



NEWSLETTER

VOL. 2 PT 10

APRIL 1983

ANNUAL REUNIONS

NEW SOUTH WALES

AGM

FRIDAY, 20th May 1983

6 pm Conference Centre,
4th Floor, OTC House,
Martin Place, Sydney.

ANNUAL REUNION

FRIDAY, 25th Nov. 1983

6 pm Conference Centre,
4th Floor, OTC House,
Martin Place, Sydney.

VICTORIA

AGM

FRIDAY, 13th May 1983

Noon - 3 pm, OTC House,
Lonsdale Street,
Melbourne.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

AGM

THURSDAY, 9th June 1983

2.30 pm start, Royal Hotel,
Kent Town.

QUEENSLAND

AGM

WEDNESDAY, 11th May 1983

OTC Office, Brisbane
(Contact Manager for
further details).

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

AGM

TUESDAY, 29th Nov. 1983

Details from Brian Morrell.

O.T.V.A. N.S.W.
26TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION

The 26th Anniversary Reunion of the O.T.V.A. (N.S.W.) was held in the Staff Cafeteria, Hosking Place, on Friday, 10th December 1982, commencing at 6 pm.

Those present were:

Jim & Joyce Anderson, Ernie & Gladys Anthoney, Alan & Joan Arndt, Ces Bardwell, Ted & Marilyn Bastow, Ray & Joan Baty, Ron & Phyllis Beecham, Ted Bishton, Lou & Elgin Brown, Jack Burgess, Bill Chant (Snr.), Bill & Betty Chant, Bruce & Georgina Collett, Joe & Hazel Collister, Orme Cooper, Jack Creswick, John Creswick, Alf & Win Culloden, Gordon Cupit, Brian & Grace Darragh, Jack Davis, Geoff & Rita Day, Percy Day, Roy Doohan, Fred Doolette, Tony & Mary Ebert, Jack & Doreen Edwards, Peter & Billie Frost, Philip & Leona Geeves, Vince Gibson, Ron & Des Godfrey, Graham & Diana Gosewinckel, Lyle & Aileen Gowanlock, Betty Greenless, Albyn (AD) Gregory, Derek & Cynthia Hallam, Tony & Doreen Hanson, Edgar & Erica Harcourt, Norm Harris, Joe Hawkins, Barry Henson, John & Lyn Hodgson, Jan & Ken Howe, Tom Hughes, Col Jenkins, Fred Jenkins, Fred Keen, John & Addie Lee, Bill Luke, Gray MacDonald, Charlie & Gwen Maiden, George & Mary Maltby, Ron & Dorothy McDonald, Tom & Beryl Molloy, Kath Morgan, Ted O'Donnell, Keith & Loma Oxley, Randy & Dixie Payne, Charlie & Molly Raecke, Alf & Marjorie Ricketts, Len Rourke, Bill Sanders, Bill & Isobel Schmidt, George & Peg Schulze, Bob Scott (Canada), Norm Smith, Doug Temperley, Trevor & Phyl Thatcher, Gareth & Vere Thompson, Reg Towner, Bob & Beryl Turnbull, Roy Tully, Cyril & Maisie Vahtrick, Keith & Sadie Vincent, Charlie Watson, Russ Welbourne, Peter & Elva Whisson, Harold & Sonia White, Jack & Jean Whittaker, Des & Irene Woods.

Apologies were received from:-

A. Agius, J. Bevan, D. Bourne, R. Branson, C. Brophy, M. Casey, A. Cilia, M. Condon, J. Cowie, J. Curtis (Commissioner), C. Dalley, J. Davies, J. Doggett, N. Donohue, L. Doubleday, V. Dunlop, N. Giles, J. Greer, J. Guthrie, D. Hoare (Commissioner), N. Huntington, R. Imrie, A. Keenan, R. Knightley, V. Litchfield, D. Lloyd, N. Martin, B. MacSmith, A. McCollum, A. McIntyre, P. Meulman, R. Moyes, J. Mulholland, J. Newlyn, E. Norris, M. O'Hanlon, R. Osborn, J. Pattiniott, E. Payne (Commissioner), C. Pickford, M. Reid, A. Ritchie, D. Rogers, S. Stanfield, C. Swinney, A. Taylor, E. Thornley, J. Toland, J. Walker, K. Wilmot, G. Wheeler, A. Wood.

The meeting opened at 6 pm with a welcome from President Philip Geeves.

VIPs present were General Manager Bill Schmidt and his wife Isobel, Cyril Vahtrick and wife Maisie, and Harold White and his wife Sonia. Visiting from Canada was Bob Scott, who addressed the meeting later and made an announcement regarding a nostalgic trip he is considering organising to revisit Fanning Island.

Special Mentions

Ron Knightley retired the previous Friday (3rd December 1982) and, of course, registered an apology.

Norm Giles had had a stroke last year - we've only just found out.

John Mulholland is now under constant care and can only move slowly, even with the help of a walking frame, and Marjorie Reed, his long-time Secretary, registered an apology on his behalf.

Greetings were received from President Fred James and members (W.A.), President Brax Horrocks and Members (S.A.), Secretary Jim Banks and members (QLD), President Bill Shea from Victoria, Chairman Bill Craig and members of the Veteran Cablemen's Association of Auckland, and Harold le Quesne, Vice President Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe, Canada. Harold and his wife anticipate a visit to Sydney in November 1983.

Our President Philip gave the Committee a well done for the work performed over the year. He also announced that Keith Vincent has acceptance forms for the 1983 Wagga Weekend for those participating in the sports, or who are just going along rubber-knecking.

A one minute silence was observed for those members who had died since our last meeting,

Harry Sutherland

Dave Fleming

George Scott

(who died early November,
and was greatly missed at
the Queensland reunion.

On the Sick List Cyril Manning, who was not enjoying the best of health after a heart attack.

Bob Scott (Canada) was then invited to address the meeting, and he announced his intention to try and organise a Sentimental Journey back to Fanning Island. Bob has been good enough to give me correspondence relating to the matter and it will appear in this copy of the "NEWSLETTER".

At this stage the formalities were completed, and the President endeared himself to the dedicated drinking Veterans by declaring the bar open. Old acquaintances were renewed, old times recalled, and old friends pledged themselves to the next meeting, God willing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Once again the editor of the "NEWSLETTER" wishes to acknowledge articles received from contributors.

Mrs. G. R. Griffiths, (Labrador, QLD)

"Recorder"

Tom Hughes

Bob Scott (Canada)

Alan Vagg

John Lee

Some of these contributions will appear elsewhere in this copy of "NEWSLETTER" and some will be held over for future editions, mainly because of the space requirements, but my thanks to all for the interest shown, and to the other Veterans out there who must have something to contribute, please put it down now for posterity - don't forget, a lot of the history of early telecommunications will end with you, and that would be a great pity.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW - A BOUQUET

Among the material on my desk (which my wife, Joyce, refers to as Paper Re-cycle Unit No. 1), I was overjoyed to find a letter from the Chairman of the Commission, Mr. R. D. Somervaille. He writes,

Dear Editor,

Just a few words to say what a wonderful publication the November 1982 edition of the Newsletter was.

I look forward to news of the activities of the Vets. and this is a wonderful way to keep in touch.

Congratulations to you and to all your correspondents upon a marvellous job. The only thing I can say, apart from wishing you a very happy and healthy 1983, is to say "Keep up the good work".

With my best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

R. D. Somervaille.

A good magazine or newspaper is no better than its contributors, and we are fortunate to have so many. Gordon Cupit did the spade work for the birth of this publication and to him goes a lot of the credit. Lou Brown does more work behind the scenes than anyone can imagine, so with the co-operation I am receiving, the compilation of material is a lot easier than it must have been in the earlier days.

Sure it takes quite a deal of work and effort on the part of all concerned, including the contributors, without whose material the "NEWSLETTER" would fold up, but it all becomes worthwhile, Mr. Somervaille, when we receive expressed sentiments such as yours, and on behalf of Lou, Gordon, and the contributors, I thank you.

TELEGLOBE CANADA NEWS.

Suite 6 - 7163 Ash Crescent,
Vancouver, B.C., Canada.
V6P 3K6.
Nov/15/1982.

TELEGLOBE CANADA.

I wish to convey greetings from all members and wives of the Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe Canada (Western Chapter) to all members and wives of the Overseas Telecommunications Veterans' Association (N.S.W.) for a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR 1983, trusting you are all in relative good health.

I also want to thank you for your November 1982 Newsletter. I am continually amazed at the size of your newsletters; here in Canada's West Coast I struggle to get even a few pages of interest from our members.

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As I read your Newsletter, such names as C. Dalley, - C. Raecke, - C. Swinney, - J. Creswick, - R. Osborne, - and many others, take me back to the twenties when I worked at 261 George Street for the Pacific Cable Board. Of more recent vintage I had the pleasure of meeting Charles Carthew - Joe Collister - Gordon Cupit and others when my wife and I were visiting Sydney.

Your Newsletter will be distributed among the Australians now retired in British Columbia, Canada.

Some retired Australians from the Pacific Cable Board here in British Columbia may ring a bell to someone: Lawrence P. Crakanthorp - Johnnie Fisk - Donald L. Schutz, Percy Bailey - Bart. Fletcher - and, of course, Robert B. Scott, who, I understand will be with you at your banquet on December 10th.

