



NEWSLETTER

VOL. 2 PT 8

APRIL 1982

GENERAL SECRETARY

Nominations closed in February, 1982 for the above position at which time the only nomination 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.

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 the courtesies and cooperation he has received, particularly to the General Manager, Bill Schmidt, and Commission Management for permitting the use of OTC property and facilities for functions and reciprocal representations at OTVA reunions, and for the assistance given for the printing and distributing of our Newsletter.

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 and Wireless Limited London and OTC for complimentary mailing lists.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to acknowledge the personal reports from Brax Horrocks and Cliff Birks. These will go on file. It is a sad but true fact that quite a few of our Veterans have not filled in the sheet available to them on which they should record a short history of themselves and their involvement in the communications game.

If any Veteran has not already done so, I urge you to do so ASAP. Forms are available from the Secretary, Lou Brown, but to save time in that respect, all you have to do is jot it down on a piece of paper and we can do the rest.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

HEAR YE!!

HEAR YE!!

HEAR YE!!

OTVA(NSW) BRANCH

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the NSW OTVA will be held on FRIDAY, 21 MAY, 1982.

Members are invited to assemble in the Staff Cafeteria at 5.30 p.m. preparatory to commencing the meeting at 6.00 p.m. sharp.

Lou Brown

HON. SECRETARY

OTVA VICTORIAN BRANCH

The 25th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the above Branch is scheduled for the second FRIDAY, 14 MAY, 1982, from noon to 3.30 p.m.

THE VENUE: OTC Amenities Section, OTC House,
382 Lonsdale Street,
MELBOURNE.

(By kind permission of the Management)

(Surcharge \$4.00)

Victorian Branch Annual General Meeting (Cont'd)

It is sincerely hoped to welcome colleagues not seen for quite some time now that winter travelling on off-peak daylight hours surely must be an inducement to come along.

The annual subscription of \$2.00 is now due.

Proof photos of the 25th Annual Reunion held at the Victorian Arts Centre last November will be on display and orders taken. Most groups are very clear.

To facilitate catering, please advise if ATTENDING or NOT.

Your cooperation will be most helpful.

W.H. Shea
PRESIDENT

C.W. Carthew
FOUNDATION HON. SEC.

OTVA SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the above Branch will be held in the afternoon, on a trial basis, on THURSDAY, 27 MAY, 1982, at the Public Service Club. The actual time of gathering will be advised to S.A. members later.

OTVA QUEENSLAND BRANCH

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the OTVA (Queensland Branch) is to be held on WEDNESDAY, 26 MAY, 1982, in the Manager's Office, Queen Street, Brisbane, and commencing at 12.00 noon.

OTVA WEST AUSTRALIA BRANCH

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the OTVA (West Australia) Branch will be held at the API Central Sports Club on TUESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER, 1982.

The Central Sports Club is situated at 104 Murray Street, Perth.

In view of the struggle the Branch is having to survive,

Western Australia Branch Annual General Meeting (Cont'd)

members are urged to come along and support the 1982 Reunion, and to publicise the function as much as possible throughout the areas in the West.

The Hon. Secretary, Brian Morrell, is located at 416 Great Eastern Highway, Midland 6056, and can be reached via telephone at 23 7241, should any further information be needed.

COMMISERATIONS

Our deepest sympathy goes to Reg Towner, whose wife Agnes Mary died suddenly on 8 March, 1982. Our thoughts are with you and your family, Reg.

ON SICK PARADE

News comes to us from Western Australia that one of our esteemed colleagues, H. (Harold) N.M. Burdett was discharged from Fremantle Hospital at the end of January and is now at home in the care of his wife, Rose.

Despite medication which has contained his problem to a certain extent, even the effort of riding in a car is a painful experience for Harold.

Brian Morrell writes "I feel sure that Harold would appreciate a visit, or a card, or perhaps a 'phone enquiry to his wife. Harold may not be well enough to go to the telephone."

His address is 74 McCallum Crescent, Applecross W.A. 6153. Telephone number is 364 1549.

CORRESPONDENCE

A quote from Eastern Veteran C.E. Martin, Halstead, North Essex.

"Many thanks for the last issue of the news and personnel of OTVA(A). Both OTVA and the NZ Veterans were brought up at the Eastern Extension Retired Officers Society annual luncheon and were well received. We were down a little in numbers, but I think the vicious weather we are exper-

Correspondence (Cont'd)

encing was mainly responsible. However, we made most of the occasion and I made one or two contacts of many years back. I have written a few lines to Eric Symes in Adelaide to keep in touch - a brave chap - he was such a live wire."

Charlie Martin and our General Secretary, Charles Carthew, have been "pen" friends for quite a long time.

ANNUAL OTVA (NSW) REUNION

25th Anniversary Reunion

The 25th Anniversary Reunion of the OTVA (NSW) was held in the Grange, Hosking Place, Sydney, and commenced at 6.00 p.m.

Those present were:

Jim & Joyce Anderson, C.E. Bardwell, Tom Barker, Arch Barrie, Ray & Joan Baty, Ron Beecham, Ted Bishton, D.A. Bourne, W.A. Brown, Lou & Elgin Brown, Keith Burbury, Jack Burgess, C.W. Carthew, J.D. Chant, W.H. (Bill) & Betty Chant, W.J. Chant, Bruce & Ena Collett, J.H. Collister, Jock & Phyllis Cowie, Alf & Win Culloden, Gordon Cupit, Jack Davis, Bill & Patricia Day, Geoff & Rita Day, Pearl Day, Roy Doohan, W.A. Easterling, Philip & Leona Geeves, V. Gibson, Ron & W. Godfrey, Lyle & Gwen Gowanlock, A.D. Gregory, Thelma Guthrie, Tony & Doreen Hanson, E. Haran, Edgar & Erica Harcourt, Joe Hawkins, Barry Henson, Mr. & Mrs John Hodgson, S. Holmes, Murray Johnson, Bill Luke, Charlie & Gwen Maiden, George & Mary Maltby, K. Minogue, Tom & Beryl Molloy, K.N. Morgan, Gray & Bev MacDonald, Ron & Dot McDonald, J. Mulholland, John & Norma Newlyn, E.J. O'Donnell, Marie O'Hanlon, Keith & Loma Oxley, J. Pattiniot, Randy Payne, Charlie & Mollie Raecke, Marjorie Reed, David & Patricia Rogers, W.H. Sanders, Bill & Isobel Schmidt, George Schulz, Jack & Audrey Sheath, Ron & Norma Smith, Bob & Ina Somervaille, Ray & Lil Stewart, Ken & Lil Stone, Annette Taylor, Doug Temperley, Trevor & Phyl Thatcher, Elsie Thornley, John & Mrs Toland, Reg Towner, Frank Turville, Cyril & Maisie Vahtrick, Alan & Mrs Vagg, C. Watson, Russ Welbourne, Des & Irene Woods.

Apologies were received from:

K. Adams, A. Agius, K. Bondfield, G. Broadbent, C. Brophy, A. Brown, M. Casie, A. Cilia, M. Condon, H. Cottee, J. Creswick, J. Curtis, C. Dale, C. Dalley, B. Darragh, J. Davis, M. Dobson, N. Donohue, F. Doolette, T. Ebert, R. Fisher, R. Flood, P. Frost, J. Greer, A. Griffiths, N. Harris, H. Hickling, T. Hughes, R. Imrie, F. Keene, J. Lee, N. Martin, E. Merridith, A. McIntyre, E. Norris, J. Orton, D. Osborne, E. Payne, P. Phillips, J. Pow, A. Ritchie, J. Robinson, J. Shore, N. Stevens, G. Thompson, R. Turnbull, K. Vincent, K. Walker, J. Warner, H. White,

Apologies (Cont'd)

J. Whittaker, K. Wilmot, A. Wood, B. Woods and B. Wright.

The meeting opened with a welcome to all from President Philip Geeves. VIP's present were Mr. & Mrs Bob Somervaille (Chairman), Mr. & Mrs Bill Schmidt (General Manager), Mr. & Mrs Cyril Vahtrick (Deputy General Manager), and Mr. Charles Carthew (Federal Secretary - Melbourne).

