



NEWSLETTER

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VACANCY - GENERAL SECRETARY

As required by the Constitution, the position of General Secretary of the Overseas Telecommunications Veterans' Association (Australia) is required to be declared vacant each year and nominations are therefore called for the vacancy in 1979/80. Nominations closing 1st February, 1979, should be addressed to Mr. Charles Carthew, 7 Lantana Street, Clayton, 3168.

The present General Secretary is Mr. Carthew who has indicated his willingness to continue in this important office for a further twelve months.

Associate Membership

The Notice of Motion for associate membership after 20 years of service was defeated by a large majority at the New South Wales Meeting, passed unanimously at the Queensland, Victorian and Western Australian Meetings and is to be brought up at a future meeting in South Australia. It was the opinion of the New South Wales members that persons in this category could quite easily be invited as guests and so maintain our unique qualification. It is to be noted that a meeting of Association Presidents prior to the State Meetings resulted in the recommendation by those gents for the proposal.

Reunions

Victoria

The 22nd Annual Reunion of the Victorian Association will be held on Friday, 10th November, 1978 at O.T.C. House, 382 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne (by courtesy of O.T.C. Management). Subscription to attend this function is \$3.00. Any interstate veteran being in Melbourne at that time will be most welcome. (Contact Charles Carthew 544 2514)

Queensland

The Queensland Association will be holding their Annual Reunion at Noon on Thursday 9th November, 1978. The venue will be the office of the Brisbane Manager of O.T.C. Any visitors in Brisbane at that time should contact Jim Banks, telephone 221 6250, and they will be made welcome.

South Australia

The South Australian Association will hold their Annual Reunion at the Public Service Club, Adelaide, on Thursday 23rd November, 1978, commencing at 7.30 p.m. (Contact Brax Horrocks 71 7524)

Western Australia

The Western Australian Association, in conjunction with the ex-Cottesloe staff, will be meeting at the Imperial Hotel, Wellington Street, Perth, in the 1st Floor Cocktail Bar. The date - Tuesday, 28th November, 1978, from 5 p.m. (Contact Brian Morrell, day 326 7241, night 274 1274)

New South Wales

This event includes members' wives, fiances etc. and will be held in the O.T.C. staff cafeteria, Hosking Place. Hosking Place is immediately behind O.T.C. House in Martin Place. The date - Friday 1st December, 1978, commencing at 6 p.m. Doors open at 5 p.m. for early comers. Interstate visitors welcome. (Contact Gordon Cupit 230 5840)

Meeting of State Presidents

By the courtesy of the management of OTC an inaugural conference was held of Association Presidents in Sydney on Friday 5th May, 1978. This was also the date of the New South Wales Annual General Meeting and allowed the Presidents to meet members of the largest association. The meeting was chaired by New South Wales President, Jack Guthrie, and attended by Tony Hanson (W.A.), Brax Horrocks (S.A.), and George Scott (QLD). Also in attendance was General Secretary, Charles Carthew. Unfortunately Mark Wilton (VIC.) was ill and sent apologies. A number of matters of mutual interest were included on the agenda.

History of Radio in South Australia

John Ross, the Historian of Telecom (Australia) in South Australia has written a book on "A History of Radio in South Australia 1897-1977". It is the story of radio covering eighty years of progress since the days of the early experiments before the turn of the century when Australia was still a colony.

Special interest to our veterans would be the chapter entitled "Calling all ships". This story covers VIA (Adelaide) and VIY (ex Mount Gambier) from their beginnings in 1913 up till 1977 and mentions most of those Operators who served at these stations.

For those interested the book can be ordered from Ernsmiths, 50 King William Street, Adelaide, South Australia, 5001 at a cost of \$10.00 or \$12.00 posted within South Australia.

The book contains the following chapters:-

THE SINGING SPARK - Wireless Telegraph Pioneers

HULLO CQ! - Wireless Institute

THE WONDER OF WIRELESS - Experimental Broadcasters

FIFTY GOLDEN YEARS - Commercial & National Broadcasting Stations

CALLING ALL SHIPS - Coastal Radio Stations

SAFETY IN THE AIR - Aeradio Services

PEDAL WIRELESS - Flying Doctor

CRYSTAL SETS AND BATTERY RECEIVERS - Exhibitions and Displays

TIME AND PLACE - Time Signals and Longitude Determination
HULLO WORLD! - Space Age Communications, Research and Radio
Communications

Also the brochure for the book records the following important milestones:

September 1897 - First recorded public demonstration in Australia of the working of wireless telegraph apparatus by Professor Bragg at University of Adelaide.

July 1899 - First wireless telegraph link established in Australia - Adelaide Observatory to Henley Beach.

October 1912 - Adelaide Coastal Radio Station VIA commenced operations.

June 1924 - Experimental broadcast transmissions by 5DN.

November 1924 - "A" Class broadcast station 5CL commenced transmission.

December 1925 - First Radio and Electrical Exhibition.

March 1927 - Second metropolitan commercial station 5KA on air.

August 1930 - Third metropolitan commercial station 5AD on air.

January 1937 - Aeradio facilities established at Parafield.

March 1942 - Adelaide Wireless Telegraph Station established at Parafield for RAAF.

September 1959 - First television station NWS9 on air.

September 1961 - 50,000 watt broadcast transmitter commissioned for 5CL.

November 1967 - WRESTAT satellite placed in orbit from Woomera.

February 1970 - Ceduna earth station opened.

January 1976 - FM Stereo broadcasting commenced.

Annual General Meetings

New South Wales

The Sydney Annual General Meeting was quite a memorable occasion in that for the first time, Presidents of all the State Associations and the National Secretary met. In addition the opportunity was taken to hold the meeting during the O.T.C. Managers' Conference and they, mostly all Veterans, were also able to attend. With attendance at around 100, the Winter Annual General Meeting is considered a record. Those in attendance were:

John Mulholland, Alf Culloden, Norm Alderson, Horrie McInnes, Joe Bugeya, Bill Luke, Nell Donoghue, Jack Davis, Stan Gray, John Toland, Eric Cockle, Geoff Day, John Hodgson, Ted O'Donnell, Molly Condon, Margaret Dobson, Eileen Haran, Bill Day, Harry de Dassel, Len Rourke, Joe Patiniott, Doug Temperley, Jack Burgess, Claire Brophy, Elsie Thornley, Tony Ebert, Eric Norris, Roy Doohan, Grahame Gosewinckel, Albert Sheppherd, Jack Guthrie, Dick Christoffersen, Cec Watson, Edgar Harcourt, Phil Harris, Charles Carthew, Gray McDonald, Alan Ritchie, Bruce Collett, Norm Harris, Jim Shore, Charlie Raecke, Joe Holmes, "Wick" Creswick, George Maltby, Paul Borg, Vin Sim, George Scott, Bob Reeks, Fred Doolette, Ron Flood, Randy Payne, Harry Stone, Alec Cilia, Alf Agius, Ted Gunning, John Rowley, Cyril Vahtrick, Bert Waugh, Matt Jobson, Edgar Appleton, Philip Geeves, Ron Beecham, Tom Hughes, George Schultz, Allan Gourlie, Brian Woods, Nick Hassou, Audrey Keenan, Betty Leweniec, Tom Heatley, Jim Banks, Jack Silcock, John Lennon, Charlie Hale, Keith Burbury, Orm Cooper, Stan Perry, John Eales, Ron McKenzie, Barry Henson, John Lee, Gordon Cupit, Jack Whittaker, Joe Collister, George Ventura, "Brax" Horrocks, Keith Wilmot, Mick Wood, Derek Jolly, Val Moore, Ken Erickson, Jim Davis and Tony Hanson.

