



Newsletter

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 4 PT 1 PAGE 159 - NOVEMBER 1990

MEETINGS AND REUNIONS

VICTORIA

Reunion Friday 9th November 1990
From 5.00pm-9.00pm

OTC Office
3rd Floor
382 Lonsdale St
Melbourne.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Reunion Friday 30th November 1990
12noon-3.00pm

Conference room
15th Floor, OTC House
231 Elizabeth Street
Sydney.

QUEENSLAND

Reunion Tuesday 13th November 1990
12noon-3.00pm

Maritime Comms. Stn
Caboolture
Queensland.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Reunion Thursday 22nd November 1990
12.30-3.00pm

Maritime Comms. Stn
McLaren Vale
South Australia.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Annual Meeting Tuesday 27th
November 1990
12.30pm-3.00pm

OTC Office
26 St Georges Tce
Perth.

Interstate members and visitors will be welcomed at these functions, but prior advice of intention to attend would be appreciated by the organisations, not only for catering purposes, but to get confirmation of times and venues.



MELBOURNE VETS 33rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 33rd Annual General Meeting of the Melbourne Vets was held in OTC's Boardroom, OTC House, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne on Friday 11th May 1990.

Our popular President Sam Bright declared the Meeting open and invited Acting Manager Rex Dupe to say a few words.

In replying Rex made the point that he was happily surprised to note the obviously healthy state of so many of the Vets particularly those who have service dating back as far as 1927, and in the case of Cable and Wireless personnel much earlier than that.

President Sam agreed to carry on for a further 12 months term and this decision was received with much acclamation.

Office bearers for 1990 - 1991 are:

President	Sam Bright
Treasurer	Bob Hall
Secretary	Guye Russell
Auditors	Ian Reed and Jim Gowans

In declaring the Meeting closed Sam thanked OTC for the use of the Board Room and invited all present to partake of the hospitality of the Melbourne Vets.

There were 48 members present with 23 apologies registered as hereunder.

Present were:-

Cliff Allison, Bill Bentley, Sam Bright, Audrey Bright, Col Benson, Page Barrow, Marie Crabtree, Denis Chambers, Merv Cooper, John Caulfield, John Davey, David Ditchfield, Janet Daffy, Rex Dupe, Bill Ferguson, Jim Fez, Les Foley, Vance Findlay, Arthur Green, Norma Green, David Gault, Jim Gowans, Bob Hall, Elaine Keil, Dimmey Krisa, Jim Kennedy, Dick Lovett, Eddie Hope, Tom Lang, Joan Miller, Gray MacDonald, Ken McArthur, Gerry McCarthy, Alan McLean, Howard Newsome, Clive Purvis, Frank Patrick, Jim Robinson, Ted Read, Ian Reed, Guye Russell, Jean Russell, Norm Stubbs, Alec Stewart, Chris Tancheff, Alan Vagg, Mark Wilton, Doug Crabtree.

Apologies:-

John Bennett, Steve Burdon, Tom Bryant, Peter Dennis, Joan Ferne, Merv Fernando, George Fraser, Doug Garling, Len Hingley, Tess Hodges, Merv Jessop, Roly Lane, George Maltby, Don MacGillivray, Jack McGrory, Betty Prentice, Pearl Peat, Doug Richards, Bill Shea, Ted Turner, Jack White, Brian Williams, Noel Dennis.

GUYE RUSSELL
SECRETARY

A MESSAGE FROM THE NSW PRESIDENT

I am getting concerned with the lack of stories from members for publication in the Newsletter. I cannot stress how important it is to relate our experiences, not only for the pleasure of our readers, but for researchers and historians in the future. Our Newsletter goes to the State Libraries of NSW and Victoria, the National Library in Canberra and also to the TV and Radio School. We did have a number of pretty regular correspondents, especially those early radio and cable boys, but our ranks are now somewhat thin in the very early pioneers, so that you younger members are now the living pioneers and your experiences and stories are now history. Surely, you have plenty to tell?

Also what about you very young Vets, there is no doubt plenty of things you have done or been connected with that are well worth recording. Especially your part in some of the big projects, and please put them in laymans terms, so that some of us under-privileged can understand them.

If you are no good with pen and paper, our Archivist, Kimberley O'Sullivan now has the equipment to record our Oral History. She could easily cater for up to half a dozen at a time, so it is suggested that you get together a few of your contemporaries and come in and see Kimberley. As experienced at our meetings, it is amazing just how many stories come to the fore in group chats. Kimberley can be contacted on phone 339-3954. Should you rather give Kimberley some stories individually, she would be pleased to hear from you, and if in Paddington at any time call in and she will give you a run down on the archives, and show you how the data base works. Home visits by Kimberley can be arranged.

We are also short on stories of some of the older developments such as Loaded Cables, Ted, Toc, Tasi, Compac and Seacom and most developments large or small right up to the present day. There must be hundreds of them and we badly need a laymans description. We have quite a bit of material on Pacific and Indian Ocean cable stations but very little on the island radio stations and even the mainland coast stations.

Thanks to Kathy Jones for the copy she has supplied in relation to the OTC Exhibits. The Settlement to Satellite Exhibition in Melbourne is still going strong and they have requested an extension of time by six months. It is still drawing crowds of approximately 50,000 per month, which is more than Sydney had in the 12 months. On Moonba Festival Day, 6,000 persons visited the Exhibition. One wonders if Melbourne people go out more, or the venue is so much better. One thing to our credit, we did give visitors a conducted tour, which would not be possible with the numbers in Melbourne. As the Exhibition is such a good publicity medium, maybe OTC Management might consider showing it again in Sydney at a more central venue when it is finished in Melbourne.

The National Science and Technology Centre opened in July, with OTC taking a major part as we read in Kathy's news. Visitors to Canberra should see this exhibition, as it will only be staged for 12 months. After that it will move to other Science and Technology Centres and we hope to see it in Sydney. However, don't take the risk, see it in Canberra if possible. Also, congratulations, to all those OTC people, who have taken part in the planning and setting up of both the Exhibitions. We salute them.

Congratulations to the 10 Veterans appearing on the back page of recent Transit, for completing 35 years service. Special mention must be made of Jack Creswick for being the only one wearing his Vets badge.

TASMAN 2 OPTIC FIBRE CABLE

The OTC Open Day at the Alcatel TCC Fibre Optic Cable factory, was very enjoyable and informative, and a credit to those who did the arranging and organising. Also to the management of OTC for providing this great day.

On arrival one was welcomed by the one and only Bill Bugeya, who directed you to the parking area. On coming to the entrance to the factory, you were fronted by a couple of beautiful creatures, who gave the adults a detailed handout, and to the kids a special project kit. Then you came upon a large blown up castle for the little one to jump about in, then face painting exponents, free fairy floss, free ice creams, an extra large, and I mean large, marquee with seating and tables. The marquee contained the lunch, tea and coffee, and soft drinks.

The cableship "Pacific Guardian" had recently come into port and was tied up to the factory wharf bow first, and connected to the factory by means of a gantry for loading the cable. The gantry had a series of pulley wheels and a walkaway. Conducted tours of the ship was the first attraction, with a trip to the ship by launch and return via crossing the gantry. The wind on Botany Bay that day was strong, with the launch going via the leeside of the ship, but unfortunately the gangway was on the open side. Landing from the launch was really hairy and I did not have my seasick tablets. After the first few trips the launch was abandoned, and visitors went to and from via the gantry.

Then came lunch. It was not the normal BBQ, there were loads of big fat sausages, steaks with onions, kebabs, and at least a dozen different salad dishes. The only complaint could have been that the plates were too small. This was followed by Pavlova and fruit salad sweets, drinks etc. I was disappointed by the poor attendance of the Vets, as I have never known them to miss out on a free feed in the past. Forgot to mention, during dinner a really first class bush band entertained.

After lunch came an inspection of the factory. Here the tour started with static displays and a video presentation. Guides were provided at each stage of production to escort parties. Production had not yet begun, but all the staff were fully trained and had been having trial runs, with full production expected the following week. Just the same during the trials they had produced many kilometres of cable, so that we were able to see each stage of production.

Stage 1

The cable starts off as a king wire, a steel wire, diameter .65mm. This king wire gives the cable strength in the initial stage of manufacture. While this revolved, a plastic slotted core is extruded on to it with lengths up to 120km. This results in a new product with a diameter of 3.9mm with six slots in it. Must mention at this stage that all stages of manufacture, the cable passes through a number of pulleys, large wheels, catapillar pullers and is kept at constant tension over fairly large distances. Therefore the factory is rather large to allow for the tensioning systems.

Stage 2

The slotted cable already rolled on to drums, is then passed through a machine called an Optical Fibre Stranding Line, which winds separate coloured optic fibres into each of the six slots. It then passes through machines which mould plastic over the outside of the cable insulating the fibres. It is then wound on to drums which are then taken to the next stage. Diameter now 4.7mm.

Stage 3

Composite Conductor Line. By means of a huge machine a number of steel wires are wound around the Optical cable (similar to the armouring on the old time cables but thinner wire) to form a steel pressure vault around the cable. This is followed by a copper sheath which is formed around the steel wires and seam welded. This is the power feed conductor for the repeaters. The cable at this stage has a diameter of 10.5mm. The cable is then wound around huge bobbins (about 12 feet in diameter) when full weigh 95 tons.

Stage 4

The loaded bobbins are then transferred by an overhead crane where the cable is covered with polythene to provide an insulating sheath from the high power (50 Kv) conductor. The run of this stage of the process is rather long, to provide cooling of the plastic insulation. Tests are conducted at intervals along this run for regulatory of size. It must be pointed out that such tests are carried at all stages of the system as correct diameter, freedom from projections etc is essential to the manufacture. At the end of this stage an aluminium tape is then wound around the cable to form another sheaf. Diameter of cable is now 21.5mm.

Stage 5

Is the storage of the cable in tanks, where optical and high voltage tests are carried out. It is at this state that different lengths of the cable are jointed together to form one length of 116Km, the distance between repeaters.

Stage 6

The cable is transferred to the final storage tanks, where the repeaters are spliced in, and the cable finally assembled into one continuous length of 2400Km for loading on to the ship.

Alcatel is one of the worlds largest manufacturers of cable communications equipment and has its headquarters in France. Alcatel - TCC is a joint venture with Alcatel and STC Australia.

The first cable to be produced at Port Botany is for the Tasman 2 project, which will link Sydney with Auckland. Joint owners are OTC and NZ Telecom International. It will use digital techniques to provide Telephone, Facsimile, Data and T.V. etc services.

The cable has three pairs of optic fibre, each operated at 560 Kbps which provides a total capacity of 22,680 simultaneous telephone circuits. There is 2227 Km of cable which includes about 30Km of land cable.

The contract calls for the cable, 19 repeaters, terminal equipment and power feed equipment to power the repeaters.

Spacing between the repeaters is 116 Km and will need a power of approximately 5000 volts.

Tasman 2 should be ready for service at the end of October 1991. Supply of the cable is by Alcatel-TCC at Port Botany - Repeater components by Alcatel-CIT, France - Repeaters to be assembled by Alcatel-TCC at Liverpool, Australia - Terminal Equipment and Power Feed Equipment by Alcatel-TCC at Upper Hutt in New Zealand.

Although attendance by Veterans was very disappointing, I am sure that those who did attend thoroughly enjoyed the day and our thanks goes to Management of OTC and Alcatel-TCC for the invitation.

MEMORIES

By Gordon Cupit

At the Sydney reunions, Percy Day informed me that he does memory training, thinking back over the old days, and he can remember the names of 18 messengers that served with him in 1927.

This has got me thinking about when I was a messenger in 1933/34 and the best I could do is as follows. Maybe someone like Arthur Purtill, Ron Godfrey, Lyle Gowanlock, Harry Stone, Frank White, Charlie Watson, Fred Jenkins, the only surviving members, can help out.

Messengers: Al Martin, Lloyd Bennett, (?) Judd, Bill Milne, George Cope, Dave Crawford, Jack Radnidge, Laurie Mostran, Don Kirkwood, Peter Phegan, Ron Godfrey, Arthur Purtill, Gordon Cupit, Lindsay Bird, Murray Todd, Doug Fairbairn, Wally Hammond; (?) Simpson.

Despatch: Pat Darcy, Pat Riley, Warren Clark.

Messengers School: Sammy Toombs.