My wife and I hope to spend yet another month at Manly next November/1983, and we hope to have time to meet with one or two old friends; in the meantime, the very best of Seasons Greetings to you and yours.

(Signed)

Harold H. LeQuesne.
Vice-President.

PARADISE REVISITED

Those Veterans who attended our Christmas bash in Sydney were fortunate to be addressed by Bob Scott, Canada, who gave a talk on a proposal he was looking into which could lead to a trip to Fanning Island, a station well known to many of our Cable veterans.

Most of us, no doubt, would have shrugged the old shoulders and said to ourselves "Ah..... well where do we start - who runs the joint now - don't suppose there's anything there now, anyway", and promptly put it into the too hard basket; but not Bob.

He got into the project, and on the following pages I am including letters Bob received which will be self-explanatory.

1175 Hewlett Place,
Victoria B.C. Canada,
V8S 4P6,
Tel. 604.598.3777

Martin Vitousek, PhD,
Director,
Pacific Equatorial Research Lab.,
Marine and Atmospheric Research,
University Hawaii,
2525 Correa Road,
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Dear Martin,

Many thanks for your very informative letter. I was pleasantly surprised to learn that it really would be possible to re-visit Fanning Island. I had thought it might be too much to expect.

I was there in 1922, just about sixty years ago!

I shall be flying from Los Angeles on 10th November on Air New Zealand flight 005, passing through Honolulu on my way to attend Veteran Cablemen's Annual Re-unions in New Zealand and Australia. I will convey the information contained in your letter to them and see what their reaction is.

Please let me know if the following plan would be feasible:

Fly by Air Tugaru from Honolulu to Christmas Island on the second Saturday in a month. You would fly us from Christmas to Fanning Island. I presume we would have to return to Honolulu by Air Tugaru flight either on the following Monday (2 days later) or the following Saturday (7 days later).

If you cannot fly more than two trips daily between Xmas and F.I. that would limit the party to ten persons. Perhaps individuals or small groups could make similar arrangements with you at some other date.

We would like to have a quick look around Xmas while there.

What would be the best month for such a visit?

In case you do not have time to reply to me in Victoria, (Mails are so unreliable these days), I will be in Sydney from 29th November to 20th December, staying at the Royal Private Hotel, 5 Hayes Street, Neutral Bay, Sydney N.S.W., so please send a copy of your reply to that address. I leave Sydney 20th Dec. on Air N.Z. flight 465, again passing through Honolulu.

Sincerely,

R. B. Scott.

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA

September 7, 1982.

Mr. R. B. Scott,
1173 Hewlett Pl.
Victoria, B.C.
CANADA. V8S-4P6

Dear Mr. Scott,

I can empathize fully with your desire for a sentimental visit to Fanning Island -- I spent a couple of relatively brief periods on the island (4 weeks the first time, and 5 weeks the second) in connection with two multi-disciplinary expeditions organized by scientists here at the university. I even had a one-day visit in 1951, when the Cable Station was still in operation; we anchored just off the station with the Research Vessel, Hugh M. Smith. I found the island extremely lovely, and would dearly like to go back myself. (The two expeditions collected a great deal of valuable data on fish, molluscs, coral, lagoon circulation, crabs, archaeology, and other subjects.)

We have a group at the Cable Station on Fanning at present; they are using the island as a base for a motor-sailer which is carrying out studies on equatorial currents. I had hoped to join them this past summer, but my duties here kept me from leaving.

As of this writing, there is some question whether the university can continue to support the upkeep of the Fanning Island lab at the old Cable Station. I hope something can be worked out, because it would be a great pity to close down such a potentially valuable site for atoll research.

I am passing your letter on to Dr. Martin Vitousek. Marty has almost single-handedly kept the facility on Fanning going, by hook or by crook, all these years. He is also the one to talk to about getting there; he flies his twin-engine aircraft into the strip which was put in just south of the Cable Station. Now that Christmas Island is on a regular air route, it is possible for Marty to ferry people across with relative ease. I'll let him tell you more about this.

My father, L. H. (Bill) Stroup, spent most of his life with the old Commercial Pacific Cable Company, so I grew up with cable, and on cable stations at places such as Guam and Midway. I'll always think that polished brass and varnished wood are far prettier than plastic and printed circuits!

With aloha,

Edward D. Stroup
Chairman,
Dept. of Oceanography

cc: Marty Vitousek

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA

September 23, 1982.

Mr. R. B. Scott,
1173 Hewlett Place,
Victoria, B.C.
Canada V8S-4P6

Dear Mr. Scott,

We would be very happy to have you visit the old Cable Station at Fanning which we now call the Pacific Equatorial Research Laboratory (PERL). We are using the old bachelors quarters as a hotel and can accommodate twelve there in double occupancy. We can accommodate more in some of the other buildings. (The bachelors quarters may be new to you - built about 1956).

I first called at Fanning on my yacht FIESTA in about 1954. I spent 18 months there in 1957-58 and finally arranged for the University to lease the station in 1966. We completed an airstrip about one mile south of PERL in 1972. I am now visiting PERL every month.

Air Tungaru, the national airline of the Republic of Kiribati (the old Gilbert Islands Colony) now flies from Honolulu to Christmas on Saturdays and from Tarawa to Christmas and on to Honolulu on Mondays (starting October 16). For your people from down under I think it is cheaper to fly through Honolulu. The present cost from Honolulu to Christmas and return is \$560 regular and \$480 for 21 days or less if purchased 30 days in advance. The airline uses a 727 jet.

From Christmas to Fanning I am providing a local feeder service using a six place (five passenger) Piper Aztec twin. This costs \$100 per round trip normally but if I have to make several trips to fly in a large party I have to charge \$150 per person per round trip since I must fly one way empty. We have an accommodation charge of \$20 per day per person and can supply meal service for an additional \$15 per day.

I normally go to Christmas and Fanning on the first Saturday of each month and return to Honolulu sixteen days later on a Monday. I could of course fly people out nine days after arrival to meet the Air Tungaru flight. I normally cannot fly more than two trips per day between Christmas and Fanning.

We would accommodate your party at any time but would like as much advance warning as possible to permit proper scheduling.

Sincerely,

Martin Vitousek, PhD
Director,
Pacific Equatorial Research
Laboratory
Fanning Island

cc: Dr. Stroup

GENERAL SECRETARY

Nominations closed in February 1983 for the above position at which time the only nomination for the position of General Secretary of the Veterans' Association of Australia was Charles Carthew, and was duly elected unopposed. Charles has held this position since its inception, and is also the Hon. Secretary of O.T.V.A. Victoria - foundation Hon. Secretary, at that.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

On behalf of all Veterans' Associations throughout Australia, the General Secretary, Charles Carthew, wishes to express, through the "NEWSLETTER", his sincere thanks to O.T.C.A. for the continued courtesies and kind co-operation he has received, particularly from General Manager, Bill Schmidt, and Commission management for permitting the use of O.T.C.A. property and facilities for functions and reciprocal representation at O.T.V.A.(A) reunions and for assistance given for the printing and distribution of April and October "NEWSLETTERS".

O.T.V.A.(A) is also grateful to the Eastern Extension and Associated Companies Retired Officers Society, Teleglobe Canada Quarter Century Club, U.K. Marconi Operators Society, Society of Wireless Pioneers of America, Cable & Wireless London, and O.T.C.A. for complimentary mailing lists - not forgetting the Retired Cablemen's Society of Auckland, N.Z.

MELBOURNE NOTES

In the early days of "Transit", Edgar Harcourt gave coverage of activity in the Melbourne Training School, and also the Melbourne Lunch Hour Discussion Group. Browsing through the scrap book, with notices pasted therein, it was quite nostalgic to find the names of trainees and speakers. Fortunately the minutes of the Discussion Group were preserved and sent to Head Office archives.

Just before C&W veteran, E. W. NEWELL died at the age of 93, our highly esteemed colleague entrusted several photograph albums to the care of General Secretary, Charles Carthew, in which many group photos of operators held pride of place along with living quarters, station apparatus and cable memorabilia generally. These albums were subsequently handed over to his son, Peter Newell, an architect and valuer, resident of Brisbane. Seven years later, Peter had occasion to visit Brunei and there made contact with the Muzium Brunei and presented these albums for inclusion in the archives there. A study of the career of the late E. W. Newell will explain just why the albums were so interesting and acceptable.

Joined Eastern	15/7/1902	at Flinders
Transferred about	1902	to La Perouse
"	"	1905 to Adelaide
"	"	1909 to Singapore
"	"	1910 to Labuan
"	"	1912 to Singapore
"	"	1913 to Adelaide
"	"	1916 to Melbourne
Retired	1932	in Melbourne

O.T.V.A. VICTORIA
26TH ANNUAL REUNION

The 26th Annual Reunion of the above body was held at O.T.C. House, Amenities Section, on Friday, 12th November 1982.

A small attendance of 37, with 26 apologies, was disappointing, but Veterans present still enjoyed the traditional atmosphere of good fellowship.

Popular Commissioner, Jack Curtis, came along and also represented Management. Veteran Ellis Smellie, recently returned from a trip to Italy and now almost totally blind, was very pleased to meet old colleagues once more. Mrs. Jean Edwards, nee Constable, was unable to attend owing to illness yet still remembered to send in a box of tasties in lieu of the traditional Reunion Cake.

