



NEWSLETTER

VOL 2 PT. 2

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NATIONAL SECRETARY

The only nomination received within the prescribed time for the position of General Secretary of the Veterans' Associations of Australia was Charles Carthew. Charles has held this office since its creation and has been the Secretary of the Victorian Association since the inauguration of the Veterans' in 1956. There is no doubt that Charles is the most dedicated Veteran in Australia and regularly keeps in touch with his State members and with numerous overseas contacts and kindred bodies.

His nomination is to be considered at the next Annual General Meeting of all State Associations and there is no doubt that his confirmation will be formally approved.

Expression of Thanks

On behalf of all Veterans' Associations throughout Australia the General Secretary Charles Carthew wishes to express through our Newsletter his sincere thanks to OTC for kind courtesies and helpful co-operation, particularly to the General Manager, Harold White and Commission Management for permitting use of OTC property and facilities for functions and for reciprocal representation at OTVA reunions, and for the assistance given to the printing and distribution of our Newsletter.

Charles would also like to express appreciation and grateful thanks, with very best wishes for happy years ahead, to Veteran Harold White on his forthcoming retirement as General Manager of OTC. His continued helpful and kind co-operation in the overall interests of OTVA activity has been much appreciated.

OTVA (Australia) is also grateful to the Eastern Extension and Associated Companies Retired Officers Society - Marconi Trans-Oceanic Guild - Teleglobe (Canada) Quarter Century Club - UK Marconi Operators Society - Society of Wireless Pioneers of America - Cable & Wireless Limited London and OTC for complimentary mailing lists.

A word of sincere appreciation once again to the Exiles Club for so kindly making available residential facilities at Meadowbank to OTVA Veterans when holidaying overseas.

Finally a thank you to the Latrobe Library Melbourne for acting in an archival capacity and making our records available for research and public scrutiny.

Annual General Meetings

New South Wales

The NSW Association will be holding their Annual General Meeting in the Amenities Room, 7th floor, OTC House, 32-36 Martin Place, Sydney on Friday 11th May, 1979 commencing at 6pm. Interstate or overseas Veterans in Sydney on that day are given a cordial invitation. Prior advice to Gordon Cupit, OTC, Box 7000 G.P.O., Sydney 2001 or telephone 2305840 would be appreciated.

South Australia

The South Australia meeting will be held on Thursday May 24, 1979 at the Public Service Club in Adelaide commencing at 7.30pm. Visitors should contact Bert Dudley, 6 Grenfell Street, Hove, 5048 or telephone Adelaide 2282867.

Victoria

The Victorian Association will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Friday 25th May, 1979 commencing at 5.30pm. The venue is OTC House, 382 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne and visitors are welcome. Contact Charles Carthew, 7 Lantana Street, Clayton, 3168 or telephone Melbourne 5442514.

Queensland

The Queensland Association will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 30th May, 1979 commencing at noon. The usual venue is the Manager, Jim Banks' office. Any Veterans in Brisbane on that day are welcome to attend and a telephone call to Jim, Brisbane 221.6250 would be appreciated.

Western Australia

The West Australian Association does not have a mid-year meeting and their next function will be a combined Annual General Meeting and Reunion on 28th November in the Imperial Hotel.

Canada

The 6th Annual Meeting and dinner of the Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe Canada (western area) will be held on the 28th April in the Georgian Room, Empress Hotel, Victoria BC. Any members in that area should contact Bruce Scott, 1173 Hewlett Place, Victoria BC Canada.

To Pasture

Margaret Dobson

Margaret retired in December after spending over 20 years in OTC in senior secretarial positions. At the time of retirement her duties were as Methods Assistant where she played a valuable part. Margaret has also been a very active member of the OTC Social and Sports Club where she held the position of Madam Chairman, to date the only lady ever to hold such a position. She has also been very active in her local community affairs and no doubt will extend this area of interest during her retirement.

Percy Day

Percy also retired in December after 51 years service. He joined AWA in 1927 as a messenger in the Beam Room Melbourne. A year later he was promoted to indoor messenger which could be classed as akin to a junior office boy. In 1930 Perc was upgraded to Beam Traffic Checker which was a lead up to becoming a Telegraphist a year later. It was obvious that Perc had technical talents and aptitude and in 1935 he was transferred to the Fiskville transmitting centre as a technician. He remained at Fiskville until 1953 when he was transferred to the Sydney Operating Room as a Technical Officer in charge of the telegraph workshop. Perc has always been a very handy man and on the advent of coaxial cables was sent to the UK to undergo a modern cable jointing course. On arrival back in Australia he taught other technical people this technique, which included x-rays, and supervised the Australian side of the jointing on a number of subsequent cable lays and repairs. He is also an airconditioning expert and was responsible for the Head Office and Paddington airconditioning. At the time of his retirement Perc was a Senior Technical Officer Grade 2.

Unfortunately two weeks before the official date of retirement Perc suffered a couple of heart attacks (quite unexpected as he had always been such a healthy and active character). As soon as Perc was well enough he was presented with the coveted gold watch.

Perc tells a story about his ancestors in that the original Mr. Day was amongst the first "assisted" migrants to Australia. It seems the Day family could never work out why the old chap received such "favoured" treatment as he was such a nice old bloke and a good citizen. Why then would he be helped to migrate to the Colonies "just for breaking a window?" Well, as Perc relates in his own inimitable way, it wasn't until years later that it was learned that the broken window happened to be a jeweller's window.

Les Farnsworth "Farny" of C.R.S. fame was an Uncle of Perc and according to Percy he was quite a lad. He (Farny) reckoned that the only way he could keep out of trouble when he was stationed at Geraldton was to marry the Gaoler's daughter - and he did.

It now becomes evident how it was that Perc was able to make anything, do anything and fix anything, when one learns a little of the stock he came from.

Mention of Les Farnsworth brings to mind that he was among those who escaped from Rabaul to Port Moresby at the time of the Japanese invasion in January, 1942. Among others to escape New Britain were Bill Luke, Ted Bishton, Ken Stone and Les Young.

Orm Cooper

December was a bad month for OTC in that it also lost another very valuable officer through retirement in Orm Cooper. He also joined AWA 50 years ago and he too was presented with a gold watch. Orm has a very varied technical career and in his early days he was attached to the AWA broadcasting section where he was a Control Room Operator. Later he was transferred to the Beam where he was trained in telegraphic duties and on the takeover by OTC returned to technical duties where he was a Control Officer in SOR followed by various technical duties including Deputy Manager (Broadway) and for periods acted as Manager. The last couple of years of Orm's service were marred by illness but at the time of his retirement he looked pretty healthy.

Ray Wood

Ray retired from the service of OTC through ill health in November. He joined AWA in 1930 and he served on technical duties in Papua New Guinea and Pennant Hills. Following the takeover by OTC and the transfer of Pennant Hills to Doonside Ray proceeded to Doonside where he rose to the position of Deputy Manager. We wish Ray better health in retirement.

