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VETERANS' NEWSLETTER

SYDNEY NEWS

The Annual General Meeting this year will be held on Wednesday, 24th May, 1972, in the dining room of the G.P.O., which is located on the 9th floor of the new G.P.O. building in Pitt Street, between Martin Place and King Street. Trust that you can all attend and please remember to advise the Secretary by the 19th May.

We had a record attendance at our last Annual Reunion, which was held on the 12th floor of O.T.C. House, Martin Place. We are indebted to our fellow veteran and General Manager of the Commission, Mr. Harold White, for making this space available. Unfortunately, due to the Commission's needs, this ideally suitable space is not now available. Your Committee investigated several venues and the most attractive appears to be the dining room of the G.P.O. The Manager of the Food Services Division of the P.M.G.'s Department has been very co-operative and the Annual General Meeting is being held with the thought that the members may care to evaluate it as a venue for the Annual Reunion.

The O.T.C. Social and Sports Club is holding a Bowls Day at the East Concord Bowling Club, Gipps Street, Concord on Sunday, 25th June, 1972. Those attending will be assembling at 9 a.m. A full day at the greens is anticipated, with 15 end games in the morning and a match against East Concord players in the afternoon. Recently, the T.C. Sydney Team played the O.T.C. Melbourne Team at Wagga and finished up champions. It is proposed that a team of Veterans may like to pit their wits against the Wagga champs. Luncheon and trophies will be provided and the cost per player will be \$1.50 for the day. Any Veterans wishing to attend should telephone Keith Vincent (Ext. 238) or Bernie White (Ext. 239) on 20333. Dress for the day will be full bowling attire.

Dudley Treliving recently retired from the service of O.T.C. after 48 years in communications. Unfortunately, Dudley will be moving to South Australia and we will lose him from our Association. He has promised to come up for some of our functions. Our loss, but the South Australian Association's gain.

Bill Luke has also retired, after many years in the Coastal Radio Service, and it is pleasing to hear that he has been honoured by the Queen with the Imperial Service Medal.

MELBOURNE NEWS

Don't forget our Annual General Meeting - notices already posted - to be held O.T.C. House, 382 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne (by courtesy of Management), commencing 5.30 p.m., Thursday, 25th May, 1972.

President Clive Purvis, Secretary Charles Carthew and Viv Molineaux, George McDonald, Joe Nuttal and Lee Burnstein attended the funeral of our late colleague, Bill Macgregor. Bill's mother, 97 years of age, was moved by the veterans attending the funeral; so much so that she requested Charles Carthew to pin a Veteran's badge to her dress.

Norm Calloway convalescing at home after recent hospitalization.

If you have not received "Transit", or have changed your address, please advise the Secretary. Please keep in touch.

Deepest sympathy is extended to Veteran Joe Micallef on the recent sad loss of his life partner.

Fred Davis is now an octogenarian - Congratulations Fred!

Gus Hart has now transferred to the Military Hospital at MacLeod and would like to hear from old mates.

Pleased to see Tom Finch home again after another few weeks in the Military Hospital at Heidelberg. Tom is being cared for by daughter Betty.

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George McDonald back at work again after an operation and a few weeks' convalescence. Whilst he was off, he visited New South Wales and contacted a number of Veterans.

The Scrapbook is getting full and will soon need a second edition. Any Veterans who can spare photographs should contact the Secretary.

Geoff and Mrs. Cox departed on the "Arcadia" on 28th April for an 8-month tour abroad.

A.W.A. have now settled in their new home out Mulgrave way. It is an ultra-modern complex and well worth visiting. Veterans down Melbourne way should contact Veteran Alex Stewart, who is the Melbourne Manager for A.W.A.