The Minute of Silence observed in honour of, and as a tribute to, veteran colleagues who have passed on proved even more touching this year for we lost our President, the late Viv Molineux ... Queensland President, George Scott, died just a few days prior to their Annual Reunion. Here in Melbourne the late veteran, Frank Handley, and over in Sydney, the late veteran, Dave Fleming, passed on ... we mourn their loss.

For information relating to the Annual General Meeting of O.T.V.A. (Victoria) please see the front page of this "NEWSLETTER".

Remember, it's a daylight meeting ... and subs. are due.

NEWS AROUND AND ABOUT

Geoff Whitmore is home again after another overseas tour ... this time to China.

Bill & Nancy Ferguson are thrilled with their first grandchild - a girl

Vance Findlay recently completed another trip overseas, this time taking in Singapore, Bangkok, Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, Alaska, Canada, U.S.A. and Hawaii.

Deepest sympathy is extended to veteran colleague, Mervyn Fernando, on the sad passing of Alice, dear wife and life partner.

C&W Veteran, V.F.M. de Souza, San Francisco, has written asking the whereabouts of D. Murdoch, who served with him at Hong Kong, and prior to the war, corresponded with one another until he became a prisoner of war. Anyone able to assist please contact the General Secretary, Chas. Carthew. Mr. D. Murdoch retired in 1963.

Deepest sympathy is extended to Mrs. Merle Willington and family on the sad passing of Eric, after a long illness. Our late colleague joined Eastern Extension Cable Service in 1925, and transferred to O.T.C.A. in 1949, retiring in 1963.

Melbourne Staff Officer, Vance Findlay, and General Secretary, Charles Carthew, visited Norm Seabrook on Christmas Eve at the Kingston Centre where Norm has been hospitalised for over 17 years. Norm wishes to be remembered to colleagues of days gone by and mentioned celebrating his Golden Wedding in November. Our congratulations to Norm and Winnie were warmly acknowledged.

Veteran, Jack Turnbull, ex Eastern, Canada, and now 94 years of age, recently suffered a heart attack and is now hospitalised at Sheraton Nursing Centre, 374 Nepean Highway, Frankston, 3199 ... in the early days Jack came along to the Melbourne reunion functions but has always kept in touch with General Secretary, Charles Carthew, and also Bill Craig, President of the New Zealand Cablemen's Association in Auckland. Jack's history card reads : Southport 2.5 years, Double Bay N.Z. 3 years, Suva 4 years, Fanning Island 2.5 years, Auckland 4 years, Sydney 2 years, Bamfield 8 years.

Hearty congratulations to veteran Phil Little and his wife and life partner, Ivy, on the happy occasion of their Golden Wedding to be celebrated on 6th May 1983.

Roley Lane has decided to settle up Queensland way and will meet up with veteran colleagues already there ... his address is:
C/- P.O. Woodgate, 4660.
Phone (071) 268767.

Deepest sympathy is extended to the McGinley family on the sad passing of Hazel, widow of our late colleague, Jack McGinley.

Our sympathy, also, to veteran Jim Robinson on the sad passing of his mother early in the New Year.

Guye and Jean Russell enjoyed their 3rd trip overseas since retirement - this time Hong Kong.

Treasurer Dennis Chambers recently hospitalised for removal of kidney stones.

On a tropical Aussie tour octogenarian veteran Frank Patrick called in on Cairns - Mt. Isa - Darwin - Wyndham and Derby.

Popular lady veteran Shirley Alexander to retire next June and very best wishes extended for good health and happiness in the years ahead.

Out walking one day, General Secretary, Charles Carethew, met another retired near neighbour and stopped for a yarn and, by a coincidence, Jim Williamson had suffered a stroke some time back and spent five years as a patient in the Kingston Centre where he became friendly with our veteran colleague Norm Seabrook - a small world indeed.

NEWS FROM OVERSEAS

Veteran H. E. Solomon reports, quote:

"It is with a heavy heart that I write these last words after serving you as Secretary for about three quarters of the life time of the Marconi (Transoceanic) Guild. When the Guild was born in 1952 few responsible for its creation would have envisaged a continuing active life into the eighties. Some 31 Annual Reunion Dinners or luncheons, and several Autumn Buffet 'get-togethers' were thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. We will, I am sure, wish to gather together in the future by supporting the Annual Reunion lunches of the Cable & Wireless Retired Officers' Association. Their next function will take place on Saturday, 16th April 1983, in Mercury House. I hope to attend and look forward to meeting many of you there.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to our last President, Harry Gibbs, who passed away on 22nd September 1982. Harry was always keen to help and attended all our Committee meetings after his appointment as President. Whenever Marconi men meet we shall remember him, together with all our colleagues who have passed on. We shall remember them with pride, knowing the tradition of service they represented. My very best wishes to all whom it was my privilege to serve." Unquote.

Veteran Solomon then went on to say that the "winding up" funds of the Guild amounted to 150 pounds and was donated to the Post Office and Civil Service Sanatorium Society Hospital, the Benenden Chest Hospital.

Over the years the General Secretary has maintained friendly liaison with "Solly" and always sent fraternal greetings on the occasions of their functions.

VETERAN CABLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION - AUCKLAND

Bill Craig, Chairman of the Veteran Cablemen's Association writes:-

"The Annual Reunion was held on Thursday, 25th November 1982. We had our annual gathering - this time a luncheon at our most popular restaurant on the slopes of Mt. Eden in the centre of Auckland. Of the original PCB staff only ten were able to make it while seven were unable to come along for various reasons. When one considers the luncheon, the others were from C&W, Eastern, P.O. chaps who joined the cable station, and Telcoms.

Had a letter from a firm of solicitors who are looking after Jack Turnbull's interests, as Jack had been removed to hospital. 'Twas a pity he was living by himself for so many years, and the long years spent making a daily pilgrimage over to hospital must have been a great strain, both mentally and physically. However, he must be about 94 now and there are few of us privileged to reach that ripe old age.

Sorry to hear that Viv Molineux passed away - unfortunately I missed him when I was last over in Melbourne - he was tied up with a bowling tournament.

With a bit of luck I hope to get over to this Telcom reunion about Eastertime and I have a few odds and ends which might fill a page in the museum history. About ten NZ Telcoms with their wives expect to make the trip and if Randy Payne can locate the Aussie contingent, the attendance might be around 50.

A correspondent in Boston sent a cutting about the Wake Atoll. During my spells at Fanning Island we had no "Hams" on the cable staff. During the first spell there, (1919/21) there was only a morse set with limited range and during the second term we were under war conditions most of the time, (1939/40). Perhaps one of your hams might be interested in this chap's plea.

Have had a very early summer and am looking forward to the swimming and bathing for the next few months. Sold my old Falcon and bought a light Ford Laser to avoid costly repairs and get around more economically.

Have a good festive season.

Sincerely,

Bill Craig.

Information needed on Wake Atoll history

FRANK P. NOLLETTE, SMSGT,
USAF, KH6TX/9
PSC Box No. 1111
SCOTT AFB, IL 62225

REQUIRES:-

Any information relating to the Wake Atoll (composed of Wake, Wilkes, and Peale Islands) will be welcomed by the person listed above. Due credit for information will be given in the ultimate history (from 1539 to present), plus a series of articles on Amateur Radio in the Pacific. If any of our Veterans who have served in the area can assist please write to the above address.

MORE NEWS FROM N.Z.

Bill Craig writes:-

"On behalf of the New Zealand Veterans, I want to thank you for sending us the O.T.V.A. "NEWSLETTER". I can assure you that it is read with great interest by all our members and then discussed at length when old friends meet - unfortunately sometimes around a hospital bed. My copy is usually passed on to Jack Woodall (PCB) in Montreal.

There is some prospect of Telcom gathering in Sydney next year and if that eventuates I shall probably attach myself to the party. Unfortunately we have lost Harry Colliver and the leader from the U.K., Bob Russell, two sterling fellows with whom it was a joy to work. These Telcom "lads" are now just about the retiring age, and, in fact, a few have already retired.

I regret to advise that Colin Cotter died in March 1982, and Mrs. Alma Henry ("Holy's" widow) in June.

Early in May, Reggie Langford, the last recruit to join the PCB in Auckland, passed away. We extend our sympathy to all relatives.

Other veterans seem to be faring the same as usual. Huia Evetts has moved to a smaller home in the same street. In the middle of November we expect a visit from Robert Bruce Scott of Vancouver, and I hope to gather together some of his old PCB friends on the 12th whilst he is in Auckland.

There is a move to have a gathering in Sydney of Telcoms who went to Colombo and other points in 1945. Denis Erson has forwarded a questionnaire regarding the meeting next Easter, to Telcoms whose addresses are known.

SECRETARY'S MEMO. Subscriptions.

It would be appreciated if members forward their Annual Subscription (\$1) for the year ended 30.11.83 to the Hon. Secretary, F. C. Studman, 829 Riddell Road, St. Heliers, Auckland 5. Lunch charges at the table.

Vale Roy Hosking one of the best known PCB members who joined the Board at Auckland about 1914/15. He was in his 84th year.