Special mention was made for Mr. J. Mulholland, Mrs Majorie Reed, and Frank Turnbull (Hobart).

Apologies were received from Commissioners Mr. Neal Stevens (Vice Chairman), Mr. Harold Cottee, Mr. Jack Curtis, and Mr. Earnest Payne.

Someone apologised for the presence of Gordon Cupit.

Greetings were received from the Veteran Cablemen's Association, Auckland (who had their meeting on the same evening), OTVA (QLD), OTVA(SA), and OTVA(VIC).

VALE

One minute's silence was observed for those Veterans who had died since our last meeting.

Russ West	(Coastal Radio Service)
Bill Jenvey	(Beam Wireless & OTC)
Harry Stewart	(Coast Radio Service)
Donald Tippet	(Eastern Extension)
Murray Hill	(OTC)
Dick 'Longun' Evans	(Eastern Extension)
George Morrison	(Beam Wireless & OTC)
Hedley Tyler	(Beam Wireless)
Frank McKay	(Pacific Cable)

Mention of list of Foundation Members displayed, Cliff Birks contributed photo albums of photos taken at Cocos Island 1911-1913.

Documents and photos contributed by Joan Evans (Longun's daughter) were displayed. Contributions needed for our archives please.

President Philip made mention that John (Ponto) Ponsonby was on the sick list but has obviously recovered as he has sent a contribution which is printed in this Newsletter.

Len Rourke, obviously still sick, he was heard recently being polite to Lou Brown, the first and only time for more than twenty years.

Vale (Cont'd)

Two tiers of the OTVA Melbourne Anniversary cake had been donated to the Sydney function, and Charles Carthew was invited to give a brief account. Charles complied, and following this, he, Marjorie Reed and John Mulholland combined in cutting the cake. Volunteers Elgin Brown, Rita Day, and Irene Woods cut up and distributed it, but no volunteers were needed to be called to dispose of it.

This concluded the formalities, so after making sure that he was not standing in front of it, President Philip declared the bar open.

The rest is history. The meeting concluded some time between 9.00 p.m. and 11.00 p.m.

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

Mr. Albury Wentworth Quirk and his charming wife visited these shores from their home country, Canada, re-visiting old haunts, mainly in the Manly-Warringah Shire where his father was Shire President in the early 1900s. In fact, Quirk Street, Dee Why was named after Albury's father.

It should bring back a lot of old memories for him.

OUT TO PASTURE

Bill Easterling, a notable contributor to "Newsletter" has joined the ranks of the retired and moved away to the Banana Republic of Queensland. In doing so, he nearly caused our ever-anxious Hon. Secretary of N.S.W. to have a heart attack by leaving no forwarding address.

However, we now know that Bill has moved to 8 Penguin Parade, Burleigh Waters, 4220, Sunshine State, so if you are looking for him, that's where he is.

Lou Brown has reverted to his normal five Pluravits a day.

VALE

Frank McCay passed away on 9 September, 1981, just after our last "Newsletter" had been circulated. Our deepest sympathy goes to his two surviving brothers and their families. Frank was 80 years old. He had another brother in the service, Reg, who pre-deceased Frank some years ago.

Frank was an ex-Pacific Cable Board man and served at Fanning, Cocos, and Norfolk Islands during his time.

He had survived two strokes prior to his death, but Brian Morrell reports that he retained his facilities right to the end.

MOVING AROUND

Keith and Sadie Vincent called when passing through Sunny South Oz on their way to Tassie. They were hoping to see Jack and Dulcie at Jordan's Joint on the Apple Isle.

Whilst in Adelaide, our most welcome visitors looked up old colleagues but unfortunately their holidays did not coincide with our reunion.

THE OTVA (VICTORIA) 25TH ANNUAL REUNION

The above event was held at the National Gallery Restaurant, The Art Centre, Melbourne on Friday, 13 November, 1981, between the hours of 6.00 p.m. and 10.00 p.m.

Commencing with pre-dinner drinks and canapes those who attended moved around in the spirit of "get togetherness".

Before settling down to dinner, President Bill Shea proposed the Loyal Toast, and then asked for a minute's silence as a tribute to the memory of those veterans who had passed on. Following the first course, Foundation Honorary Secretary, Charles Carthew, read out a long list of greetings from OTVA branches across Australia, and from kindred Associations from the U.K., U.S.A., Canada and New Zealand along with apologies from those who could not be in attendance.

Following the main course, Sir Albert Chadwick, who was our guest speaker, spoke of his long association with OTVA and OTC(A). Another feature of the evening was the brief but most welcome visit from John Hooke, a prior business commitment preventing him from staying longer.

OTVA(VIC) Annual Reunion (Cont'd)

Mrs Jean Edwards (nee Constable) kept up the tradition of making and donating a reunion cake, this time in three tiers in addition to another contribution to be shared by Norm Seabrook and Mrs Ethel Rowe. Jean requested that Vi and Charles Carthew cut the cake and also to have a section sent up to Sydney for the NSW 25th Annual Reunion on December 4.

Novelty prizes were won, many photos taken, and the friendly spirit of the occasion preserved by individuals and groups moving around the table talking of old times.

Popular Commissioner, Jack Curtis C.B., represented the Management of OTCA(A).

Present were:

Mr. & Mrs C. Allison, Mr. & Mrs Max Fernando, Mr. & Mrs Charles Carthew, M. Wilton, Mrs Pearl Peat, Mr. & Mrs F. Patrick, C. Purvis, Mr. & Mrs D. Crabtree, V. Molineux, Mr. & Mrs C. Benson, Mr. & Mrs E. Turner, J. Jacobs, K. Newsome, Mr. & Mrs J. McGrory, Mr. & Mrs N. Stubbs, Mr. & Mrs W. Bentley, Mr. & Mrs G. Perkins, Mr. & Mrs R. Lane, J. Hunter, Mr. & Mrs A. Vagg, Mr. & Mrs Mervyn Fernando, L. Shepherd, Mr. & Mrs G. Russell, Mrs N. Gosney, E. Smellie, Mrs E. Morrison, G. Carter, J. Curtis, S. Harvey, Sir Albert Chadwick, Mr. & Mrs A. Green, Mr. & Mrs D. Chambers, Vi Harrison, Mr. & Mrs W. Shea, Mr. & Mrs Sakys, Mr. & Mrs S. Bright, Mr. & Mrs P. Dennis, Mrs Beryl Dennis, Shirley Alexander, J. Cornish, Mr. & Mrs R. Hall, Mr. & Mrs K. Shea, R. Roger, Mr. & Mrs R. Lovett, Mr. & Mrs J. Robinson, W. Findlay, Mr. & Mrs J. Bedford, Mr. & Mrs A. Wilson, Mr. & Mrs W. Ferguson, J. Davey, Merle Short, L. Foley, J. Gowans, Mrs C. Bortignon, Mrs J. Edwards (nee Constable).

