Newsletter of the Australasian Association for Engineering Education

December 2003

President's Report – Gunilla Burrowes



It has been a great honour for me to be elected President of the Australasian Association for Engineering Education (AaeE) this year and I am looking forward to the challenge. I feel an enormous confidence in the great team that forms the executive committee this year, and thank Prof. David Radcliffe for his support as President-elect. It has been the first year for some time that there has been such an electoral competition for positions on the Executive Committee, which indicates the growing recognition and importance of the organisation. There are many people that I would also like to mention; however, I will leave that until later in the year. At this stage, I think that AaeE owes a significant debt to the leadership of Prof Brian Stone who has led the committee over the last few years and leaves the President's position with the organisation looking very healthy. Thank you, Brian.

A big thank you also to the organising committee of this year's conference. Margaret Jollands and her team have excelled themselves with a vibrant, professionally interactive conference. I thought the parallel sessions during the conference were particularly effective and pedagogically sound. These sessions required the speakers to team up to lead the discussion and debates on topic areas by drawing on their own papers for inspiration and ideas, and I participated in many interesting debates. I look forward to the summary of these sessions.

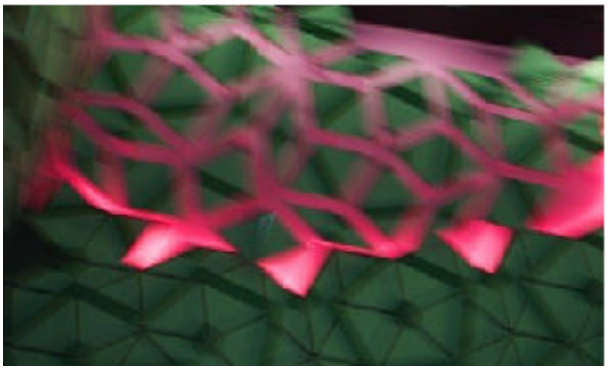
Since attending the conference I have been able to reflect on the papers presented. The quality of the papers presented was very high, with a significant number dealing with fundamental topics in the area of education. I felt that this complemented the 'show and tell' papers very well. Congratulations also to Margaret who on the day after the conference gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. That is consideration for you!

As I have said, there are many exciting challenges that face both AaeE and the area of engineering education. Many of these challenges are likely to affect us all for many years to come. For the AaeE, we are challenged at home with developing better ways to communicate with our members and responding to issues in the wider community and then globally to build closer working relationships with equivalent international organisations. We, the engineering education community, are also challenged by the dawning of a new era following the Nelson Report. Pressures on academics and the academic environment continue to grow, as increasingly scarce resources are stretched further and further.

I hope that AaeE is a place that you will turn to for discussion, debate and solutions. Next year's conference – "Creating Flexible Learning Environments" is shaping up to be an important opportunity to review the events of a challenging year, and to plan for future years. The Conference will be hosted by the University of Southern Queensland at its Toowoomba Campus from the 27th – 29th September, 2004, which just happens to follow Toowoomba's Carnival of Flowers celebrations. Contact details are included later in this Newsletter.

The Toowoomba Conference will be the Association's 15th annual conference, and also the 10th Women in Engineering Forum – important milestones for both groups. I look forward to seeing you there.

2003 Conference at RMIT



This year's conference was successfully staged by RMIT within the historic Storey Hall complex. The organising committee, led by Dr Margaret Jollands, introduced some innovations to achieve a great conference:

- The conference theme of *Engineering Education for a Sustainable Future* highlighted the challenges ahead in engineering and in engineering education.
- Keynote speakers, including Prof. Richard Felder, sharpened our attention on key elements of the conference theme.
- 5 minute presentations (an idea borrowed from the 1994 conference at UTS) were designed to *walk the talk* of good pedagogical practice. Learners should be actively involved – not passively listening. The time saved through shorter presentations was used for more robust discussion, as mentioned by Gunilla above. The conference feedback forms showed that this innovation was well received. Summaries of the discussion sessions will be made available in a future Newsletter.
- A student poster session was introduced as well as a TAFE session.
- A collaboration day followed the conference and drew a small band of enthusiasts. A report will appear in a subsequent Newsletter.
- A meeting of the Associate Deans (Teaching & Learning) was held in conjunction with the normal meeting of the Deans that follows the conference.
- The conference dinner, held on a cruiser on Port Phillip Bay was a wonderful occasion, with most participants enjoying the opportunity of dancing. (Thanks Allison!).