Leo Mahoney

Leo, another casualty to retire through ill health, joined AWA in 1939 as a technician at the Rockbank receiving station. His first job was monitoring BBC broadcast interceptions. The following year he was transferred to the broadcasting section where he served for two years on a couple of the Victorian broadcasting stations. During the war Leo transferred to the marine section where he spent three years as Radio Officer on ships. At war's end Leo resumed technical duties and was posted to the Fiskville transmitting station where he remained until 1957. His next posting was Doonside where he spent the next nine years. From 1966 until his recent retirement Leo has been Manager of the Carnarvon and Moree earth satellite stations. It looks like Leo will remain as a resident of Carnarvon and will tour from there in his kombi-van. We trust his health also improves in retirement.

Stan Perry

In the same category as Ray and Leo, Stan also unfortunately had to retire due to ill health and we wish him well in retirement. Stan joined the Commission on technical duties at the Fiskville transmitting station in 1952 where he remained until that station was closed in 1963. He was then transferred as a Senior Technician Grade 2 to the Applecross transmitting station in Western Australia. During his service in the west he served for various periods in an acting capacity as Manager at Applecross and at the Bassendean receiving station. From 1972 Stan served at the Moree, Carnarvon and Ceduna earth satellite stations. At the time of retirement he was Manager Moree.

Harry Cook

Harry joined the Eastern Extension Cable Company in March 1941 as an Operating Room clerical junior. At the time of the takeover by the Commission he was an Operator (Telegraphist). He has served most of his career in the traffic area being promoted to Senior Telegraphist in 1965, to Roster Officer in 1968, Instructor Telegraph Training School in 1969, Supervisor Circuits and Standards in 1972. This classification was redesignated to Procedures and Standards Officer in 1975.

Harry developed chest pains in 1969 which were subsequently diagnosed as Angina. His condition worsened over the last couple of years resulting in retirement on invalidity.

Harry has always been an energetic worker on staff associations and has held positions on the Staff Relations, Social and Sports Club and Veterans' Association Committees.

Les Doubleday

Les joined the AWA Marine Service in 1938 and spent the whole of the war years at sea as a Radio Operator. At the cessation of hostilities he was transferred to the Beam Service and became a Despatch Clerk in the Messenger Service. When the Messenger Service was disbanded in 1948 Les was transferred to operating duties in the Central Operating Room. He was later transferred to the Island Room and subsequently Coastal Radio Service. For the last 18 years he has been located at Rockhampton. Les has always been a very popular figure and being an excellent player of the piano (by ear) was always prominent at smokos etc. He retired in April and wishes it known that his right elbow is still OK.

Harold White

Veteran Harold White, General Manager of OTC, who joined OTC in January 1966 from the Department of Civil Aviation retires on the 3rd May, 1979. He has had a very distinguished career and we do not have enough pages available in this Newsletter to go into full detail on all his achievements.

Harold who holds a Master of Science Degree from Melbourne University worked for 8 years with the Victorian State Electricity Commission prior to World War 2. He joined the RAAF in 1942 and on discharge held the rank of Squadron Leader. Harold then spent a short time on research at the Melbourne University and subsequently joined DCA in 1948. During his 17 years with that Department he became an expert in navigational aids and was known as one of Australia's leading air safety authorities.

Harold White's 13 years as General Manager of OTC have been most outstanding and much of this has already been published. He has guided OTC through numerous technological changes and kept Australia to the forefront in international communications. He has attended many overseas conferences and not only has he taken a prominent part in the conferences but his opinions and recommendations have been respected by all nations. The highlight of his years with OTC was appointment by the Government to chair the Task Force inquiring into domestic satellites.

Harold has been ably supported in his career by Mrs. White and veterans throughout Australia wish them every happiness and success in their retirement.

Dan Griffin

Many years ago there was a well known character on the Australian scene Dan Griffin, who kept arriving here on furlough between tours of duty to many distant places. From London we hear that he retired on August 11 of last year and a retirement presentation was made in the Staff Department of C&W Head Office London. Dan had achieved the impressive record of 54 years service with the Company. It was his second retirement having originally retired from the PCB in 1966 after 42 years service. Formerly of the F1 staff Dan immediately returned to work in the Staff Department to record another 12 years service.

Reunions

Victorian Annual Re-union

The 22nd O.T.V.A. (VICTORIA - ANNUAL REUNION WAS HELD AT O.T.C. HOUSE - (by courtesy of Management) - ON FRIDAY, 10TH NOVEMBER, 1978.

Despite the petrol strike 62 attended including - OTC Vice Chairman, Neal Stevens, and several octogenarian overseas telecom pioneers.

The ladies and willing workers kept the catering and the refreshments on the move and a very pleasant "get together" was enjoyed by all.

South Australian Reunion

The Adelaide Branch of the OTVA held their Christmas meeting at the Public Service Club on November 23. We are indeed fortunate in having the privilege of having the use of these Club rooms for our meetings and again we thank Ken Collett for making it possible.

We were very pleased, and indeed honoured to have with us at the meeting Dick Christoffersen and Gordon Cupit from Sydney, and Charles Carthew from Melbourne.

Others present at the meeting were Bert Dudley, Brax Horrocks, Graham Little, Dick Evans, Cliff Birks, Harold Oates, Charles Smith, Jerrold Shaw, Ken Collett, Claude Whitford, Ron Ward and Norm Mackay.

Apologies were received from Cecil Shortt, Keith Roberts, Ralph Matthews, Rocky Gordon, Geoff Cox, Max Lang, Ken Springbett, Keith Cox, Eric Symes and Alf Kerr.

Sadly we report the death, since our last meeting, of Veteran Bill Lemon, he had been in indifferent health for some time and because of this had been unable to attend recent meetings. We shall miss Bill, a wonderful fellow, loved by all.

Charles Carthew took the opportunity whilst he was in Adelaide of visiting Eric Symes, Cecil Shortt, and Marg McKittrick, sadly it is not possible for either Eric or Cecil to attend our meetings: Eric is confined to his wheelchair at the Home for Incurables, and Cecil, who is touching 96 is finding it too much of an effort to come all the way from Glenelg.

Fraternal greetings and Christmas wishes were received from Jack Guthrie, President OTVA Sydney, Brian Morell of Perth, Tufty Baker, Bruce Sutherland and Pat Sykes.

President Brax Horrocks and Secretary Bert Dudley were re-elected for the coming year.

We again discussed the notice of motion that Associate Membership be granted after 20 years service in the OTC and Charles Carthew was good enough to explain the various facets involved. However it was eventually agreed that it would be better that we did not express an opinion on this matter.

NSW Annual Reunion

The NSW 22nd Annual Reunion was held on Friday 1st December, 1978 in the OTC Staff Canteen. Attendance was excellent with 106 Veterans and 42 wives. The attendance by wives is gaining popularity as the years go by. Guests included Mr. Cottee (newly appointed Commissioner) and wife, and John Cook (Assistant General Manager (Management Services)) OTC and wife.

