



Editor: Jim Anderson

Newsletter

Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association (Australia)

VOL. 4 PT 1 PAGE 303 - NOVEMBER 1992

MEETINGS AND REUNIONS

| | | |
|----------------------|--|--|
| VICTORIA | Reunion - 24 November 1992 5.00 pm - 8.00 pm | City Conference Centre CAE Building Level 2A 256 Flinders Street Cnr Degraves Street Melbourne (opposite station) |
| NEW SOUTH WALES | Reunion - 27 November 1992 11:30am for 12:00 noon | OTC House 231 Elizabeth Street Sydney Staff Cafeteria |
| QUEENSLAND | Reunion - 17 November 1992 12:00 noon | OTC Brisbane Radio |
| SOUTH AUSTRALIA | Reunion - 26 November 1992 12:30pm | Adelaide Radio McLarenvale |
| WESTERN AUSTRALIA | AGM & Reunion - 24 November 1992 12:30pm | Markalinga House St Georges Terrace 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 time and venue.

Oscar

Tango

Victor

Alpha

10/10/2020



CQ CQ

CAN YOU HELP

CQ CQ

I am reproducing a letter which was received from LAWRENCE L DURRANT who resides at 79 POUND AVENUE, FRENCHS FOREST, NSW 2086 (telephone: 02 451 0025).

Lawrence has sought this information without any luck. If you can help him in any way, please contact him.

Dear Tony,

This note puts in writing my request made some weeks ago by phone.

I was approached by the Editor of the Australian Dictionary of Biography, Dr John Ritchie, ANU, Canberra, to provide an entry for the next issue of the ADB on Ken Frank's life and work. This, let me stress, is not a commercial enterprise but a subsidised reference work for libraries.

My present knowledge of this officer's career history barely extends beyond the references contained in my book The Seawatchers, which include a report he wrote for AWA in 1944 and a photo (reproduced from an AWA publication, "AWA and the War", 1945) in which he appears, together with other members of the staff of Port Moresby Radio in 1943. Kimberley O'Sullivan of OTC archives has provided copies of some AWA and OTC documents. These show his date of birth as 21.11.1904, that he was appointed to the CRS on 16.4.28, his dates of service at Port Moresby after the war (1.10.46 to 19.8.51) and that he was killed in a car accident (place unspecified) while on leave, on 21.8.51.

Although I was able to include some anecdotes in The Seawatchers, about his activities at Port Moresby Radio during the 39-45 war, I have no details of his wartime period/s of service there. Nor do I have any knowledge of his pre-war service. I have no information about his birthplace, where his home was, who his parents were, whether he was married, whether he had any children and thus, whether it might be possible to contact his widow, a son or daughter.

I, of course, never met him. To do justice to him, I need help from someone who knew him, who can provide descriptions of his physical appearance, his personality, etc. It may be that few of those who worked with him still survive, though I'm sure you have some members in the OTVA who were with the CRS during that period. Though they might not have known him personally, they possibly knew him by repute.

Would you be so kind as to circulate to your members a request for any information about Kendall Frank - anything at all. This man has been chosen to be featured in this national reference publication as a way of acknowledging the work of the CRS in the Second World War. The choice was suggested by a poll of ex-CRS members, organised through OTVA. It would be a great shame to let Ken Frank and his colleagues down.

I'll be glad to hear from anyone who can help with any information at all.

Yours sincerely

(signed) L L Durrant

VALE, Ken Erickson

Ken was born and brought up in Balmain, and educated at Drummoyne High School. His father was a butcher and fed Ken on the best of steaks, resulting in him becoming a good athlete, particularly in the water. At one time, he was a member of the NSW Diving Squad and the NSW Water Polo team. In later life, he was a member of the Harbord Diggers Swimming Club. He was a good bowler and a keen fisherman.

His career first started in AWA as a junior clerk and during the war he joined the RAN. Shortly after "rookie" training, he was posted to "Z Special Force", a joint services commando group. He did training on Frazer Island and joined a small vessel the "Tiger Snake", for which was planned a similar role in the war as was for "Krait". "Krait" went to Singapore, as is well known via records and film, and "Tiger Snake" performed commando sorties into Timor against the Japanese.

At the time of the takeover in 1946, Ken was posted to the General Accounts Section of OTC. He was Secretary of the OTC Clerical Association. He was promoted to Overtime Clerk in the Admin Division in the 60s, and then to Admin Officer (General Services). At the time of retirement, he was attached to the General Manager's office, where he was in charge of Senior Officers' dining room, arranged catering for Commission Meetings, and carried out numerous miscellaneous tasks for the General Manager. He is survived by his wife, Joyce, and two daughters.

He died in April 1992.

VALE, William Joseph Edward Danaher

Advice has reached me that Bill Danaher died on 29 March 1992. The information came about only because the Executors of his will advised Corporate Planning, who, in turn, advised us.

This is all I have about Bill, unless someone has a record of his service details, which I will be glad to reprint in NEWSLETTER upon reception.

VALE, Russell Henry Welbourn

We have been advised by Russ Welbourn's daughter, Mrs Virginia Watson, of the death of Russ which occurred on 30 July 1992. Death was by cardiac arrest. The saddest thing about it all was that Russ was residing with his wife, Mary, in a room at a nursing home. Mary was suffering from Pneumonia and died the next day, on 31 July 1992.

As yet, I have not received any details of his service record. There is one thing I do know though - Russ joined the communications game during the year I was born, that is, 1921. How do I know? It stuck in memory when we were both appointed to the position of Senior Telegraphist and I could not but wonder at the irony of the situation. His promotion should have been long before mine. I have lost a good colleague and friend.

My deepest sympathy goes to his daughter, Virginia, and family.

THE NEWS FROM OUR KIWI MATES IN NEW ZEALAND

The 36th Annual General Meeting of the Veteran Cablemen's Association was held on 29 November 1992 at the Parnell Rose Garden Lounge at 11.00 am.

CHAIRMAN Denis Erson opened the meeting by welcoming those present and then called for a moment's silence in memory of Tom Condon, Joyce Beatty, widow of Alan Beatty, and Thelma Atkins, widow of Tom Atkins, all of whom had passed on during the year.