All in all, feedback suggests a very successful conference and we are all looking forward to getting together again in 2004 at USQ.

2004 Conference at USQ

The Australasian Association for Engineering Education and the University of Southern Queensland are pleased to invite you to Toowoomba for the 15th Annual Conference for the Australasian Association for Engineering Education and the 10th Australasian Women in Engineering Forum.



conference themes

The central theme for this year's conference is the need to create flexible learning environments that empower the learner as they progress through their lifelong educational journey. The increasing emphasis on flexible learning presents new challenges for students, educators and practitioners that will be explored during the conference. The three days of the conference will focus on:

- Creating Flexible Entry Paths
- Creating Flexible Learning Environments
- Creating Flexible Curricula

Linkages of special interest include:

- Flexible learning
- Lifelong learning
- Learner centric education
- Articulation and advanced standing
- Engineering education for sustainability

- Women in engineering
- Project and problem based learning
- Teaching innovations
- The student experience

keynote speakers

- Ms Catherine O'Sullivan
  Executive Director, District Office, Education Queensland
- Professor Gary Miller
  Associate Vice President for Distance Education and Executive Director,
  World Campus, Pennsylvania State University
- Professor Rosalind Williams
  Director, Program in Science Technology and Society, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

expressions of interest

Prospective attendees, authors and presenters are encouraged to indicate their interest in attending the conference, submitting a paper or conducting a workshop via the form available on the conference website. This information will be used by the conference committee for planning purposes and will ensure that you are kept up to date with developments in the conference program.

submission of workshop proposals

Proposals are invited for workshops suitable for small and/or large groups. Prospective presenters are requested to submit details of the proposed workshop by Friday 2nd April 2004. The proposal should be no more than an A4 page in length and should indicate:

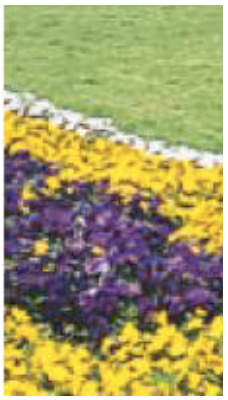
- Workshop objective
- Target audience
- Method of conducting workshop
- References
- Name of workshop presenter(s)

submission of papers

Prospective authors are invited to submit full papers for consideration by 2nd April 2004. Document preparation guidelines will be available on the conference website. Full papers will be reviewed anonymously by at least two peer reviewers. The process of reviewing papers is designed to meet the Australian Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) criteria for published papers.

important dates

Expressions of interest: 5 Jan 2004
Workshop proposals: 2 April 2004
Full paper submission: 2 April 2004
Acceptance Notification: 14 May 2004
Final paper submission: 25 June 2004
Late entries may not be considered.



conference website

For the latest information, visit: http://www.usq.edu.au/aaee.
This site is also easily accessible from the AaeE website: http://www.aaee.com.au.

Future Conferences

Expressions of interest are invited for conferences in 2006 and 2007. Please contact one of the Executive Committee: http://www.aaee.com.au/about/executiv.htm

Future Newsletters

If you would like to share any ideas, favourite websites, book reviews, new software, learning objects, etc with your colleagues in AaeE, please forward them to Roger Hadgraft and he will forward them out to the membership.



Best Wishes

Finally, have a relaxin g break over the Christmas-New Year period.
Best wishes to all!