SYDNEY ANNUAL REUNION

The Sydney Annual Reunion was a great success, with a record attendance of 110. The following attended:-

Harry Cook, Keith Vincent, Don McIntosh, Keith Wilmot, Gordon Cupit, Bruce Collett, Trevor Thatcher, Fred St. Julian, Hedley Caswell, Bernie Kelly, Max Dwyer, Alf Culloden, Eric Cockle, Wilf Ellershaw, Joe Grosbard, Lou Brown, Stan Gray, Jock Cowie, Doug Wood, Jack Osborn, Ray Baty, Norm Harris, Peter Frost, Shaddy Meynert, Cliff Stanfield, Cec Bardwell, Jack Bassett, Tiny Greenlees, Len Vella, John Patiniott, Harry Stone, Bill Day, Murray Hill, John Lee, Dick Christoffersen, Charlie Raecke, Jack Guthrie, Willie Chant, Bill Chant, Maurice Bramley, Jack Hansson, Cec Watson, Bill Jenvey, Percy Day, Alec Batten, Phil Chapman, Arch Barrie, John Hodgson, Orm Cooper, Ray Hookway, Eric Burbury, Tony Ebert, Horrie McInnes, Abe Sharland, Bernie White, Fred Doolette, Albert Sheppherd, Dave Fleming, Don Fairweather, Jim Pow, Charlie Swinney, Gareth Thompson, George Maltby, Ron McDonald, Wilf O'Donnell, Ron Waugh, Clive Tresidder, Tom Hughes, Jim Vasek, Sid Zuber, Dave Bourne, Jim Neylon, Geoff Day, Ray Carragher, Ted O'Donnell, Tufty Baker, Russ Welbourn, Jim Shore, Ted Gunning, Blue Tully, Ken Banks, John Rowley, Roy Doohan, Ron Smith, Fred Timmins, Jack Bullen, Reg Towner, Ray Harris, Joe Collister, Ray Wood, Tom Heatley, Vin Sim, Neville Huntington, John Mulholland, Dudley Treliving, Ced Dale, Alban Gregory, Keith Bondfield, Bill Hickling, Cec McNamara, Ernie Anthoney, Bill Bardin.

A number of apologies were received for various reasons and we trust that those who did not make it are able to come to the Annual General Meeting. Unfortunately Harold White was overseas and regretfully had to tender his apologies. Guests included Charles Carthew (Victorian Association Secretary), Dickson Hawkins (P.C.B. Canada), George Smedley (O.T.C. Social and Sports Club), Tom Molloy (O.T.C.- who, incidentally, has now served his time and is a Veteran), Dr. Passmore (Ex. P.C.B.), Bob Adams (Public Relations Manager, O.T.C.) and John Hooke (Managing Director, A.W.A.).

Highlight of the evening was the meeting of many of the old P.C.B. boys with new member Fred St. Julian, ex Canada and visitor Dickson Hawkins. Maurice Bramley came all the way from Tuross Heads. A number of the group had not seen one another for over 40 years and particularly delighted was Sid Zuber, our oldest member, aged 86, who taught most of them in the old Cable Telegraph School.

MELBOURNE ANNUAL REUNION

The Melbourne Association held their Annual Reunion in O.T.C. House and the following attended:-

H.R. Little, J. Robinson, J. Chalkley, R. Adams, B. Williams, T. Molloy, F.C. McCormack, T. Connolly, E. Trezise, W. Hosking, E.M. Dennis, J.V. Joiner, J.H. Heathershaw, M. Hinneberg, A.D. Gregory, C.B. Cutler, P.N. Finlayson, A.W. Stewart, J.W. Taylor, W. Ferguson, R.L. Lane, C.F. Green, T.B. Edwards, M. Short, M. Blain, L. McCarthy, H.G. Lake, J.B. White, K. Crossley, W. Bentley, W.G. Macgregor, J. Cornish, M. Fernando, F. Ash, H. Newsome, S.M. Bright, A.R. Finch, R. Gault, A. Larkins, F.C. Davis, G.E. McDonald, J.R. Hunter, G.G. Whitmore, J. Edwards, C. Tancheff, C. Purvis, L. Brown,

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L. Foley, D. Batten, C.J. Featherstone, J.W. Turnbull, J.E. Reynolds, C.W. Carther, E. Saunders, M. Wilton, F.J. Handley, V. Molineux, G. Magnus, E. Willington, H. Tyler, W. Annand, H.E. Rowe, A. Stewart, W.J. Uwins, J.R. Jordan, A.G. Vagg, E.H. Smellie, G.H. Cox, D. Humphries, A. Gosney, M.D. Treacy, A.E. Boord, S. Harvey, R.J. Gostelow, H. White, A. Thornton.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA ANNUAL REUNION

There is no branch of the Association in West Australia, but a group of old cable men get together each year for a reunion and this was held in Ron Cocker's home, on 14th December, 1971. Anyone (you need not be a cable man), wishing to join this group should telephone Brian Morrell on 23 7318 during business hours, or 76 5062 at any other time. His address is: 146 Virgil Avenue, Yokine, W.A., 6060, should you rather write.

