

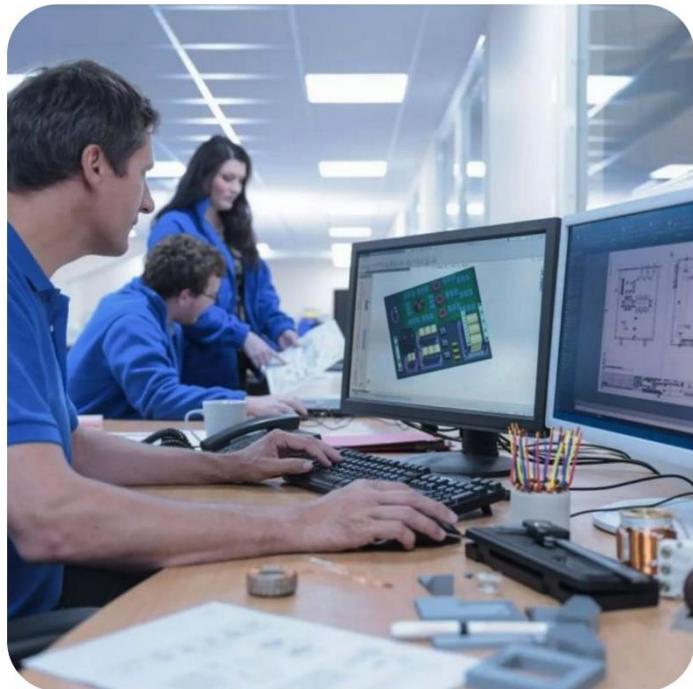
POSTED to EE&T ALUMNI

28 JAN 2026

WORKPLACES

CARD GAMES

TEAMWORK



Sections: -- Workplaces -- Paul Hassall's Memory -- Gary Kopff's Memory -- Teamwork Associations -- Anecdote --

== INTRODUCTION ==

Welcome back from the Long Weekend after your reflection and celebration. Hopefully, your projects & teamwork are resuming steadily, jovially and transparently with others.

This post's first 2 comments will have some card game notes and an anecdote of a regular player.

== WORKPLACES ==

Cards were popular in the 1970's workplaces. Dad taught me Euchre and Rummy in early High School. When I progressed to Year 11, the game of 500 was common. I experienced colourful table talk during the lunchtimes.

When I found the Elsoc common room in 1980, I saw there was a continuous game of 500 at lunchtimes. People from different years would join in to play & chat.

== PAUL HASSALL'S MEMORY ==

"I remember the joke at Telecom Australia where I first worked was that if you found 4 Telecom employees sitting at the same table they'd be playing 500."

== GARY KOPFF's MEMORY ==

"Most of the anecdotes I have about the common room and that endless 500 game aren't printable lol

The engineering curriculum and examination system help ensure that each of us is individually capable and competent.

But in my professional career, engineering has always been about collaborative teamwork. We deal with complex, interacting systems, and success depends heavily on communication. Project failures are often the result of people not communicating adequately with their colleagues, or, in the worst cases, not communicating at all.

At its heart, engineering is a highly social enterprise.

Elsoc, and the presence of a common room, is not just about having a place to relax and interact. It provides a starting point for building professional friendships. The best projects are those where the people you work with are also people you can rely on as friends.

We had a saying when writing software, but it applies equally well to hardware:
"Any coding problem will be transparent to someone."

In other words, if you are stuck on an issue and show it to your colleagues, chances are that one of them will immediately see the problem and know how to solve it.

Likewise, you can spend hours, sometimes days working on a seemingly intractable problem. Then, the moment you turn to a colleague and are forced to explain it out loud, the solution suddenly becomes obvious.

Taken together, this is why spaces and communities that encourage conversation, friendship, and collaboration are not a luxury in engineering, but an essential part of how good engineering actually gets done.

Best Regards

Gary Kopff
Life Member IEEE"

// Posted to EEnT Alumni (LI), Elsoc-Alumni (FB) and own LI space
// 28 JAN 2026
// Ctee: @Kaveh, @Luke, @Edmund, @Shakthi, @Vijay
// Prv Ctee: @GaganSK, @SomanshA, @SimonB, @MatthewR
// Heads: Dean @JulienE; EEnT Prof. @JinhongY
// School: Mgr @ElizabethGT; Projects @Klaraj

== COMMENT #1 ==

== TEAMWORK ASSOCIATIONS ==

Here are some ideas I took with me to interviews and workplaces. The red flags quickly reveal themselves. You can use them in monopoly, scrabble, playing instruments, tennis or squash.

By keeping things simple, Ken Thompson who created the Unix operating system was inspired to automate his idea of playing chess on an outdated PDP-7 computer. A story for another post.

- * let the bids develop
- * play one trick at a time (small win)

- * keep the larger picture nearby (500 pts)
- * comprehend the current style of play

- * everybody has a turn
- * play by clear business rules

- * new players are respectfully treated
- * new player learning curve is short

- * keep the humour jovial while playing
- * all players are present by choice

- * sometimes last week's partner is on another team
- * the game has a natural flow

- * outside interruptions are kept short to keep the flow
- * table talk is sometimes part of the game

- * the game may continue next time
- * keep your wits when playing individually

- * playing bad cards well keeps you in the game

== COMMENT #2 ==

== ANECDOTE about MICK HAYES ==

"One of the funniest things I saw in the common room was one morning when Mick Hayes arrived. Big guy.

He arrives in these service station overalls with a Shell logo on the pocket.

He peels them off and underneath he has the standard uni student shorts and T-shirt.

He sits down at the 500 table and starts playing and tells the story.

He had arrived at the Barker Street Gate.

Says to the greyman, "I am from the such and such Shell petrol station at Kingsford.

We received a call from ...", Mick consults a note in his pocket, " ... a Professor Stapleton.

His car has broken down in the Electrical Engineering carpark. I am here to fix it".

"Right sir!", says the greyman. "To get to that carpark ..." and continues to give Mick directions.

One way to get free parking. He would use a different gate each day lol"

Gary

// On behalf of Gary Kopff

// Campus security had grey uniforms

// Prof. Stapleton was head of Admin in ElecEng

== 7-day View Alumni Response ==
04 FEB so far

Not including the 'un触able' profiles.

LI (EE&T Alumni)

- a) Views = ...
- b) Emojis = ...
- c) People = ...

LI (Own)

- a) Views = ...
 - b) Emojis = ...
 - c) People = ...
- {
...
}

FB (ElsocAlm)

- a) Views = not visible by FB
 - b) Emojis = ...
 - c) People = ...
- {
...
}