Queensland

This meeting was held in the O.T.C. Manager's office in Brisbane on 18th May, 1978 with the following in attendance:

Jim Banks, Dick Christoffersen, John Clendinning, Eric Cramp, Allen Cox, Paddy Garrett, Alan Jones, Dean Laws, John Marshall, John Norris, George Scott, Vince Sim, Fabian Sutherland, Harry Sutherland, John Stubbs, Bob Webster, and a visitor, Keith Walsham (from O.T.C. Sydney).

All office bearers were re-elected and as distinct from the N.S.W. Association, the members voted unanimously for the Notice of Motion to admit Associate Members after 20 years service. They went even further with an amendment to the Motion to also allow female Associates after 15 years. The meeting was followed by a buffet lunch and the usual chit chat.

Victoria

The Victorian Association held their Annual General Meeting in OTC House on 26th May, 1978 with 50 in attendance. A welcome visitor was Dick Christoffersen, Director (Administration), O.T.C. The Notice of Motion for associated membership after 20 years' service was passed unanimously. Office bearers elected for the forthcoming year were President - Bill Bently, Secretary - Charles Carthew, Treasurer - Jack McGrory, Committee - Bill Uwins, Allan Vagg, Bill Shea and Les Foley, Auditors - Dick Lovett and Stan Silver. The meeting was followed by the usual convivial get-together over a glass of ale.

South Australia

The Annual General Meeting of the South Australian Association is summed up by Ray Polkinghorne in his column of the Adelaide Advertiser on 26th May, 1978.

"I bet you would like to have been a fly on the wall at the Public Service Club last night, when the Cable Veterans' Association had a reunion.

They are the men who sent and received our early cables long before overseas wireless and the Overseas Telecommunications Commission were heard of.

Last night they talked of old times and of years at isolated stations on tiny islets in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

The oldest tick-taker present was Cecil Short, 95, who operated Morse code telegraph machines in the 19th century from Cable Bay, N.Z.

Cecil, said to be Prince Alfred College's oldest living old scholar, was an operator in all Australian capitals, N.Z. and the Far East.

Dick Evans, 85, who did his cable telegraphy stints in Australia, South-East Asia and the Far East, recalls a lonely vigil long ago on little Fanning Island, in the Pacific. The post has long since been abandoned to the coconut palms.

Cliff Birks, 85 was a telegraphist on Cocos Island about the time the Sydney sank the Emden soon after the outbreak of World War I.

Eardley Horrocks, 73, the Cable Veterans' president, says the association now has only 20 members. Eardley is a grandnephew of explorer John Ainsworth Horrocks, first settler in the Clare Valley, after whom Horrocks Pass in the Flinders Ranges is named.

The first cable company was the Eastern Extension, whose premises, Electra House, still stand opposite the Town Hall in King William Street.

Then followed Cable and Wireless Ltd., which was replaced 32 years ago by O.T.C.

Two senior O.T.C. officers came from Sydney for last night's reunion."

The two senior O.T.C. officers mentioned were Dick Christoffersen, Director (Administration) and Randy Payne, Director (Marketing), both Veterans from the New South Wales Association who gave a short talk on present day communications which all in attendance found full of interest.

In addition to those mentioned above in attendance were Graham Little, George Rowe, Norman Mackay, Max Lang, Geoff Cox, Ken Springbett, Harry Colliver, Jerrold Shaw, Claude Whitford, Keith Cox and Ron Ward.

Vale

Edgar Appleton

Edgar collapsed on the golf course on 7th June which was quite a shock to his colleagues who had seen him so well and full of life a few days earlier. He commenced his communications career in the R.A.A.F. in 1942 in radar. Also during the War he served in Pacific Island areas as Officer in Charge of a unit where he set up point-to-point communications with the Australian mainland, and VHF circuits to aircraft. He joined DCA as a Senior Communications Officer in 1949 where his duties consisted of training other members of that service in aeradio work. In addition, he prepared a monthly publication of frequencies used by aircraft radio operators on Pacific and Eastern flights. A couple of years later, Edgar was promoted to Senior Engineer where his job entailed setting up, developing and controlling DCA Technician Training Schools. In 1965 he transferred from DCA to O.T.C. where he held Engineering positions and rose to Director (Operations). This post he held until his retirement on health grounds last year.

Nick Macrides

Nick Macrides died in Perth on the 4th July after 15 years of happy retirement. He joined the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company in 1920 at Darwin and served at that station as Manager's Clerk and Telegraphist until the bombing of the Darwin Cable Station by the Japanese in April 1942. He was then sent to the Melbourne Operating Room in a clerical capacity in the accounts section and later transferred to telegraph duties. In 1954 Nick was transferred to Cottesloe where he was a Senior Telegraphist until his retirement on the 31st August, 1963. He is survived by his wife Flora and two daughters.

Harry Colliver

Eastern Veteran, Harry Colliver (80), passed away a couple of weeks after his first attendance at the South Australian Association Annual General Meeting. Harry joined the service in 1914 and served on a number of stations. At the time of the takeover by O.T.C. he was Manager at Suva. He retired from the service in 1953.

Perc Sellar

Perc Sellar passed away on the 24th September after a relatively short illness. Up to that time he had been a very energetic man and always had a morning swim and run along the beach at his home on the Gold Coast.

Perc commenced his career in 1912 as a telegraph messenger in Melbourne and after a few months obtained a job as a messenger with the Pacific Cable Board. At that time the staff of the PCB in Melbourne consisted of Perc and two others. The office increased in size in 1916 when it was transferred to Queen Street and a telegraph land line installed. He passed the telegraphist examination in 1920 and was transferred to Sydney to learn cable techniques. His first posting after graduation was Southport. After 3 years at Southport he was transferred back to Melbourne where he remained until 1933. He then became a D/N Pensioner as a result of redundancy following the amalgamation of the PCB and Eastern companies.

Perc decided that he had had telegraphy and moved to Mudgeeraba (Queensland) where he became a banana grower. With the war in progress in 1940 and the shortage of manpower, Perc decided to return to communications and

joined the Brisbane Post Office where he served from 1940 to his second retirement in 1964.

In the later years of his life, Perc was an ardent bowler but as a younger man he undertook more strenuous sports, mainly wrestling and boxing. He represented Queensland in the National Games in Brisbane in 1925. Also in the State Championships he carried off 2 gold medals and was runner up on another occasion. He was also runner up in Adelaide in 1936. While serving at Southport, Perc instructed wrestling and boxing classes and the lads under his instruction during the 3 years of his stay all won a State Championship. He was also Secretary of the Cricket Club for the full 3 years and vice Captain and Manager of the South Coast team participating in the country competitions held in Brisbane. On occasions he topped the batting averages. In addition, Perc was a prominent member of the Southport Surf Life Saving Club winning beach events and participating in rescues.

Mick Treacy

PCB and Eastern Veteran, Mick Treacy (VIC.), brother of Matt, passed away in June after a long illness at the age of 82.

Frank McCormack

Frank McCormack (VIC.) also passed on in June, aged 72. Frank commenced his communications career with the PMG Department in 1922. He then joined PCB for 2 years followed by 19 years with the Eastern Extension and 10 with O.T.C. Frank, along with Lou Sherburn, worked very hard in the early days on the now popular "Wagga Weekend". He was also renowned as a first class tennis coach.