AUCKLAND REUNION

The Veteran Cablemen's Association, Auckland held a combined Annual General Meeting and Reunion on 3rd December, 1971. The following attended:-

R.A. Atkins, R.J. Bell, H.C.C. Bradnam, K. Clark, R.J. Collins, P. Cowlshaw, W. Craig, O.C. Crossley, L.H. Davison, D.C. Erson, H.C. Evetts, C.H. Forder, H.J. Fox, H.R.B. Fox, B.L. Giles, L.C. Gladding, F.N. Harry, K.J. Healy, R.K. Hosking, S.W. Weeks, A.G. Miller, A.B. Mortensen, C. Nielsen, H. Norton, L.H. Russell, L. Sedman, R.L.C. Sextie, C.L. Smyth, W.J.W. Stewart, J. Stubbs, F.C. Studman, D.H. Thompson, W.J. Todd and J. Walker.

LONDON DINNER

The 36th Annual luncheon of the Eastern and Associated Telegraph Companies Retired Officers Society was held on 9th October, 1971. 221 attended and Lord Pender of Porthcurno was Guest of Honour. The Penders have been associated with the Society for many years; Lord Pender's great great grandfather was Guest of Honour in 1894, his grandfather in 1933, 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1939 and his father Chairman of the luncheon in 1951 and 1953.

The Sydney and Melbourne secretaries have copies of the speeches and a list of names and addresses of all members of the London Association, should any member be interested.

O.T.C. MAGAZINES

Staff Magazine "Transit" and its big brother "Contact" are now being regularly published by the Commission and the Public Relations Section are forwarding copies to Veterans. Should any Veterans not receive these publications, it is suggested that they contact the Sydney Secretary, Gordon Cupit, O.T.C., Box 7000, G.P.O. We are indebted to a Veterans Corner in "Transit" and as it is a monthly magazine, contributions for inclusion would be appreciated.

GEMINI PROJECTS

As advised in "Transit", the Commission has the loan of the Gemini VI Capsule which is visiting Capital cities and major country towns all over Australia to celebrate the Commission's 25th Anniversary. It is well worth seeing and you should watch your papers for the showing in your city or town. It is suggested that Veterans make themselves known to the P.R. staff at the exhibition.

RABAU VOLCANO

It appears that the Sydney correspondent for the Veterans Corner of "Transit" received the wrong information re Jack Burgess at Rabaul. It is understood that the real story is that when things became really hot and lava was falling around their ears, O.I.C. Jimmy Twycross went on the "Montoro", Len Coleman went out on the American ship "Golden Bear" and endeavoured to make communication on 600 metres. Jack Burgess remained at his post at the station during the whole time and kept up contact on H.F. Sorry Jack, for the misleading report in "Transit".

Historical items such as the Darwin Air raids and Rabaul Volcano bring back many memories to our old members and anyone with stories on similar events should forward them to the Sydney Secretary for inclusion in the Newsletter. We have had many catastrophies, disasters, hurricanes, etc., which should make good reading, so please do not keep them to yourself.

WORLD SOCIETY

The Victorian Secretary has been corresponding with the Society of Wireless Pioneers, whose address is P.O. Box 530, Santa Rosa, California, U.S.A. It was founded 3 years ago and is now the largest of its kind in the world. It is a professional society open only to those who have made their living at one time or another as a 'Brass-Pounder'. Any bona fide experience will qualify and members include not only those from private and government agencies who have operated C.W. networks and stations, but also members of the armed services employed in this field. Membership is now 1017 and the Sydney and Melbourne Secretaries have information, should you be interested. Their secretary advised that they do not have many members in Australia, but they are gaining momentum in this area. Three gentlemen in Sydney are planning to form a "Southern Cross" Chapter of the Society and anyone interested should contact Mr. William J. O'Brien, 45 Murray Street, Pyrmont, 2009, who is the Area Director. Laurie McGowan of the P.R.E.I. is also interested and could supply information.