OTVA SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH
CHRISTMAS REUNION NOVEMBER, 1981

The South Australian Branch of the OTVA held its Christmas meeting at the home of Brax Horrocks on November 26, 1981. It was a corker, pleasant warm evening which permitted the meeting and reunion to take place outside on Brax's back lawn.

Those present were:

Ron Ward, Norm MacKay, Cliff Birks, Bill Hyde, Geoff Cox, George Rowe, Charles Smith, Brax Horrocks, Claude Whitford, Ken Collett, Bert Dudley, Ken Springbett, Hugh Taylor, Keith Parker, and Fred Reeve.

OTVA (South Australia) Reunion (Cont'd)

Apologies:

Graham Little, Rocky Gordon, Ralph Matthews, Harold Oates, Max Lang, Jerrold Shaw and Eric Symes.

We were honoured in having five visitors, Randy Payne and Lou Brown from Sydney, Pat Sykes from Perth, and Gary Hocking and Ian Reed from Melbourne.

We were sorry to get the news that Graham Little is in hospital with heart trouble. However, we believe that he is recovering and likely to return home very soon.

Randy Payne gave a short interesting, and indeed quite fascinating talk on recent developments in communications, but we found it hard to believe some of the figures he quoted.

As a trial, we decided to hold our next meeting during the afternoon instead of the evening. This will be on the fourth Thursday in May, 1982 at the Public Service Club again as Ken Collett said he was confident they would allow us the use of their premises. Commencement time of the meeting will be advised.

Faternal greetings were received from Charles Carthew, Melbourne Bruce Sutherland, N.Z., H.J. (Bert) Edwards, Queensland, Brian Morrell, Perth, Fred Doolette, Sydney, and Rolly Land of Melbourne. Greetings from the Sydney branch were conveyed by Lou Brown.

Brax Horrocks
HON. SECRETARY

OTCVA WEST AUSTRALIA

The seventh Annual General Meeting of the OTCVA(WA) was held at the API Central Sports Club, 104 Murray Street, Perth on Tuesday 24 November, 1981, commencing at 1900 hrs.

President, Fred James, occupied the Chair. Others present were Elliott Trigwell, Harold Burdett, Jack Thomas, Derek Walker, Ron Cocker, Paul Cooper, and the Honorary Secretary, Brian Morrell.

OTVA (Western Australia) Annual General Meeting (Cont'd)

Apologies:

Sandy Sandilands, Ron Fisher, Pat Sykes, Fred McNulty, Alan Gilmore, John Eales, Doug Lancaster, Les Owen, Gerry Tacey, Arthur Black and our inaugural President, Geoff Warner.

Mr. Jim O'Toole represented the General Manager OTC(A).

Visitors were Mr. & Mrs Keith Randell and John Coles.

Fraternal greetings were conveyed to the meeting by the Honorary Secretary from Dick Hickinbotham, George Rowe, George McDonald, Charles Carthew, Lou Brown and Bert Dudley.

President Fred welcomed the visitors and Mr. Jim O'Toole, who was representing the General Manager, Bill Schmidt.

After summarising the correspondence, the Hon. Secretary tabled the letters for the perusal by members, at their leisure.

Reports submitted by the President, Hon. Secretary, and the Hon. Treasurer were circulated to and adopted by the members.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

There being no other nominations, Fred James and Brian Morell were re-elected to the positions of President and Secretary/Treasurer respectively for the ensuing year ending 31 October, 1982.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The matter of subscriptions was discussed and it was resolved NOT to proceed invoking the rule allowing retired members Life Membership after a qualifying period, mainly because the OTVA (WA) could not afford the resultant loss of subscriptions. Indeed, there was a distinct possibility of the demise of OTVA (WA) unless some financial assistance could be rendered. A resolution was passed that the Secretary write to OTC(A), through the Manager Gnaragara WA, seeking some financial assistance which could allow OTVA(WA) to contain its financial situation within reasonable limits. Another difficulty that arose was that the Vets could not conveniently utilise any of OTC's facilities, and some form of central location was essential if membership was not to fritter away.

VENUE FOR THE 1982 REUNION

This is to be held at the API SPORTS CLUB again on TUESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER, 1982. This venue to be published and publicised as often as possible in order to encourage greater member participation.

Other matters discussed were attempts to increase membership, the reunion of Ex-Telcom (Cable and Wireless Limited) to be held in Sydney during Easter 1983.

TO BRIAN MORRELL

Thank you for sending me the full copy of your minute and a copy of the reports circulated, Brian. It would be a damnable pity for the OTVA(WA) Branch to fold up, so if there is any way we can help, let me know.

J.A.

FAR-EAST TELCOM GROUP REUNION

In the closing months of World War II, some fifty young Australians and New Zealanders, having been trained in cable and radio operating by Cable and Wireless Limited, were sent to Sri Lanka to join an equal number of the Company's U.K. staff. There, they were incorporated in the British Army, given a lieutenant's rank, divided into teams and despatched to various points in the Far East.

Collectively, they were referred to as the TELCOM Unit and their main tasks were to travel with and provide communications services for war correspondents, restore cable and radio communications from places recaptured from the Japanese and provide a mobile commercial telecommunications capability pending the restoration of normal facilities.

Hence teams from the TELCOM contingent found themselves in Rangoon, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Jakarta, Bali, Surabaya, Hong Kong and many other places - often among the first to land as the Japanese surrendered. In some places, such as Indonesia, internal revolution took over immediately from the war with the Japanese.

Over the years, the TELCOM veterans scattered far and wide. Many continued with C&W, while others joined OTC(A), NZPO, and Teleglobe Canada. Many more left international telecommunications and pursued other business interests. However, through various channels - including Veterans' associations - many of the TELCOM people remained in touch.

Now there is a proposal that there be a TELCOM reunion in Sydney during Easter 1983. This arose during a recent visit to Assistant General Manager and ex-TELCOM staffer, Randy Payne, by David Thompson, a New Zealand ex-member of TELCOM and now with Air New Zealand. David Thompson undertook to contact all surviving New Zealand TELCOM members with a view to arranging a visit by them and their wives to Sydney for the proposed reunion. Randy Payne undertook to round up the Australian contingent. He has asked us to invite any veterans in other states to let him know the names and addresses of any ex-TELCOM members so that he can contact them directly regarding the reunion. As most of them came from South and

TELCOM Group Reunion (Cont'd)

Western Australia, he believes that those branches would be able to offer most help.

Some of the names that Randy recalls are:

- * Ken Collett
John Chancellor
- * John Coulson
Tom Prance
- * George Scurry
- * Syd Sherwood
- * Ron Coker
- * Brian Morrell
John Charles
- Barry (?) Summerfield
- * Ken Banks
- * Ted Gunning
Bill Berry
- Roger Bardwell
- Peter Kowalik

(* WHEREABOUTS ARE KNOWN)

Anyone who can add to this list or provide addresses are asked to contact their local Veterans' Association, Lou Brown of the NSW Veterans' Association or Randy Payne at Head Office, please.

It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge the series of articles from the "Gold Coast Bulletin" concerning the fate of the old Southport Cable Station and supplied by Gwen Griffiths, widow of the late Fred Griffiths who was a pioneer Beam Wireless Supervisor, Melbourne. Precis of the articles follow below.

SOUTH - HISTORY THAT REFUSED TO BE BULLDOZED

(Courtesy "Gold Coast Bulletin" June 19, 1981)

History will not be bulldozed in Southport's Bauer Street. The Pacific cable station buildings sited there are to be whisked away before the dozers move in.

Thanks to their owners and the Southport School, two of the three buildings, a 70-year-old link with Gold Coast and Australian history, will be shifted to the school grounds, restored, refurbished and used as a musical centre.