The Telcom reunion seems to be gathering momentum and the dates are April 9th and 10th. About nine chaps and their wives will be leaving Auckland on Thursday 7th and Fulton and myself will be travelling solo. With the Aussie contingent there should be about 50 fellows and wives present. We have lost contact with some of these and they may turn up later. Randy Payne seems to have everything well in hand. Some of the Telcoms have already retired, which fact makes me feel real old and dodderly. However, I am looking forward to a good week in Sydney and hope to be able to leave a few old relics with the O.T.C. museum and records. Will welcome the chance to meet some of the older hands, Gregory ('94), Claude Dally, etc.

A Mrs. Curry of London is writing a biography of her father K. C. Cox who was with the PCB for many years. Cox produced many inventions which enhanced the working of the old system - one particular invention was the selenium magnifier one of which is now in the Royal Science Museum, London. He was a decent sort of chap who greatly contributed to the good record the PCB had. His transmitters were efficient but would have been more reliable had he used a phonic motor with a mercury flywheel. Someone invented that later on.

Chins,

Bill Craig.

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND TELCOM REUNION
"CLASS OF '44"

After several months of planning on both sides of the Tasman, there is to be a reunion of the Australia/New Zealand TELCOM group in Sydney over the weekend of 9-10 April 1983.

The TELCOM group was made up of Cable and Wireless staff, mainly from Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. They served as a special unit of the British Army during 1945 and 1946 in the Far East zone.

Most of the Australians and New Zealanders were youths of 17 and 18 years old, some 45 of whom were trained in 1944 in Adelaide and Auckland in cable and radio operations before being shipped off to Sri Lanka to join the British Army in early 1945. Their teams leaders were Harry Colliver (Australia) and Bill Craig (New Zealand).

All members of TELCOM were given a lieutenant's rank and their main tasks were to man mobile radio units for the handling of war correspondents' traffic, to take over and operate cable stations recaptured from the Japanese and to handle messages from freed prisoners of war and internees.

One of their most-publicised mobile units was the "press ship", a converted landing craft (LCIL) which was packed with radio equipment and was the first ship to tie up at the Singapore docks after the Japanese surrender. Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Commander of South-East Asian Forces, took a personal interest in the "press ship" and other TELCOM activities.

As the Japanese retreated and subsequently surrendered, TELCOM units moved in teams from their bases in Sri Lanka and India to numerous areas including Rangoon, Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Singapore, Surabaya, Djakarta (Batavia), Bali, and Hong Kong.

For the young men concerned, they were exciting days. A great deal of camaraderie developed among the TELCOM teams and even though most left the world of international telecommunications in subsequent years, many continued to stay in contact. As a result, some 24 Australians and New Zealanders out of the original contingent of some 45 will be attending the reunion. Among them will be Bill Craig, now in his 80s, who was the New Zealand contingent's team leader.

The names of those attending the reunion are:

New Zealand
Bill Craig
Grant Campbell
Peter Cowlshaw
Denis Erson
Dick Fray
Mike Fulton
Robin McDiarmid
David Thompson
John Todd
John Walker
Brian Wallace

Australia
Ken Banks
Roger Bardwell
Joyce Bell (widow of Dick Bell)
Ray Berry
Ken Clark
John Coles
Ken Collett
Geoff Cox
Heb Farrar
Bruce Gall
Ted Gunning
Brian Morrell
Randy Payne

United Kingdom - Sheila Shepherd
(wife of Tom Shepherd)

FROM OUR MAN IN THE WEST - BRIAN MORRELL

Brian has sent along a message of long distance recorder signals with the object of seeing if reading Cable code is just like riding a bike - once learned, never forgotten.

Being an old Morse undulator reader, and therefore not up on Cable code, my first impression was that either Perth had topped a 6 on the Richter scale, or that Brian had had a recent electrocardiograph and was seeking a second opinion from us.

He also writes:-

"I will get around to the Minutes, Reports, etc. sometime. Derek Walker is our new President, and you couldn't guess who 'copped' the job as Hon. Secretary/Treasurer - just in case there is any doubt, by a narrow margin I got the job again. Still it is terrific to see the response with the new set-up and I only hope it can continue.

OUR 1983 REUNION HAS BEEN FIXED FOR

TUESDAY, 29TH NOVEMBER 1983,
COOLABAH TAVERN, MORLEY
(Same as the 82 function)

Yours fraternally,

Brian D. Morrell

Our best wishes for a successful function, Brian.

Lou and Jim.

Vale H. J. (Harry) Hicks

We regret to announce the death of Harry Hicks (MBE) in Royal Brisbane Hospital on 9th March 1983 after an illness of approximately one month. Harry, who had been living in retirement near Cairns served with Coast Radio Service in a number of areas, will long be remembered for his lengthy stay (something like 14 years) on Willis Island.

H. N. (Harry) Burdett

We regret to announce the death of Harry Burdett on Sunday 27th March after a long illness. Harry who was an Eastern Extension veteran served for more than 50 years, most of which was spent in Adelaide, although his last few years of service covered Perth and Cottesloe from whence he retired in 1976.

O.T.V.A. SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH
CHRISTMAS MEETING 1982

The Adelaide Branch of the O.T.V.A. held its Christmas meeting at the home of Brax Horrocks on November 25th. We now meet in the afternoon and luckily it was a pleasant day so were able to be outside under the patio.

Those present were:-

Ken Springbett, Eric Symes, John Chancellor, Geoff Cox, Randy Payne, Charles Smith, Cliff Birks, Norm Mackay, Max Lang, Hugh Taylor, Keith Parker, L. Reynolds, George Rowe, Brax Horrocks, Ron Ward, Fred Reeve, Harold Oates, Bert Dudley, Bill Hyde and Ken Collett.

Apologies were received from Rocky Gordon, Ralph Matthews, Claud Whitford and Keith Cox.

We were honoured by having Randy Payne as a visitor, and as usual, with little persuasion, he gave one of his most interesting talks. He also conducted the business part of our meeting when President Brax Horrocks and Secretary, Bert Dudley, were re-elected.

Fraternal greetings were received from Charles Carthew, Geoff Day, Bert (H. J.) Edwards, Lou Brown, and from our Sydney, Queensland, and Perth branches.

Our winter meeting is to be held

THURSDAY, 9TH JUNE
ROYAL HOTEL, KENT TOWN
starting at 2.30 pm

NEWS FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Brax Horrocks, President of the O.T.V.A. South Australian Branch (newly elected) is a prolific writer, and, incidentally, one of your editor's favourite Crow-eaters.

He has (Gawd luv 'im) sent me a poem about a certain Divisional Manager which expresses the complete lack of appreciation of the bloke's existence, and in terms that are no doubt accurate but, in their present form, could be considered unprintable. Lou and I are devoting some time as to suitable presentation, so the ode will not be lost to posterity. From Brax's report it appears that many veterans and officers employed by C&W suffered at the hands of the Divisional Manager concerned. Have I stimulated C&W veterans' curiosity in any way? Who is the culprit, do I hear you say? The only clue I can give you as to his identity is that if this feller had joined the police force he would have been given an assistant named Watson - otherwise I am sworn to secrecy at this stage.

Be of good heart, Brax Horrocks if there is a way I will find it.
Ando.

Brax also writes:

"When I was at our Christmas meeting, I mentioned to Randy Payne that there had been an "inaugural" meeting of Presidents of the Veterans' Association in Sydney in May 1978 (ref. 'Transit' of about June that year). At that time, it was agreed by the Management of the O.T.C. that such meetings would, if possible, be held each alternate year, but nil heard since. Wouldn't it be nice if this was out there, we would appreciate thoughts on the matter."

Since that time, we are pleased to report, Brax has received a letter from Merv Gildea who says it is too late for 1983, but it is hoped to arrange one for 1984.

Brax has also included an article engendered from reminiscing with Bruce Sutherland during his visit to Adelaide last year. I have included it in this issue under the heading, "MEMORIES".

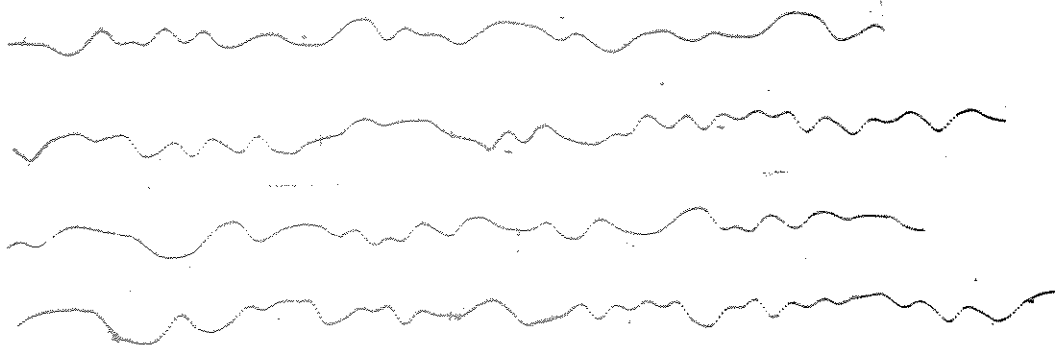
MEMORIES.

By Brax Horrocks.

When Bruce Sutherland and I were reminiscing during his visit to Adelaide last year, we decided to write something about our early days in the cable service as we felt that time was running out more than somewhat quickly for both of us, and it seemed a good idea to record a few of the things we remember before it became too late.

