

Engineers were vital: David Money and others

The autumn rain flicked from its destination by the windscreen wipers' hypnotic rhythm gently trickled down the window frame as David Money urged his car home to his young family. It was late but they were used to seeing him arrive well after dark. He and his colleagues worked long hours but it was a labour of love, and tonight Money had an additional air of satisfaction.

In his school days Money could not decide if he were going to be a doctor, a lawyer or an engineer. In the end he chose electrical engineering at a time when the industry was on the cusp of a revolutionary era. He managed to secure a job with AWA and became involved in setting up the integrated circuit industry in Australia. At the time, as in all paradigm shifts, some doubted the industry's ability to survive. But survive it did, and Money was among those leading the charge as an integrated circuit designer. In the 1960s he designed a wide variety of circuits including hearing aids and pacemakers, and rose to the role of general manager of research and development. In that role he succeeded in convincing Paul Trainor's Teletronics that the only way to obtain sufficient reliability in pacemakers was to use AWA integrated circuits designed by him.

His years at AWA were interesting but after a particularly intense June when Trainor had ramped up pressure on the small engineering company by increasing production demand for Teletronics integrated circuits, doubling and then tripling production – creating what became known as the red-eye project – the researcher in Money wondered why on earth he had given up the lab bench for management. To make his life even more difficult, Teletronics cut its requirement to a minimum