Those in attendance were:

Jim and Mrs. Anderson, Alf Agius, George and Mrs. Broadbent, Keith Burbury, Lou and Mrs. Brown, Athol and Mrs. Brown, Jack Burgess, Keith and Mrs. Bondfield, Jim Bevan, Ted Bishton, Joe and Mrs. Bugeya, Bill and Mrs. Brown, Ray and Mrs. Baty, Ron Beecham, Harold Baker, Roy Branson, Dick Christoffersen, Eric Cockle, Bruce and Mrs. Collett, Gordon and Mrs. Cupit, Jack Chant, Bill Chant Snr., Orm Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. Cottee, Alec Cilia, Alf and Mrs. Culloden, Marie Casey, Harry Cook, John and Mrs. Cook, Claude Dalley, Bill and Mrs. Day, Roy Doohan, Jim Davis, John and Mrs. Davies, Fred Doolette, Nell Donoghue, Margaret Dobson, Brian Darragh, Jack and Mrs. Davis, Tony and Mrs. Ebert, Bob and Mrs. Fisher, Graham and Mrs. Gosewinckel, Albyn Gregory, Philip Geeves, Lyle and Mrs. Gowanloch, Merv Gildea, Jack and Mrs. Guthrie, Stan and Mrs. Gray, Ted and Mrs. Gunning, Charles and Mrs. Hale, Joe Holmes, John and Mrs. Hodgson, Charles and Mrs. Hurndell, Joe Hawkins, Eileen Haran, Tom Hughes, Edgar and Mrs. Harcourt, Jack Hansson, Nick Hassou, Barry Henson, Matt and Mrs. Jobson, Bill Jenvey, Murray Johnson, Des and Mrs. Kinnersley, Audrey Keenan, John and Mrs. Lee, Bill Luke, Val Litchfield, John Lennon, Eric Meredith, John Marr, George and Mrs. Maltby, Maurie and Mrs. Matthysz, George McDonald, John Mulholland, Ron McKenzie, Shaddy and Mrs. Meynert, Val Moore, Ron McDonald, Keith and Mrs. Oxley, Ted O'Donnell, Joe Patiniott, Len Rourke, Charles and Mrs. Raecke, John Rowley, Barry Stockbridge, Bill Sanders, Jim Shore, Ray Stewart, Ron and Mrs. Smith, Charles Swinney, Trevor and Mrs. Thatcher, Gareth Thompson, Hugh and Mrs. Taylor, Elsie Thornley, Doug Temperley, Des Van Reyk, Jim Vasek, Cyril and Mrs. Vahtrick, Keith and Mrs. Vincent, Jack and Mrs. Whittaker, Geoff and Mrs. Warner, Ken Walker, Ray and Mrs. Wood, Des and Mrs. Woods, Bernie and Mrs. White, Russ Welbourn, Mick and Mrs. Wood, Ces and Mrs. Watson, Cec and Mrs. Wood, Brian Woods.

New Zealand Annual Reunion

The Annual Meeting and Reunion of the Auckland Veterans Cablemens' Association was held in the rooms of the New Zealand Netherlands Society on Friday 1st December, 1978. Those present were:

R. T. Atkins, H.C.C. Bradnam, W. Craig, O. C. Crossley, L. H. Davison, H. G. Evetts, L. Gladding, M.H.S. Greenwood, H. N. Jacobs, R. C. Michaels, A. G. Miller, A. B. Mortensen, L. H. Russell, L. Sedman, F. C. Studman, J. J. Potter, R. T. Martin, D. C. Erson, C. Nielson, D. H. Thompson and J. Walker.

Bill Craig was re-elected as Chairman and Fred Studman once again Hon. Sec/Treasurer. Following the meeting a tasty meal was provided by the ladies which was washed down with fine old ale.

Bits and Pieces

It was good to hear from George Flynn who lives in retirement at Bundeena. Unfortunately it has been a bit too far for George to come to the reunions. Still very active in the garden, around the house and on the water. Now has 14 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

The OTVA (Victoria) Amenities Fund has been in operation for many years and, through the generosity of members, fruit baskets are sent out to colleagues suffering ill health to help make them feel 'tis great to be remembered.

One of our Veteran colleagues had an abundance of lemons on his lemon tree so distributed many of them among neighbours and then decided to fill a bucket and leave it outside the front gate with a notice reading "these lemons are free - take some"....imagine his disillusionment and eventual surprise on finding that not only the lemons but the bucket, too, had gone!

Since the last Newsletter a number of our members have been in hospital; some are still there; some are now back home recuperating. Some no doubt we have not heard about but we do send best wishes for complete and early recovery to all including Ron Smith, Jack Heathershaw, Alan Vagg, Roy Tully, Eddy Trezise, Jack Guthrie, Sid Le Grand, Frank White, Cec Wood and Tom Pattinson.

Congratulations to Jack Guthrie, Claude Dalley and Bill Uwins who recently celebrated their Golden Weddings. Claude reports that he had congratulations from his local member and also the Prime Minister.

It was great to see General Secretary Charles Carthew and Mrs. Carthew in Sydney recently. Mrs. Carthew affectionately known by so many as "Vi" looks extremely well after her serious operation at Christmas. Unfortunately their visit to Sydney was to attend the funeral of a close relative.

Eileen Haran especially visited Adelaide recently to celebrate with Tom Pattinson his 80th birthday. Unfortunately Tom was admitted to hospital 2 days before the event.

Ken Springbett and his good wife who reside in South Australia are very interested in Meals-on-Wheels in his local area of Willaston. He occupies the position of Honorary Treasurer and their particular group not only deliver the meals but do the purchasing and cooking.

Congratulations to Nell Donoghue on becoming a Granny again.

National Secretary Charles Carthew keeps in touch with "ham" operators through Cliff Allison and listens regularly on his allwave transistor set. He is proud to say that the boys are still sending beaut Morse.

Vale

John Marr

John died suddenly on 26th January from a heart attack at the age of 52, whilst serving as Marine Operations Manager, AWA. Not only was he an O.T. Veteran but also a Marconi Veteran.

John joined the marine service of Marconi in 1943 and sailed on a number of ships until his transfer to technical duties in that Company. Over the next 10 years he served in Aden and Liverpool (UK) and became Marconi's Manager in Ghana. This post he held for 4 years followed by 3 years as North American Manager USA. In 1967 he gained the position of General Manager of Norsk Marconi Kompani, Oslo. He subsequently took up duty in 1971 with AWA as Marine Operations Manager.

Les Coley

Les passed away in December at the age of 81 following a series of strokes. He joined the AWA Island Radio Service in July 1922 and served at a number of the Island stations including Papua New Guinea; and also at Perth. On his retirement in 1961 he was a Radio Officer in the Island Room which at that time was attached to the Sydney Operating Room. Les was well known for his World War 1 stories while serving in the 12th Light Horse and in World War 2 was in the N.G. Naval Reserve.

Paddy Garrett

One of the old cables ship legends Paddy Garrett passed away the day following the Queensland Association 1978 Annual Reunion. Paddy attended this function where he was his amazing old self and gave the impression he would go on for many many years. Paddy was a captain of the cable laying ships and appeared to turn up on our coast at fairly regular intervals. He was also a good entertainer and managed to entertain rather lavishly on board ship. He was a very fine chef and kept his ship's cooks up to a very high standard. He will be missed by so many of his old colleagues and friends in the service.