When we joined the Eastern Extension Company in 1921 as probationer operators, there was no automatic receiving equipment for use with submarine cables. At that time only siphon recorders were used with a vibrating glass siphon, attached to the moving coil, recording incoming signals in ink on a moving tape. Morse code was used, but dots and dashes were the same length, negative to line recording a dot, and positive a dash. At the receiving end dots were recorded above the neutral (no current) line, and dashes below.

Skill and much practice were needed to read such signals, especially those from the longer cables. Shown hereunder is a specimen of siphon recorder signals from the La Perouse to Wellington cable.



Translation: MANY OF THEM MOVE
 BURY IS CONCERNED
 THOUSAND POUNDS
 HOWEVER IT REPRESENTS

At least 80% of words transmitted in those days were in ten-letter code and one had to be experienced to avoid misreading the number of dots or dashes of each letter. It certainly paid one to be careful, for about once a month there was a "Clearing House" day when every word sent and received was checked for accuracy. Any operator who made more than one letter error in every 1000 words lost his promotion for a year. This was particularly hard on those who worked, sometimes for long hours, in poor light, in such places as Darwin, for in those days the town electricity supply shut down at midnight and we had to make do with tiny 32 volt "Fairy lights" until dawn.

Bruce and I were in Darwin together in 1925-6. From memory at least half of the operators (including myself) received no promotion for those two years. Even though the yearly increment was then only about 14 pounds, it was hard missing out on the few extra shillings each week, only when some years later I passed examinations and became a Supervisor did I eventually "Catch up".

Although we had little money, we enjoyed our time in Darwin. For most of our term we lived in quarters which were in the same building as the office. There was a billiard table and in the grounds a cement tennis court. We made good use of both.

Occasionally we went duck shooting with Roy Edwards or Jack Finlayson. Roy was the proud owner of a "T model" Ford, and Jack had a very early model Renault. Many a time we literally filled the back-seat section of the car with duck and pigmy-geese. In the wet season we played football, and some of us played cricket on Saturdays in the dry - except of course when we happened to be on duty.

It was in May 1925 that five of us, Moss Hart, Ted Jacobs, George McKittrick, Bruce Sutherland, and I scraped up enough pennies to buy an old 12-foot motor-boat which we named the "Exile". This broke down occasionally so we had plenty of exercise in rowing home, but it was all good fun. One of our favourite picnic spots was Shell Island in the middle of the harbour, and occasionally we spent a weekend at the Quarantine Station island, which was unoccupied during our time.

At the end of two years I returned South on the "Marella" but Bruce and Ted Jacobs rode their "Indian Scout" motor bikes the 3,000 odd miles to Adelaide via Sydney - there was an article about that epic trip in 'Transit' of August 1976.

Bruce and I were then stationed in Adelaide for a few years. He was an outstanding lacrosse player and was in the top interstate South Australian team for several seasons.

The Adelaide branch of the Company had a very active sports club and the competition to have one's name placed on the Championship board was very keen. We had some top class players in many fields and I recall outstanding performances by Keith and Aubrey Barnes (swimming), Lance Leak (football), Arthur Shepherd (tennis), Harry Crawley (bowls), and so on. I don't know what became of this board when the Adelaide office closed, if it could be found it would be worth having the names on it photographed for OTVA records".

NO CREDIT UNION ?

By John Lee.

He was one of that younger breed of veterans who always look so disgustingly healthy. Yet he must have been fifty - his voice had broken.

"Tell me", he said, "How did you Old Codgers manage before we had Credit Union?"

The O.C. refurbished his spectacles, retuned his hearing aid and re-aligned his truss.

"Laddie" he replied, "your question is best answered by repeating a tale told by the late Cyril Swinbourn, who, like the rest of us, must have experienced periods of financial stringency. Let's see if we can recall the tale in Cyril's words.

'Shortly after World War I five young blokes were living in a Milson's Point boarding house, long since demolished to make way for the bridge approaches. We were all bachelors, all employed as operators (I.T.O.s) at the Eastern Extension Telegraph company's office in O'Connell Street, Sydney. Father Eastern paid our salaries once a month. For the first week after pay-day we lived like lords. The second week a touch of caution curbed our spending. The third week was economy all the way and the fourth week we were inevitably stony motherless broke.

Regularly at the beginning of the fourth week it became necessary to pay a visit to the local pawnshop. Each of us possessed a dinner suit, without which one couldn't lead a satisfactory social life in those days. One of our number had a handsome leather suit-case. It was the accepted rule that whoever was off-duty during the morning of the day of reckoning would pack the five dinner suits into the suit-case and call upon "Uncle" at the pawnshop in Mount Street. "Uncle" would accept the suit-case and glad rags as collateral and pass over five pounds. The fiver would tide us over for a week covering lunches, tram fares and the odd beer.

On pay-day one of our number would march up the hill with five pounds plus five shillings interest and redeem our dinner suits putting us back into social circulation once more. I noticed that after several visits "Uncle" would greet me with, "the usual, Mr. Swinbourn?" and pass over five pounds without examining the contents of the suit-case. I often wondered whether the suit-case full of newspapers with a couple of bricks to make weight would have produced the fiver, but that would have been breaking faith and I never tried it."

RECOLLECTIONS 1920-1960

By R. B. Scott.

There may be those in Teleglobe and other telecommunication systems who are not familiar with the foundations laid by the pioneers of overseas telecommunications - the cable operators. Modern electronic technicians, although performing essentially the same service of enabling the public to communicate, are not so personally involved as were the cable operators.

They lived, worked, slept and ate in the same buildings on isolated stations for years, learning the strengths and weaknesses of each other. This engendered an esprit de corps which modern conditions cannot duplicate.

The following series of articles is offered as a typical example of the life and work of the pioneers.

Big things hang on slender threads

At age fifteen I was earning 15/- a week as an office boy in Sydney, Australia. One day an advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper attracted my attention. It read: "Wanted, boys 15 years of age to learn Submarine Telegraphy." This intrigued me so I asked my friend, who was an apprentice in the Amalgamated Wireless Association (later to become the Beam Wireless) what he thought it meant.

"That's the latest way of communicating between submarines," he said. Intrigued even more, I decided to apply for the job. I learned that Submarine Telegraphy meant underwater cable telegraphy. If accepted I would serve as office boy in Sydney for about twelve months before being sent to the Southport Cable Station in Queensland, where I would be trained as a cable operator.

I was accepted and began work in the old Pitt Street office of the Pacific Cable Board, which was owned and operated by the Imperial and Commonwealth governments. My duties consisted mainly of making up the various forms upon which the received messages were typed. The forms had varying numbers of carbons for copies, some, like the press messages, requiring about a dozen carbons.

There were always about four boys making up 'carbons' as they awaited their turn to go to the training school in Southport. While they waited they advanced up the clerical scale to 'States Division', the most important position, where all traffic was distributed. The city messages were delivered by P.C.B. messengers, while suburban, country and interstate messages were sent to the post office, about four blocks away, by underground forced-air tube, a system still used by some department stores in London.

'Carbons' was a monotonous job - not at all like the romantic occupation I had imagined. I stood it for about two weeks and then, one Saturday afternoon, as I watched from the office window the crowds of people streaming down Pitt Street towards the ferries and an afternoon on Sydney beaches, I decided to quit the job. That was the last straw! Everyone else had Saturday afternoon off while we had to work eight hours a day, six days a week!

The following Monday I went upstairs to the Superintendent's office to resign, but he was out. I went back several times that day but he was out each time. By the next day I had cooled off and decided to 'give it another go,' as they say in Australia.

And so I remained in the service the rest of my working life - forty years.

Next episode: Southport Training School

ROEBOURNERADIO (VIZ) REVISITED

By. G. T. (Tom) Hughes.

In the Newsletter for October 1979 (Vol. 2 Pt 3) was published my story of 'the Coastal Radio Station that almost never was' - Roebourneradio.

The concluding paragraph of that story was "I wonder can anyone vouch for this story? What happened to the station building? If it was as solid as the other radio station, it would still be there. And was Hamilton B. Wolfe among the staff of that ill-fated station, or was it Charlie Lemmon?"

I can now confirm that it was Hamilton B. Wolfe who told me the story, that VIZ did exist and indeed that the original station building is easily recognisable in Mundumia Way, Roebourne, opposite the caravan park.

How do I know? It was really rather easy. First of all, Phil Chapman, before he retired, confirmed from old CRS records, that Wolfie had been one of the staff at VIZ in the pre-World War I days; second, that Charlie Lemmon had never been at VIZ. So, it must have been Wolfie who told me the story.

Third, "I shot an arrow into the air". I didn't know what the local government authority in the Roebourne area was called but I wrote to the "Secretary, Roads Board, Roebourne, W.A.". After a short delay I received a most helpful reply from Mr. F. Gow, Shire Clerk, Shire of Roebourne enclosing photos of the building (it is the spitting image of VIN Geraldton, VII Thursday Island, the old station VIO Broome (now a Bowling Club, I believe) and the ill-fated VIO Darwin, about which I wrote in the April 1981 Newsletter).

My recollection being thus corroborated, I am confident that, allowing perhaps a bit of latitude for Wolfie's poetic licence, his story as I re-told it was basically true. And because he didn't say who did it, I still suspect it was Wolfie who mucked up the station's one and only paid telegram.