Sydney Operating Room (SOR): Nobby Clark, Mark Mortimer, Harry Selfe, Dave (Cocko) Quinn, Don (Scrooge) McIntosh, Ken (Woof) McLennan, George (Slob) Morrison, Charlie Watson, Sid LeGrand, Stan Bouttel, Fred Jenkins, Fred Timmins, Fred Simmons, Lyle Gowanloch, Gordon Ramsay, Hilton Robertson, George Wheeler, Bert Ritchie, Harry Stone, Macca McPherson, John Hector, Ray Harris, Frank White, Jim Blemings (Mech).

Counter: Tom Jones, Arthur Wells, Jim Breakwell, Wal Jones (Invoicer), Marie Casey (Compt).

Royal Exchange: Julian Leslie, Tom Bannister.

Island Room: Jim Park, Dick Bettison, Jack Burgess, Tom Sage, Milton Todd.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION - BADGES

My ole mate, Alan Arndt, wishes it known that we have a supply of Veterans' badges selling at \$4.00 each.

We greatly appreciate the 50% subsidy from OTC Limited and the \$1,700 interest free loan to allow us to purchase the new stock of our badges.

LEN
POWER
BILL
SCREVENSON
JUN 20 1991
1000 1000

VALE ALBERT SHEPPARD

Albert Sheppard passed away on 8th May 1990 at a "Hospice for the Dying" of heart failure. His funeral was held at Eastern Suburbs Crematorium on Friday 11 May 1990.

VALE KEITH BONDFIELD

Keith died on 16 September after a long but losing fight against cancer of the lymph glands. Born on 25 September 1926, he ended up with 44 years in communications. As near as I can find out he joined AWA in 1942 and was a Clerk Accounts, progressing through the Commercial Branch, Administration, Marketing and was Budget Officer Sales when he finally retired on 31 July 1987. To his family and friends go our deepest sympathy.

34TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING O.T.V.A.
N.S.W. BRANCH 18TH MAY 1990
MINUTES

PRESENT: Roger Allen, Barrie Arch, Alan Arndt, Sylvia Ayres, Ted Bastow, Ross Beaumont, Ron Beecham, Steve Burdon, Alan Cabrera, Gerald Calais, Brian Callaghan, Marie Condon, Ron Connolly, Orme Cooper, Martin Cresswell, Jack Creswick (JNR), Jack Creswick (SNR), Alf Culloden, Gordon Cupit, Brian Darragh, Bill Day, Percy Day, Peter Dean, Margaret Dobson, Maxwell Dwyer, Tony Ebert, Peter Feely, Reg Fernando, Vince Gibson, Dennis Grant, Edward Gunning, Barry Henson, Jack Hansson, Norm Harris, Allan Hennessy, Jeff Hinwood, John Hodgeson, Ray Hookway, Brian Hoschke, Jan Howe, Tom Hughes, Neville Huntington, Ron Jones, Ulo Kampus, Fred Keen, Fred Kannard, Jim Ledingham, Betty Leweniec, Bill Luke, Stan Luxton, George Madren, Charlie Maiden, George Maltby, Don Montgomery, Kath Morgan, Horrie McInnes, Keith McCredde, Kimberley O'Sullivan, Keith Oxley, Jim Pow, Arthur Purtil, Dave Reynolds, Tony Richardson, David Richardson, Alf Ricketts, Peter Roberts, George Schulze, Peter Skinner, David Smith, Ron Smith, Gordon Stewart, Annette Taylor, John Taylor, Richard Taylor, Stewart Taylor, Gareth Thompson, Elsie Thornley, Roy Tully, Ron Waugh, David Wills, Mick Wilden, Howard Wilson, Des Woods, Len Wylde.

APOLOGIES: Alfred Agius, Jim Anderson, Ernie Anthoney, Abdul Aziz, Ray Baty, Keith Bondfield, Roger Boyden, Tony Bradney, Roy Branson, Claire Brophy, Athol Brown, Bill Brown, Lou Brown, Horst Bulka, Len Catt, Bill Chant (JNR), Bill Chant (SNR), Bruce Collett, Jim Davis, Geoff Day, Athol Dulihanty, Ron Farrel, Tony Farrugia, Bob Fisher, Peter Frost, Graham Gosewinkle, Lyle Gowanlock, Alex Griffiths, Eileen Haran, Edgar Harcourt, Jack Heath, David Hoare (DIR), Les Hunt, Fred James, Harold Jones, Harry Kellerman, Tom Kenny, Ted Knowles, Cyril Manning, Bill Martin, Maurie Matthisz, Noel Martin, John Maurer, John Menadue (DIR), Peter Muelman, Kevin Minogue, Marie Casey, Ron McDonald, Gray McDonald, Laurie McIllree, Martin Nemeyer, John Newlyn, Eric Norris, Alan Oakford, Maurie O'Conner, Marie O'Hanlan, Dick Osborne, Toby Perrett, Marjorie Reed, Phil Ryan, Robert Scherf, V.J. Singh, Charles Stanfield, Chris Stanley, Jim Simpson, Ray Stewart, Ken Stone, Mani Subramany, Charlie Swinney, Ken Theaker, Ron Turnbull, Cyril Vahtrick, Des Van Reyk, Joe Vassallo, Bert Waugh, Russell Welbourne, Peter Whisson, Tony White, Frank White, Helen Williams (DIR), Mick Wood, Vernon Yen.

1.
The President, Gordon Cupit, opened this meeting and welcomed our official guests, Steve Burdon, Managing Director of OTC Limited, Jim Ledingham, an ex employee of EECC in Spring Street and Kimberley O'Sullivan, OTC Archives Coordinator and all members present. New members attending their first meeting were:-

Gerald Calais, Dave Reynolds and Dennis Grant.

2.
Apologies were received from OTC Limited Board of Director's members, Mr David Hoare Chairman, Mr John Menadue and Ms Helen Williams. Mr Len Hingley managed to spend half an hour with us between meetings. All other apologies are recorded in the attendance book.

3.
Fraternal greetings were read as received from the Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe Canada, the Veteran Cablemens Association of New Zealand, Presidents and members of our Victorian, Queensland, South Australian and Western Australian Branches on this, the occasion of our 34th Annual General Meeting. A cordial invitation has been extended from our Branches, to any of us who are interested in attending their next meetings.

4.
One minute's silence was observed to mark the passing of the following member's during the past six months:-

Jack Lee, Jock Cowie, Albert Sheppard, Claude Dalley, Don Balmain, Fred Barrington and Jack Bullen.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of our previous meeting were distributed to members in our October 1989 Newsletter (copies were also available at this meeting) and were declared open for discussion. There being no discussion it was moved by Horrie McInnes and seconded by Peter Skinner, that the minutes of the 33rd Annual General Meeting be confirmed.

Carried Unanimously.

6. Balance Sheet and Annual Accounts

The Balance Sheet was presented to all members present and opened for discussion. There being no discussion, it was moved by Martin Cresswell and seconded by Des Woods, that the Balance Sheet and Auditors report be accepted.

Carried Unanimously.

7. Election of Officers

The President declared all offices vacant and called for nominations for a Returning Officer to conduct the annual election.

Mr Des Woods was nominated by Alan Arndt and seconded by Betty Leweniec. There being no further nominations, Mr Des Wood was duly elected as Returning Officer.

The Returning Officer called for nominations for the office of President. Mr Gordon Cupit was nominated by Alf Ricketts and seconded by Jack Hansson. There being no further nominations, Mr Gordon Cupit was declared President.

Mr Alan Arndt was nominated as Honorary Secretary by Horrie McInnes and seconded by Peter Dean. There being no further nominations, Mr Alan Arndt was declared Honorary Secretary.

Mr Mick Wilden was nominated as Treasurer by Elsie Thornley and seconded by Ron Smith. There being no further nominations, Mr Mick Wilden was declared Treasurer.

Messrs Ron Connolly and Peter Roberts were nominated as Auditors by Norm Harris and seconded by Ron Waugh. There being no further nominations, Messrs Ron Connolly and Peter Roberts were declared Auditors.

The following members indicated their willingness to accept a twelve months term of office on the Committee. Jack Cresswick nominated the new Committee in toto, and this was seconded by Brian Darragh. Duly elected to the new Committee were:-

Jim Anderson, Peter Skinner, Ron Connolly, Alf Ricketts, Peter Roberts, Keith McCredden, Ted Bastow and Tony Richardson.

8. Sick List

Bill Luke has recovered from a Cataract Operation and is here today. Tony White took ill in Canada while on OTC business, which delayed his return and so can not make it here today.

Athol Brown has a badly bruised pelvis following a fall earlier this month. Eric Norris, who has MS, is going into hospital next month for a prostate gland operation.

It is good to see Tom Hughes here today, fully recovered from his recent operation for an ANEURYSM of the AORTA ARTERY.

9. 34th Annual Reunion

The Secretary recommended we endeavour to secure the OTC Conference Centre located at Head Office, 231 Elizabeth Street Sydney for Friday 30 November 1990 as the venue for our next Reunion. This recommendation was supported unanimously, with a suggestion that final arrangements be left in the hands of our Committee.

10. Business Arising from Previous Meeting

a) "An OTC Veteran either, Male or Female is any person who:

1. is currently employed by OTC Limited or one of its subsidiaries and has been in such employment for at least 25 years.
2. has retired from OTC Limited or one of its subsidiaries and 25 years at least have elapsed since the date of their commencement with OTC Limited.
3. whilst in the employ of OTC Limited transferred to Aussat, then (a) will apply".

Explanation: The wording is intended to exclude employees who resign from the Company as the loyalty of such persons should transfer to the business of their new employer. It also brings in such person as Athol Brown as full members and not treat them as lesser mortals. This motion was moved by Jack Hansson, seconded by John Taylor and was carried unanimously.

b) Notice of motion moved by Wilf Atkin, seconded by Alan Arndt:-

1. 20 instead of 25 years.
2. Forming a Retired Officers Club to meet with us?
3. Allow Honorary Membership to those with 20 years service without voting rights, which would also legalise the move made by our Victorian Branch some years ago!

This motion was rejected unanimously, in favour of the previous motion.

- c) President Gordon Cupit expressed thanks for the work put in by George Schultz and Jim Ledingham, in getting the MARCONI BUST from the AWA Archives, to place in the grounds of Sydney Radio (VIS) at La Perouse, or OTC Head Office in Sydney.
- d) Steve Burdon, Managing Director of OTC Limited thanked our President, Secretary and Committee, for the work they put into keeping our Association so active. After all he said, if it was not for the ground work O.T.V.A. members have contributed during their working lives, OTC would not be taking the giant steps forward that we are now taking, to give Australia such an advanced telecommunications system.
- e) President Gordon expressed our appreciation and thanks to OTC Limited for its continuing and generous support to our Association.
- f) There being no further business to discuss, President Gordon closed this meeting after inviting all present to adjourn to the adjoining lounge area for refreshments.

ALAN ARNDT
(HONORARY SECRETARY)

KEEPING IN TOUCH

A suggestion has been received from a couple of our Veterans that it would be a good idea to publish a list of the names and addresses of those veterans who would welcome some form of communication with people they knew and worked with over the years.

We have given this a lot of thought. One opinion recorded is that the Veteran concerned objected to such a procedure, arguing that his friends all knew where he was located and he had no desire to re-establish contact with anyone other than those. Another angle is that some members could regard this as a breach of their privacy and that is a valid point.

In the long run, we have decided that we leave it to the individual. Accordingly, this is the way it will work.

If any veteran has an objection to having his name and address published in the NEWSLETTER, please write and advise of that fact. If no objection is received we will assume that you don't mind and lists will be published as space and time permits.

PLEASE LODGE YOUR OBJECTION, IF THERE IS ONE.

VALE ALFIE AGIUS

ALFRED AGIUS died during August 1990, a fact that would not have come to light except that our old mate and Veteran, Tony Ebert, happened to meet Alfie's wife at the Maroubra Junction shopping centre, a matter of a few weeks ago.

Alfie was one of the blokes who was caught up in the confusion that occurred in Egypt during the Nasser regime, being employed by C&W U.K. at the time. He, and others like him were offered employment in England, Canada, or Australia and Alf chose Australia.

I first met him in the old S.O.R. Spring Street, when the York Street office of the Beam Wireless section closed and we were all re-located at Spring Street. He was a quiet type of bloke, but had a dry sense of humour once you got to know him.