Arthur Matthews

Arthur Matthews, the Cottesloe handy man and Jack-of-all-trades passed away in July. "Matt" came to Australia from the U.K. at the age of 16 and worked on various farms in the Great Southern District, some of the farm duties including fencing and clearing virgin bush. Matt said clearing by hand earnt him \$1.00 an acre, fence post holes - a penny per hole and 6 bored holes in a post for a penny. He served in the 1st World War with the 10th Light Horse Regiment in Egypt and on return from service resumed farming, carting wool to the railhead. On coming to the big smoke in 1932, he worked for the North Freemantle Town Council then Greenkeeper at the Cottesloe Golf Club. In 1938 he was enticed into the Cable Company where he did maintenance duties and helped in local cable repairs. His hobbies included rifle shooting and fishing. It is claimed that many Christmas functions held at Cottesloe could not have been had it not been for the work carried out by Matt and his little helper, Pat.

Reg Shepherd

Reg (W.A.) passed away in July. He was a very well known operator in the cable service who joined O.T.C. in 1950 and was posted to Cottesloe. He remained at that station until his retirement in 1967.

Harry de Dassel

Harry de Dassel was born in Tasmania in 1893 and educated in Ballarat. In his boyhood he became interested in communications with Eric and Keith Burbury. They lived on opposite sides of a valley and practiced

morse by means of lamps across the valley. Harry followed up his morse practice in the Manchester Department of a retail store to the consternation of management who blamed the noises on rats. With Eric, he joined the Marconi School of Wireless in Sydney in 1914 under George Apperley and did some of their morse practice in the Bow of the Mosman Ferry. As soon as they were trained they were conscripted by the navy to man the merchant fleet. Harry's first ship was the "Zealandia". This being the days of the quenched spark gap transmitters. Harry remained at sea until the mid-20's when he was transferred to the AWA laboratory in Melbourne. In the early planning days of the "Beam" Harry was selected to go to London to train the initial operators and to set up procedures etc. He was back in Australia for the opening in 1927 and was posted to the new Rockbank receiving station. He was later transferred to the Fiskville Transmitting Centre where he rose to Engineer-in-Charge. After just on 20 years at Rockbank and the takeover by O.T.C. Harry was transferred to the Engineering Branch of Head Office and later was promoted to a position of Assistant to the General Manager. At the time of his retirement, Harry was the Australian Representative on the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board in London. On returning from London, Harry was employed for a short period on researching the history of O.T.C.

In retirement, Harry spent a number of years at Nambucca, New South Wales North Coast and only in the last couple of years returned to Sydney where he took up residence near his daughter at Collaroy. Harry was one of nature's gentlemen and will be sadly missed by all his colleagues.

To Pasture

Eileen Haran

Eileen retired from O.T.C. in July after 28 years' service. She initially started at the Telegraph accepting office where her duties consisted of typing and clerical work for the Supervisor, Tom Pattinson and later Jack "Lawman" Heathershaw. She subsequently graduated to the Staff Section where she became so well known as the Leave Clerk. In the latter years Eileen was promoted to a higher level Clerical Assistant in the Industrial Relations Section. Eileen was always an exceptional worker who strived for 120% and her popularity was in evidence by the number of colleagues who attended her farewell presentation.

U.K. Visitors

Chris Fox, who was a member of our Melbourne Association, advised a change of address to a new bungalow situated at 10 Tithe Green, Rustington, West Sussex, BN16 3QX, Telephone Rustington (090-62 6094). He and his good wife, Barbara, are always pleased to see any of our members over in the old dart and is prepared to assist them in any way for a better stay in his country. Those who have met Chris have found him a very pleasant gentleman and well worth the effort of looking up.

The Fanning Island Defence Force (by Jack Guthrie)

Recently, while sorting through some old papers, I came across two letters I received back in 1968 from the Office of the Resident Commissioner, Tarawa, Gilbert and Ellice Islands. These letters were replies to a query of mine regarding the official record and standing of the Fanning Island Defence Force and its ex-members.

To the best of my knowledge the Defence Force was formed in 1940 by the late Major Charles Swinbourne with a view to assisting the small New Zealand army Garrison in the event of an attack by the Japanese. Membership was voluntary and the strength of the Force depended on the number of volunteers from the cable station staff plus a platoon of native policemen under a native Sergeant. The cable station Manager was gazetted to officer rank and he was assisted by two non-coms. The late E.M. Dennis was made a Captain until he was relieved by A.H. (Long'un) Evans who was gazetted Lieutenant. The two non-coms were Sergeant Frank McCay and Corporal Maurice Rees. Privates were Norm Giles, Harry Fox, Viv Molyneux, Ted Weldron and myself with probably one or two others whose names I can not recall.

The officers wore standard officers' uniform whilst the rest of us wore cocked hats, Khaki shirts, shorts and long socks, with shoes of various descriptions.

The Force was equipped with .303 army rifles and one Lewis Machine gun which became my responsibility. Arrangements were set up so that should I be on duty when the alarm sounded I would be relieved immediately so that I could rush home and get the machine gun and boxes of ammunition and convey them to one of the prepared machine gun posts on the sea-front or on the road to the "Greentrees".

As the sound of the alarm generally caused a mild panic I frequently had difficulty in finding a boy to assist with the gun and ammunition so I found an old perambulator in the tip with wheels intact which I was able to convert into a "drag-along" gun carriage large enough to carry both gun and ammunition boxes.

Each member of the Defence Force carried a small card on which was typed "The bearer of this card is a member of Her Majesty's Armed Forces and, if captured, is entitled to the normal treatment of a prisoner-of-war, By Order". The idea behind the card being, of course, that as we would most probably be in civilian dress and carrying arms when captured, production of the card could prevent us being shot on the spot.

Alarms were fairly frequent as stray ships and planes were spotted by the army lookouts but fortunately no attack eventuated. Notification was received from the Gilbert and Ellice Government that members of the Defence Force would be regarded as being on "actual service" from the sounding of the alarm until the "all clear" and could be paid at appropriate army rates for the time involved. Norm Giles and myself decided we did not want the pay and would prefer some sought of a medal or certificate in recognition of our service, so we wrote to Tarawa in this regard but failed to receive a reply.

With the relief of the New Zealanders by a far larger and better equipped American contingent, need for the Defence Force no longer existed and activities gradually ceased.

When I retired in 1967 I joined a Bowling Club which was part of the sporting activities of an RSL Club and so became an associate member of the parent body. It soon became apparent that full membership of the RSL carried privileges which was not available to associate members and I began to wonder if my "actual service" in the Fanning Force carried some standing in official eyes. So I wrote to the Gilbert and Ellice Government seeking information. The first reply received in April, 1968 stated that records which survived the Japanese occupation of the Gilberts were held by the Archivist in Suva, Fiji and that my query would be passed to him.

The second reply in May, 1968 was as follows:-

- "1. I refer to my letter of the 8th April, 1968 in which I promised to write to the Archivist in Suva for details he might have of the Fanning Island Defence Force during the War.
2. The Archivist has now written to say he has made a thorough search - but to no avail.
3. We too could find no record and can only conclude that they were among the many files and documents which were lost during the War."

So the Fanning Island Defence Force has become another one of those things that never was.

Women Enter the Marine Service

The following extract from a recent edition of the Australian Ports and Shipping Journal has been sent in by Philip Geeves.

"S.A.'s Dorothy Smith - our first marine wireless operator.

Her father was delighted, her mother reluctantly resigned, but young Dorothy Smith didn't actually tell them until after she'd become Australia's first female sea-going wireless operator, just in case.

The year was 1951, her ship was the S.S. Karuah, a member of the old Newcastle and Hunter River Company fleet plying the Sydney-Newcastle-Hobart run.