PRESENT Frank Blakely, Grant Campbell, Ken Clarke, Mike Fulton, Les Gladding, Graeme Hawken, Kelvin Healy, Sandy Miller, Mick Milne, Syd Murray, Colin Nielsen, Jack Potter, Fred Studman, David Thompson, John Todd, John Walker and Brian Wallace.

APOLOGIES Ray Connolly, Dick Fray, Norman Jones, Bob Martin, Robin McDiarmid, Len Sedman and Bruce Sutherland.

MINUTES of the 35th AGM were read and confirmed and the financial statement was received.

ARISING from the minutes was a discussion of the suggestion put forward last year that "Telecom staff who worked in the Auckland cable office could be invited to join our Association." The Secretary pointed out that the Association's Constitution would need amendment to accommodate local operators. After consideration, it was decided that such Telecom personnel would have little in common with overseas cable vets and it was agreed not to proceed with the suggestion.

CORRESPONDENCE During the year, several letters were received from Alan Arndt. As well as his personal best wishes and greetings from OTVA Sydney, he sent an up-to-date mailing list of Australian Veterans which is available to anyone wishing to locate old associates. In his last letter, Alan advised that he did not seek re-election as NSW Branch Secretary and that the new Honorary Secretary is Tony Richardson.

News was received from two of our older members, both now live in Australia. Richard Michaels is now settled in Brisbane and is slowly adjusting to the climate change. He sends his regards to all who remember him.

Harry Verrall is now living in Perth and reports spending two months travelling around UK last year. While there, he celebrated his 94th birthday with three of his sisters whom he had not seen for twenty years.

GENERAL Grant Campbell introduced the thought that Telecom Unit members, who had been refused membership of the NZ Returned Services Association on their return from overseas in the 1940s, would have no difficulty in gaining admittance now. He also felt that, although only a few had received Service Medals after the war, most were entitled to them. On finding that some members were interested in receiving medals, Grant volunteered to pursue the matter.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11:50 am.

Afterwards a very convivial luncheon was enjoyed by all.

HOBARTRADIO CLOSURE - 31 January 1992

by Ruben Buttigieg

A function to mark the closure of Hobart MCS was held at the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania on Friday 31st January, 1992, commencing at 6:30pm [ended at 11:30pm].

150 invitations were mailed, 130 attended. The Manager, Melbourne MCS, Ruben Buttigieg travelled to Hobart on Friday morning (see Attach. 1) . Product Manager Maritime, Jim Simpson was also in Hobart for the occasion.

Ruben Buttigieg met each guest in the foyer of the RYCT as they arrived and distributed name-tags. Drinks were served as guests continued to arrive. At 7pm Jim Simpson, as Master of Ceremonies, opened the formal part of the evening by reading a letter from General Manager, Warren Grace, addressed to staff of closing stations.

The Tasmanian Minister for Primary Industry, David Llewellyn, then told those present of an agreement just concluded between the Tasmanian Government and OTC Maritime for the retention of monitoring facilities at Bruny Island.

Jim Simpson introduced John Brooksbank, Manager Hobartradio. John recalled the history of the radio station, from its opening in 1912, a talk which he preceded by the call "Securite, Securite, Securite" - one he'd be making, he told the audience, for the last time. Acknowledging the assistance of so many local organisations he presented the RYCT with Hobartradio's wall map-display. He then delivered the MHO official speech and introduced the manager, Melbourne radio.

Ruben talked about Hobartradio's "unofficial" history, giving humorous examples illustrating the close relationship that had existed between the two stations. He then presented John Brooksbank and Phillip Jones with pewter mugs on behalf of OTC Maritime.

Jim Simpson introduced Inspector Maurice Massie (Tasmanian Search and Rescue) who spoke words of gratitude for Hobartradio's work and personally thanked John and Phil, presenting each with framed photographs of the Police Marine Division launches.

Later in the evening, while those assembled were socialising, other speakers took the microphone (F. Cole - fisherman; Dr. Des Cooper - yachtsman, and others) expressing appreciation of Hobartradio's work and thanking John and Phil for their services in the past.

Discussion/Feedback Report

In discussions with many of the guests it became quite clear that Hobartradio held a very special place in the Tasmanian maritime community. There is a great deal of anxiety about how Hobartradio's functions will be adequately handled by Melbourne radio.

An overwhelming majority expressed understanding, realised that with advances in technology changes are inevitable, requiring ships to re-equip and seafarers to improve their operating skills. Many expressed some apprehension about the reliability of communications on 6 mHz to Melbournradio from south Tasmania. The singular position of 8291 kHz as an exclusive distress frequency, presents problems when vessels require to contact Melbournradio on "other business". The only alternative, channel 811, may be occupied at the time.

The most common subject of concern was the scheduled time of transmission of Melbournradio's weather forecasts. Everyone to whom I spoke believed them to be going out too late, both in the morning and in the evening, especially during the summer- 0833 and 2033 dst.

Before GMDSS and following similar approaches from interested parties VIM established an early morning "freebie" sked. I am now investigating the possibility of augmenting our transmissions to meet our customers' requirements.

There was nothing but praise for our Seaphone service. I was asked about the possibility of extending Seaphone to the west and northeast Tasmanian coasts.

Members of the RYCT with a special interest in communications asked that I visit Hobart again soon to talk to professional and leisure sailors about GMDSS. I suggested that perhaps, towards the end of the year, when sufficient data have been accumulated, I might travel to Hobart to sort out areas of concern arising from the closure of Hobartradio and explain other OTC Maritime services.

In my view the function to commemorate the closure of Hobartradio was a diplomatic success. It had the right balances between acknowledging the solemnity of the occasion, friendly, lighthearted celebration of the future, allaying of concerns, assurance of continued provision of our reliable services and tribute to the personalities involved.

Ruben Buttigieg
Melbourne MCS

VALE, Les Hunt

Les passed away on 31st July, 1992 at his home in Dee Why. The first thing I can recall is seeing Les in his brown techs coat in the Beam Telegraph Workshop when I came back after war service. He was a likeable and popular fellow, except on any occasion when he was called to fix a Gel or other piece of equipment which had failed. In his view, and the view of most telegraphic mechanics, it was always the fault of the operator, never the machine. I think he was trained by that wild Ulster man, JIM BLEMINGS, Les was a very able tech and served in York Street, Spring Street, and Paddington.