To his wife and family go our sincere condolences.

CLAUDE DALLEY - SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

In our last newsletter we reported that Claude had had further surgery on his leg. This is not correct. Claude had been fitted with a new, light-weight leg in place of the old one.

He had the misfortune to get appendicitis and despite that a man of 90 should not have had appendix trouble, according to his doctor, surgery became necessary. It was the appendectomy which upset his prostate gland, so much so that he had to undergo surgery to rectify the prostate trouble and it was the complications from the prostate surgery that caused his death on 9th February 1990. It was distressing for his family that this should happen as he had been recovering well from the appendectomy.

We thank Thelma MacDonald, Claude's eldest daughter for writing to us so as to set the record straight.

ORAL HISTORY

Archivist, Kimberley O'Sullivan, has started the oral history campaign and a number of our members have formed small groups and are co-operating.

Unfortunately her job does not allow her too much freedom to travel around the states so it is suggested that some of the members outside Sydney might care to get together in groups with a tape recorder and just chat over old times. It is amazing just what emerges and how important it is to complete our history of international communications. All that is needed is a cassette recorder with a microphone. If you require any advice as to how to proceed, just drop a line to Kimberley, care O.T.C.

MARCONI MEMORIAL

by Gordon Cupit

Some 20 years or so ago, Marconi's son visited Australia. One of the highlights of his visit was the presentation of an Italian marble bust of his father, to the Sydney Lions Club, a gift from the Lions Club of Turin, Italy. The bust stood about 4 foot high. The Sydney Lions contacted AWA and it was agreed that AWA who are the Australian Reps for the Marconi Company, would hold the bust in trust for the Club and set it up at the Ashfield works on an Australian granite base.

When AWA moved from Ashfield, the memorial was left on site. Recently members of the AWA Veterans, including our own George Schultz had word that the property had been sold and that the buildings were to be demolished, George immediately started the ball rolling and after consultation with AWA, OTC and the Sydney Lions President, it was agreed that the trusteeship of the bust be transferred from AWA to OTC, with the view to having it installed at La Perouse. It was picked up just before the bulldozers moved in and is now stored in a special statue store, we believe next to Governor Phillip. The action was taken at the time of the last Sydney A.G.M. and the President of Sydney Lions, Jim Lettingham attended our meeting. Incidentally, in his youth he was a messenger in the Spring Street Cable office.

Subsequently Jim invited George Schultz, Archivist Kimberley O'Sullivan and Gordon Cupit to a meeting of the Sydney Lions, where George gave full details of the history of the bust and Marconi's and AWA's part in the early experiments from Australia. Kimberley produced a number of photos of not only the memorial, but of the unveiling ceremony at Ashfield. Included in the photos were Marconi's son and AWA Managing Director at the time, Sir Lionel Hooke. Gordon gave an up to date account of the present position. The members of Lions were extremely interested in the whole of the proceedings and moved a resolution thanking OTC for their interest and support and to inform the Turin Lions Club of the new arrangements for the safekeeping of the bust. It was the considered opinion of the meeting that it would be more suited to a city site and requested Gordon to approach the Management of OTC with a view to having it set up in Head Office. This is now being actively considered by Management and it is hoped that it will be in place for our Reunion.

VETERAN CABLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION
AUCKLAND

The 34th Annual General Meeting and Reunion was held at the Parnell Rose Gardens Lounge and Restaurant on 1st December 1989 at 11.00am.

PRESENT

Frank Blakely, Ken Clarke, Ray Connolly, Peter Cowlshaw, Bill Craig, Denis Erson, Keith Faulkner, Les Gladding, Graeme Hawken, Kelvin Healy, Bob Martin, Sandy Miller, Mick Milne, Syd Murray, Colin Nielsen, Graham Parsons, Jack Potter, Len Sedman, Fred Studman, David Thompson, John Walker, Brian Wallace.

CHAIRMAN

Denis Erson opened the meeting with a welcome and a brief silence was then observed in memory of those deceased since the last meeting. They were: HARRY FOX, HORACE MCCOY and staff widow LENA BRADNAM.

APOLOGIES

Apologies and greetings were received from Norman Jones, Bruce Sutherland, Mike Fulton, Richard Michaels and Huia Evetts (currently in hospital).

MINUTES

Minutes of the last A.G.M. were read and confirmed and the balance sheet adopted.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters of condolence were sent to relatives of those who passed on during the year. Correspondence was sent to and received from Australia and Canada and copies of the RECORDER and ZODIAC were received from London and distributed to interested members.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chairman	DENIS ERSON
Hon Sec/Treas.	BRIAN WALLACE
Hon Auditor	GRAEME HAWKEN

were all re-elected unopposed.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Congratulations and Best Wishes were extended to Sandy Miller for his 90th Birthday later in the month.

Sandy reported contacting Pat Sykes in Perth recently and meeting him in the old Cottersloe Cable station. Pat is keeping good health and sends greetings.

Denis Erson told of visiting Colin Stubbs in Sydney a few weeks previously. Colin also sends his best wishes to all.

It was reported that Harold Le Quesne intends visiting New Zealand from Canada next year and it was agreed to contact him and endeavour to arrange a get together. All members were asked for any information they could glean on the early days of the Eastern extension and on the closure of Bandung Station.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.45am and after further chat, all present enjoyed a smorgasbord luncheon bringing to a close a successful Reunion.

BRIAN WALLACE
HON. SECRETARY

By the way, you may be unaware that since our last meeting, Bill Craig has passed away - in March at the age of 91. His death brings an end to the era of our association as Bill was one of the prime movers in its formation in 1956. He was the initial Chairman and held that position until he expressed the wish to step down, 32 years later.

Bill will be greatly missed by all his old P.C.B. colleagues and also the members of the N.Z. Telcom unit as he was very much "Father Confessor" to them all during their travels in the East.

We lost one of our members, Harry J. Fox last year. Don't know if it was recorded before, but thought it advisable to mention for those of your members who may have known him.

Fred Studman and other veterans send all their best to you.

Kindest regards

BRIAN WALLACE.

FROM THE LAND OF THE LONG WHITE CLOUD

Fred Studman, nicknamed by his associates as "Spook" is a member of the Probus Club in Auckland, N.Z. Apparently it is their custom to have a main speaker at these functions, but before that one of the members is called upon to provide a "mini" talk on either his life or any experience he may have had during his career. We reproduce it here for the benefit of all Veterans.

"I had just completed three years at Auckland Grammar in 1920 when a friend of my family suggested that I apply for a position with the Pacific Cable Board. The P.C.B. was a British concern, established and maintained undersea cable communication linking Australia, Norfolk Island, New Zealand, Fiji and Canada by means of landlines east to west and the United Kingdom. This was established in 1903 with the terminal in N.Z. being at Doubtless Bay. In 1910 this was changed to the top floor of the C.P.O. in Auckland where it remained during the whole of my service.

As there was a limit in length which the original type cable could be used efficiently, it was necessary to establish a station roughly half way between Fiji and Canada, so Fanning Island, a low-lying coral atoll, provided the link.

In later years, with improved cable technology for communications, Fanning Island was abandoned. It was originally manned by a full staff of engineers and operators with accommodation for both single and married staff and a resident doctor. Ships such as the old "WAIRUNA" called three-monthly with mail and supplies. For staff it was a two year station. Earlier, access had been made by sailing ship from Honolulu or San Francisco taking an indefinite number of days.

Now, back to Auckland.

Having applied and passed a medical, failure in which would have cost me one guinea, I commenced a two year training course on the princely salary of six pounds per calendar month. For many years we were paid on the 27th of each month. Finally appointed to the permanent staff, we rotated shifts around the clock. A proportion of messages were in plain language, but most government and business messages were in five or ten letter code words. A tally was kept of each operator's work and a mistake could cost one three months deferment of his normally annual increment. In the initial stages messages were converted to a perforated tape which was fed into a transmitter and passed to the next station, the process being repeated all along the line.

After eighteen months on the staff in Auckland I was transferred to Suva. Here the original office was a delapidated old two story wooden building with the traditional wide verandah all round both floors. Shortly after my arrival this was replaced by the present concrete building on an adjacent site on Victoria Parade. About twenty young N.Z. and Australian staff trained in Southport Queensland, living in single room bachelor quarters with a matron in charge of native staff. A dozen or so fully furnished houses catered for married staff. Here we worked mainly five hour shifts. Staff provided a Rugby team and also a cricket team for local competition and some of us played tennis and hockey. Staff owned launches and sailing craft which provided further recreation.

I personally got involved as painist in the only dance band at the time and we played for all the dances at the Town Hall, Grand Pacific hotel and twice at Government House. With two local chaps I took some leave and we hiked around the coast from Navua around the west coast and down through the middle of Viti Levu, eating and sleeping in native villages on route. There was no Kings and Queens roads around the island at that time.

After three and a half years of this pleasant life I was transferred to Canada. Four of us travelled to Vancouver via Honolulu, as always first class with allowances, on the old 'NIAGARA'. Two of my party were enroute to Halifax, Nova Scotia, which involved a three to four days journey by train across Canada. Two of us were destined for Bamfield, on the wild west coast of Vancouver Island, an overnight journey by Princess ferry from Victoria. At Bamfield a new operating building had just been completed and here, by comparison, we worked three eight hour shifts. The Centrally-heated bachelors quarters were in a C.P.R. hotel type of building with single room accommodation and staffed by Chinese.

A dozen or so houses for married staff, a recreation hall and a concrete tennis court occupied one side of Bamfield Creek. The other side comprised a life-boat station and a general store plus a few fishermens' cottages. No roads or footpaths - just board-walks and trails.

Incidentally, Bamfield Creek is a deep-water inlet a few hundred feet wide off Barclay Road otherwise - nothing but trees, trees and more trees. There was good outdoor sport with salmon fishing, trout in rivers and duck shooting in season. Cougar, deer and bear were around the area. Canoes, fishing and hunting gear could be acquired by newcomers from outgoing staff. We had an orchestra for the occasional concert and dances when the tourist ships called in the summer to provide dancing partners.

Two of us took out a trappers licence one winter. We got mainly racoon which were processed at Victoria and sold to members of the staff. In winter there was skating on the frozen swamps. The nearest doctor was thirty miles distant by water and a dentist called twice a year. We had a good library and a billiard table for the sporting types.

Two and a half years later I was due for long leave, accumulated on the basis of one month for each year of service. Following the usual farewell parties, three of us left for Victoria, thence three days in Seattle and up to Vancouver. From there it was aboard the "AORANGI" via Honolulu and Suva to Auckland.

After five months leave I resumed in the Auckland office. In 1945 I was transferred to Suva again to augment extra staff under war time pressure.

Here, as in Auckland, the office was sandbagged and boarded up against air attack. I travelled on the old "TOFUA" carrying twice the normal complement of passengers. Twelve of us slept on mattresses on hard boards in the forward hold. Women were accommodated in tiered bunks in the saloon - known as "the jungle". The ship zigzagged all the way to Suva and complete black-out above decks at night prevailed as a precaution against submarines. This was definitely not the first class travel we had been accustomed too. There being no other accommodation I was booked into the Pier Hotel for the two years I was there. We were well-looked after to the extent that meals were brought to the office during long shifts. We had little time for outside activities for the first year until life in general got back to normal.

During World War One a German warship put a landing party ashore on Fanning Island to completely wreck all the communications gear and cut cables thus rendering the station useless. Some time later they did manage to re-establish communications.

In view of that, three days before World War 2 was officially declared, a contingent of thirty army personnel with two officers was despatched from Auckland aboard H.M.S. LEANDER to defend the station against possible attack. It was considered that the secrecy of cable communication was most vital.

I returned to Auckland in 1947 where I remained until retirement in 1958, compulsory retirement at the age of 55 after 38 years of continuous shift work.

About 1930, the Pacific Cable Board, together with other Cable Companies became Imperial and International Communications Ltd, shortly afterwards becoming Cables and Wireless. It is not a public liability company operating cables worldwide in conjunction with three satellites placed 35,000 Km above the earth in a line with the equator through which it is possible to reach any part of the world. Nine cable-laying and repair ships are based in various parts of the world.

So today, in conjunction with 113 countries, we have world wide coverage by cable and satellite in communications. In 1991 a new cable will be laid between Sydney and Auckland of the new fibre optic type capable of handling 100,000 simultaneous telephone conversations - which, looking back on my days, is quite incredible.