Equipped with the "B" class, damp wave spark transmitter, the Karuah was a "first tripper", highly suitable for a new operator because the wireless gear was reliable and relatively simple to use.

Pre-lib, how did it all happen?

Living at Semaphore, within earshot of the squeaky time signals being hauled up each day at the signal tower, probably helped; a grandfather and father working as shipping agents (with Smith Channon) undoubtedly cast its shadow; the family friendship with the then Harbours Board pilot, Captain Girling, took its toll, often leading to trips on the pilot launch from the Semaphore jetty; and the visit of a wireless operator from the Jervis Bay, a young man who patiently explained in simple terms a child could understand how wireless worked, could not be discounted. All are memories tucked away in the mind of a woman who determined her course clearly and broke through many barriers en route.

As a child, Dorothy Smith didn't have to be sought out most nights at 9 o'clock. She and her brother often tuned their cats whisker crystal sets into the coast radio station VIA, operating from Rosewater, to pick up the shore-to-ship morse transmissions at that time. Their morse was just good enough to enable them to decipher some of the messages.

In 1949, she tried for a job of any sort on the S.S. Nestor, on its last trip from Outer Harbour to Melbourne, but had to go instead as a passenger. There may have been an eyebrow or two

raised at AWA's Marconi School of Wireless in Melbourne when Miss Smith appeared on the doorstep to begin the course she had successfully applied for (without specifically saying she was of the gentler sex) but they were too polite to indicate anything other than a genuine welcome to a new student. Twenty months of tough theory and practical followed, financed unaided from a rapidly emptying purse.

Having graduated in 1951, Miss Smith found some scepticism and few job opportunities at sea. None of them came her way. Her chance came on a trip to Sydney in the same year, and when she returned to Melbourne she had one month to tidy up her shore affairs before joining the Karuah.

Home on a visit to Adelaide, she finally broke the news to her family as a fait accompli. Having being "scared stiff" of her parents finding out while she was doing the course, she was vastly relieved at the astonished approval the news aroused."

Personal News

Good wishes to Ron Waugh in his business venture. Ron recently resigned from the Traffic Section of SOR after 40 years' service. For the last few years he has held the position of MRS Co-ordinator. For the uninitiated, MRS is the computerised system associated with telegraph switching.

A recent visitor to Sydney was Dud Treliving now living in South Australia. Dud renewed his acquaintance with a number of Veterans whilst in Sydney.

Our deepest sympathy to Ken Walker (Sydney) on the tragic death of his son in a motor cycle accident.

Congratulations to Alf Agius and his good wife, Lydia, on the celebration of their Golden Wedding. The Golden Wedding celebrations was a family affair, the evening initially at their daughter's place with a home mass, and afterwards close relatives joined them at a memorable celebration organised by their son and daughter.

Ye old mariner Dave Fleming has completed another world trip. These appear to be coming up annually. He always manages to include Ireland in his itinerary and look up old friends.

Congratulations to Veteran Randy Payne on his election as Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors of Intelsat. Randy has had a wide experience in C&W and O.T.C. and presently holds the important position of Director (Marketing) of O.T.C.

Philip Geeves appeared recently in a showing of "This is Your Life" which featured country and western star, Reg Lindsay. Philip was Manager of 2CH at the time that Reg broke into broadcasting. Not only has Philip an ideal broadcasting voice but he is also photogenic.

National Secretary, Charles Carthew, who busily fills in his time with National and State Veterans' matters, Masonic activities, entertainment as a magician, has now taken on another project 2 days a week listening to and helping 8 to 10 year old youngsters in their reading, spelling and writing at the Clayton State Primary School.

Veterans way back will remember J.M. Martin whose signature appeared on the wireless operator Certificate of Proficiency in those days. Jack is now the grand old age of 91.

Victorian member, Jim Taylor, recently flew from Melbourne to Perth, then up to West Australian coast via ports en-route to Broome, thence to Darwin, inland to Alice and home again. Not only a holiday plus but away from the mid-winter of Melbourne.

Veteran, Matt Treacy (85) jets up to Queensland each year for the Brisbane Cup - motors down weekly from Warburton to Preston - speaks and writes Italian - plays bowls - tends his vegetable garden - an active chap and always cheerful.

Brian Morrell visited Sydney and Melbourne on recreation leave and looked up a number of his old colleagues. Brian, being a railways enthusiast, spent the majority of his holiday time touring around the country.

Bert Edwards returned home after several operations and is slowly becoming fit again after being on the serious list for some time. It is understood that not being able to adjourn to the Southport Yacht Club for his daily constitutional is apparently not improving his temper.

Harry Oates (CRS) is now in the Free Mason's Home at Sandgate, Brisbane, and would be pleased to see any of his old friends should they be up that way.

South Australian member, Dick (Longun) Evans was in Sydney looking up old friends on his way back from a winter holiday in Northern Queensland.

Paddy Garrett remains very active both as port meteorological agent for Queensland and keeping his home ship-shape. Paddy is a very fine chef and undertakes a remarkable amount of entertainment.

Dean Laws is still at sea as a Marine R/O. They get it easy at sea these days and he spends half the year on paid recreation leave. No wonder there is a shortage of ships for Marine R/O's with such good conditions. Must make the old marine man now in the coastal radio very envious.

Bob Webster looks particularly fit and well, no doubt due to breathing the clean air on his property at Mudgereeba (behind the Gold Coast).

Eric Cramp is enjoying his retirement on Bribie Island. His life is centred around big fish and brewing "the best beer in Queensland".

Harry Stewart, after many years of indecision as to the benefits of tropical and temperate climates, has finally moved out of Sydney and settled down in Canberra. You don't get cheaper taxation in the Capital City, Harry.

Ray Wood (Doonside) has now retired to St. Hubert's Island, that exclusive residential paradise on Brisbane waters.

Fabian Sutherland was seen in the O.T.C. staff cafeteria with old Sydney colleagues. Fabian looked extremely well no doubt due to the Gold Coast sun tan.

Rocky Gordon (Mannum, S.A.) has had a couple of bouts of pneumonia resulting in daily visits to the hospital where, in his own words, the nurses thump hell out of his back trying to remove the muck from his lung.

Congratulations to Veteran Nell Donoghue on becoming a Granny.

Sorry to hear that Harold White was hospitalised in Vancouver recently and had to abandon an extensive itinerary of international meetings.

The father of octogenarian Veteran, Claude Waite, kept a diary of his interesting life as a geologist, particularly during 1894-1927 when in New Zealand, for it was then that he worked with Scott and Mawson at Macquarie Island. This valuable diary is to be preserved and kept in the family.

Best wishes to Bill Jenvey who recently spent a short time in the Bateman's Bay Hospital. It is heard-tell that the nurses at this small country hospital are worth being sick for.

The local Government, Sawawak, Borneo, asked the family of our late-esteemed colleague, E.W. Newell, to supply photos, etc, relating to the life of this so well known and remembered cable station personality at Brunei, for Ned Newell was well versed in local folk lore and dialects. Fortunately O.T.V.A.(A) was able to help per medium of the "scrap book" now re-bound and kept ready for reference at the Latrobe National Library, Melbourne.

When the letter from Mrs. Mary Ross to the General Manager, OTC(A), was brought to the notice of Mrs. Jean Edwards, (nee Constable, Secretary to the late Sir Ernest Fisk) by the General Secretary, Jean was very pleased and immediately wrote to her colleague of so many years ago and duly received six pages in reply. This correspondence proved most welcome and certainly nostalgic.

Veteran Allan Vagg has a most interesting diary authentic in detail and prized by the family of a relative who actually worked on the now historic Adelaide to Darwin overland telegraph project in 1872. Allan has promised to let the General Secretary have a copy for inclusion in O.T.V.A.(A) archives.