(EXTRACTS FROM WIRELESS WEEKLY ARTICLES DATED 1923.)

Joe Reed.

Mr. Joe Reed, the well-known wireless expert of Amalgamated Wireless Ltd. has become a member of the American Radio Relay League.

Hams

There are many experimenters who are not interested in wireless telephony except in a casual manner - large numbers of leading experimenters are not at all anxious of receiving telephony realising that it is a pleasant pastime, but that its practical value to them is not great - regarded from the view of the genuine experimenter it is of casual interest only. The recently formed Relay League realised this and its members recognise that if they are to become an asset to the country they must concentrate their efforts on continuous wave telegraphy.

Mr. Norman S. Odgers, Charters Towers, Queensland, writes stating the 2CM comes in strongly on one valve. Last Sunday he heard 5BG - Mr. Cooper - Adelaide - calling 2CM, after he had finished his usual Sunday nights transmission.

Coastal Radio Service

C. M. Urquhart, radio telegraphist, Broome Radio Station, transferred to Wyndham Radio Station as radio telegraphist in charge.

R. C. Anderson, radio telegraphist, Wyndham transferred to Perth Radio.

E. J. Roberts, radio mechanic, Wyndham Radio, transferred to Perth Radio, on completion of tropical service.

D. Bowles, radio mechanic, Brisbane Radio, transferred to Sydney Radio.

A. P. Hosking, radio telegraphist, Melbourne Radio, transferred to Broadcasting Dept. at Melbourne.

J. M. Johnson, radio telegraphist, Adelaide Radio to Engineering Dept. at Sydney.

J. G. Cookson, radio mechanic, Sydney Radio, to Broadcasting Dept. at Sydney.

High Speed

In tests recently conducted between the Majestic and a shore station a speed of 80 words a minute was attained by the use of sending and receiving machine, and was shown to be practicable for commercial use. Some idea of what this means may be gained from the fact that it is virtually impossible to maintain a speed higher than 25 words a minute when messages are transmitted and received by hand.

Coastal Radio Service - staff changes

E. J. O'Donnell, radio telegraphist Melbourne Radio has been transferred to Adelaide Radio.

A. R. Finch, rigger, on completion of overhaul of mast and aerial at Sydney Radio Station to proceed to Cooktown Radio to overhaul the mast at that station.

Outside the law

Radio has fallen into disgrace with the Prohibition folk, for it has shamelessly joined hands with the bootleggers. Somewhere in Canada, over the boundary line and well hidden away, is a very powerful transmitting station. Also in many towns and cities are concealed sensitive receiving stations. Both are part of a 'ring', the sending station being headquarters, and instead of using the telephone as formerly, the illicit purveyors of liquor (it is rum in this case) report by radio direct. Time and location are signalled as soon as the 'runner' has paid for his protection, and then broadcasted at once, so that it is possible for him to get through without any hitch by travelling as per radio schedule.

Marconi's recent work

In a statement issued to the press on his arrival at Southampton, on board his yacht, "Electra", recently Senator Marconi said that during the two months he had been away on his research cruise he has been working all the time on the system of directive wireless telegraphy by which a message could be sent in one direction only, and he was delighted to say that experiments had proved highly satisfactory. The apparatus with which he had been working was the only installation of its type, but it was likely to come into universal use in the future. The results he had obtained proved that communication could be maintained over long distances. The new system, said the Senator, effectively eliminated atmospheric disturbances, and he might say that he had experienced no trouble of that sort during the whole of his two months' research. The course of the trip was roughly 2200 miles, or the distance from England to Canada.

THE NIGHT THE BEER RAN OUT

By John Lee.

That redoubtable character, Joe Nevitt, was given to remarking that it was strange how one could work with a chap for years and never realise what he did in his private life. Joe would tell this tale to emphasise his point.

Following the amalgamation of the Pacific Cable Board and the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company around 1930 (give or take a few years) it was decided that a staff dance would improve relations at Spring Street. A hall was booked, and orchestra engaged and there we were demonstrating our fancy foot-work.

It must have been a hot night for after a couple of hours of to-and-froing the whispered word went round that the beer had run out. Those were the days of six o'clock closing and we stood around in groups pondering the situation, one that seemed insurmountable.

We had on the staff, one, Bill Crowley, whose job was designated mechanic. I suppose he was the forerunner of the modern technician. Bill had been born and bred in Wollomooloo and knew his way around. Waiting his chance to get Joe Nevitt's ear, Bill sidled up and mentioned that if money and transport could be arranged, he could procure beer from the Sly Grog in the 'Loo.

Joe was never one to hesitate when the solution to a crisis was offered. The hat was quickly passed around to fund the expedition and with Joe at the wheel of his trusty roadster, Bill beside him as navigator and a couple of us in the back for moral support, we set off for the 'Loo.

With Bill scanning the streets for cops we drove slowly past the pub on the corner, which was in darkness. At the adjoining house Bill motioned Joe to the kerb and taking the money, said, "Wait here". He tapped on the door of the house and was admitted. The door closed after him. We waited, wondering. Joe sighed from time to time, possibly contemplating arrest.

After a short time Bill emerged with a sack over his shoulder. He passed the sack, which was emitting the sweet music of full bottles jostling one another, to the back seat blokes and said to Joe, "Step on it, Joe."

Before doing so Joe cocked a thumb at the house and enquired, "Who lives there?"
Bill's answer couldn't have been shorter, "We do."

GOLF - Old Suva Links

"Recorder"

One of the advantages (or disadvantages) of working on a cable station was that it had to be kept open twenty-four hours every day. In tropical stations this usually meant that the day was divided into four watches of about six hours each. One would be on the same watch for a whole week - an arrangement which was very convenient if one wished to participate in any sporting activities. For instance, with all the mornings free it was possible to enjoy several rounds of golf at times when there would be very few other people playing. Thus there would be no need to scramble up at an early hour as at weekends, and rush along to the club to join the queue of prospective players and then hang around for an hour or so 'ere one could tee off. On weekday mornings it was possible to start right away and there was no need to hurry along as there would be only a small number on the course.

The old golf course in Suva was right up Waimanu Road past the hospital and it had many features which made it unique and at times exceedingly exasperating. Some of the holes were blind - one had to drive the ball off the tee over a hillock and only when one climbed up the hill could the green be seen. Therefore it was essential to have a fore-boy - usually a young Indian lad - and he would take up a stance over the hillock to pinpoint the ball as it came to rest. With the heavy rainfall in the Suva district, the fairway was frequently sodden in the little depressions and a lofted ball would sink in the mud until it was almost out of sight. Occasionally one would have an unscrupulous fore-boy who would further depress the ball, 'ere one climbed the hill, until it disappeared entirely in the swampy fairway. When the player appeared, the boy would claim that he couldn't find the ball. On two occasions, the fore-boy assisting my opponent gave the show away and I had to chase the offending boy off the course and return to the club house for a more reputable lad.

Because of the heavy rainfall, the course was not suitable for grazing sheep but a local milk supplier made full use of the course to graze his cows during the week. At weekends the cows were placed elsewhere. Besides being beefy, physical obstacles, these animals caused other embarrassments. Not infrequently, the ball would land in the middle of cow droppings and the Indian fore-boy would be obliged to clean it before one took the next shot.

In those days all the club shafts were hickory and with the damp humid climate, I have known the wooden club-head to become unstuck and leave the shaft and almost follow the ball, though still perilously attached to the shaft by a long length of uncoiling binding cord.

Here and there near the fairway there would be a close covering of Mimosa sensitive plant - patches of almost half an acre in extent. This mimosa was very useful when a ball was hit into the rough, as the leaves would fold up on contact with the ball and, provided one trod carefully, the track of folded leaves would lead one to the missing ball. Incidentally the mimosa extended on to the fairway as well. The cows seemed to like eating the young shoots, although I think it gave them mouth sores. The mimosa was not much help when a ball was really lost, as the leaves seemed to revert to their normal outspread condition after a few minutes. The Golf Club had formulated rules and regulations covering every possible situation on this unconventional course.

One of the most unusual shots I ever played, occurred on these old Suva links. Although the course was used for grazing cows on weekdays, they seldom caused any trouble on the greens. Maybe the grass on the greens was too short as they were the only part of the course that was moved. Indians or Fijians wielding machetes would be employed to keep the longer grass on the fairways in a reasonable condition.

On a lovely cool morning I was teed up on the second tee (incidentally all the players used sand tees) and just casually noticed a cow about twenty yards away busily engaged in chewing the long grass on the fairway. As I drove the ball, the cow raised her head and the ball went straight into the animal's ear. All hell broke loose as the crazed animal let out a loud bellow and frantically shook its head to dislodge the ball, but it remained firmly implanted. Dashing madly over the fairway and green, followed by myself, and later, by the fore-boy, we eventually caught up with the beast, but found that the ball had been dislodged in the wild rush over the course and the cow was apparently grazing on this other part of the fairway. However, she would occasionally shake her head and gaze at me with rather soulful eyes and I must admit to feeling a little guilty as I returned to the tee and drove off another ball.

One occasional player on these old links was the manager of the Colonial Sugar Company's mill at Nausori, named Knox. Every year Knox would travel to New Zealand for his annual leave and he regularly played a game of golf for a side wager, with a well-known Auckland player named Rainger. The games took place at Middlemore and as Rainger was on rather a low handicap, he usually won the annual contest.