COMMUNICATIONS IN ANTARCTICA

By Vince Gibson

Communications in Antarctica can be difficult at times, so it may be some time before that part of the story begins, so much happens before any communicating starts.

Apart from previous thoughts of going to Antarctica, it all begins when an application is made in response to an ad in the Sydney Morning Herald some time in February. Nothing happens for some months when suddenly a letter is received requesting an interview. More silence for a month or so and then things begin to happen, dates and times for medical, X-ray, blood tests and a psychological examination, hadn't had a medical for twenty years or more so was somewhat apprehensive. All went well until the blood pressure test when the doctor said 'You won't be going to Antarctica with that blood pressure, you had better lie down for a while and I will try again in half an hour'. Of course it was impossible to relax with all sorts of thoughts going through my mind, high blood pressure, missing out on Antarctica etc, but on retesting there was no problem and was I relieved.

Down for the X-ray, a building near Hay street, sitting on hard wooden benches about a dozen people waiting their turn, no magazines or books to pass the time but we were kept entertained by the girl at the desk who asked particulars of all in such a loud and penetrating voice, we all knew the intimate history of all present. Up to Macquarie street for a blood test and a few days later the psychological test in Grace building in York street. Run by the Army, very military, the corporal called us in from the waiting room with the injunction "Follow me", setting off in a very brisk march, we had to give a little trot at times to keep him in sight along the corridors. It was a long demanding test of two or three hours with an interview at the end.

All I had to do now was wait, in the meantime hearing all sorts of rumours about there being 7,000 applicants and that 60% failed the medical and the same figure for the psychological, however it was sometime in August working in the S.O.R. one day when I heard on the grapevine that I was going to Antarctica. The rumour became confirmed, I was given what leave I had owing and that was spent getting things in order at home for almost eighteen months absence.

It was some time in October when I finally flew down to Melbourne to join the AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL ANTARCTIC RESEARCH EXPEDITION known shortly as ANARE, living in a boarding house in St Kilda road, which was a bit of a comedown after all the comforts of home for so many years. The next day or so was mainly spent in administration work, meeting the other expeditioners, looking with great interest at all the pictures of Antarctica which hung on the walls and beginning to live in an atmosphere of expectancy of a wonderful new adventure. The personnel at each base consisted of a group of scientists and a support group, depending on the type of scientific work done so the type of support group varied slightly. It consisted basically of Officer in Charge, mainly an administrator and coordinator, Doctor, Cook, Carpenter, Plumber, Electrician, Diesel Mechanics, Meteorological staff, Radio Technicians and Radio Operators. The scientific staff at this particular base consisted of Glaciologist, Electronic Engineer, Surveyor, an upper air Physicist and one year there were a couple of American scientists stationed at our base. We did not meet all the personnel of our base until we embarked on the boat.

However going back to our first few days at the Antarctic Division, a week after arrival there was orientation week, a week of lectures and films on subjects ranging from cold climate clothing, travel on snow, ice and sea ice, personality problems in isolation, first aid, health and hygiene, prevention of cold injuries, elementary navigation, survival in Antarctica, fire protection and control and many more, interspersed with films. This was a whole new world of experience.

Shortly we were given our clothing issue, such heavy warm clothing it seemed at the time but did not realise that it was only our summer clothing for Antarctica, the winter clothing was kept down there at the base. Another day was spent at the Fire Brigade Headquarters learning as much as we could about fire fighting, as fire is one of the biggest hazards at the base, the air is so dry and everything is devoid of moisture, water for most of the time is just another mineral. Others days were spent out at the store at Port Melbourne, giving a hand packing into boxes all the stores required at the bases during the year. Towards the end of October we went to Falls Creek, up in the mountains for four days, becoming accustomed to the equipment gear and

clothing we would be using down south, also some training in skiing, climbing out of crevasses and other survival skills. During the four days we lived in tents, cooking our own food from emergency packs, sleeping on the snow and at the end of the four days we were given a 16 kilometer trek around the mountains.

Eventually the time came for the first expeditioners going to Macquarie Island to leave on the ship the Nella Dan. The ranks were somewhat depleted when they left and a little later towards early December the same ship left for Davis and Mawson further depleting the ranks, it seemed as if our time for leaving would never come. However Christmas came and we all returned home for a few days and on returning to Melbourne it was final packing and then off on the boat, the Thala Dan, a Danish boat that plied between Denmark and Greenland during the European summer, a boat of 2000 tons and about 200 feet long, specially built to withstand and travel in ice but not an icebreaker. A boat which rolled a lot in heavy seas, but we only found this out when storms hit us. Just after leaving port we had lunch whilst sailing down Port Phillip bay and in about five hours we arrived at the entrance to the bay and we felt the first rise and fall of the ocean and realised that the next few days were going to be difficult. We had sea sickness pills which we took freely and we turned into zombies, a good way to be until we found our sea legs.

A very severe storm hit us only about three days out, in the middle of the night we were awakened by the crashing sound of loose luggage being thrown around the cabins. One moment we would be almost standing on our heads in our bunks and the next almost standing upright, it was impossible to sleep. On board they had a meter to register the degree of list and it reached 53 degrees at one stage. Lying in the bunk one would wonder whether the ship would right itself again, but after hours of wondering at each time it rolled one became confident in the ability of the boat to weather the storm. The meals on the boat were excellent, it was a pity that we could not appreciate them for the first few days. When we went on deck again we admired the graceful flight of the Albatross, so economical in their flight, gliding hour after hour around and around the ship with no beating of the wings. Each day was always a little colder than the previous one, the seas improved when we passed below the roaring forties, so aptly named.

I will conclude this episode with an extract from a diary I kept throughout the year. This extract was written on Friday 19 January, nine days after leaving Melbourne.

"Have been busy today writing all my letters, we expect to be in Casey about Sunday and we will then be extremely busy for some time unloading the ship, sorting our cargo, taking over the station etc.

Today has been eventful, the first ice bergs were visible on radar from midnight last night. There was a thick mist this morning preventing us seeing any visually, it was after lunch before the first one was seen, a large one a couple of miles away. After the mist cleared this morning drizzle came on for about ten minutes then it snowed for a couple of hours or more, a wind from the south behind it, the temperature dropping to 1c. It has been fine since but completely cloudy all day. There is a very large berg coming up on our starboard side and should be alongside in about half an hour. It is a huge tabular shaped berg, flat topped with vertical sides. The other type with triangular peaks, some of them having two or three peaks are old tabular ones that have turned over.

We are just below 60 degrees south and 124 east after lunch today. There have

been several schools of killer whales passing close to the ship today, but unfortunately have not been on deck when they passed. Notice there is roast pork for dinner this evening, it is nice to be able to appreciate food once more after the rough weather. Films on this evening, with Danish pastries and cocoa at 8pm. It is now light 24 hours of the day.

OVERSEAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS VETERANS ASSOCIATION (QUEENSLAND)

MINUTES OF THE 15TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD IN THE OTC BRISBANE OFFICE ON 15TH MAY 1990

PRESENT President Keith Vincent and Sadie, Jim and Beryl Banks, Denis and Eve Bloudani, Kevin Bodridge, Blue Easterling, Alf and Heather Gooby, Alan Jones, Dean and Alma Laws, Doug and Cecily Lloyd, John and Mildred Norris, David Rogers, Vince Sim and John and Betty Toland. Also present were NSW Veterans Bruce and Ena Collett and Mick and Betty Wood, together with visitors Joe Johnston and John Bailey. OTC Brisbane Office staff were present for part of the meeting.

President Keith opened the meeting at 12.20pm and after welcoming all present and our visitors and NSW colleagues in particular, called for a minute's silence in remembrance of Les Doubleday and other former colleagues.

APOLOGIES were received from Rowley Lane, Stan Silver, Laz Eliou, Paddy Phipps-Ellis, Bob Hooper, Sid Gill, Wilf Atkin, Brian Callaghan (NSW), Bob Webster, Les Ayres, Lou Heggie, Eric Cramp, Peter Starbuck, Kevin Hiscock, Alan Rees, Denis Humphreys and Pat Gray whilst John Taylor, Manager of Brisbane MCS, had to apologise at the last minute with station problems.

MINUTES of the 14th AGM, held on 4 May 1989 were read and adopted. Correspondence related only to apologies and notices. The Financial Statement was then presented showing a current account balance of \$205.51. This was approved.

PRESIDENT Keith then presented his annual report, which mourned the passing of several old friends but also described the happy reunion with others at the second Bogga function at his home in January. He thanked OTC State Manager John Blewett for the use of his office for our annual meetings, Glenys Baldwin for the excellent catering and Secretary/Treasurer Jim Banks for his ongoing efforts. The report was adopted.

The chair was then passed to an independent chairman, Mick Woods, for the election of officers for 1990-91. In best Queensland style, Mick advised that existing office bearers were henceforth re-elected, viz: President Keith Vincent, Secretary/Treasurer Jim Banks and Honorary Auditor John Norris.

Resuming the Chair, President Keith then introduced General Business and asked that we discuss the membership question brought up in the latest Newsletter. Jim Banks advised the meeting that at the inaugural meeting of the Queensland Veterans Association in 1975 the formal Veterans Association Constitution was presented by the General Secretary, Charles Carthew and after discussion and because of the small numbers then eligible in Queensland and likely to remain so, it was agreed to amend that constitution such that eligibility would be for males with 20 years service in appropriate fields and for females with 15 years service. Other minor adjustments dispensed with Committee members other than office bearers and fixed annual dues at \$2 per member per annum.

It was agreed unanimously at the meeting that we saw no merit in varying the constitution as adopted in 1975. It was further stated that whilst acknowledging the pride taken in having served for 20 or 25 years, the objectives of this branch were primarily to enable and encourage ongoing fellowship between those who had served together in the overseas and Maritime telecommunications fields. Those whose service fell short of the requirements were always very welcome at our meetings, as were our wives and other friends.

With no other general business, the date of the next reunion was set as Tuesday 13 November 1990 providing this is suitable to the Manager, Brisbane MCS ('VIB') which will be the venue.

The meeting closed at 12.44pm and was followed by the usual good food and fellowship.

THE 1990 MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The end of a year and a decade, in trying to recall events over the past ten years makes the mind boggle, the changes in the methods of communications seems to indicate the swinging of a pendulum - our first means was by undersea cable, then came radio, then co-axial cable systems, then a swing to satellite systems and now back to fibre-optic undersea cable systems, what will the next century bring???

All of this is over for the majority of Overseas Telecommunications Veterans but never-the-less we ought to continue to have an interest in the profession that occupied most of our working life.

It is sad to report the passing of Les Doubleday on 24 August 1989 it is also sad to note the passing of Claude Dalley on the 9 February and of (Gentleman) Jack Lee on the 7 March. Also Jock Cowie, Bert Dudley and Eric Symes, these were fully reported in the Vets Newsletter. We mourn their passing.

The Christmas function at VIB on the 14 November was again well attended and well hosted by the staff of the station. Our grateful thanks for their attention to this annual event.

Australia Day week-end brought the second "Bogga" function which was held at the Vincents at Bogangar, the attendance was great, almost as many as the first "Bogga". Thanks to John Norris for the write-up in the Vets Newsletter. We are looking forward to next year for a similar reunion.

The now regular visit from down south by the John Toland's, Bruce Collett's, Ray Baty's and Mick Woods' for the annual VFL match. Sydney Swans vs Brisbane Bears, saw Laws, Batys, Collett's, Woods, Vincent's and the Toland's at Carrara. The Swans were beaten (again) by the Bears, however it finished up an exciting game and maybe next year will bring a surprise result.

The Newsletter has brought to our attention the matter of -Membership-, as each Branch is autonomous, the feelings of our Branch ought to be conveyed to the National Secretary and this subject will be discussed at this A.G.M.

Again, my thanks to OTC for allowing use of their facilities, to State Manager, John Blewett, to VIB Manager, Dick Westwood and Staff, to Glenys Baldwin for her very capable assistance in many ways and to Secretary/Treasurer Jim Banks.

Here's looking forward to next year.

KEITH VINCENT.

OVERSEAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS VETERANS ASSOCIATION (QUEENSLAND)

There were twelve Queensland and two NSW Veterans at the 15th AGM of the Queensland Vets, held in the palatial offices of OTC in Brisbane on 15 May, plus two male guests and ten wives. Up from Sydney to see the Sydney Swans (and formerly South Melbourne) thrashed once again by the Brisbane Bears, were Bruce Collett and Mick Woods. It was our pleasure that they stayed over to join us at our AGM. There were, in fact, two other NSW-ites there, too. President Keith Vincent and John Toland, but they have now been granted full passport rights as honorary Queenslanders.

