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Joined the Institute in 1987

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Environment Institute  
of Australia and  
New Zealand Inc.

*What was EIANZ like in the early years? Why did you decide to get involved?*

It was all a bit remote from me to follow closely in the early days - I was working as a planner in the NT national parks agency, the Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory based in Alice Springs, so I observed things from a distance I suppose. Both the Australia Planning Institute (RAPI as it was then, today's PIA) and the Australian Institute of Parks and Recreation (then RAIPR, now PLA) were too 'urban' or "modified/landscaped" focused to be an ideal fit for someone working in conservation and nature-based recreation planning and land management, so I joined the EIANZ in the hope that it could be a 'halfway house' between the environment and its conservation/management and outdoor recreation planning.

*Who were/are some of your career mentors? Tell us about them.*

John Wood was the head of park planning at the CCNT during my early years there, and one of the doyens of outdoor recreation planning, also Michael Butler his successor.

*What are some of the most important lessons you have learned over the course of your career?*

Trends may come and fads may go, but the basics of sound planning and getting back to first principles will always deliver. And technology is a tool, not an end product.

*Thinking about the last 30 years, what stands out to you as the highlight or most significant achievement of the Institute?*

Growth and persistence.

*What do you think the biggest challenge facing the environment profession is today and what do you think EIANZ's role is in addressing this challenge?*

Tokenism and 'lip service'. With environmental issues increasingly being mainstreamed as a 'tick the box' exercise or gateway consideration only and initial protections or commitments progressively traded-off as well as generally little follow-up or effective enforcement measures.

*What do you think EIANZ will be like 10 years from now?*

Hopefully a broader church promoting applied solutions rather than narrowing into a focus on specialised, technical and largely separate disciplines.

*Why has EIANZ membership remained a priority for you over the last 30 years?*

Although the EIANZ does seem to becoming increasingly technical and focused on a number of specialist fields - and moving away from broader/integrated land and environmental management solutions - there is occasionally something of sufficient interest or relevance to my own special area of interest, and my practice, to keep me coming back.

*What advice would you give to new members of the Institute?*

Make the most of it, because there are not a lot of alternatives out there!

Celebrating  
**30**  
years  
1987 - 2017