Another visitor to Sydney was Harold Burdett (Ex-Cottesloe). Harold spends most of his time bowling and gardening, and is in very good shape.

Kath Morgan, touring U.K. and the Continent for the last 12 months, reports that she will be home for Christmas.

Good tripping to Jim Rodda and wife, Joyce, on his retirement. They are heading North by caravan and hope to travel initially around Australia. Jim joined O.T.C. after service with the RAAF as one of the "Rehab" boys. He saw 31 years with O.T.C. which included SOR, Pacific Cable Stations and Paddington. Jim, a good all-round sportsman, was outstanding for the Sydney O.T.C. cricket team at Wagga and in the Public Service comp. He played first grade cricket as a specialist batsman for a time with Glebe, scoring 88 in his initial first grade match.

Doubtless Bay Cable Station

The following letter from Bob Marchant living in Auckland was sent to the Editor recently and is published in its entirety.

"Firstly I would like to thank yourself and other members for forwarding me your Newsletter which gives me pleasure to peruse.

I thought it would be of interest to yourself and other members to hear from me as I am, as far as can be found, the only living operator who was stationed at D.B. (Doubtless Bay Mangonui).

I joined the PCB at D.B. in 1909. The Superintendent then was Smith. We were using a separate morse line to Auckland and the N.Z. Govt. received a pro rata rate on all messages transmitted over same. After being on abstracts for a year I managed to qualify and face the necessary exams etc. I can thank the senior operators for this; and then one of the junior operators was accidentally shot and died the day after being shot by a chap named Wilkinson from U.K. The operator was Theo Bullance. I was given a month's trial of operating and as error percentage was OK was put on as an operator and Milward who was then manager in Pacific at Sydney granted me an operator's salary, but said I would have to complete the two years before I was to sign the Cable Bd staff agreement. We transmitted all the PCB international Cablegrams etc. from Sydney. The Cable from Sydney to DB was connected on shore to the cable going north to Suva, Norfolk Fanning and BC. In 1912 we shifted to Auckland (AK) a cable was laid from Mangonui DB around the coast to Auckland and into the PO doing away with the land line and morse. When the second war was on the cable was lifted out at sea and joined there instead of it lying buried ashore at DB. We were really comfortable at DB having good quarters. Tennis court, hall, billiard room and smoke room with a piano which sometimes was treated to a glass of beer. The Mangonui Hotel was three or four miles away so a person going in hired a horse as in places the road was knee deep in mud. Often a riderless horse would return to the Station and half an hour later over the hill would appear its rider staggering along mud from head to foot. The usual procedure was to dump him in the bath, into pyjamas and if he was required on shift someone would do his shift.

I left A.K. and went away in the 1914 turnout with the 3rd AMR as a trooper. When in Egypt I met one of your men who must have left from Ausie as he was with the 2nd ALH. His name was Joe Neritt and he was in the AK office with me at one time. In those days it was mostly keying work or using the old two punching irons to perforate the tape which we put thro' the old machine to go thro' on relay. I was often on the Sydney circuit with one of your old veterans, Nuts Evans. Sometimes sending and also receiving. I returned from the war, after being wounded a couple of miles from the Port of Jerusalem (Jaffa) per hospital and arrived three days prior to peace being declared. I applied for reinstatement but the Board's Dr. could not pass me as the piece is still in me under the spine and my next station was Fanning or Bamfield.

I had it in black and white on a form with the PCB monogram where they put me down as a deserter for leaving the Company in the hour of need as it takes two years to train a Cable Op. and only 3 months to train a soldier.

My next birthday I will be 85 and altho I am a double amputee I have been to several of the Veteran Cablemens' reunions here but did not attend the last one.

Bill Craig who was Superintendent of Cable and Wireless after they amalgamated at AK was my sheet boy when I left to go overseas. Tom Condon who is at present having a holiday in the Fijian Islands,

often comes to have a chat with me, also Ray Sextie before his demise.

I do not think that there are any of the old operators who were at the AK station in my days alive today. The "Iris" was the Cable Ship in use during my period with the PCB. There are many amusing incidents that happened at DB but I expect you are already tired of reading my scrawl.

Good health and best wishes to all your Veterans of the O.T.V.A."

Historical Information

Included in this Newsletter is a form for Veterans to list down their experience and places served. This information comes in very handy at times when we have requests.

Two recent examples of this being:

- (a) a request by the Department of the Northern Territory for information on an old cable staff cottage located on Lot 624 The Esplanade, and
- (b) information on the locality of a cable station in the Cape York Peninsula.

The request for Darwin is still current and your Editor, Gordon Cupit, O.T.C., Box 7000 G.P.O., Sydney, would be pleased to hear from any of our members who have any information on the history etc. of the cottage. The Department of Northern Territory have been given the names of a few who have served at Darwin and they may be contacting independently those on the list.

In the case of the cable station at Cape York Peninsula, the request came from the National Museum of Victoria who were seeking the exact location where the last of a rare type of bandicoot was found in Northern Cape York. The original reference "Northern Cape York. Type from Utingu, others from Cable Station - Collected 20th September, 1912 by Robin Kemp." Some time back Dave Fleming filled in a members' particulars form which revealed that he joined the PMG's Department at Thursday Island in 1905. He was able to give the information that an under-sea cable went from Thursday Island to Horn Island thence to the top of Cape York Peninsula and landed in an area Utingu. The resulting letter from the Assistant to the Curator of Vertebrates, National Museum of Victoria to our General Secretary, speaks for itself.

"Dear Mr. Carthew,

Thank you for sending me the letter you received from one of your members in Sydney. I have taken a copy of this letter and am returning the original.

I cannot over-emphasise how much help the information Mr. Dave Fleming supplied has been. Miss Dixon, the Curator of Vertebrates at the National Museum of Victoria has just completed a paper on the different species of short-nosed bandicoots in Australia and will be presenting this at the Second International Teriological Congress in Brno, Czechoslovakia next week. Though we were able to find out from references and old maps that the cable station was at the top of Cape York Peninsula, we found no mention of Utingu. When we had exhausted our resources, it was most reassuring to receive the details Mr. Fleming remembered. This was especially useful for Miss Dixon's distribution map. She has now been able

to mark the site where the first bandicoot of specific type was collected. She will be offering this paper for publication so the locality of Utingu will be clear for the future and not lost, as is much important historical information as the pioneers pass away.

I would be most grateful if you would thank your members for me, particularly Mr. Fleming. It must have taken a great deal of time and effort to contact them all and explain any query and yet you were able to answer it very promptly, luckily before Miss Dixon left for Europe.

Thank you so much."

Fanning Island

Tomi Condon (Auckland) is always good for a story on Fanning Island and his more or less up-to-date version of the Island is interesting.

"Something about my beloved Fanning which may be of interest to many who served there. There are no British authorities in residence on Fanning unless you count Mr. Palmer and Mr. Fleetwood who are Manager and Assistant Manager respectively of the copra plantation but since this Phil Palmer is now retired and living in Northern Queensland. There is in addition a representative of the Gilbert and Ellice Colony, a Gilbertese who seems to have some say on who can land at Fanning, inspects Passports, etc.

Burns Philp operates the copra plantation. There is a three monthly schedule of a copra boat operated by, I believe, the Bank Line. A Coast Guard comes about once a year and air connections are much more frequent. Marty Vitousek (Dr.) flies down a couple of months a year from Honolulu stays for a week and then comes back. 'Lucky bugger'. There will also be a boat operating Washington, Jarvis, Malden etc. shortly. Vitousek carries out research at Fanning who belongs to the Hawaii Institute of Geophysics of the University of Hawaii and is more oft than not at Fanning for there is quite a Tsunami program there. There is a caretaker for the Cable Station and marine biologists go along somewhat infrequently now.