On one occasion, Rainger was still leading at the fifteenth hole when Knox remarked, "Well, it's not much use playing you as you always win." "O.K.," said Rainger, reaching for a small lemon from a tree just off the fairway, "I'll putt the next three holes with a lemon." And so he duly putted with a small round lemon but still won the match.

The next year when Knox was due for his annual leave, he sent a cablegram to Rainger:-

"Arriving by Tofua will play Thursday this time you putt with a banana".

For those of us who know the continued story, this cable was one of the lighter moments in the long night watches on the Suva Cable Station.

EDITORIAL NOTE:

As a golfing referee of some repute I am pleased that "Recorder has a sound knowledge of the rules. His statement that the fore-boy removed the golf ball from the cow-pat before re-playing was strictly within the ambit of the rules, one of which states:-

"No ball will be played whilst in motion."

PEOPLE AND PLACES

HOW, WHERE, WHAT THEY ARE DOING ... GOING ... AND MISSING PERSONS PAGE

LOST - ONE VETERAN

Hugh Taylor (South Australia) wants to know the whereabouts of Norman Olsen.

Frederick Norman Olsen left OTC on 6th February 1946. In 1922 he was on the "Hobson's Bay" with Hughie. He is also believed to have been on the "Riverina" when she ran aground off Gabo Island, around about 1927.

If anyone knows the whereabouts of Norm Olsen please let the Hon. Secretary know, so that he can relay the info. on to Hugh.

ATTENTION OLD CRS MEN

Looking back on it, I suppose that heading could have been better put, but I just want to advise C.R.S. vets. that Cyril Urquart, one of their old mates, has recently been moved to Belvedere Nursing Home, 9 Pacific Highway, Wahroonga, Phone (02) 42-2664. He particularly remembers Bill Luke, Ted Bishton and Ken Stone but please would you make a phone call before visiting him, as he is not in the best of health, having his good days, and his bad days. A call will determine if he is able to have visitors.

Vale David Burke Lee Fleming

Born Tipperary, Ireland, 7th May 1891. Ex RAN Petty Officer Tel. Sworn in for service in AWA on 28th October 1919 for three years, and commenced duties at Brisbane Radio on 20th of that month at a salary of 180 pounds p.a.

Discharged medically unfit on 12th December 1919.

Recommenced duties Brisbane 5th March 1982.

Transferred:

Darwin	15/4/21	Hobart	10/4/24	VIS	5/10/26	Melb.	19/11/30
VIS	25/1/31	Melbourne	9/5/32	VIS	17/9/35	Brisbane	19/6/39
Sydney	9/10/39	Adelaide	31/3/40	Melb.	22/11/40	Sydney	24/1/41
Hobart	1/9/41	Sydney	31/12/43	Darwin	3/1/44	(Acting Manager)	
Sydney	20/1/45	(Senior Radio Tel.)					

While at Sydney Radio he acted as OIC and then in December 1950 was Assistant Station Manager at a salary of 500 pounds p.a., which position he held until he retired on 6th May 1956.

Interesting Facts His first day of sick leave was on 3/2/49 - Vertigo, a condition which he had frequently after that. He also had one bout of Nervous exhaustion. Dave died on 9th October 1982, aged 91 years.

COMMISERATIONS

Our sympathy is extended to both Des Woods and Peter Frost. Des lost his father on 15th October 1982, and Peter lost his father in September.

Our deepest sympathy also to the family of Harry Sutherland, CRS Brisbane veteran who died on 14th July 1982.

SICK PARADE

As at last November, Cyril Manning was not the best having suffered a heart attack. Naturally, our wishes are for his speedy recovery to normal life.

George Rowe, Adelaide, suffered an abdominal aneurism whilst playing in the Australian Lawn Bowls Championships, just at a time when things had been going along well, George's four having won the section - who knows - they might have gone through to final victory. After quite a lengthy operation George is recuperating at home, and feeling stronger every day.

Dennis Chambers recently underwent an operation for the removal of kidney stones, and was confined to the Freemasons' Hospital, Melbourne. Trust you are fit once more Dennis, now that you are a few stones lighter.

Vale

Veteran Bert (A. M.) Hartley died suddenly on 3rd February 1983. It was only a few months prior that he had moved from Victoria to live in Caloundra. Our deepest sympathy to his family.

Frederick Charles Mulligan, one of our Kiwi veterans who retired from the C.R.S. many years ago, died in N.Z. late last year at the age of 95. His son, who lives near Newcastle had lost touch with his father for some years but regained contact through Philip Geeves. The son visited his father in N.Z. just a month or two before he died.

Frederick C. Mulligan retired 13/12/51, at which time he was Senior Radio Officer, Adelaide Radio. He had served at Pennant Hills, Melbourne, Flinders, Darwin, Brisbane and Adelaide.

His son's address is:-

A. J. Mulligan, P.O. Box 230 Toronto, NSW. 2283 Phone (049) 752291.

On the Sick List

Reports from Victoria indicate that Al Boord, Vin Duignan, Charlie Green, Frank Dunstall, Ron Taylor, Gordon Campbell and Jack Trunbull, along with several other colleagues, are not the best in health and have been unable to attend veteran "get-together" functions.

From the C&W Secretary

Veteran George Braby, Chairman of the Retired Radio Operators' Association, in reply to our General Secretary's fraternal greetings and good wishes expressed on the occasion of their last meeting, sent many thanks for being included in our "NEWSLETTER" distribution, and added, quote:-

"Your membership of 500 adds another factor to my oft expressed wonderment at the grand atmosphere that existed and still flourishes after retirement amongst world-wide telegraphists - our membership is 750 at the moment", unquote.

The Price of Progress

Eileen, widow of our late colleague Matt Treacy, telephoned to say that the old homestead in St. George's Road, Preston, along with several others, is being demolished to make way for a park.

Did You Know ?

John Lee, a contributor to "NEWSLETTER", writes that despite the fact that he and his good wife, Addie, are both nursing crippling ailments, intend attending a Wildflower Seminar at Adelaide later in the year. He is also hoping that the occasion will allow him to renew acquaintance with a few of the old hands there, say, Ken Springbett, George Rowe and Brax Horrocks.

Now, here comes the DID YOU KNOW bit. Did you know that John and Addie get a mention in the new Reader's Digest Book on Native Plants and Gardens? Well they do - so they must know their stuff.

All Dutch to Me

The latest issue of the C&W "Zodiac" is interesting plus, but the technology and terms used is too way out for the old morse man to really comprehend: and to think that the opening of the Beam Wireless Service was considered something special fifty years ago ... you live and learn, that's for sure.

New Commissioner

Mr. David M. Hoare was appointed Commissioner of the OTC(A) as from 23rd September 1982, replacing Mr. N. F. Stevens, A.O. O.B.E. who had completed his term. Mr. Hoare is Chairman of B.T. Australia Ltd., Merchant Bankers of Sydney, as well as being Chairman and Director of a number of companies. He takes the position of Vice-Chairman of the Commission.

MORE ON THE COAST-WATCHERS

By Alan Vagg.

Some years prior to World War 2, a Naval Officer, Commander Feldt, formulated a plan to organise the many small radio units which operated throughout the islands for use in the event of war, to be used as watching and reporting stations.

A number of special crystals were supplied all netted on what was known as "X" frequency and were to be used only when authorised by the authorities concerned. Special codes were also issued which were sealed and only to be opened when properly authorised.

Continuous listening watch was established at various places such as Darwin, Port Moresby, Townsville, Cairns, etc. as soon as hostilities commenced in the Pacific.

The people involved in this operation became known as the Coast Watchers, but later on other organisations, such as the A.I.B. (Allied Intelligence Branch), the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles, (my unit), "Z" Force and others, established stations at various places to watch and report on enemy movement and the name Coast Watcher was also applied to them.

So far as A.W.A.'s involvement in this is concerned I cannot give you very much detail as at the time I was involved in Army operations in the Morobe District and beyond, but as Signals Officer for the N.G.V.R. I had installed a number of stations at various places watching the coast overlooking Salamaua and Lae and also a number of aerodromes, lest the enemy take in into their heads to move inland.

After some time the A.I.F. caught up with us and eventually I returned to Port Moresby and was told that Jeff Buckland and Tim Neale had both been sent out on jobs in battle areas. What was involved I have no idea. Also, much later, I was told that Tom Sexton, who was previously with Charlie Beckett at VJX (Wau), had been doing a watching job for the A.I.B. in the Solomon Islands.

The three above-mentioned A.W.A. staff are all now deceased. Jeff, I think, got an O.B.E. and Tom Sexton also received a decoration, but as to what, I have no details. The only people who I can think of that might assist with further details of the jobs done by Jeff and Tim are Norm Odgers and Ted O'Donnell. Ted is a member of the Sydney Vets, and I think Norm is in Brisbane.

As regards Tom Sexton, I cannot think of any way of getting more details of his activities, nor am I sure of which organisation he worked for. Perhaps if you made an enquiry in the next copy of "NEWSLETTER" someone may be able to supply the answer.

You are no doubt aware that the A.W.A. station at Port Moresby continued to operate throughout the war, all the staff being given the honorary rank of Naval officers to protect them in the event of capture.