For many years he was a valued member of the OTC cricket team, in his capacity as a fast and accurate fast bowler, with the capacity to get a few runs at the tail end, once he got his eye in. He has not attended our functions for the last couple of years because of his failing eyesight, which finally sent him blind

(Thanks Qpee. I hope to get more of his service from records for the next NEWSLETTER. Yes I have many fond memories of Les, most of them unprintable, but all of them either hilarious or entertaining. We liked the bloke).

Acknowledgments

I wish to acknowledge those who have provided material for this NEWSLETTER.

David Richardson
Vince Gibson
Steve Burdon

Ruben Buttigieg
Jim Banks
Martin Ratia

Gordon Cupit
Keith (Pancho) Vincent

Gordon Cupit has been a tower of strength in the material he has provided, but, like him, I know that there is a lot more material out there and I suspect that a lot of our members have become gunners; you know, "Well I was gunner send an article along but I ran out of time. I'm gunner send it along for the next one".

Come on, we need this information and if you are not careful you're gunner run out of time permanently before it makes the magazine.

TELECOM DID NOT GET A FAIR GO

On the demise of the PMG's Department in 1974, it was decided that the finances of Telecom and Australia Post would be revised. The Postal section was so far in debt that the Government would have no chance of recovery. Also their opportunities for profits were very limited, so therefore, all debts were wiped from the slate and they started at zero. On the other hand, Telecom had some promise and it was decided that their initial debt would be determined as the value of their assets, \$400 million. Also, they would be required to pay a dividend relative to this amount, and to further increased debts. Due to the need for further loans from Treasury, reserves for future projects, interest on the debt, and dividends to the Government, the debt today has risen to \$2 billion. Fortunately the management of OTC decided to borrow on the open market, where it was possible to repay loans, and so did not get into this position. I think that I had have the story somewhat correct, but wish that I had been better at - Business Principles at High School and I may have understood the system better.

To cover the present and future position of the \$2 billion debt, the following has been published.

The Government has unequivocally committed by letter dated 25 June 1992 from the Minister for Transport and Communications to convert debts of \$2 billion owed by AOTC to the Commonwealth to equity.

The steps to achieve this commitment are:

- On 1 July 1992 the Commonwealth was allotted 1 billion \$1 ordinary shares paid to \$0.01. After enactment of the Appropriation Act (No 2) for the 1992/93 financial year the Commonwealth will pay up a further \$0.49 per share in respect of these shares.
- At the time of paying the further \$0.49 per share on the first 1 billion shares, the Commonwealth will subscribe for a further 1 billion \$1 ordinary shares which will be paid to \$0.50 per share.
- The remaining \$0.50 per share in respect of the 2 billion shares (i.e. \$1 billion) is to be paid in 4 instalments of \$250 million each on 1 July 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996. The Minister of Finance has also made determinations the effective result of which is that \$990 million of the \$2 billion of Government debt will be interest free during the period 1 July 1992 until and including 4 days after the enactment of the Appropriation Act referred to above. (The documents which give effect to these matters are described on page 17.)

An interim dividend of \$215 million was approved by the AOTC Board in March 1992 for the period ending 30 June 1992 and has been paid.

HIGH FINANCE

by Gordon Cupitt

In the last Newsletter, I stated that we would be looking with interest in the future profit margins, achievements of OTC, Telecom and AOTC.

Telecom 1990/92 pre-tax profit was \$1625 million, a 12.3% return on assets. After tax (a new requirement for Telecom), a net profit of \$962.7 million resulted. A dividend of \$250 million was paid and together with the tax resulted in a total of \$913 million to consolidated revenue.

I got quite a jolt recently, when I read that the final trading results of Telecom and OTC were tabled in Federal Parliament early in June and that Telecom recorded a loss of \$204 million. AOTC has since published the following clarification, and I can now sleep at night.

"The reports apply to the period leading up the February 1 merger of Telecom and OTC to create the Australian and Overseas Telecommunications Corporation (AOTC).

In difficult economic conditions, OTC experienced an eight percent growth in demand for services, generating revenue of \$1442.7 million and a 10 month after-tax profit of \$260.7 million.

Telecom had strong revenue growth and a modest profit increase, recording a seven month trading profit of \$1006 million before abnormals - right on target.

However, a change in the method of accounting for assets - from the 'group method' to the 'unit method' - has led to a significant one-off acceleration in Telecom's depreciation expense.

The accelerated depreciation has led to a \$1292 million asset write-down, (taking the value of assets from \$24.8 billion to \$23.5 billion), which has reduced the normal operating profit from \$1006 million to an abnormal loss of \$240 million.

The accounting change was necessary to meet audit and tax assessment requirements as Telecom prepared to become part of AOTC, a Corporation under Corporations Law.

It has helped ensure that AOTC enters the competitive Australian telecommunications environment on the surest financial footing and has no immediate cash flow effect.

While some further asset adjustment may be necessary in AOTC's end of financial year accounts, this is expected to be comparatively small.

Overall, the outlook for AOTC is one of sustained strong profitability as it restructures for competition.

The \$1292 million write-down was attributable predominantly to depreciation of the Telecom exchange network, and does not hinder AOTC's recently announced plans to spend \$40 billion over the next five years to satisfy the needs of its customers.

AOTC has set itself the goal of remaining Australia's pre-eminent telecommunications carrier by delighting its customers and expanding the market for the products and services domestically and internationally.

AOTC will release its first operating financial report when it presents its June 30 1992 accounts later this year.

COMMUNICATIONS IN ANTARCTICA

By Vince Gibson

Continuing the story, it is now early August and over the past week or more the inland party of seven men have been preparing for our trip - loading fuel, cleaning and stocking the two small fibre glass caravans with food, the mechanics and scientific personnel attending to the vehicles and scientific instruments.