Jim Blemings

Jim died on the 10th March, 1979 aged 79 after a short period in hospital. He had quite a full life and served through two world wars. Jim, an Ulsterman, joined the Irish Rifles in August 1915 and served in that unit for 8 months until it was discovered that he was only 15 years of age. He was promptly discharged and sent back to "civvy" life. Two weeks later, on putting his age up to 18 he again enlisted in the 7th Reserve Cavalry Regiment. He saw service in France with the 1st Middlesex Regiment, 2/7 Light Highlander Regiment, 1st Reserve Cavalry Regiment and was finally discharged in India whilst serving with the 21st Lancers. He continued military interests and served as an officer in the Royal Corps of Signals Reserve from 1920 to 1926.

During World War 2 Jim re-enlisted in the RAAF and served from 1943 to early 1946 as a Flight Lieutenant in a meteorological unit for the South Pacific area based at Darwin and Morotai.

Jim joined AWA in 1927 and served for many years as a Telegraph Mechanic and Telegraphist in the main Beam and Sydney Operating Rooms. He retired in 1964.

Jim no doubt because of his brogue and Irish background was a well-known character with a sense of humour which more than compensated for his occasional outbursts.

He lived at Cammeray and quite often would turn up in the office on a Sunday with his monstrous dog "Bruce" which he had taken for a stroll over the Harbour Bridge.

Jim's son Hec also served in the RAAF during the 2nd World War and on demobilisation was one of the group of ex-servicemen known as the Rehab Boys who trained in the Marconi School under that pioneer Joe Hawkins. Hec thought there were better careers than telegraphy and moved to Melbourne where he made a fortune in operating a chain of health food stores.

Jim's daughter, Dorothy, also served in communications and was one of the lady telegraphists employed in the Beam Room under Mrs. Rowe during the war years, preparing and transmitting EFM messages to and from the troops.

Matt Treacy

Matt passed away on the 16th March at the age of 85. He started his communications career with the Post Office where he was a Telegraphist from 1914 until 1927. On the opening of the "Beam" he was selected for transfer to that service where he was employed in the Melbourne Operating Room. He resigned in 1947 and became very active in ethnic and community affairs in the Preston area.

Harold Baker

Harold "Tufty" Baker passed away on the 11th April. Harold joined the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company as a probationary Cable Operator in Adelaide in 1916. As an Operator he served at Darwin, Singapore and Cocos and in 1925 was promoted to Supervisor whilst at Singapore. In this role he later served at Cocos, Djakarta, Singapore, Shanghai and Penang. In 1934 "Tufty" was then promoted to Assistant Manager and in this rank served at Sharp Peak (China), Shanghai, Port Sudan and Colombo. 1943 saw him promoted to Station Manager at Cocos and he later served as Manager at Colombo, Mombassa, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Harold was an outstanding officer whose talents did not remain unnoticed and Cable and Wireless promoted him to Divisional Manager Straits District in 1954 followed by Divisional Manager Far East in 1955. In 1960 he was transferred to Head Office in London where he was appointed as a Director of Cable and Wireless Limited. "Tufty" retired in 1964 and took up residence where he claimed he held the rank of labourer (unpaid).

Harold made a special point of attending the Veterans' functions and he will be missed by his old colleagues.

Harry Tuson

Harry who passed on in September completed a course at the Marconi School of Wireless in 1914 and immediately took up duty in the Steamer "Bombala". During the next 8 years he served on no less than 12 ships three of which were on the hospital ship "Kanowna" during World War 1. In 1923 Harry was appointed to AWA's Wireless Press Department which was followed by transfers to the Sales Department, Engineering Department and Broadcasting.

New Zealand

From NZ we hear of the passing of H. W. Anketell, R. J. Bell and also of the widows of the late C. H. Heaps and A. E. Killworth.

Our deepest sympathy to Victorian Veteran Ellis Smellie on the sad passing of his life partner in early February.

Cables and Satellites

Display of Submarine Cables in Australia

Mr. D. Turner, Curator of Electronics, Science Museum of Victoria, 304 Swanston Street, Melbourne (telephone 6634811) is undertaking preliminary work towards a display on submarine cables in Australia. He is interested in acquiring relevant items and of having at least one cable laying ship model made. Should any of our members have a model of the "Great Eastern", the "Omeo", "HMS Victoria", "Storm Bird", "Hibernia" or "Edinburgh" he would be most interested. Also if you have any information or plans and photographs he would be most grateful.

He is also looking for any pieces of cable that he could add to his collection which already includes Atlantic, Red Sea and Victoria to Tasmania cables.

End of TAT 1

From Canada we hear that TAT 1 the first trans-Atlantic telephone cable linking Canada and Great Britain, failed on the 19th November, 1978. As it was due to go out of service on 27th November, 1978 it was decided to abandon it 10 days prematurely. Whoever planned the life expectancy of the cable was certainly very close in his estimate.

Satellites in Orbit

With the new breed of satellites it is interesting to note that it is planned to place them in orbit by shuttle service spacecraft rather than disposable rockets. In addition, because of the design of the proposed cargo hold of the shuttle rocket, where the hold has more width than height, and the method of renting such space; future communications satellites will most likely be wider and flatter. It is not yet known whether the space vehicles will bring back and trade in the old satellites.

Maritime Satellites

With the introduction of maritime satellites and computers it is now quite possible for a ship to leave port without a captain and be controlled by means of cassettes or other information devices from say a wharf in Sydney Harbour to its berth in San Francisco. All courses etc. are plotted beforehand and controlled from shore after sailing.

Domestic Satellites

On the domestic scene, experiments have been conducted from OTC's Moree Earth Station transmitting television programmes to the spot beam antenna of the INTELSAT satellite and retransmitted to small receiving dish antennas with a view to television transmissions to any part of Australia. It is envisaged that in time individual farms etc. in the outback may be able to have their own mini dish to receive programmes direct from a satellite.

Following the Moree tests the Minister has now advised that the Government has approved the use of INTELSAT IV as part of a 3 year programme to give 76 areas in outback Australia their first TV services.

A total of 41 earth stations will be built in the first 2 years and viewers will receive simultaneously the national (ABC) television programmes being shown in capital cities. Such programmes would be transmitted to the satellite by the OTC Earth Stations at Carnarvon and Moree. This new scheme replaces a previously approved programme under which 76 repeater (tape relay) and translator stations were to be established.

The new programme provides for 56 stations (including 41 Earth Stations) in the 1979/81 period at a capital and operating cost of \$8.8 million.

The new proposed system has a great advantage over the original scheme for repeater stations in that it will provide simultaneous transmission/reception rather than pre-recorded programmes which could be weeks out of date by the time they were telecast.

The Minister said he had been tremendously impressed by the quality of test transmission carried out by OTC and quoted it as "a most exciting development in Australian communications" and will ensure that people living in remote communities will have access to national TV services of the highest possible technical quality, viewed at the same time as the programmes are seen in other parts of Australia.

