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EIANZ CENVP

ECOLOGIST | JR-L
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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?

I had been working for the Ministry of Works and Development since moving from the UK to New Zealand in 1981. I was the only ecologist in the organisation and one of very few ecologists working outside academic and research areas. My job brought me into contact with a range of other environmental professionals including landscape architects, engineers, geologists, hydrologists and planners, and I enjoyed the challenge of introducing ecological ideas to them! But there was no professional body for ecologists in NZ so I relied on overseas (mostly UK) journals, newsletters and organisations for support – remember this was all pre-internet! When I read about the formation of an Australian environment institute it seemed more likely to be relevant to my work, so decided to join.

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

Prof David Bellamy was my PhD supervisor at Durham University. Around the same time he made his first appearance on television talking about environmental issues – the Torrey Canyon oil spill was a change event in pollution awareness. Dave made me aware of the need to be able to communicate complex ecological ideas in simple terms to encourage the community to care.

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

Establishing the CEnvP program to set high standards of professional performance.

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

It remains the only institute for professional ecologists in New Zealand and the only organisation committed to professional standards across the environmental spectrum. Through its publications and networking I can keep up to date with a wide range of technical issues.