The tractor train, as it was called, consisted of a D5 Caterpillar tractor hauling a fuel sled, a workshop for mechanical repairs, which also included a small generating plant used for lighting or power for small tools. After that came a sled with food, emergency clothing and tents, and lastly, two caravans for living and sleeping purposes. Also in the party was a vehicle called a "Nodwell", a large tracked vehicle almost as big as a bus. This vehicle carried radar and scientific instruments. The caravans were very compact, sleeping three men with cooking facilities. There was room for only one man to get dressed at a time, and whilst one cooked the other two had to lie in their bunks. This tractor train was assembled and ready a few days before our departure. All we had to do was to await favourable weather. There had been strong winds with nil visibility for days. Suddenly it all cleared, no wind and blue skies, so at 4pm we left the base. Conditions were excellent as we began our steep climb up to the plateau, following a track marked by cane marker poles placed every 500 yards. Our speed averaged two to three miles per hour, but was slowed when steeper, rougher, terrain was encountered and the train had to be winched over these difficult places. It quickly became dark, but a beautiful brilliant yellow, almost full moon, came up and visibility was no problem.

About 8pm we arrived at a junction in the track, 10 miles from base. We had our evening meal and camped for the night. Next morning we had a little work to do at this junction, replacing signposts and repairing marker poles, but after lunch we were off again, heading south. The three of us in the caravan took turns each day cooking. We only had one main meal each day and that was in the evening. Breakfast was Muesli, lunch maybe some tinned meat and sledging biscuits, somewhat like the old army biscuits. The evening meal was a hot meal prepared by the cook of the day, frozen meat obtained from the sled, powdered potatoes, frozen vegetables, soup, bread, and a wonderful variety of dessert, ranging from tinned cherries, peaches, pears, plums, etc. with tinned cream. We had a multiple gas burner stove, fed by a large gas bottle at the rear of the caravan.

After a few days as the elevation increased and consequently the temperature dropped, cooking and obtaining more water became more difficult. One very cold night when the temperature was well below -40C I had difficulty cooking some sausages. In the pan was a small ring of melted fat surrounded by solid fat which would not melt. Living and working in these cold, harsh conditions was difficult, combined with the close cramped living quarters. It takes quite a lot of discipline to live in harmony. Sometimes it was a few days before one could venture out of the caravan due to the poor weather. This is when the strict psychological testing prior to acceptance is effective, but even so, it was difficult and testing.

We continued on our way south gradually climbing up to the plateau, the gradient becoming more gradual as we moved away from the coast. At this stage we were in the cloud area and for travelling on cloudy days we had to rely on radar to pick up the cane markers. I remember one day of poor visibility taking a turn at the radar screen, a fog of minute ice particles outside, trying to pick up the marker canes on the screen. So many false images, tiny mounds of ice would show up like a marker, eventually a marker would come up with a sigh of relief ready for the next encounter. The tracked vehicles wandered off course considerably, unless the tracking mechanism was perfectly adjusted. It was an eerie world travelling through these ice fogs but after a couple more days we were above the cloud level, which was quite a low one in these latitudes.

We eventually arrived at our destination on this white featureless plain. It was a hut containing scientific instruments for measuring magnetic cavitations of the sun. It was buried beneath the ice, with only the antennae array visible, an array like TV aerials. We camped there ready for work the next day. A most beautiful day, blue skies, no wind but very cold - below 40C. We began work after breakfast, digging and shovelling the hard packed snow away from the aerials until we came to the outline of the building. The daylight hours were still quite short so we had to wait until the next day to begin unearthing the hut. The next three days were days of blizzard, and we were confined to our caravans, reading, playing chess and eating. At the end of the blizzard we went outside to find that the work we had accomplished had all been undone, so another day of hard work. It was difficult working in these conditions of extreme cold, wearing three pairs of gloves and mittens. The last large pair of mittens were strapped around our necks to prevent them being blown away in the wind if it was necessary to take them off for a moment to do some more delicate task. Whilst outside in these conditions we had to watch each other constantly for signs of frost bite. The face was the only exposed area of skin, the nose and cheek bones being the vulnerable spots. The next day the tractor with bulldozer blade began excavating, moving huge mounds of snow and ice until the hut lay exposed, the base being about ten feet below the surface. The next two days were days of blizzard, with winds of 50 knots and no visibility. The winds inland are not as strong as those on the coast.

I had to go out and repair an aerial during this time, 20 yards from the caravan nothing could be seen, only a swirling whiteness. We had a Codan transceiver, a sked with the base each evening, conditions allowing, and the base station had a continuous listening watch on our frequency in case of emergencies arising. We loaded the hut on to a sled when the weather cleared, which took all the daylight hours of the short day. The scientific information in the hut had been recorded on tape during the past two years. The power source was a wet cell battery, constantly charged by a small solar panel and a propeller driven by the wind of which there was no shortage. After we had been camped in the same location for a few days and there had been blizzards, we had to dig the snow from around the tractor train before we could move. If the train was parked in a certain relative position to the prevailing wind digging out was kept to a minimum. Another major event was starting the tractor after an overnight stop or longer. At -40C or colder the oil in the gear box had the consistency of a brick, so we took it in turns to help the driver in the morning when we anticipated moving. It was up at 6am, out in the pitch darkness, a wind blowing ice particles cutting into the face. In the workshop sled there was an object called a "Herman Nelson". I remember from my youth reading stories of 1st World War airmen in France on a cold morning wheeling out the "Herman Nelson" to help start their engines. Little did I realise that I would ever have a more

intimate knowledge of them. It was a petrol driven engine on a sled creating hot gases from the exhaust which were fed by a flexible pipe a foot in diameter and this pipe was placed adjacent to the gear box. The tractor engine was covered by a large padded quilt to trap and contain the hot gases. It took about three hours for the oil to liquify enough to enable the engine to start. Living and working in these conditions of extreme cold and wind was difficult. Little things one does not give a second thought to back home became a hazardous operation under these conditions. On the back of the caravan on the outside corner opposite the gas bottle was our toilet. To use it was one of the most hazardous operations, especially at night. To leave the caravan one had to dress so securely, especially with a wind blowing and the temperature below -40C. Then in pitch blackness one had to feel ones way along the caravan wall to the right location. Once inside one had to divest a certain amount of clothing, with much powdery snow coming in contact with one's skin in a very confined area. May I digress and say that when taking photos in these cold conditions we had to take off two pairs of gloves to manipulate the camera. Our hands became frozen in 20 seconds and then we had to rush the other gloves back on and rub the hand vigorously for some time. It took about 30 minutes for the hand to regain some use.