"EPIC BIKE RIDE" (continued)

However, Albert was not to be denied, expressing confidence that with the gears and cranks he wanted and with partly deflated tyres he would be able to ride over many miles of soft sand that had defeated the previous attempts. He proposed a no-result, no-pay plan and went so far as to offer to make Melbourne his finishing point after Adelaide.

The Melbourne firm drove a hard bargain, requiring cash for the cycle, and a time limit on the journey from Darwin to Melbourne via Adelaide of 5 weeks. Albert wrote "this makes the journey a very formidable one, but I will certainly face it and will not fail, if determination and honest effort can pull me through. Please do not make public my attempt; time enough for that if I succeed".

At 6.15 a.m., 22nd August, 1898 the news was flashed along the line that Madconald was away, to the cheers of his colleagues and half the town. He was accompanied for some distance by members of the North Australian Cycling Club. The first 88 miles of his route lay along the railway line and much of it had to be ridden on the ballast, where the embankment was impossible. The first day's stage caused him anxiety as he felt weak and depressed, but he realised that hunger was his trouble and thenceforth he decided to carry more provisions, however heavy the load, and for the rest of his epic ride he ate 5 or 6 meals a day.

The second day brought a strong SE wind which reduced his run to 49 miles, but he then averaged 70 miles a day over fairly good track to Newcastle Waters (366 m.). The track was, in fact, made by camel pads, these beasts having been much used during the construction of the line.

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O.T.C. 25TH ANNIVERSARY BALL

The O.T.C. is holding its Annual Ball in the Round House, of the University of New South Wales, Kensington on Friday, 1st September, 1972.

The ball is being linked with the 25th Anniversary celebrations of the Commission and it is hoped to make it the biggest yet and fitting to such a memorable occasion.

It is thought that some of the Veterans may care to get together and arrange a Veterans' Table at the ball. It is not necessary for Vets to be ex-O.T.C. to attend. It would also be a very good opportunity for you to bring the good lady to a function and for her to meet other Veterans and their wives.

Tickets for the Ball will be \$4 single or \$8 double and any Veteran interested should contact Keith Vincent at the Sydney Annual Meeting or telephone him on 20333 extension 238.

"EPIC BIKE RIDE" (continued)

Hard slogging for 350 miles over hills and along sandy tracks followed by a 100 mile stretch of desolate spinifex country with sand 2 to 5 inches deep. He had a lucky break when a light rainfall firmed the sand enough to make slow progress, but later Albert had to trudge or ride for miles through bush where the track was too heavy to follow. Partly deflated tyres helped and another 200 miles of fair "road" brought him to Alice Springs and his telegraph mates.

Albert was pleasantly surprised at his encounter with the MacDonnell Ranges. He had been led to believe that he would have to carry his bicycle 12 miles over rough boulders and frowning hills. In fact, he rode his machine those 12 miles in two hours, only having to dismount and lead the bike down steep grades and over a few rough hillocks.

Then came the worst part of the journey; the 100 miles of sandhills to Charlotte Waters. But another opportune fall of rain improved matters and the flats between the high dunes were often rideable and a welcome change from monotonous trudging. Stages of between 40 and 58 miles a day took enormous effort, especially when heavy rain set in and fell all day, making progress over an area called Boggy Flat a nightmare. So sticky was the mud that Albert had much trouble in pushing his cycle through it and frequently had to remove "pug" from wheels and forks. In trying to avoid the worst of the Flat, the sadly soaked and mud-spattered overlander missed a turn-off and went some miles off course. However, a brief glimpse of the sun gave him his bearings (he carried no compass!) and good bushmanship enabled him to strike across country to the telegraph line without much loss of time.

On arrival at Charlotte Waters he rested for a day. At this stage he would have to average 100 miles a day to Melbourne to complete his task and so made a fresh start at daylight September 12th, having changed from a 59 to a 66 gear in anticipation of better conditions. For the first time he reached the century, arriving at Macumba (101 m.) a little after dark.

Albert believed his difficulties to be practically at an end at this stage, but after passing Oodnadatta the track became terribly stony and continued rough and in places very sandy till William Creek was reached. From there things decidedly improved and his hopes of success again rose till he passed Hergott Springs (Marree) and encountered a strong head wind, which slowed him down as far as Edeowie. By this time, the daily average still to be attained had risen to 112 miles and with a gloomy prospect of continued head winds Albert's chance of success began to look small.

(To be continued)