History That Refused to be Bulldozed (Cont'd)

The buildings were under the trusteeship of the De La Salle Brothers who donated them to the TSS so that they would not be smashed to rubble during the building of a new retirement village soon to be erected on the old cable station grounds. Whilst it means that a part of Australia's heritage won't go down the drain, the TSS is up for the \$150,000 for the big shift, and an appeal called the "Cable Station Complex Appeal" has been started to raise the funds.

Said the Chairman of the appeal, Mr. John Walker, "No money was spared for construction in those days. The buildings are all cedar doors and windows and the eaves of Canadian redwood. No one could afford to build them today."

The buildings were built in 1902 for about two million pounds, the station serving as Australia's first direct overseas communication link, and are listed by the National Trust as buildings worthy of preservation because of their historical and architectural significance. The station connected us to America, Fanning Island, New Zealand, Suva and Norfolk Island until it stopped operating in 1962.

The Australian Government sold the cable station property to the De La Salle Brothers in 1964 and for a while it appeared as if the property might stay preserved for posterity, but the owners applied for and were granted by the Gold Coast City Council to have the property rezoned for grounds for a retirement village, much to the Queensland National Trust and the Bauer Street residents dismay, who looked upon the destruction of the buildings as the end of an era.

Then, as some things happen in the nick of time, along came a local chemist, Mr. John Walker, a TSS old boy, who figured that something should be done about it. He was finally able to announce that the De La Salle Brothers had donated the buildings to the school. "The Brothers could no doubt have sold them," he said, "but it was a very generous gesture on their part to donate the buildings to the school. The task in removing the buildings will be a monumental one in that the larger of the three buildings would have to be sliced into five parts to facilitate removal. Only one of the other two remaining buildings will be suitable for the TSS and even that has to be sliced into three parts. I still have hopes that the third building can be saved and put to some use."

When resited south of the headmaster's house overlooking the Nerang River, the buildings will provide 140 squares of usable space for the 635 boys who study music, musical instruments, orchestral and choir groups.

Up to the time of printing the article, \$25,000 had been raised toward the appeal, a sum of \$89,000 being needed to resite the buildings. Whether the sum is raised by the deadline didn't matter. "They won't be there when the bulldozers arrive." said Mr. Walker.

"WOODMAN - SPARE THAT TREE"

Subsequent to the above article, another one appeared in the "Gold Coast Bulletin", in the September 14, 1981 issue in which local residents threatened to throw themselves in front of the chain saws if any attempt was made to cut down four pines growing on the old Southport Cable Station property, the trees being estimated to be at least 90 years old. No attempt has been to remove them as yet.

The good news is that the third building ended up Mudgeeraba, where it will harmonise with other old buildings on the property owned by Mr. Kearney. Mr. Kearney owns the property, Jabiru.

Another resident of Bauer Street doing his part to preserve a bit of Southport history is Mr. Max Gillard, a furniture restorer who bought up the entire 2000-picket fence which surrounded the Cable station. He has been slowly removing the fence picket by picket and says he will be the only person in the State with a fence of such historical significance.

During the time, arrangements were being made to remove the buildings to their new site, The Southport School. Assistant General Manager, George Maltby and OTC Brisbane's Manager, Mr. Jim Banks paid a visit to the area to see what assistance OTC(A) could give. They were welcomed and invited to lunch in the Founders Room.

In order to give the cable station a final night of glory, Bauer Street residents, together with the Star of the Sea's Parents and Friends Association decided to hold a Last Night party as a farewell to the old buildings, and more than 150 sentimentalists turned out for the occasion, a good many of them dressed in costume of the early 1900's just for added flavour. The buildings had been spring-cleaned and the outside area floodlit. The function raised \$1,200 toward the fund, which was a pretty good effort on their part.

The buildings have at last been relocated at the Southport School with only one slight incident in which one section landed with a bit of a bump when the trailer on which it was to be moved tipped over. No damage was done, which only goes to show that they made them to last in those days.

Well ... that's about it. Once again, thanks, Gwen, for keeping us posted on the fate of the old Southport Cable Station. Your original articles will be returned. Unfortunately, we are not equipped to reproduce the pictures in the newspaper but I was glad to be able to see them.

And so, as a certain pommy Elizabethan poet/playwrite (who's name escapes me for the moment) once said,

"ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL"

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Submitted by Veteran FRANK PATRICK

In 1920, the Marconi School of Wireless was operating in 422/424 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, a single storey brown stone building. Lionel Hooke was in charge of the school which operated Monday to Friday daily and was open for night classes three times a week. The main subjects were Morse, radio, and PMG Regulations.

In 1921, Joe Williams took over as instructor, followed later by Keith Burbury. Examinations were carried out by Joe Martin of the PMG Department at three monthly intervals in Morse and regulations. The radio theory test was usually done on any suitable ship which happened to be in port. This consisted of tuning the spark transmitter to either 300, 450 or 600 metres. (Kilohertz etc. were unheard of in those days). To test the student's ability a couple of faults would be deliberately put onto the apparatus, such as a small piece of paper under a relay contact, or a fuse removed requiring the sweating examinee to locate the cause and remove same. I suspect today the modern student would be prone to laugh at such an examination, but to us hopeful operators it was a serious business.

Among those I can recall from the 1921 course were: P. Manly, Rupert Baston, Cecil Hughes, Bill Veering, Fred Canning, Clif Allison, Hedley Tyler, Llyal Farnsworth, Bill Rowlands, Eric Warner, Bill Croft and Frank Williams. At least six of these men joined the Police Patrol when it formed in 1925. Others went to sea and some later joined the Department of Civil Aviation as radio operators.

In those days the course cost £28 and was expected to take some 18 months to complete. Once a student had successfully completed the course, he was given a First Certificate of Proficiency under the London convention. Mine was number 981, issued in November, 1921. This reverted to Second Class in 1930 and the holder was required to undergo another examination to revalidate a First Class ticket. In order to increase his speed in Morse code, His Master's Voice records were available at varying speeds.

Regretfully, it must be admitted that the old type radio officer is fast approaching extinction, as Morse code, except in a few areas, is no longer necessary. Radio teletype and radio telephone have taken over and not many operators can remember the old days of heavy QRM and solid QRN and weak spark signals. Perhaps it is just as well, but those of us who had to get the traffic through under adverse conditions suffer pangs of nostalgia at times.

ANOTHER MEMORY LAND - SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT

Whilst going through the mass of material generously contributed by Veterans, I came across this little item from a new subscriber to the "NEWSLETTER". Lou and I have a fair idea as to his identity. See if you can pick his style. By the way, please do not write in for the answers to the questions he poses in his quick quiz which appears to be directed to those who served in the old Spring Street SOR between 1950 and 1970. I present his contribution unedited and no further correspondence will be entered into.

(EDITOR)

It starts:

"Dear Sir or Madman, *(Please cross out the one not applicable)*

Perhaps it is a sign of old age but somehow the Communications industry or Telegraphy, as it was known in my youth doesn't seem to produce the characters that it used to do.

One of these characters was a Scottish gent called Mac (that will do anyway as the laws of libel still apply in this State). Mac, with a couple of others, had in due course, graduated from Stevo's Academy of Culture and arrived in the old Spring Street SOR to commence "dualling" with experienced operators. Those who had trod the path before them gave them certain good advice on who to approach and how, and who to avoid and how. Working on the Sydney/Melbourne line was the late Charles Barden. Socially, Charlie was one it was suggested that trainees should avoid, but like a moth to a candle, our Scottish friend was drawn to the Barden presence. Suitably prompted by Mac, Charlie began to explain the whys and wherefores of landline working, etc., only to be taken aback when Mac burst into some operatic aria midway through Charlie's spiel. Now, I'm not sure what he said, but Charlie's explosive reaction took Mac back about six paces, and poor Ginny Parker three weeks to clean the language stain from the table.