On the other hand, for probably the first time in our fifteen years, there was no representative from Brisbane Radio present! John Taylor, the new Manager now that Dick Westwood has headed south, was coming but last minute problems kept him at the station. The problems may have been Laz Eliou and Paddy Phipps-Ellis, both of whom were on duty, or even Alan Rees, just off nights - we don't know. We do know that we'd like to see more of the old CRS bods coming down to the 'big smoke'.

Others who had to apologise included Rowley Lane, gallivanting around in Melbourne of all places; Stan Silver (we'll get him to a meeting yet...); Sid Gill, UK-bound; Wilf Atkin, a bit too old to travel but far from too old to reminisce well, judging by Newsletters; Les Ayres, Lou Heggie, Eric Cramp, Kev Hiscock and Peter Starbuck (all without a good excuse); Denis Humphreys who had to go to Ballina (what on earth for?); Bob Hooper, who gets a bit tired these days; and Pat Gray, flat out trying to get the flowers to grow in his new home at Bargara, near Bundaberg. Pat, ever the old navy man, sent his MRU's - Much Regret Unable - on a most appropriate flower-covered card!

All those present looked in excellent shape, or should I say condition! Their wives looked much better, however; wasn't it an excellent idea to have them along! Several of the wives had served together on remote stations - Guam, Fanning and the like and have just as much to reminisce about as the menfolk, maybe more. (And they come in very handy for driving home, too....)

JIM BANKS

FROM THE O.T.V.A. QUEENSLAND BRANCH

Just a note, perhaps for the newsletter to advise that one of our members, Eric Cramp, passed away in Redcliffe hospital on 15 June. We are not sure of the cause: we suspect it was cancer. Eric, who was originally from New Zealand, was 78 and we believe he was survived by a brother. He asked, though, that his funeral be a private one and unattended.

I am grateful to Laz Eliou for gathering the facts for the following brief biography:

"Eric Cramp came to Australia from New Zealand just before World War II. He joined the Australian Army and was one of the "Rats of Tobruk". On returning to Australia in 1942, however, he transferred to the RAAF and trained as a Wireless Operator - Airgunner. He flew with the RAAF over Europe and on one occasion was shot down, crashing in England and suffering burned hands in trying unsuccessfully to rescue his pilot.

After the war, Eric began a career as a technician with broadcast stations, starting at 4CA, Cairns, until he joined OTC as a Radio Officer in 1956, beginning at La Perouse. He served as a relieving officer in Lae, Brisbane, Thursday Island, Rockhampton and Norfolk Island before being sent to Brisbane Radio in 1971 as a permanent relieving officer for the Queensland stations. He resigned in 1980 and settled on Bribie Island, where his main hobbies were fishing and cycling".

Eric will be missed by us all; he was a thinking man, courteous and conscientious always.

I believe I have already advised that the next meeting up here will be our 16th Annual Reunion, to be held at Brisbane MCS on Tuesday 13 November. I trust you will onpass our greetings to the other branches for their meetings as usual. Many thanks, Alan, to you and to 'Newsletter' for the excellent job you both do.

Sincerely

JIM BANKS

THE DAY THE WAR STARTED

By Gordon Cupit

Prior to the war, the old Head Office of AWA, at 47 York Street was pulled down and the frame of the new building taking shape. The Beam Room was temporarily housed in 39 York Street (corner of Erskine Street, opposite the Occidental Hotel, with the Cosmopolitan Hotel at the rear). Could not have been a worse location for the old reprobates in the Beam. Many an hour was idly spent peering across the road into the windows of the Occidental, and many a good man snuk out the back door across the lane into the Cosmopolitan - but that is another story). The Beam Room and messenger despatch were on the ground floor, and the Beam accounts on the First Floor. The rest of the AWA

Head Office was located in 72 Clarence Street, at the rear of the old 47 York Street.

On the day that the war started, I was the Invoicer at the Beam Counter, usually doing a 3pm to 10pm shift. The Counter Officer did the Counter Sheets during the morning and the Invoicer had the job of Invoicing those messages as the first task of the day. At that time, most of the business traffic was lodged as CDE, that is five letter code. Most of the clients used the normal business code books, such as Bentley's Acme etc., with a few having their own code. This day, due to the declaration of war, the business houses lodged a record number of messages and as a result, I was brought in early to help with the load.

When I arrived, I found that they were already preparing for war, with the building having a couple of armed guards, one patrolling York Street and the other Erskine Street. Fixed bayonets and all. Sand bags had been placed around the doors, and men were busy fixing chicken or bird wire over the windows in case of sabotage or bombing. Also that the censors had moved in, and were housed on the first floor with the Accounts. All messages had to pass through them between invoicing and preparation for onward transmission. I was given a messenger to take the messages to and from the censors.

The censors, do doubt from orders higher up, agreed that clients could still lodge code messages, provided they were in one of the regular business codes and the name of that code advised and forwarded to the office of destination. As a result, code messages were lodged all day long and well into the night. Even some clients who normally did not lodge code, were using the code books at the counter, also causing the heavy load. I was still on duty at 11pm, with Dave Quinn coming on as night Supervisor, when alas, a message came back from London, that all code messages were stopped by the authorities in that city and that clients should relodge all messages in plain language. Also that there was heavy delays on European traffic. This sent Dave into a real panic - not an unusual occurrence and it was decided to immediately phone all clients, where we had after hour phone numbers and the rest to be advised early the next morning. All the counter staff were kept on all night on this task and all through the next day. I managed to cease duty at midnight the following night. An experience not to be forgotten.

Where were you and what were you doing, the day the War started, and how did it affect your job. We have some good war stories from people on Pacific Islands and those in Papua New Guinea, but what about all you guys and ladies on the mainland and other places. How about sending in your story, there must be many of them and they are all important to our history and records.

SETTLEMENT TO SATELLITES EXHIBITION

Provided by Kimberley O'Sullivan

The Museum of Victoria has invited OTC to extend the Exhibition's original 12 months season to 18 months to include the 1990/91 Christmas holidays.

OTC Exhibition Coordinator, Adrienne Leith has been working with the Victorian Ministry of Education representatives at the Museum of Victoria, developing an education program. This includes a touch trolley with bits and pieces that students can play with, touch and write about (cables, old photographs, an old wireless) and a signposted exhibition trail.

Epson Computer Pals Across the World is now becoming part of the Exhibition education program. Epson Computer Pals communicate with each other and with schools around the world using OTC Dialcom. They will be invited to send questions to the Museum about science, technology and communications issues and student visitors to the Museum will be able to return answers.

The highly popular videophones are being serviced after being displayed at Comms '90 and the Career Expo. They are a bit battered and bruised from the 60,000 monthly visitors that come to the Exhibition in Melbourne.

OTC Faxlink held a buffet luncheon at the Exhibition on Tuesday, 27 February for Melbourne's facsimile vendors. The function was a great success with an enormous amount of interest being shown in both the Exhibition and the Faxlink product.

The biggest day for the Settlement to Satellites Exhibition for March was the Moomba Festival Parade Day, when over 6,000 people visited the Exhibition.

Settlement to Satellites is the "walkway" between the entrance to the Museum and the Taonga Maori Exhibition, also being sponsored by OTC. Many of the visitors to the Maori Exhibition and to special New Zealand/Maori functions have enjoyed their walk through Settlement to Satellites.

An Easter competition was run at the Taonga Maori Exhibition at the Museum of Victoria, with the prize being three free international telephone calls to the value of \$30 each, which were given away over the Easter holiday period. The competition was open to children under 16 years of age and involved answering a simple question about the Exhibition.

Settlement to Satellites was again a participant in Senior Citizens Week. Senior citizens visiting the Exhibition during Senior Citizens Week were asked to answer questions about the Exhibition. A draw was made at the end of each day for an overseas telephone call to the value of \$50. This was promoted through the Victorian Premier's Department.

Settlement to Satellites together with OTC's Melbourne Office are hosting visits by Victorian schools through the Know Biz Program. This involves students in Year 10 learning about career opportunities at OTC in technical, sales and administrative areas.

There will also be an OTC Dialcom display at the NSTC focusing on Aboriginal rock band Scrap Metal. They use OTC Dialcom to keep in touch with their agent who is in Sydney. The band is based in Broome.

Tandy are supplying the computer hardware for the 'Scrap Metal' display, which consists of a replica of Scrap Metal's touring VW Combi Van, inside of which is a Tandy model 100 with modem which links the band to the world beyond Broome.

ROY DOOHAN VALE

Roy died in hospital on the Gold Coast on 5 August. He had only been in hospital a few days with a heart ailment, which together with diabetes, a gammy leg and bad eyesight had been a problem for the last couple of years. He was cremated up north and his ashes sent to Sydney so that he could join his wife Elsie who had died some 10 years ago. A memorial service was held at the Northern Suburbs Cemetery and a number of his old workmates were in attendance.

Roy joined Eastern Extension in O'Connell Street in the early 20's and spent the most of his career as a transmitter clerk in the cable service working around the clock with chaps like Percy Love, Will and Jackie Chant. Roy's wife Elsie was in poor health for a number years, which deteriorated to the extent that he was unable to continue shift work, so in 1954 Fred Hales arranged for him to be transferred to the Records Section. He was later promoted to Records Officer, a position he held until his retirement. Roy was an outstanding penman and his numerous entries on the index and other records etc will remain for posterity.

Roy was always a hard and benevolent worker, an active member of the Social and Sports Club, the man behind the Staff Balls, very prominent in organising the childrens Christmas picnics, operated the SOR staff canteen and aided in the staff purchasing scheme. It was indeed a pleasure to work with Roy.

In retirement he could not stop work and assisted his son in law in running a take away and grocery business on the Gold Coast. He got great pleasure in helping and meeting the customers.

Roy will be sadly missed by all that had contact with him.

FROM THE CROW EATERS (SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH O.T.V.A)

The A.G.M. of the O.T.V. Association (South Australia branch) was held on 24 May 1990 at the OTC Maritime Centre at McLaren Vale at 12.30pm.

Only seven members were in attendance, namely Geoff Cox, President, Harry Stone, Secretary, Max Lang, Fred Reeve, Ken Springbett, Keith Parker and Dennis Maher who was duly welcomed by our President Geoff Cox. Apologies were received from Dick Inwood who is travelling overseas, George Rowe, Dudley Treliving, Hugh Taylor, and Ken Collett.

The only correspondence was a letter from Mrs Mary Brady concerning the demise of her late husband "Bill" Brady who intended joining the Veterans Association but passed away before being able to do so. Frank (Bill) Brady punched keys at VIA when the station was located on Grand Junction road, Rosewater. A minutes silence was observed for our "Silent Keys". One other letter was received from the NSW Secretary, Alan Arndt, containing an updated veterans' mailing list as at 30 April 1990.

The Treasurer's Annual Report was read to the meeting, acceptance moved by Fred Reeve and seconded by Keith Parker. Our bank balance of \$152.75 is largely due to the dispensation of OTC Manager, Fred Reeve and the catering magic of his secretary Rhonda Hunt.

The election of officers resulted in the re-election of Geoff Cox as President and Harry Stone as Secretary/Treasurer for the following year.

GENERAL BUSINESS concerning three items was discussed. The date and venue of the next Annual Christmas get-together was set at 12.30pm Thursday 22nd November 1990. A debate on the pros and cons of shortening the Vet's eligibility period to 20 years favoured the 20 year term, with some thought to be given to associate membership. This would indeed help with the South Australian branch as two of the existing staff members of OTC Maritime Station would be immediately eligible. The third item was the impending 100th birthday of our oldest member, Cliff Birks, in July and the representation of the O.T.V.A and possible OTC at the proposed family function. A copy of his autobiography is attached.

Appreciation was offered to OTC Manager Fred Reeve and his secretary, Rhonda Hunt by our President Geoff Cox for their efforts in making the venue available and providing a delightful lunch and refreshments.

HARRY STONE
HON. SECRETARY

O.T.V.A. SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

The following report has been received from Harry Stone, Hon. Secretary of our South Australian branch.