Christmas Island's copra plantation is run by a different outfit to that at Fanning and Dr. Philip Helfrich of the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology has plans for a brine shrimp operation at Christmas. At Fanning the tennis court still is in operation and has a new fence now. C&W took all the equipment from the recreation hall. The Ping Pong table has been replaced but the billiard table still remains. The library has been built up. Movies are held inside now instead of outside. The wooden houses are gone but the concrete ones still stand. There is quite a good road (coral) to English Harbour while a "jeep" road connects North Passage to Whalers Anchorage. PERL International Airport is situated astride the Island from Bicknell Point to the lagoon at the South end of the old Guano area.

The new name for the Cable Station is the Pacific Equatorial Research Laboratory of the University of Hawaii. The airstrip is of grass, 3000 feet long and is being extended to 4000 feet, that is the total width of the island at that point. Dr. Vitousek flies a small twin Piper Aztec aircraft from Honolulu.

The fishing is excellent and one may still set out at 5 pm in quest of Pihere and be assured of fish for dinner. Boy oh boy. Many are the Pihere caught there, also Rai. Ends Charlie but am in contact with Marty Vitousek and will get a new line up on the Island from him which may take time as he is a busy guy. Speaking of Rai, I caught quite a few one early morning and took them around the station to this one and that until I came to the Doctor who incidentally had just arrived from NZ and when I tipped him out four from the bucket he said 'Oh are these the boney buggars that I 'ear talk of'. Collapse of Tom."

Marconi Veterans

The article in a previous edition of newsletter on the Marconi Veterans bought the following information from Hugh Taylor. He states that he could also help to refute the rumour that long exposure to RF radiation is detrimental to health. Hugh started his radio career as a member of the Royal Australian Naval Reserve and was sent with 5 others to the Pennant Hills Naval Radio Station (VIS) on the 20th June, 1917 as the war emergency station. Jim Lamb (one of nature's gentlemen) was in charge. Dick Bettison and Roy Symons arrived later as part of the regular staff. In November, 1918, Hugh was transferred to Garden Island Radio (VKQ) which was doing the coast station work. Bob Freeman was the petty officer in charge of that station. In April, 1919, Hugh sailed with Charlie Donn on the HMAT Bakara A41 bringing troops back to Australia. He joined AWA in 1921.

He asks if any of the members ever heard of the "OP" who went ashore in Melbourne and asked Harry Lamb for half a dozen of those early Expanse "B" valves and was told they were out of stock. "Well", he said, "give us a hurricane lamp then".

Another page from the diary of a Wireless Operator

During the early 1950's the Melbourne Training School became the lunch hour meeting place of Wireless House personnel prepared to meet and listen to interesting people from the outside world.

Shell and Vacuum Oil, many Business Houses, together with well known public identities, were only too pleased and willing to come along with their own equipment and illustrate or show documentary films covering current projects.

The Police Department demonstrated the value of the finger print system; the State Electricity Commission dealt with the Latrobe Valley Brown Coal Development; The Canadian National Railways...The R.A.A.F. Training Command; The Antarctic Division and many more educational topics were coveredall most interesting.

On transferring from Queen Street to O.T.C. House in Lonsdale Street the Discussion Group, as it became known, continued on with the addition of a library and table tennis facilities under O.T.C. Sports and Social Club auspices. They certainly were good days.

Canadian "Hams"

From Teleglobe, Canada we have information of the following "Hams"

on their staff.

Robin Applewhaite, VE7DFI; Brian Dickenson, VE7BEO; Martin Dunsmuir, VE7BDF; Bill Parker, VE7IX; Bob Thorburn, VE7AU; Ron Kolthoff, VE2RK; Dave Carter, VE7AQN; Phil Howard, VE7BNX; Jean Achim, VE2ATL; Joe Bowman, VE2RJ; Lanny Conroy, VE2AZK; Peter Statham, VE2AAP; Tom Archer, VE3BXZ; Dick Bird, VE2XO; John Cook, VE2OG; Bob Scott, VE7VG.

The last four on the list are Veterans and one in particular, Bob Scott, is the Publicity Officer for their Veterans' Association. He is in constant touch with your Editor and has written a couple of very good books on British Columbia.

Relics

Thanks to Ted O'Donnell for donating his old "Bug" key (purchased second hand in 1933 and used ever since), books and valuable old photographs to the Veterans' archives and museum. Of particular interest were photographs of the demolition of Balsillie mast at Cooktown in 1926.

Hercus Clark (By John Lee)

When Hugh "Hercus" Clark passed away in 1977 Telecommunications Veterans lost another of its colourful characters. Though I worked with him in Cable & Wireless' Spring Street Operating Room in the 1930s it wasn't until I was transferred to Suva in 1943 that I came to appreciate his true worth.

Here on his own stamping-ground his friendly advice was of tremendous assistance to the newcomer not only in the office where the hours were long and the work-load overwhelming, but the off-duty hours where Suva's hard-drinking society offered many pitfalls to the unwary.

In those days (1943) Hercus was the proud possessor of an Austin car with a retractable roof - the only one of its kind in Suva at that time. After a couple of gins he would maintain that his car could go anywhere and he proved this by getting it into some very awkward places. The old Suva Post Office had verandahs round three sides, supported by posts and elevated three or four steps above street level. On a downtown trek early one morning we were surprised to see Hercus' car parked (unattended) on the Post Office verandah. How he bucked it up those steps and turned it behind the verandah posts where clearance was minimal I will never know. He told me that around 9 am that morning he received a 'phone call from the Postmaster, "All right, Hercus, you have proved your point, now come and take the damn car away."

He was prepared to bet any stranger that he could steer his Austin with his feet. He did this by removing his shoes and socks, sliding the roof open, sitting on the roof with his legs down through the opening and locking his feet through the bars of the steering wheel. Some other party had to manipulate gears, accelerator and brakes. Pretty scary for the passengers!

There was a rigid curfew in Suva during the war and after many months of restriction a dance at the Grand Pacific Hotel offered us the chance to kick up our heels. The authorities were going to relax the curfew until 10 pm. Cable and Wireless' staff had curfew passes but our wives did not and there was no way we were going to give the dance away at 10 pm and leave the remaining hours to Military personnel. We put the problem to Herc who replied, "Leave it to me."

He turned up at the dance around midnight and chauffeured us all home in turn. In the off-side front seat of the famous Austin was an off-duty inspector of police, a friend of Herc's, suitably "oiled". The Fijian policeman who stopped us on the way home backed off swiftly when he saw who was in the front seat. Maybe there are not many survivors who will recall the memorable engagement party at Suva for Hercus and his charming wife, Veda, around 1945, but perhaps Ken Springbett or Fabian Sutherland could be prevailed upon to recount some of the highlights. I am still trying to find out who dropped the frankfurt down the blouse of the Manager's wife.

A.W.A. Staff Magazine "Radiogram"

Turning the pages of a December, 1936, "RADIOGRAM" was not unlike the pleasure of browsing through the family album....morse always did have the happy knack of engendering good fellowship among its operators.

Page one registered the names of A.W.A.(A) Ltd. Directors, Executive Officers and Branch Managers of whom John Mulholland is a notable survivor.

Pictures of the then wireless equipment looked cumbersome in contrast to the sophisticated and computerised set-up of today- and how!