This was found to be one of Mac's obvious drawbacks. No matter when or where he was he would keep breaking our into operatic arias. To say the best, Mac's voice was not what you would call crash hot, and to his disgust he seemed to get the cold shoulder wherever he went. One day, chancing his luck, he approached the gent on Cottessloe (if my memory serves me correctly). He did this with great stealth because one thing he had learned was that telegraphists don't like to be rushed. The Cottessloe operator was one known as "The Reverend".

Mac asked if he could be of assistance, at the same time putting his arm up to fend off the blow which usually followed, but this time he was taken aback when the reply was "Yes". "What can I do?" asked Mac. The Rev replied without batting an eye or missing a beat. "See that door over there? If any good sorts come through it, let me know." (That's the censored version).

Another Memorary Lane (Cont'd)

Well, Mac finally got onto the swing and I would like to report that he finally made it, but for what reason we shall never know, he took himself to the men's toilet and proceeded to decorate it with sundry graffiti, (whether by word or verse I do not know). Suffice to say that the door was removed as evidence, sundry handwriting comparisons were made, and Mac was banished, never to darken the SOR doorstep again.

One wonders what became of him. Perhaps he now sings around the Club circuit - or writes scripts for TV shows. It has even been suggested that he is the Graffiti King of the Devonshire Street Subway ... I don't know.

I post a quick quiz. The following questions can be answered by anyone - whether they have retired or are just about to do so.

1. Who were the leading stars in the OTC classics "The Sinful Seven"?
2. What was the onion box?
3. What was the fate of the Spring Street multi-pot, and what was its finest hour?
4. Who was the gent who battled all the way out to a distant suburb with a piece of second-hand three-ply he had acquired only to find out it was riddled with borers?
5. Who, on being introduced to a new member of the staff and having been told that the new man had just completed 15 years in the Royal Navy said, "Don't worry about it - you will live that down in time, Mate. (?)
6. Who was the third gent present at the above incident?
7. What racist, endorsing a proclamation "Bring Out a Briton" brought out a counter proclamation, "Take back a Briton - and we will chuck in two Maltese."
8. Who was the telegraphist who referred to his colleagues on the other end of the line as "market gardeners"?
9. What was the sign marked on the tape, and who did it, so that the late Ben Nixon knew which end of the tape went into the transmitter?
10. Who was the Cable supervisor who, when told that London had requested traffic be sent ZST said, "Tell him to take it ZSO"?
11. Who were the two tels. observed in Woolworths trying on various bedroom utensils, and for what purpose?
12. Who was K. Mullen? Explain his impact on the Communications industry? And why did H.J.H. get a Christmas card endorsed, "Don't get this finger-printed - I did it wiv gloves on"?
13. Who threw the bag of lime, and, more importantly, who copped it?
14. What was the instrument used to cut the perfect round hole in the SOR window?
15. It was a time when there had been a lot of petty pilfering in Spring Street. Who was approached by the then Traffic Manager and when advised that the Montebello bomb had gone off, replied, "Boss, some of these blokes would pinch anything."

Another Memorary Lane (Cont'd)

16. Who was approached by the Indian Deputy Director of Posts and Telegraphs and was asked to explain what a morse reperforator was, replied, "Damned if I know."

"GINGER"

LET'S BE SERIOUS

Like PONTO

I had to stop OTC sending me their literature - it was getting too technical for an ex smoke screen operator of the Millingimbi tribe from Bulla-Ma-Kanka. There was a time when I could speak with some authority on the superiority of the "Cat whisker detector" as opposed to the magnetic detector. Nowadays when I hear them discussing single side bands, I think they are referring to the elastic that dangles from the dirdles of single women.

Thank you once again for the "Newsletter" bringing as it does much of interest and a modicum of sadness for colleagues who have departed - not from Morse to remorse, I hope. You also have a kind word for those ailing, of which I have been numbered. Yes, I have been in hospital again with triple pneumonia - decent folk get pneumonia; not so decent folk get double pneumonia. I was 5'10" when I entered hospital and only 5'8½" when discharged. This loss came from the Almighty pressing from above saying "We don't want you", and Old Nick pressing from below saying "Not on your Nellie." It really didn't matter as the 1½" lost was of very little use, anyway.

Because of this scurvy treatment, I decided to organise my own heaven. Mahomet was very successful, Father Divine and Mrs McPherson amassed a good following, so why not? I received plenty of nominations but when I issued the rules, the first of which was NO SEX, fifty applicants withdrew their applications and, strangely enough, 49 of them were women which rather belies the old repeated assertion that the shortest bedtime statement ever pronounced then or now, is NO. Confucius must have been a bit confused when he stated, "There is no such thing as rape - women with dress up run faster than man with pants down."

An old spinster of 97 told me that all her life she had been dying to try it, but nowadays she was just trying to diet. She also explained that the reason she had not withdrawn her application was because she felt that rules were meant to be broken, and she would rather do defacto than virgo intacto. She also tendered the further advice, "If you are thinking of having a night of wine, women, and song, pick a woman over 40 - they neither yell, swell or tell." Ridiculous advice to a decrepit old feller who has been with one foot in the grave and the other on a banana skin. Anyway, I have always been perfectly content with my home brew and Mum.

Let's be Serious (Cont'd)

I have given up my daily three hours of devotion and reading the Bible. My knees were getting so knobbly that decent housemaids were getting jealous. Nowadays I watch the TV womens' session. The more blue they are, the more they shriek their heads off. Gone are the days when you heard lovely, sweet old songs, such as "Oft in the Stilly Night Slowly sinks the son to rest", "Home Sweet Home", or "Who drove the Tacks in Mother's Face", or again, "Monty Bring your Monocle, there's a Flea in Auntys's Auricle".

It all makes me very melancholical.

PONTO

(Goodo, Ponto. But watch those priorities ... home brew first then Mum? Questions could be asked in the House). (Ed.)

THE LA PEROUSE CABLE STATION

The request we made in the November issue of the "Newsletter" asking for any information on the La Perouse Cable Station brought two responses, one from A.D. Gregory and W.A. Easterling.

Here are their contributions:

LA PEROUSE CABLE STATION

A.D. Gregory

Up until a couple of years ago, I possessed an album of photos of the original cable station at La Perouse adjacent to a small block of land (about 30ft square) which contains a memorial column to La Perouse, the French explorer who landed there. Unfortunately, I have been unable to find this album and believe that I have loaned it to a friend who has failed to return it. Perhaps the following may be of some use, as little seems to be known about the station.

Whilst I was studying Matriculation in April, 1906, at Sydney Grammar School, my father directed me to call at the Eastern Extension Australiasia & China Telegraph Coy. in Moore Street, Sydney (Martin Place) for the purpose of taking an enhance examination to enter this London company. My elder brother had failed this exam a couple of years previously solely, I believe, on his handwriting. In those days, messages received were in the operator's handwriting. I passed the exam which included unseen French, Mathematics, Algebra, etc. and went to La Perouse (Quarters) which were adjacent to Bear Island Fort in Botany Bay" date was on 1 May, 1906. This was a few years after the cable terminal had been removed to Yarra Bay Headland (a short walk along the beach) where a new two storey building had been erected to accommodate large operating rooms, post office, and close by a generating and battery room. Upstairs

La Perouse Cable Station (Cont'd)

were the Superintendent's spacious quarters with a fine view of Botany Bay.

