same room as your colleagues was simply not even contemplated.

The world is now very small and flat (metaphorically speaking) and the world population has become highly mobile.

It is in light of these changed circumstances the work of the Engineers Australia to advocate for, advance and promote the profession and set standards has become imperative. It is for this reason that I believe that it is our collective responsibility to contribute to the organization that is run by engineers for the benefit of engineers and the society that we all serve.

When asked to join EA the usual comment is "what do they do for me". Let's think about this for a moment.

One way to answer this question is to reflect once again on the past. The 1980's was an economically volatile period of time which culminated in the depression we had to have. It was during this period that there was a push to corporatize as many organizations and companies as possible. It was during this period that Engineers as a collective profession lost its way and allowed themselves to be overrun by the business managers and accountants. By and large engineers were bypassed for executive positions and we were relegated to the "Back room Boys" Classification, or that is what seemed to be happening from my perspective.

Since that time the EA organization has become far more proactive in promoting the profession in the public arena, in the schools and universities, and at government level.

**It is precisely these circumstances that we must avoid. This is the work of EA and is why we must be involved.**

However more needs to be done and it is incumbent on us as a collective to do more and the vehicle by which we can achieve and maintain our objectives is through our professional organization "Engineers Australia"

Remember the profession of engineering in all its colours is arguably the only one that affects each and every person in the world as there is literally no part of the physical world that has not had an engineer's hands all over it.

Considering the physical world with all the problems connected to population, engineers can occupy the position of driver to solve the problems as they raise their ugly head.

Let's not occupy the back seat.

I urge every existing member to become more active in the branch or at state or national level and encourage friends and colleagues that are not members to join.

Ross Proud  
MIEAust CPENG  
Ballarat Chairman