Realising these conditions, you can understand that constipation was a real hazard to life and limb, especially limb.

Eventually, we were only a day's journey from the base, being held up considerably by blizzards. However, a day dawned with no wind and blue skies. We travelled all day arriving about a mile from the base about 9pm, where we camped. I will close this episode with an extract from my diary.

"Woke this morning a mile from base. It looks so beautiful outside, hills, valleys, sea ice, ice cliffs with icebergs in the distance, a feast for the eyes after the flat, white plain which was constantly with us for the past weeks. It is -27C this morning but appears so mild and warm, comparatively. Am looking forward to a luxurious hot shower and a change of clothes and the ease and confort of the base camp."

Memories

Gordon Cupit writes

Vince Gibson's story on the Antarctic brought to mind one outstanding character with the name of Harry Hicks. Harry spent seven twelve month periods in the Antarctic with a break of 12 months between each on O.T.C. outstations. It must be remembered that Antarctic service was voluntary. Between one break he volunteered for service at Willis Island. At Willis he was unlucky enough to get caught up in a giant cyclone which blew the wireless mast over. With sheer dogged persistence, Harry re-erected the mast and renewed communication, for which he received a bravery award.

I could never understand why Harry kept volunteering for these bleak assignments until one day when a lady came in to see enquiring as to his whereabouts. It happened to be Harry's wife, the reason for Harry's dodging.

This story has no reflection on Vince who has a very happy marital relationship.

The Passing of John Eales made me remember the special circumstances of he and Les Doubleday. John loved Esperance and Les, Rockhampton. Any time either of these gents were in Sydney they would come and see me to further convince me to inadvertently not mention their names when discussing transfers with the Superintendent Coastal Radio. Later, visiting these places, I can see why they did not want a transfer. Needless to say both remained on their respective stations until retirement.

OTC Maritime

It is not many years ago that the Coast Radio Service consisted of 12 radio stations to handle all ship/shore traffic. Now, i see that with the advent of Seaphone there are now 35 points of contact with another three planned. Most of the coast is now covered by this service, which is a boon to the small ships community

THANK YOU, DAVID RICHARDSON

The Editor of NEWSLETTER is extremely grateful to David Richardson for providing supplementary records of the activities of two of our recently departed colleagues, CLIVE TRESSIDER and NORM ALDERSON.

Clive Tressider

Clive was born on 11/12/1902. Originally engaged by Cable and Wireless Ltd in New Zealand, he subsequently transferred to the Australian Division of Cable & Wireless in July, 1918. Between 1918 and 1949 he served in Sydney, Darwin, Adelaide, Sydney again, Cocos Island and back to Sydney. On 26.12.49 he transferred to Fanning Island. 1.4.50 became an OTC officer, remaining at Fanning Island as an operator. 3.6.50 reclassified as telegraphist, Fanning Island. 17.6.52 transferred to the Central Operating Room, Spring Street, Sydney. 3.7.59 promoted to Senior Telegraphist. 15.8.60 promoted to the position of Traffic Officer

From 25.9.66 acted as Assistant Supervisor, Sydney Operating Room.

He retired on 10.12.67 but applied for and was re-employed as temporary Telegraphist in the Sydney Operating Room, until 21.2.69.

He died on 1st January, 1992.

Norm Alderson

Norm joined the Eastern Extension Cable Company as a junior on 1.12.1923 and served from that time until taken over by OTC. He served in most operating room clerical type positions including Service Clerk, Despatch Clerk, Circulation Clerk, Counter Clerk, Transmitter Clerk, and Abstracts Clerk. On 1.4.1950 he was transferred to Clerk, General Accounts, Accounts Payable. He was extremely efficient in this capacity, processing accounts as they came in. He was meticulous in his work and made his job look easy. On his promotion to Senior Clerk, Engineering, on 2.5.62 it was found that it took two men to fill his position. On 8.9.67 he was promoted to Assistant Properties Office, Administrative Division where he remained until his retirement on 19.12.73. He died on 13.4.92, aged 84 years.

Norm was a member of the Staff relations Committee and the Social and Sports Club Committee, and in his home suburb of Earlwood took an interest in civic affairs, particularly the P & C.

Our sincerest sympathy goes to the families of both gentlemen.

OTC/TELECOM MERGER

The following article is reproduced; from OTC's staff magazine, *Transit*, for the benefit of all veterans who might be interested in the 'mechanics' of the OTC/Telecom merger--and particularly for those who might be wondering why some traditional OTC products (such as 0011 IDD) are now being marketed with the 'Telecom' logo.

In late 1990, the Commonwealth Government decided - as part of changes proposed to Australia's telecommunications industry - that the international carrier, OTC Limited (OTC), and the national carrier, Australian Telecommunications Corporation (Telecom) would be merged into a single telecommunications carrier: Australian and Overseas Telecommunications Corporation Limited ACN 051 775 556 (AOTC).

The merger took place on 1 February 1992 under special legislation of the Commonwealth of Australia: the Australian and Overseas Telecommunications Corporation Act 1991.

On 1 February, AOTC became the legal successor to OTC and Telecom; all property, rights and liabilities of OTC and Telecom became property, rights and liabilities of AOTC - and all OTC and Telecom employees became employees of AOTC. AOTC is an ordinary company, wholly owned by the Commonwealth of Australia.

Ministerial approval for the full financial and operational merger followed advice from the regulatory body, Austel, that fair and equitable arrangements were in place to enable the second carrier (Optus Communications) to use AOTC's networks.

The Minister for Transport and Communications, Senator Graham Richardson, issued a statement saying he was pleased with the speed and efficiency that Telecom and OTC had demonstrated in upgrading their exchanges.

'This means that most customers will have convenient access to both carriers as soon as Optus starts offering services', he said.

Chief Executive Officer, Frank Blount, has announced a strong, customer-focused business structure for AOTC.

He said that setting a world benchmark for excellence in customer service and market focus was the driving force behind the new organisational arrangements.

The structure provides for six major business units, each with 'bottom-line' accountability. Steve Burdon, previously OTC Managing Director, is a Group Managing Director in the new structure, with overall responsibility for the Corporate & Government and International Business units.