As a probationer, the salary commenced at 24 sovereigns PER YEAR, payable monthly, with a mess bill of 35 shillings a month. There was little chance to travel to Sydney which was allowed only once a month, and then with the Superintendent's permission.

In the quarters, there was no electricity, wood fires were used for cooking and kerosene lamps for lighting in the mess and billiard rooms and in some of the bedrooms. Juniors were allowed candles only, so it was a tough start for boys of 16, having to be content to keep fit through tennis, gymnastics, and jogging frequently as far as Maroubra and back, or at least to Little Bay.

Probationers handled the inward and outward postal service apart from learning and practicing on landlines and cable telegraph, and they were assessed by having to pass quarterly examinations. In two years, if you made "smart" progress you became an operator on £72 per annum, but even then the town leave restrictions were still enforced, with an occasional weekend at home. Normal staff numbers were from 15 to 18 hours 5 a.m. to 11.30 p.m.

LA PEROUSE CABLE STATION

W.A. Easterling

Well Lou, you asked about the old cable station. It is alive and well, kept in very good condition by the Salvation Army who run it as a Girls' Home. If you stand at the southern end of the new Sydney Radio building, you can look right down on to it about 500 yards away. At present, the roof is being repaired or painted.

From memory, the cable operations were transferred into Spring Street in 1917. I do not know when it was acquired by the Salvation Army but during the War, it was used as a nurses' annexe for the nearby Prince Henry Hospital.

And thereby hangs a tale.

Rather than wait for a tram, the girls would take a short-cut through the Radio Station grounds, past the front of the old building and then down the "old" road that was the main entrance: it has been disused these last 35 years. They would then cut across the scrub to the Cable Station, sometimes stopping off at the Radio Station and taking a dish of tea with the "elderly gentlemen", which was a rare privilege in that male chauvinistic bastion.

Now nursing is a woman's work and the nurses were quite acceptable. They didn't pose a threat. However, the great numbers of girls being trained in telecommunications by the three armed

La Perouse Cable Station (Cont'd)

services brought much gloom to the "e.g.s.". There was fear and mistrust, and many genuinely believed that after the war, old scores would be settled and they would be replaced by cheap female labour.

So much heat was generated, that some stirrer decided to add a little petrol to the fire by faking a service message to the Manager advising him that some WRAN Radio Operators would be seconded to La Perouse for evaluation and suitability for the postwar CRS. The carbon copy was quietly put into the files where it would be found by one of the inquisitive "E.G.s". The storm broke one weekend. It was found and exploded with a satisfactory bang. Passed around hand-to-hand in great secrecy, it produced loud and long lamentation.

But worse was to come ... On the Sunday afternoon, one of the elderly gents looked out of the window and with trembling finger pointed to the track and croaked, "Look at 'em, they're here, we're finished, we'll all be out on the street."

Down the track striding purposefully, came the WRANs. Panic broke out as they came to the door and passed on down the track along the "old" road. Turned out they were Sick Berth Attendants just taking a short-cut down to the Cable Station to visit friends, innocently oblivious of the furore they had caused.

Well, that was nearly 40 years ago. How things have changed. I do wish that some of the "e.g.s" could come back and see the place now - and meet Dianne, Maree, Louise, Danielle, Robyn, Denise and Jane, and be as charmed as we are.

MORE ON RABAU

Various members were circulated on any added information that could be used supplementary to that submitted by Bill Luke. Fred James from South Como writes:

"Regarding the escape from Rabaul, Bill Luke has covered it all very thoroughly and there is little I can add to his account of events.

Prior to our escape from Rabaul, Bill and I were on duty at the Malaguna transmitting station during the time of the first air raids and from a hill behind the station we watched the Japs bombing the gun emplacement at Praid Point. From the vantage point, we saw what looked like a Wirraway crash into the side of the extinct volcano. It was from there also, that we first saw Mrs Boles arriving in her schooner from Waterfall Bay, and Bill left to contact her at the warf.

More on Rabaul (Cont'd)

During a previous raid, we were at Malaguna whilst the Japs were bombing a ship loading copra at the wharf at the rear of the station. The planes were down so low that we could actually see the pilots. I don't know the name of the ship, but she broke away from the wharf burning fiercely and drifted across the harbour to Matupi Island, and was still burning there when we left.

As Bill said, the staff, with the exception of Ivan Gascoigne and Harry Holland arrived at Malaguna from the Town office in a car and picked up Bill Groom and myself, then headed out along the Kokopo Road. As we left Rabaul, there were many loud explosions, and as there was no air raid in progress at the time, we took it to be the demolition of installations in Rabaul.

Arriving at Raluana wharf, we found that we were ahead of Bill on the "Iboki", with Neva Boles. We signalled them, and they put into the wharf and picked us up, and we then set sail for the South Coast.

I cannot add further to Bill's account of the remainder of the trip to Salamaua and then to Port Moresby.

At the time of our escape from Rabaul, I had been only six months with AWA and was not acquainted with a lot of the chaps mentioned by Bill. My wife and I had only arrived in July. At the time I was prepared to transfer to Kieta Radio to relieve Doherty, who I had never met, but who, I believe, got out of Kieta.

Like Bill, I lost my photographic records of Rabaul, and only have a few which my wife brought down with her when she was evacuated from Rabaul on the "Neptuna".

REFERENCE THE ABOVE

I was in the RAAF at the time and stationed at Rabaul as a wireless operator at the Advanced Operational Base which serviced the Catalinas, and which was located just down town from Steamship's Wharf. We had been instructed by RAAF North Eastern Command, located at Townsville, to remain behind and give them a blow-by-blow account of the invasion whilst ever we could maintain communication. The explosions you heard was the army demolition squad blowing up pre-set charges at strategic points. As it turned out, fortunately for us, they accidentally blew up the transmitters, blowing us off the air, allowing our Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Lerew to say, "Well - that's that. Come on lads - no use us sticking around now."

Reference the Above (Cont'd)

So that was what you heard, Fred, and yes - it was a Wirraway that plowed into Vulcan. We only had five of them and the Japs took only five minutes to shoot them down. There were no survivors.

Jim Anderson

BITS 'N PIECES ... HERE & THERE, ETC

Dennis Chambers went along to Puckapunyal Passing Out Parade of military reservists to see his son graduate as a Lieutenant. You wouldn't want to know it, but Jack Birch was there also witnessing his son-in-law get a promotion. Needless to say, it was a proud and happy occasion for two old Beam Wireless colleagues.

Doug and Marie Crabtree and Chas. Carthew visited the Kingston Centre, Cheltenham, and delivered the traditional Christmas cake, made and donated by Jean Edwards, to our esteemed colleague, Norm. Seabrook. Norm has been hospitalised for many years and now has his own electric wheelchair. Our Newsletters and "Transit" help keep Norm in touch with days gone by, and he wishes to be remembered to his old "Beam Wireless" mates.

Another old "Beam Wireless" man, Ron Taylor, is now resident in Belden Lodge Nursing Home, Mooroodah Road, Croydon, 3136, and he also sends his regards and wishes to be remembered to his old mates.

THERAPY DEPARTMENT

Listening in to amateur radio operators on short wave is good therapy for veterans in retirement. How nostalgic it is to hear the inevitable QRM, good and indifferent sending and, or course, the interchange of chatter and friendly 73s.