Overseas Telephone Extension

Early in 1979 marked the occasion of an additional telephone circuit to Fiji which represents the 1000th international telephone circuit opened by OTC. This has doubled the 500 circuits available 4 years ago.

During the 3 days Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day a record 238,000 international calls were made to and from Australia. How does the old pioneer imagine such volume when we consider some of our old methods of operations?

Ham Hook-up

A number of the Veterans throughout Australia have a regular hook-up on the amateur radio band at noon every Sunday. Any "ham" interested should listen at that time on 14130 Khz + - QRM.

Recently one of our well known Veterans Don Soroghan (VK 2 PU) Kingscliff near Queensland border came on the air and talked to a number of

his old buddies and got acquainted with some new ones. Brian Woods taped the session and the Editor was privileged to hear Don's comments. Don joined AWA in 1920 and later transferred to Civil Aviation where he remained until his retirement. Unfortunately his eyesight has failed badly and he is not far from being totally blind. Nevertheless he was in very high spirits and related how he helped to build a new station at Salamaua with Jack Doggett. Don promised to be a regular participant in the Sunday session. Others on the hook-up are:-

Brian Woods	VK 2 AZI	Trevor Thatcher	VK 2 TT
Joe Collister	VK 2 ANP	Ray Baty	VK 2 BT
Norm Odgers	VK 6 NF	Keith Parker	VK 5 SO
Bill Jenvey	VK 2 ZO	Bill Luke	VK 2 AWU
Dean Laws	VK 4 ALN/MM	Orm Cooper	VK 2 CP (?)
Des Kinnersley	VK 2 CAC	Doug Temperley	VK 2 BKT
Geoff Warner	VK 2 HJ		

Cape York Cables

The following extracts of a letter from Charles Martin who resides in North Essex are of interest. Charles was the Chief Engineer of the cableship "Cable Enterprise" which was seen in Adelaide in 1941. He refers to the historical information on the locality of the cable station at Cape York Peninsula.

"I was up there in 1944 in the "Cable Enterprise" and we were to lay a line from Cape York to Port Moresby to join Guam and Bougainville to Canberra, as Macarthur was yelling for communications.

As I remember we found a cable in the sand at Hall Sound and joined in to it. Then it had to be buried and there were no picks or shovels so they were flown up. The pilot unfortunately dropped them in the sea in deep water and he had to go back for a repeat load.

Landed safely this time, the troops got to work - and put a pick through the cable!

Reported that, and did some engine adjustments before going back to Moresby for cable data.

While there, several of our crowd were taken up on the Kokoda Trail where the Australians had met the Japs and cleared them off.

On board we had a Captain Mc? for the army and one Watson, I believe from the Company.

Our pilot was Captain Campbell from Sydney and he showed us all the interesting points of the Barrier Reef - Whitsunday Passage etc.

There were two mission stations at Hall Sound; one run by Mr. Chatterton and the other concern by a brother George."

Telecom Historical Society

The Telecommunications Society of Australia - NSW Branch are considering the formation of a Telecommunications Historical Society in NSW

(initially as a Branch of the NSW division of that society).

The society is made up mainly of Telecom people but they have been extending their areas of activity for some time now to include people from other organisations.

A meeting was held on 4th April and a number of visitors attended. It was resolved that an Historical Section should be formed and an interim committee of 10 persons were nominated to investigate ways, means, and requirements and to report back to a subsequent meeting.

Any of our members interested in joining the Telecommunications Society and particularly the Historical Branch should write to Mr. Bob Langevad, Box 6026, G.P.O. Sydney.

Research

Mr. Glen French, 32 Charles Street, Cairns is undertaking a research into the life and activities of an early Cairns resident - Mr. George (Yorkie) Lawson. He has come across a reference to a vessel called the "Iris". Subsequent research that he has undertaken shows that a cable steamer, the Iris, was built in 1902 (D. J. Dunlop, Glasgow) and her intended duty was the maintenance of the All Red Line (Pacific Section). In 1929 the Iris was renamed "Recorder" however Mr. French's interest in the Iris is its connection with George Lawson prior to the 14th April, 1907 which was the date of Mr. Lawson's death. The Morning Post (Cairns) Tuesday, April 16, 1907 contained the following article:

Yorkey's Funeral

An example of the tributes paid to the poor old chap, of whom a more lengthy notice appears elsewhere, was a magnificent floral tribute enclosed in a glass case, the endorsed card bearing the following inscription:

"A tribute to the memory of 'Yorkey' of whom we have many pleasant recollections, from the crew of the Iris."

Glen assumes that the cable ship Iris and the one mentioned in the funeral notice are one and the same as there does not appear to have been a later vessel of that name in the period. He assumes that the Iris spent some time in Cairns and that the crew of that vessel paid visits to Green Island, as that is where George Lawson lived for about 15 years prior to his death. Another opinion is that George Lawson had been employed as a "pilot" aboard the Iris as he had been a Beche-de-Mer fisherman in Barrier Reef waters for many years and would have known the passages, shoals and dangers as well as anyone.

Your editor has been in touch with the Archivist of Cable & Wireless Limited who has gone through all the existing staff ledgers, logs etc. of the Pacific Cable Board and Eastern Extension and unfortunately had no further information. Should any member be able to help Glen it would be appreciated if he could write to him direct or to Editor Gordon Cupit, Box 7000 G.P.O., Sydney.

Cocos Island

Mrs. R. A. Brockman of 20 Irvine Street, Peppermint Grove, Western Australia, 6011 is a mature age (these are her own words) student attending Murdoch University and she is about to embark on a study of the post-war history of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands for a Master of Philosophy thesis. One of the employment aspects of her research concerns the Cocos-Malay community and in this connection she is anxious to contact members of the OTC staff or Veterans who may have worked on Cocos from the time the operation of the cable station was transferred to OTC from Cable & Wireless Limited. Any Veteran who has served at Cocos and is interested in giving information could contact Mrs. Brockman direct or through the Editor, Gordon Cupit, OTC, Box 7000 G.P.O., Sydney.

The information is required to help her piece together an overall picture of various aspects of the transformation of the Cocos-Malay community. She is prepared to respect the wishes of any member where questions of confidentiality arise and will undertake not to attribute in any public source or communicate to any third person information provided, without expressed permission.

Pre-Retirement Planning

We are indebted to Mr. Lou Deutscher, Field Officer of the NSW Council on the Ageing for the following article on pre-retirement planning. Retirement Planning is an urgent matter for everyone over 50 years of age and even those in retirement may gain some value or realise the value in good planning.

"Pre-retirement planning is a relatively new form of education as far as Australia is concerned and in New South Wales it is only in recent years that we have seen some form of counselling programme being available to those who are within reach of their retirement.

However, only a small group within our community have had access to those programmes because they have usually been company based seminars which are available only to their employees.

The Council on the Ageing became very aware of the large gap which was being created, and consequently a committee was established and given the task of providing pre-retirement information to the general community. This is now being done and I will explain to you a little later just exactly how C.O.T.A. can help you plan for your retirement.

But you might well ask, "Why should I plan for retirement?" "I'm really looking forward to the time when I finish with the regular routine of work, when my time will be my own and I can do exactly what I want to do. What's to plan?"