Doug Campbell, previously Telecom Deputy Managing Director, is also a Group Managing Director, responsible for the Commercial and Consumer Business units.

Interim Arrangements

AOTC is the interim 'legal' identity of the merged OTC/Telecom, pending the outcome of a full review of the organisation's corporate identity requirements - scheduled for end-1992; AOTC will not be used as a marketing identity during the interim period.

Five AOTC business units are market-facing: Corporate & Government, International, Commercial, Consumer and Enterprises. During the interim period they will use either Telecom or OTC trading identities--not both, and not AOTC* - depending on the customer-base.

The general principle is that the Telecom identity will be used internally and for the Australian market, and the OTC identity will be used internally and for offshore markets. The market-facing business units will only use the AOTC identity when communicating with local, state or federal Government, Austel or Optus.

The Network Products Business Unit and the Services and Corporate Centre groups do not face the market and will therefore use the AOTC identity internally and externally.

The International Business Unit is comprised mainly of OTC (less maritime, value added services and some marketing functions), plus OTC International and Telecom Australia (International); it will use the OTC identity (including the OTC Australia and OTC International logos offshore) in dealing with customers and correspondents offshore and with corporate customers in Australia. In the latter case, the OTC identity will only be used in ways which will not be visible to other customers in Australia (eg direct mail) so as to avoid causing any confusion.

OTC Maritime is a stand-alone business within the Enterprises Business Unit and will continue to trade with the OTC Maritime identity during-the interim period.

Separately, the AOTC identity will appear on several items of stationery etc for internal use only. This is to reinforce to staff that we all now work for a different organisation than pre-merger; it is *not* an indication that the AOTC wordmark should be adopted for external use by the market-facing business units.

In terms of trading identities, it's generally fair to say that 'OTC' continues with its international activities, and 'Telecom' with its domestic role. Changes will surely be necessary over a period of time but, at least in the short-term, it's 'business as usual' (or 'better than usual') as ex-OTC and ex-Telecom staff go through a period of assimilating and fine-tuning the various policies and practices of the merged organisations in order to combine the strengths and eliminate the weaknesses.

Welcome to AOTC!

OVERSEAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS VETERANS ASSOCIATION QUEENSLAND

Jim Banks who is the Secretary/Treasurer of our Queensland branch writes:

It is my sad duty to be the bearer of news of the deaths of two of our colleagues.

Once again their career details are scant but I have managed to glean the following :

Alf Goeby

Passed away at Caloundra on 31st January, aged in the late seventies. Alf came to OTC in the early 50's having served with the Army and having obtained a 2nd Class PMG certificate. He began as a clerical assistant in Melbourne and for a short time worked as a radio officer in Melbourne Radio, but then reverted to the telegraph side and spent most of his years as a counter officer. He also had a side interest as a TV repairman. Retiring at 65, Alf and Heather moved to the Sunshine Coast in Queensland and was a regular and popular attender at the Queensland Vets meetings.

Sid Gill

Joined the Royal Navy in 1944 and served as a telegraphist with them until 1957. Then for the next three years, he worked in the radio branch of British Railways, the wireless section of the Foreign Office, and for Sperry Rand. In 1961 he emigrated to Australia and joined OTC as a telegraphist. He moved to Brisbane when the B.O.R. opened in 1970 and retired in the mid 80's after having a heart bypass operation. He moved to Bribie Island a few years ago and attended most O.T.V.A. meetings held in VIB.

We know that all Veterans will join their Queensland colleagues in extending sincere sympathy to Heather Goeby and Eileen Gill and their families in their sad losses."

WHERE THEY ALL WERE IN THE COASTAL RADIO SERVICE IN DECEMBER 1948

Adelaide

F C Mulligan (OIC), R W Tymms
E W Coldwell, A G Kempling,
J K Overbury, H S Taylor

Brisbane

A G Cox (OIC), J Ward, A H Burke
E W Sievers, H Sutherland

Broome

L T J Allinson (OIC), R S Glenn
J A Grant, S Hamilton, H J Hicks

Cooktown

W C H Hodges (OIC), F G Marlow
F N J Gowlett

Darwin

L C Cusack (OIC), A T Sage,
A A McCollum, H B Taylor,
W Wells

Esperance

F J C Bridges (OIC), S C Ambler,
L W K Wilson

Geraldton

F H Christmas (OIC), C E Lemmon,
H B Wolfe

Hobart

M L Weeks (OIC), J Howe,
J B Ponsonby

Port Moresby

K T Frank (OIC, New Guinea-Papua
District)
N F Odgers (OIC) M S Lang,
H Stewart, F K K Minogue,
G W Warner, Miss K Grahamslaw
Mrs S M Bingham

Rabaul

D W McMillan (OIC), E E Thompson
J R Kennedy, P J Chapman,
W A P Luke

Rockhampton

G Walters (OIC), F L Scott

Thursday Island

G J Scott (OIC), V R Birks,
J W Fumell, B D Woods
W E Sawyer

Townsville

G D Reynolds (OIC), H W Brown
M B Todd, H R Dedman, F W Bond

Wewak

W W Watson

Willis Island

E I Hyde (OIC), P R Walker

Wyndham

G E Davies

Kavieng

J Widdup

Madang

F C James

Melbourne

L C Farnsworth, A S Hart,
L C Reynolds, E A Smellie,
L E Ternes

Perth

W G Chapman (OIC), J R Clifford,
R C Anderson, W A Chambers,
M A Macgoun, P C Priestly,
R C Williams, J P Bullen,
W H Richardson, H W M Rumble,
A E Mitchell

Lae

C C Becket

La Perouse

P W Brown (OIC), C F Dalee,
D B L Fleming, B F Hirst,
J T Buckland, H W Barnfield,
C L J Coley, W Day, J Elmore,
P C Gillon, J Gornall, H F Hartley,
A W Hooper, G T Hughes,
W D Johnson, J E Kemp,
C T F Northam, H E Oates,
J B Parsonage, G S Robinson,
N R Seymour, A Shingleton,
T Swarbrick, T W Thomson,
C M Urganhart, C R West, W J Peell,
J H Heavey, R W S Bailey,
F Marsden, C R Stanfield,
C W Drew, R Brogan, E Hopwood