President Geoff Cox and myself attended the 100th anniversary of our oldest living veteran Cliff Birks on 6 July 1990. This was held in Myrtlebank War Veterans' Home in Adelaide and was attended by some one hundred friends, relatives and guests. It was quite a convivial gathering, helped along with the usual assortment of good wines, champagne and the old nut brown ale. This was particularly appreciated by myself, as for once, I was not the driver of our transport, which had kindly been provided by Geoff Cox, which enabled me to give it a nudge or three.

We had arrived a little late and had missed the speeches and having spotted the oldest - looking bloke in a wheel chair, who appeared to be the centre of attraction Geoff and I button-holed him and plied him with questions about his illustrious history and achievements. This went on for about ten minutes when a lady approached us and asked if we would like to meet the guest of honour. Geoff and I looked at each other and at our presumed "celebrity" who never turned a hair. We then proceeded to meet the real Cliff Birks, who turned out to be the youngest-looking veteran there.

He was occasionally sipping from a glass of red wine and obviously enjoying himself. His eyes were bright and alert, his conversation quick with relevant replies and his memories of his days in communications as a telegraphist quite vivid. A truly remarkable man for his age. As Geoff and I both agreed, he didn't look any older than a young seventy.

Telegrams and messages of congratulations from the Queen, the Prime Minister, the Premier and various other notables (including O.T.C. and O.T.V.A.) were read out with much acclamation from the guests present.

The birthday "spread" was quite a sumptuous buffet complete with birthday cake (not enough room for the 100 candles though) and had obviously been well organised with plenty of work, thought and of course, finance, going into it; indeed a credit to the organisers who had made it a day to remember for our oldest surviving veteran, Cliff Birks.

Best regards to you, Alan, Ando and all my good friends wherever you may be.

HARRY STONE
HON. SECRETARY

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF CLIFF BIRKS (O.T.V.A. SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH)

As you will see elsewhere in this edition, Cliff Birks, celebrated his 100 years birthday on 6 July 1990 making him our oldest living veteran, so it appears to me that it would be appropriate to give a thumb-nail sketch of the man in this edition of NEWSLETTER.

Cliff was born on 6 July 1890 He says

"My Great-grandparents, George and Hannah Birks and their family of six sons and one daughter, came to South Australia in 1839. They settled in Angaston where he was the first doctor in that town. One of his sons, Alfred James, married Catherine Salter of Angaston and their eldest son, Alfred Percy, was my father."

When I was two years old, my father and his brother bought a farm at Clare. I had my early schooling at Clare, followed by two years (1904-1905) in Prince Alfred College in Adelaide.

In 1907, I applied and was accepted as a probationer in the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company and was trained as a cable-telegraph operator. In 1910 I was transferred to Perth and later served in Singapore, Cocos and Banjoewangie (Java).

In 1913 I resigned from the Cable Co and returned to Clare and helped my father establish the "Wendowree" Wine Cellars. I, with the engineer from an Adelaide firm, installed the power plant and equipment and I managed the grape-crushing for the 1914 and 1915 vintages.

World War 1 started in 1914. I couldn't leave until after the 1915 vintage, but I enlisted in June 1915 and on account of my "telegraphic background" I was drafted into the Signals section at Mirham Camp. Later in 1915 I embarked on S.S. Berrima with reinforcements for the A.I.F. We joined a convoy of five other transports and escorted by a cruiser, went via Capetown to England.

After some advanced training in England, we crossed to France and I joined the 5th Australian Division Signal Company. I served with that unit in France and Belgium throughout the war.

In April 1918 I was caught in a barrage of mustard gas at Corbie in France and was badly burned and temporarily blinded. Was in hospital at Le Tresport on the French coast for about six weeks, then after a short spell in a convalescent camp, I rejoined the unit late in July and served until the war ended.

I returned to Australia in 1919 and married Katherine Yeatman in October of that year.

I had obtained a house and 30 acres of land adjoining my father's property under the Soldier Settlement Plan and in the years 1920 to 1922 I planted it with wine-grape vines.

I thought I was settled for life until I received a letter from Mr S.S. Ringwood, (Supt. C & W Adelaide) asking if I would rejoin the Company. This was during World War 2. After an interview with him I accepted but it wasn't easy to adapt to the different procedure which was very different to the old Simpson Recorder working.

I eventually managed to cope and stayed with the Company until the Adelaide office closed in 1948.

I didn't return to Clare. My wife was in poor health so I sold my Clare property and bought a house in an Adelaide suburb. I worked with the Electricity Trust of S.A. until 1956 and then with the Institute of Technology (Electronics Department) and finally retired in 1966 at the age of 76.

My wife died in 1971 and I entered the War Veterans' Home at Myrtle Bank, South Australia in 1973."

EDITORIAL THANKS GO THE CLIFF BIRKS FOR SHARING WITH US THE BACKGROUND OF A REMARKABLE BLOKE.

GIVING CREDIT WHERE IT IS DUE

The editor of NEWSLETTER wishes to thank the following Veterans for showing enough interest to take time to send articles for publication.

George Russell	Gordon Cupit	Harold H Le Quesne	Brian Wallace
Fred Studman	Vince Gibson	Jim Banks	Kimberley O'Sullivan
Harry Stone	David Marshall	R.B. Scott	Dave A Smith

REMEMBER The fate of O.T.V.A. and this NEWSLETTER is the hands of OTC Ltd and its tenure is now uncertain with the proposed privatisation/merger with Telecom. It would be a pity for the experiences, yarns, reminiscences experienced by you, the pioneers of telecommunications, were lost to posterity and that would be the case if this outlet closes.

For those of you who can't write, how about getting a group together, with a few beers, a microphone and a tape recorder and spin a few yarns. Something or someone you might mention could trigger off the memories of others and that is what we and your archivist, Kimberley O'Sullivan are after. GIVE IT SOME THOUGHT.

EXTRACT FROM SPYCATCHER

by Peter Wright

Before World War I Britain decided that a long-wave radio system should be built to replace the cable systems as the principal means of communication with the Empire. The decision was held in abeyance during the war. But Marconi believed it was possible to project short wavelength transmissions over vast distances using beams. The use of short wavelength beams promised a greater volume of traffic at much higher speeds. Despite the advances in wireless made during the war, Marconi's vision was derided as "amateur science" by a Royal Commission in 1922. One member even concluded that radio was a "finished art".

Marconi issued a challenge. He offered to build, free of charge, any link across the world - provided the government would suspend long-wave development until the beam system had passed its trial and provided they would adopt it if the trials were successful. The Government agreed and specified the toughest contract they could devise. They asked for a link from Grimsby to Sydney and demanded that it operate 250 words a minute over a twelve-hour period during the trials without using more than twenty kilowatts of power. Finally they demanded that the circuit be operational within twelve months.

These were awesome specifications. Radio was still in its infancy and little was known about generating power at stable frequencies. The project would have been impossible without the commitment of the Marconi technical team, consisting of my father, Captain H.J. Round and C.S. Franklin. Marconi had a special talent for finding brilliant scientists who were largely self-taught. He found Franklin, for instance, trimming arc lamps in an Ipswich factory for a few shillings per week. Within a few years he rose to become the outstanding technical man in the Company.

The proposed Grimsby-Sydney link astounded the rest of the radio communications industry. My father often described in later years walking down Broadway with David Sarnoff, the then head of RCA when the project was at its height.

"Has Marconi gone mad?" asked Sarnoff. "This project will finish him. It'll never work".

Father replied "Marconi and Franklin think it will".

"Well, you can kick my ass all the way down Broadway if it does," said Sarnoff.

Three months later the circuit was operational, on contract time. It worked twelve hours a day for seven days at 350 words a minute and was, in my view, one of the great technical achievements of this century. My father's only regret was that he never took the opportunity to kick Sarnoff's ass all the way down Broadway.

Submitted by David Marshall VK2BZM.

FROM OUR CANADIAN FRIENDS

Harold H Le Quesne

First of all I wish to thank you for continuing to send me your NEWSLETTER, the latest being the April, 1990 edition, I still look forward to receiving and reading the NEWSLETTER, still finding names of colleagues whom I knew in past years in the communications service. I note that your President, Gordon Cupit, takes a great interest in all facets of the Association and with your contributions, you have an Association to be proud of.

Our Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe Canada (Western Chapter) held its Seventeenth Annual Meeting and Dinner at the Harrison Resort Hot Springs, Saturday 21 April 1990. A motion was unanimously passed by members conveying very best wishes and fraternal greetings to all members and wives of the OTVA (NSW) Branch, and for continuing good health to all. The same wishes were also expressed to our Honorary Life Member, Charles W Carthew (Australia).

My wife Katherine and I have tentative plans to revisit New South Wales this coming November when we would look forward to visiting with many relatives and friends.

The very best wishes to you and yours.

Fraternally,

HAROLD H. Le QUESNE

A HISTORY OF SIGNALLING

By R.B. Scott (Canada)

(Written at the request of the Maritime Museum of B.C. in 1970)

Man's ability to communicate at a distance was originally limited by the factors of sight and sound. Grunts, shouts and waving arms covered intermediate distances, while drums, fires and smoke signals carried information to distant horizons: these forms of communication are still in use among some native races.

The need of some form of signals to control the movements of large armies and navies led to the use of flags. As early as 800BC the Persians used the apron of a blacksmith as a standard around which to rally in revolt. An operational signal was used at the naval battle of Salamis in 480BC, when a red cloak tied to an oar instructed the Greek ships to swing around and attack the Persians.

The first to suggest an actual system of signals to control the movement of a fleet appears to have been the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI in the tenth century. "Let there be some standard in your ship," he said, "either a banner or a streamer or something else in some conspicuous position to the end you may be able thereby to make known what requires to be done." He then drew up a system of signals relating to tactics that could be understood and carried out by ships in a fleet at sea.

In the sixteenth century the practice of firing a cannon or lighting a lantern were also used to convey information.

In 1673 the first book of signals was issued by James, Duke of York. In it he coordinated all existing signal flags, which had become too numerous to remember. Over the next century flag signalling became extremely complicated, each admiral having his own system of communication. In 1799 the Admiralty issued the first universal signal book so that now a ship joining a fleet no longer had to have that particular admiral's private code in order to understand a signal. Signals consisted of 3- and 4-flag hoists and by using a combination of alphabetical letters and numbers with 3- and 4-flag hoists, the signalling vocabulary was increased to 30,000 words.

Around this time a new form of signalling called semaphore was devised and introduced. A sailor with a flag in each extended arm, or a mechanical apparatus consisting of oscillating arms, used various positions for letters of the alphabet. Later, lanterns were used for lighting the arms at night. Verrey lights, rockets, whistles and bells were also used to convey specific kinds of information.

In 1840 communications changed radically with the invention of the telegraph, a system of signalling over a wired circuit, using a key to make and break the continuity of the electrical circuit with a system of dots and dashes known as the Morse Code. This 'make and break' system also lent itself to artificial light as well as sunlight and in 1867 the first flashing lamp appeared. There were two types, the first using shutters to obscure and expose the light and latterly, an incandescent light was keyed like a telegraph circuit. The heliograph (meaning sun writer), a set of mirrors which gave a brilliant flash when positioned to reflect the sun, was also introduced around this time.

The telephone closely followed the invention of the telegraph. This system depends on the use of a diaphragm which vibrates in response to sound waves as does the tympanum of the human ear.

The first telegraph systems were simplex, meaning that only one message could be transmitted in one direction at a time. Later a duplex system was introduced, using a 'balanced' wire so that a message could be sent in each direction at the same time over a single wire. Quadruplex systems followed until, now-a-days, systems using hundreds of simultaneous transmissions, both telegraphic and telephonic, over a single wire, have been evolved. The invention of facsimile transmission by means of which photographs and documents can be transmitted over wires and by radio, followed.

It was natural that the system of telegraphy should be extended overseas and in 1866 the first successful cable was laid across the Atlantic Ocean, although unsuccessful attempts had been made ten years earlier. Submarine telegraphy required a new system of signalling because the great electrical capacity of the cables, and the subsequent time lag, inhibited the make and break system. So a system of cable code, similar to that of a seismograph, was used wherein dots were of the same duration as dashes, but appeared above an imaginary line along the centre of a tape and the dashes below.

At the turn of the century Marconi's system of wireless, or radio, telegraphy, using a simple spark coil to generate low-frequency radio waves which radiated outwards from an antenna suspended in air, like ripples generated in a pond by a falling stone, revolutionised communications. Since these signals could be intercepted by an enemy, or anyone having the requisite apparatus, codes and cyphers were introduced to circumvent interception of intelligence.