Planning for retirement, ideally, should be as important to a life as planning for a working career or an education. Many people in the Western World today will spend at least as much time on this earth after they have ceased to work, as they did before they began.

A good way to think of retirement is as a stage of life which is as controllable as any other. Remember that question which echoed through your childhood: "What are you going to do when you grow up?" Well, "what are you going to do when you retire?"

It takes thought and experimentation to find out, and the time to start this is when you are in your fifties or earlier. A successful retirement plan looks far beyond ones obvious financial needs. It must take account of the psychological, social and spiritual needs that develop as a person gets older. Like all good planning, it must aim towards particular goals.

Consider the difference planning could make in nourishing one's interests in later life through hobbies, sports and friendships. The prospect of a shortage of friends makes a good example of the unpleasant facts of life in retirement which some people choose to overlook. Friendships in our kind of society can tend to revolve around work. What happens when a person is no longer working?

I heard only a few weeks ago, a story of a man who retired and then went back to his old factory every single lunch hour, so that he could be with his friends.

It is well known that loneliness is one of the biggest problems of growing old. Making friends outside of the sphere of work is one way to guard against it. Friendships are commonly based on mutual interests; so planning for retirement means finding new interests that will bring new friends.

The main point to remember is that retirement will open up an immense time gap in your life - more than 2000 extra hours a year for the average worker - and there is a need to fill that time with "creative activity."

I mentioned earlier that I would tell you how C.O.T.A. could help you plan for retirement.

There are a number of ways in which we can offer assistance.

C.O.T.A. is organising a series of community retirement planning programmes and you may be able to attend one of these.

The topics covered in these programmes include:
Financial investment - health in retirement - estate planning - social security benefits - continuing your education - travel - taxation - accommodation - interests - leisure activities and many others.

Give me a ring at C.O.T.A. (27-4857) and I will let you know about community programmes that are planned for your area.

The Council also has available, for sale at a cost of 35c each, a series of "thought starter" booklets. The issues available at the present time are:

People alone
Financial aspects
Keep well - good health in retirement
Accommodation
Travel
Making a will

There will also be other booklets in the series including Women in retirement - creative activities - and income maintenance.

There are also a number of very good publications for sale through book shops and if you would like a copy of a current list, please contact me at C.O.T.A.

Finally, may I say that the vital thing for a retiring person is not to let go. Life consists of movement. In a world that moves as fast as ours, no one can keep his balance if he stands still. Your life must have direction and purpose. Activity, as a primary human need is basic to the retired person, just as it is to the young person leaving High School. Both need activity that will give a feeling of adequacy, accomplishment and usefulness.

I trust that what I have had to say has been of some help to you, and if I can possibly be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to get in touch with me."

Retirement Seminars

Seminars on this important subject are being held at the following suburbs as indicated.

Warringah Senior Citizens Centre, Jacksons Road, North Narrabeen.

Monday, 23rd April 7.30 p.m. (Part 1)

Monday, 30th April 7.30 p.m. (Part 2)

Subscription \$5.00 per person.

Senior Citizens Centre, 624 Military Road, Mosman.

Commencing 9.00 a.m. (full day) Monday 7th May.

Subscription \$3.00 per person to cover morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

Register with Mrs. McDonald, Mosman Community Services, telephone 960-2155 before Tuesday, 1st May.

Community Centre, 13 Smith Street, Parramatta.

Wednesday, 23rd May. 7.30 p.m. (Part 1)

Wednesday, 30th May. 7.30 p.m. (Part 2)

Subscription \$5.00 per person.

Ella Community Centre, 60 Dalhousie Street, Haberfield.

Monday, 28th May. 7.30 p.m. (Part 1)

Monday, 4th June. 7.30 p.m. (Part 2)

Monday, 11th June. 7.30 p.m. (Part 3)

Subscription \$5.00 per person.

There will also be preparation for Retirement Workshops at St. Ives during July and at Turramurra in October. Enrolment fee is \$5.00 for couples and \$3.00 for singles to cover costs of catering etc. Information on these workshops can be obtained from Peter Briscoll or Christa Chadwick at the Education Office of the Hornsby Hospital telephone 476.3622 and ask for the Education Office.

Book recommended for all

The Division of Health Education of the Health Commission of New South Wales has published a booklet titled "Getting On" and is recommended for all those in retirement or over 50 for assistance in planning retirement. It is a handbook for older people and those who care for them. Subjects covered are:

- The Normal Changes of Ageing
- Exercise
- Food
- Activities and Recreation
- Safety and Care at Home
- Legal Matters
- Where to go for Help
- Accommodation
- Mental Health
- Grief and Loss
- Taking Things Easy
- Sexuality in the Aged

Museums

Adelaide

The cable station in Adelaide, Electra House, 131 King William Street is now being used as a telecommunications museum sponsored by Telecom Australia. This museum is a result of a lot of hard work by John Ross and it is recommended that any member in Adelaide pay the museum a visit. It is open Monday to Friday from 10.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. and admittance is free.

Perth

A radio museum has been opened in Perth and is housed in the OTC's old Applecross site. OTC's Public Relations Officer Alan Cupit, Box 7000, OTC, Sydney would be interested to hear from any Veterans who may have any old radio equipment which they would care to donate to this museum.

Perth also has a Telecommunication and Postal Museum in the old Government Printing Office Building, Murray Street, Perth. It is manned by members of the Post Office Historical Society.

Fanning Island

The following letter has been received from Tom Condon who resides at 38 Holland Road, Takapuna, Auckland 10 New Zealand.

"Firstly my congratulations on your Newsletter with its many interesting contents with emphasis on old colleagues and their doings. Time does not appear to efface one's memories of them and it is refreshing to know of so many still on deck. I must pay tribute to John Lee's article on Hercus Clark, words which epitomize so much into the life of a true gentleman. The Fanning Island Defence Force was also ably dealt with by Jack Guthrie and as I was one of the originals speaking with some whimsical vein on the setting up and doings of this Dad's Army. Denno dressed in splendour in his Sam Brown suffered no end at the caprices particularly Viv Molineux and myself. How we were ever to defend the Island with a lone Lewis Gun will forever be a wonderment to me. However we did try and held the fort until reinforcements arrived in the person of the 19 New Zealanders from Trentham and the subsequent arrival of the Americans. Part and parcel of the Defence Force was the opening of the long closed rifle range to keep our eye in so to speak and I have fond memories of Stuart Macdonald of Adelaide winning the open shoot with myself gaining the handicap prize. Touching on recognition of being a member of the Fanning Island Defence Force I too have had difficulty in having any recognition of serving with that body. If however Paddy Macdonald is still alive and can be located I am sure he would do something to get some form of verification as to having been a member of this Force. Paddy was at one time the Resident Commissioner as was Mr. Leembruggen who also would have the know how of locating through the red tape information and factual knowledge in this matter. I was sorry to hear of the death of Harry Colliver for I was on Fanning with him and enjoyed his outlook and went many walks with him on the 'trails'. He was a man of great strength of character and although his outlook was not in keeping with our own it would be the last thing that we would do to take that opinion away from him. I have a very deep yearning to go back to Fanning and the nostalgia persists and to this end negotiations are on the way. Whether or no the outcome will be at least I am a trier. I had a letter last week from one Charlie Bennie (Horace) who was ex PCB having been trained in Auckland under the late P. F. Bundle and at a later stage joined the Commercial Pacific. Charlie now lives at Kaaawa, P.O. Box 625, Oahu, 96730, Territory of Hawaii. While stationed on Fanning Charlie was our official photographer and did a good job in the developing of our photos. He, Doug Passmoore and Izzy Towner figured in the canoe mishap being swept seawards in the Passage, English Harbour rip and rescued by Hughie Greig."