Island Room COR Sydney

J Bassett, R O Bettison, E F Bishton
H J M Kyle, E J O'Donnell,
G P O'Hare, F Ouvrier, J Park,
K C J Stone, H W Waugh

**WHERE THEY ALL WERE IN THE RADIO SERVICES BRANCH
FEBRUARY 1950**

COR SYDNEY

Superintendent: M Mortimer

Supervisors: D McIntosh,
A H Brown, J Shore, L Thorndike

Asst Supervisors: H Burgess,
W P D'Arcy, F Jenkins

Senior Telegraphists: W J Blemings,
S Bouttell, G D Brown,
C A Gowanloch, S LeGrand,
J Newlyn, W Stevenson, L Sanders,
C Watson, F White

Service Clerks: J Fabris, M F Hall,
N Hutingdon

Counter Clerks: J Breakwell,
Miss M Casey, A Wells, G Wheeler

Circulation Clerks: J Bowes,
R Corcoran, B Darraugh, J Davis,
A Dulihanty, A Ebert, V Frost, H Fry,
J Greer, A Hall, R Hookway,
R Jarvie, E Langbridge, G Lynch,
E G MacDonald, I G MacDonald,
J MacFarlane, J Meaney,
M O'Callaghan, O J O'Dea, J Rowley,
W Sandry, G Saunders, K Schultz,
T Shepherd, P Stewart, P Stewart,
D Snedden, E Suiter, L Walsh,
B Ward

Typist (Beam Supt's Office):
Miss V Budd

Telephonists: Misses L Clark,
R Doyle, K Sheather, Mrs Jefferies

Supervising Technician:
J G Cookson

Mechanics: K Barton, A Flood,
L Hunt, W Gadd, K Woodward

Telegraphists: J Anderson,
W H Blemings, D Bourne, E Burke,
F Briggs, H Cladingboel,
J Connaghan, W Cowley,
H Crawford, G Cupit, G Day,
L Doubleday, J Edwards, P Frost,
C Gibson, A Griffiths, R Hector,
R Herrington, J Hodgson,
R Hoseason, A P Jones, W H Jones,
K Lawlor, J Lennon, H McInnes,
J Neylon, W F O'Connell, C Pearson,
A Phillips, A Purtill, J Pow, R Reeks,
J Rodda, J Sheath, G Sheppard,
F Simmons, J Smith, H Sticpwish,
H Stone, R Studd, J Swift, J Tait,
M Taylor, T Thatcher, C Wallace,
G Waterhouse, R Waugh,
D Williams, C Whittaker,
E Wickham, D Woods, L Young,
W Zihrul

Outside Representative: Mr T Jones

Enquiries: H Robertson

Training School: M Hill, D Jolly,
K Kennedy, C Maiden, N Patfield,
J Sallaway

Special Leave: K Quinn

PENNANT HILLS

V E Stanley (OIC), W F Bardin,
C Binns, S R Campton, A R Catford,
J W M Cottrell, F L Dawes,
G J Flynn, A A Kerr, A R North-
Smith, AF Plowman, W S Ringrose,
E A Ritchie, W V Sim, R E Wood,
A A Woodley, S W Wright

**WHERE THEY WERE IN THE ACCOUNTS BRANCH
AUGUST 1950**

SYDNEY

Chief Accountant: Mr H Steel
Typist: Miss D H Wallis
Accountant: Mr J M Hansson

General Accounts

O P Asher, Miss B Bradley,
Miss N Cavanagh, J Dunn,
C Farrelly, R W Godfrey, F R Hales,
Miss B F Heiron, F J Finds,
C B Manning, N H Trotman,
Miss K N Morgan

Abstracts

Miss V Beaton, K D Bondfield,
Miss A Brown, Miss J A Brown,
Miss P L Bush, Mrs Z D Byecroft,
Miss M Chant, E C Evans,
Miss P Goodwin, D J Hallahan,
Miss G F Harris, F C Hickling,
H V Lingard, Miss J I McIntosh,
Miss J Mann, G Maltby,
Miss L C Meadows, D Montgomery,
R O Osborn, C O'Sullivan,
Miss V D Preston, Mrs G D Prince,
Mrs M Ryan, Miss C Stephenson,
H J Sutherland, Miss M M Urguhart,
Miss V D Van Hemelryck

Telegraph Accounts

Miss C V Brophy, R M Carragher,
E J Cockle, Miss W M Donnelly,
Miss A A Gersting, R A Harris,
Miss J D Hudson, K R Keane,
F L Keen, Miss P R Klumpp,
Miss H M Manuel, E W Northwood,
Miss J Small, Miss S J Thorburn,
Miss E D Thornley, Miss E M Todd,
Miss K J Wheeler,
Miss M L Whitehouse

Final Accounts

D R R Anderson, A G Colbey,
W Ellershaw, Miss V J Matthews,
A J Millikan, J J McGee,
C K O'Donnell, R J Rivett-Carnac
T W Schapel, Miss M A Shaw,
Miss I J Webster-Fowler, O M White

Coastal Radio Accounts

Miss H I Crawley, K L Erickson,
N R K Harris, D Hodgins,
Miss S Jackson, G J Johnston,
Miss D J Lipscombe, A J Meeley,
Miss M B McCarthy, J Thorpe,
Miss M A C Watt,
Miss R D Woodhams

MELBOURNE

Accountant: Mr G H Cox

General Accounts

Miss J Burbury, G A L Dowd,
J F Hogan, J R Hunter,
Miss J A Snowden, D H Tippet,
A E Watson, D A Williams,
Mrs T P Wilmotm Mrs J Wilson

Traffic Accounts (Abstract)

M G Gee, Miss R E Gillies,
H S Harvey, R L Hayes,
Miss J E Howship, W Hoyes,
Mrs J E McMurray, Miss A J Merton,
J Montgomerie, H Oliver, J Oliver,
Miss B F Poynting, Mrs L M Reeve,
Miss M F Thompson, E E Tresize,
L G Waters, R J White

Traffic Accounts (Telegraph)

Mrs B V Boyce, F P Bristow,
J H Heatherwshaw, Miss E M Hunter,
Miss M L McKeown, Miss J M Miller
T J O'Leary, W A R Parker,
J A Robinson, Miss M Smith,
Mrs S M Stelling, Mrs E V Stewart,
Miss W J Symons, Miss B H Wallens,
Miss E T Wong Yen.

