

Richard Donaldson

Richard started his association with NZED (or was it still State Hydro then?) in 1961 as an Engineering Cadet at Canterbury University Engineering School. He graduated with a BE (Electrical) in 1964 and started work in the NZED Christchurch District Office where he worked for well known identities such as Eddie Close, Peter Dunn and Ian Fazackerley. As a dutiful public servant he answered the call to Head Office in 1967 where he worked on the commissioning of Aviemore under the command of Ted Schultz, Walter Strauss and numerous others.

In 1969 it was into the Communications Division with Fred Swan and Doug Rowe to upgrade the NI System Control SCADA systems at Whakamaru. New adventures in 1974 drew Richard into Substation Design to build the new computer-based SCADA systems for the Redclyffe and Otahuhu Area Control Centres and the new South Island System Control Centre at Islington. Of course, these systems are all now just museum pieces.



A short stint as Principal Design Engineer Transmission, working for John Malcolmson and Geoff Robinson when the Huntly-Stratford line was started, was followed by Roger Douglas changing NZED into Electricorp and the government department was gone forever. Richard then went elsewhere to play with large mainframe computers for a few years in other Government organisations, but returned to Transpower, the last vestige of NZED, as a contract project manager in 1997. Since then he became keenly involved with GridHeritage from its inception in 2002.