New Format

How many of our members noticed that the last issue of the Newsletter was on different size paper? For the uninitiated we are now using A4 international size paper. After all, we are international so why not use international size paper.

In the Short Circuit Court

A chap was arrested for assault and battery and brought before the judge.

Judge (to prisoner): "What is your name, your occupation and what are you charged with?"

Prisoner: "My name is Sparks, I am an electrician, and I am charged with battery."

Judge: "Officer, put this chap in a dry cell."

Island Defence Forces

The article by Jack Guthrie in the October 1978 Newsletter on the Fanning Island Volunteer Defence Forces has revealed that Bill Craig President of the Auckland Cablemen's Association was also in that Force and in fact was issued with a discharge certificate. He has supplied a copy to Jack Guthrie who is now seeking more information from the appropriate authorities. It has also been revealed that Claude Dalley served in the Fijian Volunteer Defence Force during the war and he is endeavouring to get some recognition for this Force.

Tasman Cables

Further to the query in the October 1978 Newsletter on a cable layed between Auckland and Sydney in the 1918/1920 era it has now been ascertained that such a cable was layed by the cablesip "Faraday" which was owned by Siemens.

Exiles Club

It is with regret that we have received the following communication from the Secretary of the Exiles Club.

"Accommodation in the Club is normally restricted to Club members with priority given to members on the Expatriate staff in transit through London.

In the past we have been pleased to be able to accommodate OTC Veterans, but with the current expansion of business in the C&W group, we are obliged to restrict reservations to our Expatriate staff or members able to make reservations near the required date.

Will you kindly inform your members regarding the changed circumstances. Should Veterans wish to request reservation within 2 weeks prior to the date required, we will be pleased to accommodate them if possible."

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Our members have been very welcome at the Exiles Club in the past and I am sure they will make every endeavour to accommodate any of our members should they have available rooms. Unfortunately the lack of reservation maybe too uncertain and members might prefer to make alternative arrangements. If in doubt it is suggested those travelling to London make tentative accommodation arrangements and then enquire at the Exiles Club as soon as they arrive. The Honorary Membership Secretary is Mr. Eric Clear. The address of the Exiles Club is Meadowbank, 27 Cambridge Park, Twickenham, Middlesex and the office phone number is 01-8924602. The telephone number for resident guests is 01-8921787.

Recollections - By Phil Little

No doubt all Veterans will have, at some time or other, cast their thoughts back to the time when they entered the field of communications; the interesting times they experienced; and the following recollections of mine may be of interest.

I clearly remember my first day as a messenger with PCB and the feeling of awe on being part of a service which carried messages from other parts of the world, and of course the fact that I was instrumental in delivering some of them around Melbourne made one feel quite important.

Not so long after, we had the Police strike, and I was amazed, and not a little scared on one of my evening trips to the Post Office with suburban cables, to turn the corner into Bourke Street and see the huge crowds milling around the big stores.

Then occurred something I shall never forget. Rocks were hurled through the plate glass windows of the "London Stores". The noise was quite frightening, and lo and behold, men entered the windows, disrobed, and then proceeded to don new shirts, suits etc., and then ambled off. The crash of breaking glass continued for the rest of the night and with no police around the mob had a ball. Fortunately the strike was quickly settled.

My appointment to the staff in April 1924 was a big day and I remember George Pickering on night shift remarking that 'Harold' was a B---- of a name and he thought 'Phil' would suit me better. To my surprise everyone else took it up and to this day my colleagues call me 'Phil'.

Test Cricket

The test matches against England will always be remembered of course, and I'm sure all my ex-colleagues will agree that the tension was terrific.

The fall of a wicket caused a panic with each correspondent trying to get their message in first, and this at times caused some disagreement and one had to be quite tactful.

One day at the M.C.G. that many will remember, is 13th January, 1939, when the temperature reached 109°.

The telegraph office situated in the centre section of the concrete stand was like an oven and the operators were stripped to the waist by 6 p.m. Everybody was perspiring profusely.

The ground was a beautiful sight on one occasion. There had been a terrific storm during the afternoon and the arena was completely covered with hailstones.

On another occasion, torrential rain which continued for a couple of hours, left the arena completely covered with water.

Strange indeed for a cricket match, but then of course Melbourne weather does these things.

How wonderful it was to meet the past well-known cricketers, now turned press correspondents; and to watch their successors on the field.

Davis Cup

How exciting it was to be rostered to Kooyong for the Davis Cup matches between the U.S.A. and Australia.

The pride and pleasure we all had, to see those fabulous youngsters, Hoad and Rosewall, who, representing Australia for the first time, were able to beat the Americans led by Seixas and Trabert, two excellent tennis players.

One never to be forgotten item was the method of getting the correspondent's messages from the Press Area situated on top of the stand, to the transmission centre underneath the stand, as no provision had been made for a chute.

A very simple method was devised which caused a lot of merriment but worked like a charm.

The messages were placed in a bucket attached to a rope and lowered over the back of the stand to a chap waiting below.

We received a lot of ragging over this, but all agreed it worked beautifully.

My resignation from OTC on 17.8.1960 ended thirty-six-and-a-half very happy years of service with PCB, Cable and Wireless and OTC. It is with great pleasure I look back and remember the many grand chaps who did so much to assist me.

Cable Ships

The following article on the cable ship "Great Eastern" was published in a recent journal of Overseas Containers Limited.

"The 680 foot long, 19,000 ton Great Eastern, was launched in 1858.

The Great Eastern had the capacity to carry 4,000 passengers, or 10,000 troops in less spacious accommodation.

She could also carry 6,000 tons of cargo and 12,000 tons of coal.

The theory behind these huge dimensions and capacities was that Great Eastern could carry her full complement of passengers

and cargo from England to Australia without having to call at re-coaling points which would have to be set up at great expense. She could also steam to India and back without re-coaling.

She was indeed the marvel of the day but Great Eastern's day was her downfall - it was about 30 years too early.

There just weren't that many passengers about; there just wasn't that amount of cargo about; and the docks and other maritime facilities of the day just weren't geared for a ship of that size.

She was woefully underpowered.

Great Eastern was an incredible mixture of triumph and failure, of innovation and obsolescence.

She was unique in having paddlewheels and a screw propeller; she had five funnels (the only ship ever to carry that number) but she also had six masts and an enormous sail capacity as insurance against the possibility of mechanical disaster.