Today radio telephone, whereby the radio carrier wave is modulated by superimposed audio frequencies, has almost superceded radio telegraphy. Latterly telephony has been extended to submarine cables which previously had been capable only of telegraphy. With a new type of co-axial cable containing built-in amplifiers every twenty miles across the oceans, a system of broad-band transmission, containing scores of telephonic and telegraphic channels of communication, has been introduced, making the old telegraphic cables obsolete.

With the comparatively recent invention of television, what seems to be the ultimate in the transmission of information has been reached. The weakness of radio telegraphy and telephony lies in the fact that its electyromagnetic waves rely upon the Heaviside layer, a region of ionized air sixty to two hundred miles above the earth, which under favorable conditions, reflects the waves back to earth and, in fact, bounces them around it for long-distance transmissions. This system is subject to various degrees of fading, noise interference and complete blackouts during magnetic storms. This was the barrier that radio propagation reached and the only way conditions could be improved was to place a number of satellites in fixed positions around the world so that the impulses could be reliably reflected under most conditions. This is being done. Eventually a system of world-wide communication may be evolved which will link all peoples of the world more closely in everyday life. The more people communicate, the better they understand each other.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF OPERATING

(An obituary written by Dave A Smith for the Quarter Century Club
Western Canada Division in 1977)

Fred Yeomans will be remembered by those who worked with him in the golden days of operating on the cable system which encompassed the earth during the first fifty years of this century.

Fred was born of English parents in Manchester who moved to Cardiff, Wales, where he acquired the characteristics of the Welsh people. In younger days to hear him sing the Welsh national anthem was a treat and he was always willing to oblige.

In 1910, Fred, still in his teens, joined the G.P.O. in Cardiff, qualifying for the post of 'sorting clerk and telegraphist' which was a must in those days. At the outbreak of the war in 1914 he was drafted into the Royal Engineers (signal corps) and landed at Suvla Bay in the mediterranean at the Greek side of the Dardanelles in preparation for the ill-fated campaign to force the Straits and capture Constantinople. It was not to be as events record and Fred was invalided out of the British army due to stomach trouble brought on by dysentery, in the summer of 1917.

At the crucial period of World War 1, in 1916, a submarine cable was secretly laid between Peterhead, Scotland and Alessandrovsk, on the Sea of Murmansk in Northern Russia, to complete communications between London and Petrograd. Specialists were provided from London G.P.O. to train the Russian staff at the Russian terminal in Alessandrovsk and also a similar staff was sent to Peterhead composed of experienced landline and cable operators from the principal post offices in Britain, London, Bristol, Nottingham, Birmingham, Liverpool, Cardiff, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen along with engineers and technicians.

The operators had to master the art of reading and transcribing long cable signals, the cable room being set up on the third floor of the Peterhead post office building. A special landline connected Peterhead with "TS" in G.P.O. H.Q. London. It worked automatically at 80 w.p.m., Creed perforators being used. Compressed air was used to blow the perforations out of the slip instead of by punchblocks as used in hand perforators.

The speeds were synchronised and it was a pleasure to hear the steady rhythm of the equipment going 80 w.p.m. The slips were wound by hand and docketed to go to the cable room section where Muirhead transmitters were used to convert them to cable signals.

Receiving from Russia was not so pleasant, the wavy line having to be gummed down on message forms and passed through to the landline section for transcribing on punched slip by means of Gell Keyboard instruments and also by hand using stick punching perforators, into Morse Code and sent over the duplex landline at 80 w.p.m. to the Creed compressor reperforators in London.

Some of the G.P.O. operators were artists with the punching sticks on the hand perforators, crossing over hands on the figure groups and attaining a good speed.

The younger lads taken on locally were used for office work such as tending the open fire, mailing and learning to transcribe the long cable signals - which was to stand them in good stead later on as they got jobs in the P.C.B. and the Central America Cable system.

Peterhead was a busy place, millions of cypher and figure groups passing between Petrograd and London. Fred Yeomans was transferred to Peterhead cable staff on discharge from the Signal Corps in 1917 and was a welcome addition to the talented staff members already there, including a violinist, singers, comedians, artists, all of whom gave concerts in town for the war effort.

In the summer of 1917 the Bolsheviks took over control of Russia. The Anglo-Russian cable had served its purpose in the war effort. The Peterhead cable station was phased out and the staff returned to their respective headquarters. Some were sent on loan across the Atlantic to Halifax, N.S. to get ready for the re-opening of the Imperial cable between Penzance, Fayal Azores and Halifax. Members on loan were Bert Odonnell, London, Archie Gauntlett from Edinburgh, Oliver Wright and Jimmy Soutar from Aberdeen, Norman Doig from Dundee, Donald McKenzie from Peterhead and Fred Yeomans from Cardiff.

They were to augment the staff which had arrived from Australia and New Zealand in the Pacific section. The prolongation of the war due to submarine action in the Atlantic and the explosion in Halifax Harbour on 6 December 1917, delayed the restoration of the Number One Imperial cable. A number of the Halifax staff were injured with cuts from flying glass, Paul Brady and Jim Henderson most severely.

The cable was restored in 1919 after the armistice and the All Red Route was complete again. The post office men were returned to Britain with the exception of Donald McKenzie, Norman Doig and Fred Yeomans. Fred was transferred to Fanning Island in 1920. From there he went on long leave to Britain and his home town of Cardiff in Wales.

At the end of his leave he returned to duty travelling through Sydney, Auckland, Suva to arrive at Bamfield in 1925. In 1925 he got married to Catherine Wright of Halifax whom he met while stationed there 1917-1920. The marriage took place on the Bamfield cable station with the ceremony being held in the hall. Jim Sherlock, the Superintendent, gave the bride away. The reception was held at the house of Jack and Moragh Turnbull. It was a lively celebration.

The bridal couple embarked on the Mailboat and a fleet of canoes and boats escorted them out into Barkley Sound on their way to Port Alberni. Incidentally, Walter Jaffray slipped into the water while casting off the ropes of the Mailboat.

The Yeomans remained at Bamfield until 1929 when they were transferred to Halifax. They stayed in the Maritimes until World War II, educating son Ken and daughter Glyn there.

In 1947 Fred applied for transfer to Bamfield, due to the state of Catherine's health and on the advice of her doctor. The transfer was not granted so Fred decided on early retirement. They moved to Victoria, Glyn remaining at Dalhousie University to complete her degree.

Fred had further service with the Department of Transport in Victoria for a number of years before going into semi-retirement. Catherine died in 1963. Fred finally called it a day in 1964 and left on a world tour via England returning by way of Australia and New Zealand. He returned to Thurlow Street in Victoria, taking up gardening and carrying on with his Masonic work.

In 1972 his health began to decline after two strokes. He spent some time in Kamloops with his son Ken, finally entering James Bay Lodge where he remained until his death in February.

Fred had a great liking for amateur sports - especially Soccer and Rugby Union football. He was a member of the Wanderers and the North West Arm Canoe and Rowing Clubs. He liked to play the game, win or lose. He showed his versatility in taking to tennis on Fanning Island and Bamfield, defeating Darcy Goldrick in two sets - a feat that few could accomplish!

Fred Yeomans was a great competitor - sometimes controversial!

He leaves pleasant memories of his friendship when we locked horns during the years 1917/1977.

DOUBLE 0 DOUBLE 1

That is the name that was finally decided upon. The Exhibition in Melbourne has grown somewhat since it left Sydney, and all for the better.

Three IDD telephones linking up to locations around the world, similar to the ones at Settlement to Satellites will be installed in the NSTC. They are most popular displays at Settlement to Satellites, but at the NSTC they will be connected via a new service using voice recognition. There will be recorded announcements for OTC services, connections to overseas weather details and information about countries. At the moment this service is used for credit card calling. Also at the Exhibition there will be Alcatel TCC's "Sea Wall". This will show how fibre optic cables are laid along the ocean floor. It will show scenes from Alcatel TCC's Fibre Optic Cable Factory at Botany (NSW) and feature live fish.

Double 0 Double 1 features OTC Switched digital, OTC Vanguard, OTC Data Access, Private Services, Dialcom and OTC Faxlink in its "Over to You" theme. Using these products and services is a good way of helping people to understand what telecommunications can do for them. Both in business and leisure time.

The NSTC (National Science and Technology Centre) began on 13 June 1990.

Double 0 Double 1 arrived packed in half a kilometre of bubble wrap inside two containers, a pantechicon and a flat bed truck. There are 41 separate exhibits, each one telling a part of the communications story - from how we communicate face to face, to how we send our messages into space. It took 7 builders, an electrician, 3 joiners, 2 designers and a project manager - and a cook, 9 hours to unload the truck.

REFLECTIONS ON THE "SETTLEMENT TO SATELLITES" EXHIBITION

When the exhibition was installed in the Paddington terminal of OTC some of us old retirees had our reverie interrupted by a phone call from Head Office and propositioned. NO - not that way! We were told that it was the intention to have two officers, one of the younger blokes who would explain the modern technology exhibits and one of the older blokes, to cover the morse, sounder,

cable, radio receiver and transmitter sections. As most of the operators who handled this type of gear had retired it was proposed that they recall some of them to be at the Exhibition, mainly on the week-ends. A number of us old blokes were propositioned so that it would not have to be the same few who had to give up their week-ends for the whole time the exhibition was in vogue. Why not? quoth I, when I was asked. Could be interesting.

My first day was a Saturday, and I was fortunate to be on with one of the younger operators who had officiated at the exhibition previously, thereby having a few clues on what went on. The exhibition opened at 8am and closed at 5pm (I think). Anyway, we manhandled the sign out onto the footpath near the corner of William and Oxford Streets, ensuring that the arrow indicating the exhibition pointed the right way, that is, toward the OTC building and not across the other side of Oxford Street, and waited at the bottom of the steps on the lower level for the customers to arrive.

The "Free" on the exhibition sign was the operative word. Not much is given away these days, so we got a trickle of rubber-neckers almost immediately. They came in all shapes and sizes - ladies with scarves over their plastic hair-curlers, men with shipping trollies who were cunning enough to realise that it gave them an excellent excuse to knock off a couple of jugs at the local across the road and who found the exhibition a great place to kill a couple of hours whilst they awaited opening time at 10am. Strange as it may seem, these were the ones who became so interested in the exhibits that it was long after opening time before they left.

From around 10am until 12 noon and again from 2pm to about 4pm you could expect what I called "the ankle-biters". These were our future senior citizens and lawgivers who were passing through the ten to 12 year span. They were easily identifiable by traces of chocolate still adhering to the corners of their mouths and vestiges of egg, toast and assorted jams clinging to their tee-shirt fronts. Signs which exhorted the visitors to "Please Don't Touch the Exhibits" acted as an open invitation for them to do just that. With some of them I had to stand with one foot firmly jammed down on the other so that my grand-paternal instincts would not allow one foot or the other to find its way toward the rear division of their Levi's.

They had a few standard favourites within the exhibition which attracted them like flies to a sugar bowl. Located at one end of the room was a video phone which was connected to a similar set-up at the other far extremity. One bunch would make for one phone and the other bunch to the other. There was no doubt that they were "regulars" because they had the procedure off pat. My companion gave me an almost imperceptible nod and I attended one group and he the other. The little monsters would hog the devices to the total exclusion of the "oldies" who also wanted to have a go. It was our job to see that equal opportunity was given young and old and to act as ombudsmen between the girls and boys among the small fry, the girls being the more ebullient of the two sexes.

From there they would flock to the mouse game. This was an exhibit whereby voice commands were fed into a microphone giving the commands of Up, Down Right Left in one of several languages, such as English (which also includes Australian and American), French, German, Spanish, Russian, Japanese and Italian. A button was pushed to commence the game and an electronic mouse appeared at the beginning of a maze, the object being to guide the mouse by voice commands through the maze to the cheese and wine at the other end in the shortest time possible. Some of these kids were phenomenal - they would have the mouse out of the starting gate and into the cheese in about 10-12 seconds flat, whereas I couldn't get the stupid animal through the maze under 23 seconds. Not that I tried while the ankle-biters were around. Never lose face with them, that's my motto.