The pictorial coverage of staff engagements, marriages, children growing up, social activities in general and sporting events (with emphasis on golf) was nostalgic in itself.

Tom Finch let flow some real flowing verse whilst "Geller" and "Blue Gum" hid poetic talent under a pseudonym!

Group photos of some Coastal Radio Stations personnel brought back memories and then, as an extra treat, appeared the names of all operators at sea or ashore and held attention for quite some time.

Editor F.W. Larkins certainly knew how to put together material that mattered and which ultimately would prove invaluable to the historian.

The Guam Gang of Fortysix Invade China (By Keith Vincent)

By a very great stroke of luck my wife and I were able to join the Guam-Sino Friendship Society and with 44 other members made up the Guam Gang of 46. We flew to Hong Kong via Manila on April 4th, spent the next day sight-seeing Kowloon and Hong Kong island and on April 6th boarded a rather tacky Kowloon Railway train to the border. "NO TOILETS ON THIS TRAIN" warned the sign when it was too late, however with crossed knees and clenched teeth we made it to Lo Wu. Porters loaded our baggage on hand carts and we walked across the border to Shum Chun, past the inscrutable soldiers of the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.) into a world which we were to find interesting, strange, astounding, incredible for the next 16 days.

After some hours of red tape we boarded the steam train for Canton - renamed Kwangchow by the P.R.C. but called Canton still - this train is a beauty, the carriages in which we travelled had lace curtains, seats slip-covered with snowy antimacassars and we were very comfortable.

The lush south of China flashed past and, except for the endless fields of rice, it was reminiscent of travelling through northern Victoria with rows of eucalyptus trees along the tracks.

We were introduced to one of the rites of China - tea drinking - a young woman wearing the familiar short pigtailed, baggy pyjama suit poured tea into large cups which had lids to keep the tea hot.

Canton has two million people and 1.99 million bicycles with a bell attached and they are constantly rung. The few buses and cars honk their way through the bikes bleating like sick cows. Our two buses landed us at the Tung Fang Hotel which is, in part, English designed 1909, Russian built 1959, the new part has a modern look but that is about all - the plumbing still left much to be desired compared with western standards.

We met our International Guides Madame Lu, Madame Chang and Professor Lee who were to accompany us throughout our tour, also local guides Mr. Yeh and Mr. Hwang who introduced us to the local leaders of the factories, museums and commune sections we were to visit.

At each place we visited the format was the same, we were ushered into a meeting room plied with green or jasmine tea then given a "briefing" which ran like this:-

- (a) this factory (museum, commune - whatever) was a disgrace to humanity when it belonged to the imperialist landowners etc.
- (b) it was badly managed, produced poorly had lousy conditions for workers before the cultural revolution
- (c) since "gang of four" have been ostracised and the teachings of Mao have been followed, the --whatever-- has improved considerably
- (d) with the pure thoughts of Chairman Mao now being followed by our glorious workers, production has and will continue, to increase

Sometimes this "brief briefing" lasted 30 minutes, sometimes an hour or more.

Nightlife was practically non-existent throughout China and our excursions after dark consisted of two visits to restaurants, a movie at the Tung Fang Hotel, a first class acrobatic show at Shanghai, and some late night shopping.

One of the two restaurants was at Canton, the "Horn of Plenty at the Hanging Gardens", the menu had 14 courses with as much beer, plum wine and MAO-TAIS which is 115 proof grain spirit-promptly renamed WHITE LIGHTNING. The food was excellent - Pijui (beer) good, even at room temperature - plum wine sweet and palatable - MAO-TAI - KA-BOOM!!

One problem was to get to the bottom of a glass, as soon as a sip or swallow was taken, the glass was refilled and the only way to empty was to gulp it down and turn the glass over - or give up sipping.

The other restaurant was the famous "BEI-YUAN PEKING DUCK" where the main course - along with 15 others - was Peking Duck and you get "everything but the quack". We supped on ducks liver, heart, brains and even the webbing between the toes - which were a bit chewy. We all soon became very adept at using chop sticks and even able to select the smallest delicacies that were served - fish eyes, duck brains, etc.

The visit to the Acrobatic show at Shanghai was one of our highlights, it was a 2 hour non-stop performance of top grade acrobats, balancing and

animal acts. The troupe has only been recently reformed after it was disbanded by the "gang of four" who had the idea that any form of artistry was "contrary to true Communism".

The museum at Changsha had on display the 2100 year old woman dating from the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.), the corpse, coffin and furniture are all marvelously preserved. Relics from the tomb included 50 pieces of clothing, silk fabrics, 180 pieces of lacquerware, 50 pieces of pottery, musical instruments, 162 wooden figurines and many other artifacts. The woman was about 50 years old and so perfectly preserved that doctors were able to conduct an autopsy and remove her organs and stomach contents.

The visit to the mountain resort of Loshan, where only P.R.C. persons who are rewarded for "good work" are allowed to holiday for one or two days, was a revelation for the inhabitants and us. The sight of the round-eyed, high-nosed westerners was something that some locals had never seen, we were the first outsiders to call for many years and mothers held their wide-eyed, open mouthed children up to us for a closer look at the strange sight. The views from this retreat were breathtaking and it looked as though we were on top of the world - we were 1,400 metres high. The road to the resort was about 50 kilometres with over 400 bends and took 1 million coolies 10 months to construct.

We arrived at Shanghai after a train ride of 15 hours, wow what a change, stayed at the Chiang Chang Hotel - formerly the Cathay Mansions - working plumbing, ice water, cold beer. Some of the hotel staff had been there for forty years or more and gave the best of service.

Observed an acupuncture operation on a workers knee - removal of cartilage - who remained conscious throughout and immediately after the operation spoke to us.

A two hour flight to Peking in Boeing 707, again plied with tea, also a bag of candies and an airline badge, given out by hostesses in pigtails and Mao suits.

Our hotel room - purely because of a mix-up - was magnificent, a lounge suite which could comfortably seat 20 people, small dining room, huge office space with enormous desk to match, magnificent bedroom and toilet en suite fully equipped including a bidette.

The foul-up was to last only one day then were back with the masses.

Left early next morning to view one of the Ming tombs about 35 km from Peking, one of the prime tourist attractions where 13 Ming emperors lie in the shadow of the gentle mountains. Only one tomb has been excavated, that of Ting Ling described as one of the poorest Ming's, however, it was pointed out that the cost of construction would feed a million people for 6 years, such was the exploitation of the "masses".

After a box lunch, we were off to perhaps the greatest tourist attraction on earth, the Great Wall. The guides reminded us that the Great Wall was the last man made object visible to America's astronauts on their journey to the moon.

No matter how many pictures you've seen, it is impossible to suppress a gasp when you finally round a bend and sight the 2000 year old masterpiece of stone snaking its way over the hills.

The following day we visited the Former Imperial Palaces (Forbidden City), covering about a fourth and taking nearly 3 hours of viewing the royal residences of emperors of the Ming and Ching Dynasties. A lot of the area is being restored after the partial destruction by a number of revolutions.

Mao Tse-Tungs Mausoleum is open to all three days a week and about 10,000 people file through each day, foreign friends first, then military and lastly the Chinese, some who have waited many hours for the doors to open at 1 PM.

Our final museum was the Summer Palace, which was built in 1750, sacked by British and French in 1860, rebuilt in 1888, sacked again in 1900 during the Boxer Rebellion and rebuilt in 1903 for the second time. There are over 3,000 halls, towers, pavilions and promenades to view and at the long promenade there sits the Marble Boat built for Empress Tzu Hdi who appropriated money from the Navy. She liked to be on a boat but was afraid to leave the shore, hence the magnificent Marble Boat.