She was the first ship to have a double cellular hull for greater chance of survival in the event of a grounding and she was the first ship to have steam powered steering.

Great Eastern's troubles began at her scheduled sideways launching into the Thames on November 3, 1857. She moved a few feet and then stuck fast.

Three months and £120,000 were spent in trying to launch her.

On January 31, 1858, Great Eastern took things into her own hands by slipping gently into the Thames - but by then her owners were bankrupt.

The huge ship lay at anchor in the Thames until 1859 when The Great Ship Company bought her for £160,000, about one quarter of her building cost.

But ill-fate continued to follow. On a trial voyage in September, 1859, an explosion in one of her two engine rooms killed six firemen.

She spent the winter in Southampton and her first commander, Captain Harrison, was drowned when a launch taking him ashore overturned.

(Her designer, Brunel, had already died from a stroke said to have been brought on by worry over the ship.)

Great Eastern finally put to sea on her maiden voyage in June 1860, arriving in New York 11 days and two hours late. Despite her paddlewheels, propeller and sails she just didn't have enough power to drive her huge bulk.

She created enormous interest in New York and in five days 143,764 people paid 50c each to inspect her. It was one of her few financial successes.

Great Eastern entered the trans-Atlantic passenger trade but each voyage was a financial disaster.

During 1865-66 she took on the role of cable-layer and successfully laid five trans-Atlantic cable lines.

She also laid the Bombay-to-Aden stretch of cable link to Europe before being laid up for 11 years.

During this time the once-proud ship for a time became a floating amusement park with huge advertising slogans decorating her iron sides.

Great Eastern finally went to the breaker's yard in 1888 and once again displayed her contrariness - because of the sheer strength of her hull it took three years to demolish it.

In the final breaking up many thought they had found the reason for The Great Ship's ill-fated career.

When workers broke through into the huge double bottom they found in one of the compartments the skeleton of a man, sealed in during the early stages of construction and entombed for 30 years in the innards of the heaviest ship afloat.

But Great Eastern had seen, and contributed in some degree to the victory of steam over sail.

In 1893 the tonnage of steamships exceeded that of sail.

Even as Great Eastern's iron hull stuck stubbornly at her launching site, shipbuilders were experimenting with lighter, stronger steel as a material for ship construction and more powerful and reliable steam engines were being developed."

Aust-UK Circuits

The following letter from Bert Burgess of Beckenham Kent to our General Secretary will bring back nostalgic memories to many of the old Beam staff.

"Your letter in the December/January "Mercury" has prompted me to drop you a line in the hope that we may have a few dot-pushing memories in common. As an old Eastern/I&C/C/W man, 1916-1957, I can't quite equal your 'nigh on half a century of service'. I retired at the normal (C&W) retiring age of 55. However I later went into the Board of Trade where I got established and stayed until I was 70.

As one of the old hands on the Aussie wireless circuit I wondered whether the enclosed photocopy of an XQ dated 1947 may ring a bell with you.

'XQ XQ VIZ - MNI TKS FOR THE FASTEST THREE HOURS

WEVE HAD MCGINLEY AND TEVLIN TKU *'

In those days I was one of a team on 'Aussie', who coming on duty at 8 a.m. started off with "BK him ZOR", then onto our control room "Best pse on VIZ we trying ZSF to 200". (This was fastest speed the G.N. perf would go and meant taking the brake off the paper feed to avoid dragging.) The combined perf/undulater slips were then 'farmed out' all round the office where spare printers were available and thus we were able to clear the bulk of your tfc before lunchtime here.

When VIZ direct started to fade, we used to lay on links via Barbados (P.P route) or Colombo (AA), but of course all this now goes via satellites and they tell me most of the tfc is now routed via computers.

I was once the grateful recipient of one of your food parcels the chaps on VIZ used to send us after the war when food was a bit tight here and I can say that these were very much appreciated here. Despite everything they were happy days with a wonderful team spirit among what Reuters once described as the most highly skilled telegraph operators in the world."

New Radio Station at La Perouse

The opening in March of the new Coastal Radio Station at La Perouse came at approximately the same time as the introduction of maritime satellite communications. The official opening was attended by the Minister and numerous Coastal Radio business associates. It was opportune that on the morning of the opening a distress working was in progress and those in attendance were able to witness the procedures involved and the importance of the Coastal Radio Service.

La Perouse has quite a history in the fact that the suburb was originally used as the first cable landing site of the Pacific when a cable was laid between Sydney and Nelson in New Zealand in 1876. The lay was completed by the cables ship 'Edinburgh'. When it was decided to abandon La Perouse as a cable landing site the shore end was rerouted to the then new site at Bondi Beach.

Claude Dalley remembers that a special room was constructed under the Esplanade at Bondi which was known as the Cable Hut. His memory is a bit hazy but he said several attempts were made to pick up the Whakapuak (Nelson) end without success and he thinks that a new end was spliced in deep water and taken ashore at Muricvai Beach. Also that when this cable was connected overland to Auckland in 1912 another cable was laid from Auckland to Doubtless Bay where it was spliced to the original 1902 cable and Doubtless Bay was closed. In addition another cable was laid from Sydney to Southport which became a relay station and the bulk of the staff brought to Sydney. At the same time Norfolk Island was also converted to a relay station and only a few staff were left to run it.

In recalling Bob Marchant's letter on Doubtless Bay which appeared in last October's Newsletter Claude said that Bob describes the Doubtless Bay events very well. The chap Bob met in the Second Australian Light Horse was Joe Nevitt. Claude states that Joe was the life of Bamfield when he was there and when he and Jock Baird got together the stories they told about their doings in Egypt were somewhat outstanding.

Claude joined the PCB in Auckland in 1916, the men who had come from Doubtless Bay and Norfolk Island were the stars of stick punching mentioned by Bob Marchant. These fellows could do drum rolls and cross overs and with a cracking pace kept the cable full. Some of those who come to mind are Collins, Jack Turnbull, Stoker, Carl Mogini, Kilworth, Homie, Christian and Tom Bailey. The Manager was David Cuthbert and the Electrician (Cable Engineer) Bill Rutherford. Percy Bundle was in charge of the Cable Training. Bill Rutherford was followed by K. C. Cox who incidentally invented many pieces of equipment such as transmitters and magnifiers that we used throughout the Pacific Stations.

We youngsters from the Cable School had to learn stick punching and Kleinschmidt Keyboard re-perforating and Morse. The youngsters were not allowed on the circuits until they could type without errors and if they exceeded 10 errors per month they had to go back to the school for further practice.

OTC Museum

From time to time there have been suggestions that OTC should have a museum and the Management of OTC may be agreeable to the suggestion. However one of the big problems with museums is the matter of staffing and in the case of the telecommunications museums in Adelaide and Perth these we understand are being manned by members of historical societies who are retired. Before putting a firm proposal to the Commission the thoughts of members would be appreciated as to whether they would be prepared to man such a museum on a roster basis. The most likely site for the museum would be Paddington. Please contact Gordon Cupit, OTC, Box 7000 G.P.O., Sydney, telephone 2305840 with your views.