It is typical of "Ham" operator sincerity when calls from many colleagues were made at an appointed date and time expressing condolence on the sad passing of the late Bill Jenvey. Tributes and thoughtful acts like this help to keep the amateur radio operators closely bound together, ever ready to make

Therapy Department (Cont'd)

friends' "over the air" in any part of the world, and the QSL cards give further emphasis to their enthusiasm and sincerity.

MEMORABILIA

From time to time, photographs are sent to your editor without any indication as to time, place, and names which renders them virtually useless for inclusion as archive material. If old photos are found, please ask around and fill in the details so as to preserve them for posterity and research.

OVERHEARD AT BROADWAY

Statement - "Well, I finally went down and got a new battery for the wife today."

Reply - "Struth, that was a good swap - wish I could get a new set of tyres for mine."

THE LATE GEORGE MACDONALD MORRISON

Born 3 February 1897 at Townsville.

Joined the PMGs Department on 16 August 1911 and became telegraphist. Joined Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (AN & MEF) 24 May 1920 as a Petty Officer and departed for Rabaul to operate the Kokopo Radio Station for the Island Radio Service (IRS) until 1 January 1922 when AWA took over the service.

Appointed to Melbourne Radio (VIM) 14 February 1924, then to Sydney Radio (VIS) 8 September 1924.

Selected with a number telegraphists/operators to travel to England for training in the Beam Wireless Service and appointed to that service 1 April 1927. Transferred to Sydney 5 June 1929 and then back to Melbourne 6 April 1937.

The Late George Macdonald Morrison (Cont'd)

He spent some time at the Fiskville Transmitting Station during the early war years and then transferred to Sydney, then back to MOR in 1944.

Promoted as Training and Recruitment Officer, Sydney, in December 1949, and then back as Supervisor MOR in November 1952. It was from this position that he retired in February 1962, after 50 years in the Communications Service.

In retirement, George moved around Australia from time to time and then finally decided to settle in Sydney. George became totally deaf and lead a lonely life and will be remembered as a kindly gentlemen, highly respected by all who knew him. George was 84 at the time of his sad passing in the fire that destroyed The Rembrandt Apartment House, Kings Cross, in which he was a resident for many years.

NEWS FROM NEW ZEALAND

From the Land of the Long White Cloud comes a letter from Bill Craig, President of the New Zealand Retired Cablemen's Association. Bill writes,

"Thank you for your letter of 29 November - it arrived just in time for our Annual Reunion on December 4.

You certainly had a grand attendance for your 25th Annual Reunion (Vic.), and it seems to have been a little more formal than the usual meetings held here. As yet, we have not had a three-tiered cake, but who knows what the future may hold.

I regret to advise the loss of two of our members during the year.

MSH (Peter) Greenwood PCB retired early - served mainly at Auckland and Suva.

WJ (Wally) Steward - Eastern. Wal had also retired early.

That has now reduced our membership to 40.

We have 25 at our Reunion, and as our previous venue had been demolished and is in the process of being rebuilt, we were obliged to seek a convenient location preferably one accessible to public transport. Our older members prefer to leave their cars at home on Reunion days.

Ex-Telecom David Thompson arranged to have us meet at the Air New Zealand Data Centre, with refreshments being catered by the

News from New Zealand (Cont'd)

Airways people. After the formal Annual Meeting, we were taken on a tour of inspection in groups of half a dozen or so to see how a modern communication centre works. I am afraid it was difficult for us to comprehend the fantastic and complex developments made in this field, but the Air Staff made it as simple as possible, and we left with a greater appreciation and respect for the technicians and computer operating staff. One of our members, Reg Langford, brought along some cable tape from Fanning Island. It was a recorder tape of the last numbers sent to Suva and Bamfield at the request of the German Officer-in-Charge of a party put ashore from the "Nurnberg" before they set to with axes and hammers to smash up all the instruments. The Germans would have blown up the office with dynamite, but they refrained when they found that the staff's quarters were right next door. The ink on the tape was rather faded and a bit difficult to read under artificial light, but it could probably be improved with great care. Reg's father was one of the early Managers.

Incidentally, we have about a dozen ex-Telcoms in our membership and they are thinking of the possibility of a Telcom Reunion in Sydney in 1983. Maybe something will come of it as the four I spoke to were quite enthusiastic. I think that Randy Payne has had some thoughts about it also.

Tommy Condon was unable to attend the Reunion. He is quite fit, it was just that he had a business appointment. Will get him to write his usual newsy items when next I see him.

Pleased to hear Jack Turnbull is still on deck. I had written to him months ago with a question on Father Rougier on Fanning but when he didn't reply, I thought the worst. Some authors in the USA apparently think that I am an authority on Pacific Islands from the queries they send me. The hardest to complete was the family tree of the Greig Family, the original owners of Fanning Island." *Ends.*

Charles Carthew onpassed a copy of this letter from Jim Jacobs. Jim thought it might be too lengthy, and gave me permission to edit it if necessary, but I am presenting it in its entirety because I think it will have great appeal to a lot of our older veterans, especially those of the Beam Wireless Service.

ON THE BEAM

by Jim Jacobs

It gave me a great deal of pleasure to read the November 1981 "Newsletter", bringing back quite a number of memories of my early association with A.W.A. and what was then known as "Beam Wireless."

On the Beam (Cont'd)

Perhaps a brief resumé of myself would be in order by way of introduction.

I was born in Brighton in 1902. I lost my father in 1904 and of course was too young to remember him. My mother had a struggle to bring up my younger sister and myself, so at the age of 13, I left school, did an early morning paper round and got a job at 12/6 (\$1.25) a week in a Flinders Lane clothing factory, working from 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. weekdays, and 8.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. on Saturdays. I was a messenger/cleaner and the only male on the staff, the business being run by three elderly spinster sisters.

In 1917, I joined the P.M.G. as a telegraph messenger and worked from the "old tin shed", on the corner of Little Bourke & Elizabeth Streets. From there, I was transferred to Brunswick P.O. then to Moone Ponds, where I also worked as a postal assistant. Transferring to the relieving staff, I had terms at about a dozen city and suburban post offices.

In 1922, I was transferred to the "Telegraphs and Wireless" branch under Chief Manager, Jim Malone, and with Jack Martin, Senior Radio Inspector.

Being interested in "wireless" (called radio these days), I became foundation Secretary of the Essendon Wireless Club and enrolled with the Marconi School of Wireless under H.R. Burbury. Two of the pupils I remember meeting there were Aub Shacklock and Constable Downey who founded the Police Wireless Patrol. Bill Jenvey joined this patrol and we became firm friends. I was saddened to hear of his recent death. I well remember reading Bill's father's text book on Telegraphy.

When I received my First Class Certificate of Proficiency, I immediately ordered my uniform as a ship's radio officer and packed a suitcase with clothing, ready to go in case I got a call from A.W.A. Sure enough, in April 1924, I got a phone call from the late Joe Williams asking me if I could leave for Sydney that evening. Without hesitation, my answer was 'yes'. He told me to get a passport photo and to report to him at 4.00 p.m. at the old A.W.A. office at 167 Queen Street,

I went straight in to see Jim Malone and told him I wanted to resign. He said, "When Jim," I replied "Now." He gave me a sheet of paper and a pen told me to write out my resignation, which I did on the spot. After a hasty round of "good-byes" with the staff, I rushed out to get my passport photo, hurried home and told mother, grabbed my packed bag, reported to Joe Williams who handed me my rail ticket to Sydney as well as tickets to Ben Rose and Geoff Steane who has also been called up.