Next day fly to Canton for two days then head back to the border, Hong Kong and familiar world of "beware of pick pocket" "cigarettes, coke, cold beer" thrust at you at every angle by children who should have been at school - we were back in the free enterprise system.

All of the group were impressed by thousands of peasants toiling in nearly green fields, adorable children clapping and singing songs of praise to Mao. The honesty of the people and the strangeness of walking down dark strange streets at night without fear of getting mugged.

All in all an exciting adventure.

Eric E. Beehan - A Tribute
(By Tom Condon)

Early in March a great Morse - Cableman passed on in his beloved Canada. Eric always had distinct leanings toward British Columbia since his sojourn in Bamfield and it was no surprise that he chose Victoria to live and alas eventually pass on to Higher rewards. A true Kiwi, Eric made many friends wherever he went, either at his work or on the golf course at which game he was a very worthy exponent. He was through many years an active member of the Titirangi Club, Auckland, and also a member in Bc and Montreal during his stay in those cities. Sacred Heart College, Auckland, has turned out many very worthy citizens and Eric was one of them for after his term there he joined the Pacific Cable Board and served in Suva, Fanning, Bamfield and Montreal. His Irish background showed out in his ever ready wit and on the golf course he had the manner of a Hagen for his general demeanour was one of complete confidence. His main characteristic, however, was his confidence in the younger members of the staff - the probationers whom he nurtured with loving care. The Maoris have it that when an elder or chief dies that a giant Kauri has fallen and so be it with Eric Beehan. We will all miss him for his humour and, unwavering always - a colleague whose memory we will all cherish.

Experts

Ted O'Donnell tells the story that Joe Reed during the 1st World War was a soldier in uniform and on guard duty at Pennant Hills. Two of the technical staff at the station were having a conversation on the ways and means of improving the equipment when the voice from outside yelled out "Don't worry about the inductance but increase the impedance". The voice belonged to Joe who later became one of the best known radio engineers in AWA.

Found under the Carpet

By coincidence an O.T.C. Cleaner brought in a copy of the Sunday Pictorial dated 18th August, 1929 which was found as part of the padding under a carpet. The journalism in those days was quite amusing, particularly the headings for the different items. Two items in particular which could interest our members are:

NO LIMIT TO SYDNEY-LONDON CHAT

—————
'A SHRINKING WORLD'
—————

Far Apart Speakers Hear
With Perfect Clarity
—————

HISTORIC ADVANCE

LONDON, Saturday. In a leading article headed "A Shrinking World", the "Daily News" welcomes the remarkable development of wireless telephony exemplified in the conversation conducted on Friday between the editor of the Sydney "Daily Telegraph Pictorial," Mr. F.W. Tonkin, and the acting managing editor of the "Sun-Herald" cable services in London, Mr. G. Innes.

The conversation is described as historic. The voices were heard as plainly as if two London subscribers were speaking.

"Even this development, which has joined the ends of the earth, may soon seem a rudimentary achievement," it is added.

"We shall not only recognise voices, but even see the faces of those talking to us, and be present with them, as if they were bodily in the same room. There seems to be no limit to this advance, which should lead to an improvement in international relations."

Australia First

Australia is the first Dominion to co-operate with England in wireless telephone experiments, a Post Office official informed the "Daily News," but the project is being discussed with all the other Dominions.

An effort will be made in a few weeks to talk to South Africa and India.

Engineers are experimenting with a short-wave system for commercial wireless telephone services throughout the Empire, and the trans-Atlantic system will probably be joined up in England with the whole of the North American traffic, comprising business and social calls.

The revenue will cover operating and maintenance costs.

—————
GOSSIP OF THE TOWN

Bishton's "Permanent Wave"

Ted Bishton, "Bish" to all the Mandated Territory, is holidaying in

Sydney. He is a wireless man of cheerful disposition and marked popularity.

A big job of his was when, with Archie Whitbourne, he took the Edie Creek wireless station in from Salamau Bay up through the mountains along the dreadful Buyang track. The job occupied four weeks and necessitated the services of four hundred carriers. "Bish" is a man of noted good humour, but he declares that the bone-headedness of those stone age carriers gave him a permanent wave in the head.

"Bish" has got a plantation at Kavieng, and is going in for coconuts.

Cable History

As a result of the articles in the last Newsletter, Hilton Robertson has come up with the thought that a new cable was laid between Suva and Sydney in the period around 1918-1920. It is Hilton's thoughts that there was an undersea explosion and rather than do a repair a new cable was laid. The cable was not listed by Cable and Wireless and if any members have information, would they please contact the Editor, G. Cupit, O.T.C.(A), G.P.O. Box 7000, Sydney, 2001.

Corrigendum

In reporting the history of George Brown it was wrongly reported that he hailed originally from the cable service and transferred to the Beam on its inauguration. George was one of those group of morse experts who came from the Post Office, not the Cable Service.

A Piece of Humour

Ellis Smellie tells the story of the little boy who on his first morning at school put up his hand and asked to leave the room. He came back sobbing "I can't find it, I can't find it, I've lost it". He had his underpants on back the front.

Bonus Winners

The following extract from a 1930 edition of AWA's "Radiogram" is most interesting and I am sure members of OTC would appreciate bonuses based on traffic growth.

"The following are the winners of the monthly bonus for increased traffic returns for the months of April and May:

April - Mr. J. Maird, S.S. "Koolinda."
May - Mr. C. Williamson, S.S. "Taiping."

On and after 1st July, a new system was introduced, so that results of individual efforts would be more likely to receive recognition. The new system is that a commission of 25% will be paid on all accepted ship tax revenue in excess of the monthly average of each vessel, the average being based on the previous two years. No commission,

however, will be paid unless the increase over the monthly average amounts to 10/- or over in the case of passenger vessels, and 5/- or over in the case of cargo vessels.

It will be seen that under the old system, irrespective of the number of increases shown, only one man received the bonus, while under the new system, a bonus will be paid to any wireless officer showing a certain increase in his traffic returns."

Coming Up For Retirement

Looking forward to retirement in December are Ormie Cooper, Deputy Manager, Paddington Overseas Terminal and Percy Day, Senior Technical Officer, O.T.C. Head Office. These gents have over 50 years service and no doubt have some fine tales to tell.

Keyboard Skills

Those of our members who were proud of their 50 word per minute non-error keyboard skills would be horrified by the speeds that printed matter is churned out by these new-fangled wordprocessors and computers. For the uninitiated a wordprocessor is a typewriter-style device which has storage capacity and limited memory bank. In churning out the stored information it can record speeds of up to 700 words per minute. When the wordprocessor gets to the end of a line there is no carriage return, it just prints backwards every second line.

In the case of producing information from computers, these phenomenal machines do not consider words per minute but produce full lines of print. Speeds of up to 5,000 lines per minute are quite common. Mind-boggling for us old timers.

Sparks

The founder and president of the Society of Wireless Pioneers in the U.S., Bill Breniman, comments on a book recently published called "Ports O' Call".

"The objectives of this book and the Society of Wireless Pioneers are simple.

First, to record the colorful history and memorabilia of the early days of Wireless. To give credit due the hundreds of brave and dedicated men and woman who saved thousands of lives and untold numbers of ships ... often undaunted by the fact that sticking to their key for a few extra seconds or minutes might cost them their lives - which in fact it did on too many occasions.

In so doing, they have etched a heritage that should be cherished by all mankind. We salute these brave men who have brought so much honor to our profession.

The title "Sparks" is universally known over the 'Seven Seas'. This book will document their deeds for posterity."