I would imagine that the jobs that Jeff Buckland and Tim Neale did would be to carry out point to point communications for the Navy or the Americans and so could not have been directly involved in what was called Coast Watching. On the other hand Tom Sexton would not have been working for A.W.A. during his time on the Solomons but would have been attached to one of the units active in the area. No doubt he would have been involved in reporting enemy movements.

And While We Are On The Subject:

Maybe someone can answer this one. Whilst stationed at Rabual before the Japanese invasion, warning of impending raids were passed to us Blue Orchids by the N.O.I.C. Rabual, always commencing with the words

"The following from Tabar begins"

All I could find out was that there was a listening out observation post on Tabar Island, just north of Rabaul and presumably manned by one or two Navy personnel. It was Tabar who gave us the sightings of the two groups of Japanese bombers, one consisting of 60 aircraft, the other of 50 aircraft which hammered the town and surrounding military areas just prior to the actual invasion. They also were able to give us a ring-side description of the ships constituting the invasion force, as the Japanese ships anchored off Tabar prior to the attack.

Over the years I have often wondered how they fared after Rabaul was invaded and they were virtually cut off at Tabar.

Anyone know?

Editorial Query.

Matters Arising

The best seller life story of A. B. Facey relates a humorous story of his tram driver days. The par. reads -

"On a loaded tram a very good looking girl got on carrying a lot of parcels. An old man sitting on a seat next to where she was standing apologised for not being able to give her his seat, but suggested that she sit on his knee, and the girl was quick to accept his kind offer.

The tram took off at a pretty fast rate, with considerable swaying from side to side because of the uneven track. Suddenly the old man requested the girl to "please get off my knee" - which she did. Struggling to his feet he turned to the girl and apologised, saying, 'You keep the seat, lady. I'm not as old as I thought I was.'"

Freelance Journalist ?

Wilf Atkin, our veteran now in Broadbeach Qld, and who is now pushing 80, appears to be as facile with the pen as ever. Recently he wrote an article which was not only accepted by the Australian Women's Weekly, but for which he also received a nice cheque. He is now wondering if he could claim, retrospectively, a few dollars for the many sketches he wrote for the O.T.C. Sydney and Melbourne Cricket Clubs when he was their President forty years ago.

(Ah, Wilf ... how soon is fame forgotten ... but I'll give you half my travelling clock if you give me half the cheque. Ed.)

An Appeal - Change of Address

Change of address and/or telephone number should be notified to your State Secretary of the O.T.V.A. It is the only way we can keep tabs on you blokes, and also helps the secretaries to maintain an up-to-date list of veterans.

Could This Be The End ?

An article in a recent edition of "Electronic Magazine" highlights the life of a ship's wireless officer over the years with the responsibility of modern equipment in contrast to the early days when, for instance, the auto alarm was a clumsy and cantankerous device and the radio direction finder comprised a rotatable loop and receiver.

The shipping companies plan to eliminate the radio-man on ships by 1990, and they will probably be able to do without him as a key pounder, but ships will always need a man to care for electronic equipment and make repairs under way.

There is still a future in Marine Electronics, and young men who are interested can be trained at the Australian Maritime College, Launceston, Tasmania. So says the article, anyway.

Where My Caravan Has Rested.

Bill and Phemy Day, who retired about a year and a half ago, have forsaken the sedentary life of the home or unit owner, fitted out their caravan appropriately named "Dunworkin", and are traipsing around the continent, a trip that they hope will take about three years, at the end of which time they hope to return to New South Wales and probably take up residence in the War Veterans' complex at Narrabeen.

As at 22nd February, this year, he was camped at the Tinaroo Dam, near Cairns. Our contact with the Days is Keith and Sadie Vincent, who pass on any news they receive to yours truly.

Bill writes:-

"We must say that we greatly missed the Wagga Weekend, and Mum commented on the same when the holiday weekend rolled around. At the rate we are progressing, we won't be there next year, either, but with a bit of luck we should make it the following year - so make it a date, Keith, see you in Wagga in 1985.

"The Atherton Bowls Club is a very friendly little club and can do with some support, so we play there at least once per week instead of at the R.S.L. Club which has plenty of beer sales and therefore in a good financial position, so we support the little club. Another nice one in the area is Malanda, but I'm damned if I can handle the green; can drive like a champ, but hopeless on the draw - and the b...grs will persist in making me skipper, too.

We have experienced our first tropical storm up here, and boy - didn't it rain, but not a drop at Atherton, only 15 km away. The local newscast says that if they don't get rain within the next three weeks some mills will barely have enough cane to crush this season. We have kept abreast of the dreadful bushfires in Victoria and South Australia as they have a pretty good TV coverage up here.

Regards to Joe Collister, and tell him the 'ham' conditions are pretty crook up here, but I can read everyone better than they can read me. I have a jury-rigged half-wave di-pole up, which has certainly improved my reception, but apparently not my transmission. Mick Wood romps in well, as does Keith Parker. Also give my kind regards to me-old-cobber, Bobby Reeks.

CUL,

Bill and Phem.

RIGHT ... LET'S HAVE A SPECIMEN

By Ando.

John Lee's humorous contribution, "WORDS" (Nov. 1982 Newsletter) triggered off a "read-out" from the old memory bank of an occasion somewhat similar to John's.

The year was 1956 - The Occasion was the Melbourne Olympic Games - The Place 2nd Floor S.O.R. Spring Street.

A sudden influx of Games traffic for the U.K., Europe, and beyond necessitated the "running-up" of more radio channels to clear same, so a series of specimen bands, of "specs" as they were more commonly known, had to be made up for each channel.

For the uninitiated, the spec band consisted of a series of words all commencing with the same letter as the designated channel. For example, Chan. AAA and BBB were already passing traffic, after London has perused the spec bands to ensure that the signals contained no mutilations or character drop-outs. The band on channel A had transmitted the information that,

ARTFUL ARCHIE ADVANCED AGATHAWARDS on Chan AAA from Sydney AGATHA ARTFULLY AVOIDING ARCHIE'S ANDS, etc., whilst on channel BBB,

BEAUTIFUL BELINDA BELTED BERTIE'S BACKSIDE on Chan BBB from Sydney BECAUSE BELINDA BELIEVED BERTIE BROKE BELINDA'S BRANDNEW BRA.

The length of the band and the alliteration was restricted only by the imagination of the composer.

Meanwhile, London had agreed to man channels CCC and DDD, and the appropriate spec bands were transmitted for his reception. On channel CCC,

CHEERFUL CHARLIE CUNNINGLY CHASED CORA CUPBOARDWISE on channel CCC from Sydney CLAMMILY CLUTCHING CORA'S CONSIDERABLE CHARMS, etc.

whilst on DDD,

DIRTY DICK DEVIOUSLY DRUGGED DONNA'S DRINK on channel DDD from Sydney DRAGGING DONNA DIVANWISE.

The operator in London, having assured himself that reception was OK gave the "GA" for traffic to commence on CCC and DDD at the same time volunteering the information that he was able to staff channels EEE and FFF if required.

As the Godfather said, it was an offer too good to refuse. In a trice channel EEE was announcing that:

EROTIC EDNA EXPOSED ERSELF ERICWARDS on Channel EEE from Sydney EAGERLY EXCITING ERIC'S EROGENOUS EXTENSIONS.

The "GA" from London to commence on EEE broke all records, London adding, "With bated breath and some trepidation we await your spec band on channel FFF."

Our boys were way ahead of him. You couldn't find a spare KBP (keyobard perforator) in the house.

But London's memo re channel EEE had also reached our Supervisor, and as our American cowboy friends say, "had really spooked the herd." With one swift movement, which did credit to a man of his age and infirmities, he placed himself, Horatio-guarding-the-bridgewise in front of the Channel FFF transmitter, where, with outstretched hand, he took delivery of the efforts of the spec band composers. Having received all entries, he commenced to read each one, little knowing that all entrants had put two bob into a central pool, the Supervisor being the unwitting judge.

Covertly the operators watched his reactions. Some of the bands produced a grin, some grins a little bid wider, and the occasional chuckle, but we all knew we had a winner when he let out a great whoop of laughter, collapsed into a chair, took off his glasses, wiped his eyes, and offered the band around for the perusal of Senior Telegraphists and above in his immediate vicinity.

Naturally there is no way for me to reproduce the original composition in this journal. Suffice to say that it concerned one Filthy Florence from Fivedock and her flirtations with a feller called Fred.

I would like to report a happy ending, but channel FFF was never opened; in fact, the traffic load had subsided and the channels were progressively closed.

I also regret that the original band was lost to posterity and has never been archived.

The winner? That, as they say on the lottery form, is N.F.P. Sorry.

Whilst we are on specimens, I recall an incident on the Singapore channel one day. Singapore's signals had started to fade and our operator had asked him to send specs so that he could get a retune.

The Singapore operator, who had probably had a rough night out on the rice wine, put the spec band in all right, but backside first and the right way up. Consequently, instead of sending HERE SPECIMENS FROM SPORE it read EROPS MORF NEMICEPS EREH.

Right on the ball, our bloke stopped Singapore cold with his memo,

BREAK BREAK SPORE. I ASKED YOU FOR SPECIMENS. WHY ARE YOU SENDING ME NEMICEPS?

Stunned silence from Spore as the old idler light blinked away. Finally, he got the message, rectified the matter, and traffic resumed.