Arriving in Sydney, we reported to Hugo Phillips, the Marine Superintendent, and I was allotted to the R.M.S. "Makura/GDZI" with Harry Barnfield as Senior, and Ernie Coldwell as Second.

On the Beam (Cont'd)

Over the next three years, I was to serve on a number of ships, with a number of shipmates, some of whom may be remembered by other veterans. They were: Jack Bennett, "Tiny" Ternes, Harold Sticpwich, Peter Gillon, Viv. Brooker, Colin Hickey, Hector Kirk, Ron McKenzie, Lionel Jones, Gordon Guppy, Frank Davidson and Wilf Atkin.

Returning to Sydney on the "Tahiti" in March, 1927, I got a letter from John Mulholland to say that all the Union Steamships Coy vessels would now own, not lease, all wireless equipment on their vessels. The company would be quite willing to employ all the operators then serving on their ships, but the snag was that A.W.A. could not offer them transfers to other vessels not owned by the Union Steamships Coy.

This came as a bit of a shock, but I applied for and got a job in the Beam on May 18, 1927. As I remember, the Supervisors were Roy Mancer, Fred Davis, George Morrison, Roy Simmons and Glen Pope. It was whilst I was in the Beam that Marion Galtry (Beam Accounts) introduced me to Dorothy Lycett, a ledger-keeper in the Accounts. We became engaged and then married in April, 1930.

In the meantime, I resigned from the Beam and took a job with Warburton Franki in Bourke Street. Came the depression in 1932 and I was retrenched, but managed to get a job at Myers in the radio department. From there, I went to Oliver J. Nilson as a salesman and quite often acted as relieving engineer in the control room of 3UZ.

Then came the War.

Being a militia officer, I was appointed to 8th Division Signals and after training at Liverpool, Ingleburn, and Bathurst, left Sydney on the "Queen Mary" in February 1941, with the rank of Major in charge of a company of 200 men. We were billeted in Kuala Lumpur for 7 months, then transferred to Jahore Bahru until the fall of Singapore on 15 February, 1942.

Then followed three and a half years as a prisoner-of-war in Changi, but whilst there, I formed and was the O.C. of the original Changi Concert Party, which later proved to be a great morale booster for the troops. After three months, I was transferred to a working party of 8,000 Australians destined to repair an aerodrome at Tavoy, in Burma, and then to the infamous Burma-Siam railway where hundreds of our men died.

From the time I was liberated in August, 1945 until October that year, I was given the task of collecting evidence relating to atrocities committed by the Japanese for the War Crimes Tribunal. This job I completed in Bangkok by October 1945 and was then flown by Dakota to Singapore, thence to Melbourne by ship. I was appointed ship's Entertainment Officer which kept me busy on the way home.

On the Beam (Cont'd)

Needing time to settle down and find a job, I stayed on in the Army until December 1947, when I got a job as Secretary-Superintendent of the Freemasons' Homes of Victoria. Here I stayed for 20 years, during which time the number of residents rose from 32 to 360. Retiring in 1968, I then took a part-time job as office manager for a city real estate firm for the next seven years. Fully retiring in 1975, I settled down to a fairly quiet life until my wife suffered a massive stroke in November 1980 from which she died in March, 1981. I sold my home in Essendon and came to the Freemasons' Homes as a resident, where I hope to end my days. I am very happy and comfortable here and spend a lot of time helping in the office.

It was great to attend the 25th Annual General Meeting and to meet Eddie Turner, Norm Stubbs, Jean Edwards and of course, Charles Carthew again.

Reading through the Newsletter, I saw many familiar names, Alan Hosking, Roy Simmons, Ossie Jarman, George Apperley and A.F. Newman on page 3 and George Scott on page 5. I met George in Melbourne in June 1928, when he was on the "Canberra". There on page six was Wilf Atkin, from whom I recently received a welcome letter. It saddened me to learn of the death of Lou Sherburn. When my son, Raymond, was in Perth in 1959, he met Lou and his son, Gerald, and on my son's return to Melbourne, I took over and drove Gerald back to his home in Camberwell.

Page 13 - Arthur Stewart - In July 1940 the C.O. of 8th Division Sigs sent me to Seymour Camp to select 124 men out of about 200 who wanted to join our unit. I was pleasantly surprised to find that Arthur Stewart and Bill Heggie were among them. Bill was later transferred to 9th Division Signals, but Arthur stayed with us. It didn't take long for Arthur to get his three stripes, and later was promoted to Lieutenant. He was one of my officers when I was given the job of forming a new company, and naturally I selected Arthur for the W/T Section as O.C. We were both captured, separated during captivity, but met again at many of our reunions after the war.

Page 14, and there was Harry Rowe. Harry drove my wife and I to a Beam picnic at Ballen around the 1931 mark.

On page 16 was a request for reminiscences. I have tried to remember some of my old mates and hope these notes will be of interest to some.

I met quite a few Veterans at Alec Eickstadt's funeral many years ago, among them Bob Ingles and Jack Chalkley.

On page 19 was a list of "Hams" compiled by Bill Jenvey. Going back to 1923, I was a member of the Wireless Institute of Australia, with Geoff Steyne as Secretary and Howard Kingsley Love as President. Among the well-known "hams" of those days were Norm Culliver of East Melbourne, well-known for his Sunday morning musical broadcasts under the call sign of "Three Don Pip"

On the Beam (Cont'd)

also a chap named Maddocks, of Elwood, known as 3EF. The late Ross Hull, who died in USA was also well-known on the circuit.

On September 21, 1923, I listened to Jim Malone and John (later Sir John) Monash speak on the future of radio on 3DP. Morrie Israil and Tom Court were two other "hams" I recall.

I just hope that this article will bring back as many pleasant memories to other veterans as it has done for me.

Jim Jacobs

HOME VISITS TO VETERANS IN PERTH

George McDonald and Brian Morrell called on Arthur and Mrs Black who are now located in the Hollywood Senior Citizens Retirement Village, Nedlands, on the 9 March this year. George who has been retired about six years or so, and Arthur, talked over "old times" in Suva, where they were together some years ago. Both Arthur and his good wife looked fit and well.

Following the visit to Arthur, they went over to see Alan and Mrs Gilmore in Claremont. Alan was retired under the D/N scheme in 1932, just fifty years ago, and he was able to recall the early years in NZ at a cable station on the shores of Cable Baym adjacent to Auckland.

On the way back, they also decided to call in on Harold and Rose Burdett, both of whom have not enjoyed the best of health of late, but with the help of many good friends and an odd burst of good weather, they are comfortable at their Applecross home.

A HISTORY OF COCOS

Randy Payne writes that he bumped into Gavin Souter, who is on leave of absence from the Sydney Morning Herald for a year. Gavin is writing a book on the history of the Cocos Islands, and he came to see Randy recently to probe some aspects of Randy's experiences in Cocos.

It was mentioned to him that there were a lot of veterans whose experiences on Cocos go back a long time, (e.g. Reg Towner, Greg Gregory), and that it may be useful for him to come along at our next Veterans Reunion on Friday, 21 May. Approval has been given for Gavin Souter to attend the meeting, and we particularly ask that those veterans who have served on Cocos Island

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to also attend and assist Gavin with any information they may have.

STOP PRESS

VALE

It is with sorrow that we have learned of the sudden passing of L.T. (Les) Young on Thursday 8 April at home. Les had been one of the Coastwater heroes during WWII and was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal in recognition of his services.

Eric Russel Wickam who has been living in retirement on the Gold Coast for some years also passed away very suddenly at his home in Mid March.

We extend heartfelt sympathy to their widows and families from all old friends and colleagues.
