

SMEEA Dinner, 5th July 2006

The SMEEA Annual Dinner and AGM was held in the Monash University Club on the Clayton campus on Wednesday evening 5th July. There were 49 in attendance and a good time was had by all.

The really notable people in attendance included **Bill Bonwick** (previously the John Monash Professor of Electrical Power Engineering), **Kishor Dabke** (popular teacher and, for many years, the driving force behind SMEEA) and **Garth Jacoby** (BE 1965, the earliest graduate present). The Class of 1973 had the largest numbers present of any final year, possibly because one of their number was to be the main speaker for the evening.



Members of the Class of 1973 – Bill Brown (he shouldn't be there), Brian Sneddon, Bob Girdwood, Leo Wursthorn, Tony Cotter, Jim Landau, Peter Harrison and, in the front, Paul Kirton

David Morgan, Head of Department, gave a very entertaining picture of the current healthy state of the Department, complaining, as all heads should, of the unreasonable demands being placed on Universities by government and bemoaning the shortage of funds.

Bill Brown reported that the **Doug Lampard Prize and Medal** Committee had decided not to make an award for the 2005 bunch as none of the four PhD theses completed in that year was considered to be of a sufficiently high standard.

He went on to conduct the AGM of SMEEA in a very brief space of time, simply saying that he would continue as President, Greg Cambrell as Treasurer and the other members of the Committee would continue to be Kishor Dabke, Adam Crow and Geoff Ramadan

Paul Kirton (BE 73, PhD 80) was the main speaker for the evening. On the previous day he had retired from Telstra as the General Manager of Next Generation Infrastructure. It was a big week for him! He talked with conviction, honesty and generosity of his thirty years at the Telstra Research Labs. He spoke about the main achievements of the Labs since their inception in 1923 and of how they more than justified the price that Telstra had to pay to keep them going. The closure of the Labs this year has been a sad blow to many, including a number of our graduates, but Paul said he could understand it in the current climate of telcos in Australia.

He said he hoped to write up his talk but admitted it might be some time before this can happen as he tackles other priorities in retirement.

Kishor Dabke moved a vote of thanks to Paul in his usual inimitable and engaging style and everyone present expressed their appreciation of Paul's talk.



Kishor Dabke, Paul Kirton and Bill Brown