Their next favourite was the morse key - not that they knew the code, but it didn't take them long to find out that the key gap could be adjusted, and when they had adjusted it so that you could crack walnuts under it, that's when they would commence transmission. I finally beat them at this game by using a pair of long-nose pliers to bind the adjusting screw so that a reasonable and viable gap resulted, at which time they would give it away and go for something else, leaving me to wipe off several layers of sticky lolly from the key knob and slip outside for a couple of soluble aspirin.

Now I don't want you to get the idea that I am anti-kids. Some of the same kids had obviously been to the exhibition during their school days in which they did projects on what they saw, and a lot of the information they had been given had stuck in their memory banks; amazingly so, in the cases of the older ones.

The place was a hive of activity while they were there, then suddenly, as if at some given signal, they would be gone - disappear like a school of fish going off the bite, leaving me with the sweet memory of the look of awe on their faces when I read out to them a message in morse which advised all ships south of the Bass Strait that there was a strong-wind warning from the Strait to Antarctica, "and he didn't even have to write it down on a bit of paper". Of course he didn't, you little twit - it's transmitted on a round band. I knew it by heart.

It is a great thing for an old operator to gain status among the Paddington Ankle-biters. Did my old heart good, I can tell you.

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MORE ABBREVIATIONS AND JARGON

Supplied by Gordon Cupit

AIDS	-	Daily summary & global environment monitor
AMIE	-	Office Automation System
AVD	-	Analogue Voice/Data Service
ATM	-	Asynchronous Transfer Mode
BTI	-	British Telecom International
BISDN	-	Broadband ISDN
Connect 400	-	OTC Dialcom Electronic Messaging System
CT2	-	Personal Mobile Telephone System
EDI/EDGE	-	Electronic Data Interchange Software
EIRP	-	Effective Isotropically Radiated Power
EBU	-	European Broadcasting Union.
EPTL	-	Laos Telecommunications Authority
ESOC	-	European Space Agency Operations Centre
FFS	-	Fee for Service
HAGGLUND	-	All Terrain Tracked Vehicle
HAW-5	-	Usa/Hawaii Optic Fibre Cable
IN	-	Intelligent Networking
ISDN	-	International Integrated Services Digital Network
MOSES	-	Accounts On Line Inquiry System
NETWORK INNOVATIONS	-	Joint OTC/British Telecom Joint Venture Company
OTFC	-	Sydney University Optical Fibre Technology Centre
OTC CALLCARD	-	Telephone Credit Card
OTC VANGUARD	-	OTC National Packet Switch Network
OTC/LAWPOINT	-	Joint Legal Information Services Venture
RFI	-	Radio Frequency Interference
SAMART TELCOMS	-	Thailand Telecom Company
STM	-	Syarikat Telekom Malaysia (Malayian Telecom Body)
SSI	-	Seafloor Surveys International Inc.
SYS-09	-	Long Range, High Resolution Seabed Mapping System
SAC	-	Service Aggregation Centres
SDH	-	Synchronous Digital Hierarchy
TDMA	-	Time Division Multiple Access
TMN	-	Telecommunications Management Network

UTTERLY CONFUSED

By Gordon Cupit

On starting this article, let me point out that I am not siding with any of the political parties and do not wish the following to be considered in that light. In addition, due to the deadline for the Newsletter, I have not carried out any research, but recall history and events to the best of my feeble old brain. Therefore, please forgive me, if there are errors or omissions.

The reason that I decided to put pen to paper, is that I am thoroughly confused with all this talk of micro-economics, privatisation, mergers etc. In the case of International Communications do those making the present big decisions, really understand the implications, and just how involved running a show like OTC, with its overseas counterparts can be. Senator Gareth Evans should have some idea. It would be of assistance if all politicians, including those at the top, read Edgar Harcourt's book "Taming the Tyrant". This book details the problems associated with the development of the industry. I am sure that ex senior officers such as George Maltby, Edgar Harcourt, Jack Hansson, Cyril Vahtrick, Tom Hughes, Ron Knightley to mention a few, together with some of the younger men, who have been involved with overseas conferences and negotiations will agree.

Going back a few years to 1870 when the first cable to Australia was being planned, each of the states were endeavouring to get the cable to land on their shores, or else have the landline come to or through their particular state. In the wash up, South Australia won, the cable landed at Darwin and the Overland Telegraph Line was built. The cable service was a monopoly until 1901, when the Pacific Cable Board, a newly formed organisation, laid a cable across the Pacific with landfall at Southport. By this time state rivalry had more or less disappeared due to Federation. This was the first competition in the industry.

In 1911 the Coastal Radio and Island Radio services came into being. At the start of the First World War, the ship - shore service was taken over by the Navy and Island stations by the Military Expedition Forces. On the cessation of hostilities, both services were handed over to the PMG. AWA finally took over these services in 1922.

The next major event was in 1927, when AWA opened the Beam Wireless Telegraph Service, which brought another competitor into the field. Within 18 months, the wireless service had taken approx 60% of the telegraph traffic and the cable companies were posting their first ever losses. To combat this, the UK authorities combined the cable and wireless services in that country. In 1930, a Beam Radio Telephone service was opened, followed by a Facsimile service in 1934. These monopoly services, together with the successful Beam Telegraph provided record profits to AWA. The double competition between the cable companies was lost when the Eastern Extension Cable Company and the Pacific Cable board merged to form Cable & Wireless Ltd. Both AWA and Cable & Wireless were happy with the profits they were making for the shareholders. They were running their services on a shoestring, with practically no improvements or developments. Not a good recommendation for privatisation.

Then World War II and panic. Censorship was immediately introduced, communication facilities could not handle the load, delays that left a lot to be desired. AWA in its role as a manufacturer of radio equipment played a major part in that field, but nothing much changed in regard to the Beam Service. The cables were working to maximum capacity, and staff shortages due to enlistments in the early stages, called for long shifts by the cable and radio operating staffs.

Bringing all the allied communications services to a wartime role, was a difficult task, so towards the end of the war, at a conference of representatives from British Commonwealth countries, it was decided that governments of all Commonwealth countries would take over the international services of their particular countries. This was the main reason that OTC was born, with a charter to conduct the service efficiently with the least possible cost to the public. To do this, the Commission took over the Beam and Coastal Radio services from AWA and the Australian branches of the cable service from Cable & Wireless. A transition period was necessary and the actual functions of the AWA services handed over in 1948, with cables in 1950. During this period OTC had many problems combining the staffs of the two services and bringing their terms of employment into line with the Public Service. One aspect was the handling of seven different superannuation schemes. A combined operating room was opened in 1951 in Spring Street and the radio office in York Street closed.

Early in the 60's, OTC was blessed?, with its first international conference, the planning of the Compac Cable. Those involved with this conference could write books on the subject. Would a private company have obtained the cooperation of the British, Canadian and New Zealand governments in this or the many other vital international conferences that have been held through the years and are continually being held. Let me draw your attention to the fact, that Australia (OTC) is only responsible for our side of the global communication network. There are over 140 other countries also involved, approximately 90% by government bodies. Of course, where possible, each of these countries pull their weight in the total picture, with research and development, standardisation, traffic routing, financial arrangements, technical and traffic coordination, training and future planning for the good of international communications as a whole, but are ever seeking means to get the best deal for their particular country. A number of OTC officers are to be congratulated for their success in this aspect of the business. Others have taken executive positions in the international and Commonwealth bodies, responsible for organising and running the international scene.

Compac was closely followed by Seacom, where we did see a bit of political influence. It would have been far cheaper and more efficient for the cable to Madang and Guam to have gone out from Sydney. However, the Minister at the time was representing Northern Queensland and that part of the country did not have Television. As a result, it was decided that the PMG instal a microwave link from Brisbane to Cairns to complement the Sydney-Brisbane coaxial cable, and the cable to go out from Cairns. North Queensland got its TV and OTC an inferior link.

Another milestone in international communications, Satellites. As on previous occasions Trevor Housley jumped in on the ground floor and OTC became a foundation shareholder of Intelsat and later Immarsat. By this time OTC had undreamed of capacity and was able to offer many new services, not the least TV. With good management, dedicated staff and the computer age, they have gone from strength to strength.

Then came the split up of the PMG's Department into Telecom and Australia Post. The government of the day, drafted a Bill merging OTC with the new Telecom. The Bill was passed in the Lower House, but defeated in the Senate, mainly due to pressure from the Chamber of Commerce, following substantial lobbying by Harold White, who was tireless in his opposition to the proposal.

In 1982 the Liberal government in its wisdom proposed that OTC be privatised. The rumour being that 25% of the shares would go to each of three big intreprenuers, with the remaining 25% being offered on the open market. A change of government, stopped that proposal in its tracks.

Another proposal was for a domestic satellite. Telecom expected to gain this project on the basis that it was the monopoly internal carrier. This did not result, and the government asked OTC to set up a planning task force headed by Harold White, which led to OTC being given the job of setting up Aussat. This task was given to Graham Gosewinkel, ably assisted by Dick Johnson, who on completion of the project were appointed General Manager and Asst General Manager respectively. The concept of Aussat was to provide services to remote parts of Australia in conjunction with Telecom. In time even taking over some of their services, and Telecom using Aussat services for their business. History has shown that this did not really eventuate, and I can't see the position improving with the present proposal to sell off Aussat as a competitor to Telecom. Particularly with opposition from the unions.

On the retirement of Bill Schmidt, we had the pleasure of seeing George Maltby promoted to the newly created position of Managing Director. George, as a boy, had been transferred from the cable company to OTC on its inception. At about the same time, OTC was changed to a Government Corporate body with certain privileges and delegations. One of the problems of Management at that time was the "Brain Drain" in respect of Engineering and Technical staffs, so the Board approved (no doubt on the assumption that they now had this power) to pay rises for Engineering and Technical staffs, in a bid to keep these people. This turned out to be against Government policy at the time and it would appear that George was made the political scapegoat and his services terminated. The Chairman, a very experienced and respected businessman resigned on principal. The Technical staff of the Commission went on strike because of George's sacking, an event new to union circles. At the time OTC was showing profits and paying record dividends into the Treasury purse. What a reward to such an efficient and dedicated officer. Did he receive a gold watch??

It is most pleasing for us oldtimers to see that George's successor, Steve Burdon is keeping up the good work, with OTC recently announcing a record profit for 1990. I have not seen the figures, but if the 1989 Annual Report is any indication, OTC is continuing to be a very efficient and valuable organisation. Operating profit increased by 54% - Total assets were increased by \$190.8 million to \$1143.5 million - \$109.9 million was paid in Income Tax - A dividend of \$84 million paid to the Government - \$236.3 million to Telecom for domestic transmission - \$456.8 million paid to overseas countries. In 1983 the pretax operating profit per employee of \$30,000 rose to \$142,709 per employee in 1989. All this with OTC's rates being the lowest in the world, despite it having most of the longest circuits in the world.

We can see from Transit, that OTC is not resting on its laurels, is continually operating a Research and Development programme, and offering many new services to its customers. Very few private organisations put money into the essential R & D facility.

For many years OTC has had an interface with Telecom in the efficient coordination of their services and Telecom must be given some credit for OTC's success. If there are failings in Telecom, these must be found in other areas. So why try to merge these two organisations when previous attempts have failed. Governments seem bent on getting rid of all their trading

enterprises and seem to forget that they earn dividends for the government, pay all customs and other taxes, for which government departments are exempt. If governments can't efficiently run such enterprises, how can the public expect them to successfully run the country.

A recent maiden speech to Parliament by newly elected Federal member for Banks, Mr D Melham sums up the case against privatisation and confirms that the country was lucky that some of the forementioned proposals did not eventuate. Quote:-

" The 1980s has been a decade of excess and wasted opportunities.

We have seen the unprecedented accumulation and concentration of wealth, all in the name of free enterprise.

The irresponsibility and damage caused by corporate cowboys is just now becoming apparent.

The high flying entrepreneurs of the 1980s who prospered at society's expense and proceeded to flaunt their new found wealth, have either disappeared or are in their death throes. Society does not mourn their passing, but is burdened with their funeral expenses.

Australia cannot afford to be taken on a roller coaster ride with mavericks who are concerned solely with their own interests.

Yet these corporate cowboys have the audacity to claim that they are working in the national interest, that their interests are somehow one and the same.

Their empty rhetoric has been exposed for what it is."

Trust the above history is not too garbled and provides some interest to our members and not more confusion. And finally if it is so important for Telecom to have a competitor, let it be OTC.