**WHERE THEY WERE IN THE COASTAL RADIO SERVICE
CHRISTMAS 1951**

Adelaide

E W Coldwell, H S Taylor, J E Fuge,
D Sharples, J K Overbury

Brisbane

A G Cox, J Ward, E W Sievers,
A H Burke, H Sutherland

Broome

L T J Allinson (on leave), A T Sage
(Relieving OIC), V R Birks,
W M F Wattleworth, J R Pell,
J H Wilson

Darwin

A S Hart, A A McCollum (on leave)
C J Frazier, W Wells,
J E Clendinning

Esperance

R C Anderson, S C Ambler,
L W K Wilson

Geraldton

J A Grant, T C Bryant, T J C Daniel

Hobart

M L Weeks, B F Hirst, W W Watson

Kayleng

E I Hyde

Lae

C C Beckett, Mrs D H Watson

Perth (Applecross)

W G Chapman, J R Clifford,
W A Chambers, J E Kemp,
M A Macgoun (sick leave),
P C Priestley, N F Odgers,
A E Mitchell, J J Roberts,
H W M Rumble, R J Keane,
P J R Morris (Bassendean)
A T G Hanson (Bassendean)

Rabaul

D W McMillan, P J Chapman,
L G Palmer (on leave), A Barrie,
W A P Luke, Mrs N Showman

Rockhampton

S Hamilton, G Walters,
F L Scott (sick leave)

Thursday Island

E H Smellie, G J Scott,
W E C Sawyer, F Turville (sick
leave), J Cahill, W A Easterling,
J O'Connor

Townsville

R W Tymms, M B Todd, H W
Brown, F W Bond (on leave),
N R Seymour, W F Kavanagh

Wewak

A J Dunstone

Willis Island

H J Hicks, G T Long

Melbourne

L E Ternes, H B Tyler, L G Reynolds
M H Stuart, L C Rogers

La Perouse

P W Brown, D B L Fleming, J
Gornall, F N J Gowlett, H E Oates,
C M urguhart, J Elmore,
J T Buckland, H W Barnfield,
L C Cusack, W Day, J W Furnell,
H F Hartley,, P C Gillon,
A W Hooper, D J Kippers, H L Jones,
W D Johnston, N Johnstone,
M R Kellie, J R Kennedy,
F C Knudsen, F G Marlow,
G Madren, C T F Northham,
J Mantouvalos, J B Parsonage,
V J Richards, A E Sheppherd,
A Shingleton, T W Thomson,
B D Woods, C R West, R W S Bailey
W J Peell, C W Drew, O E Cooper,
H W Waugh, R S Glenn, J A Heavey,
C R Stanfield, E M Hopwood,
R Brogan, Mrs A M Johns

Island Room COR Sydney

G P O'Hare, R O Bettison, J Bassett,
E F Bishton, C L J Coley,
H J M Kyle, E J O'Donnell,
F Ouvrier, J Park, K C J Stone

WHO WAS AT HEAD OFFICE AND MELBOURNE OCTOBER 1954

(Excluding names which have appeared in previous lists under headings
of Traffic and Accounts Brances)

General Manager: J L Mulholland
Assistant General Manager: T A Housley

Private Secretary to Chairman: Miss C L Walker
Private Secretary to General Manager: Mrs D V Creighton
Private Secretary to Assistant General Manager: Miss E M Bowker

Engineering Branch

A S McDonald (Chief Engineer), W
R Baird, J G Reed, R R Long,
W W Jenvey, A J Black, E R Dalziel,
C R Dalley, J D Wood, J A Guy,
R J S McDonald, J Doggett,
R T Hughes, W G Cowley,
F Marsden, R G Flood, R E Branson,
R Fench, C K Green, K L Erickson,
Miss D J Fizelle, Miss J C Chaffer,
Miss B M Johnson

Accounts Branch

J M Hansson (Chief Accountant),
J W E Emmett (A.g Accountant,
Sydney) W Ellershaw (Traffic
Accountant)

Melbourne Branch

T B D Edwards (Manager),
H A De Dassell, G H Cox, J V Joiner,
M Wilton, D L Bernstein,
Miss J A Lindsay, Miss M R Eckford,
Miss M Sheridan, Miss E P Alford

Traffic Branch

A D Gregory (Traffic Manager),
K McLennan, Miss T H McHugh

Administrative Branch

G Wallish (Chief Administrative
Officer), E C Harcourt, T J Molloy,
F R Hales, A E Shepherd, N J Smith,
A W F Brown, A L Donnelly,
G Maltby, W G Miller, G T Hughes,
W P Atkin, J B Walsh, R A N
Pegrum, G Cupit, R H Stewart,
M F hall, K Keane, R Doohan,
J B Maloney, C W Gray,
N M Hudson, O L Brazier, R C Lane,
E L Osborne, S Graham, G W Meek,
F S Masters, J T Aiken,
R J W Christoffersen, J Brummond,
G E McDonald, Miss W N
Shindorfer, Miss V J Budd,
Miss J H Matthew,
Miss B C McCabe,
Miss J M Hutchins, Miss H Steed,
Miss R Caldwell, Miss A M Walsh

AOTC ORGANISATION

As a result of the kind invitation by PETER SHORE, fifty Veterans were given a run down on the complete organisation, plans and aspirations of the merged OTC/Telecom. Peter, who is the Managing Director, International Business Unit, gave a very good and informative address, for which we were very appreciative.

AOTC is made up of six business units, namely Corporate & Government, International, Commercial, Consumer, Enterprises and Network Products, plus a Services Group and the Corporate Centre.

Most of OTC is known as IBU (International Business Unit). CRS has gone to Enterprises, with OTC's WARREN GRACE as Managing Director. Enterprises consists of CRS and all OTC and Telecom Mobile Services, plus Payphones. All the resources of the Business Units will be applied solely to providing the most efficient service to the client. They will not be burdened with any of the everyday administration of the organisation.

The Corporate Centre consists of Finance, Human Resources, Corporate Affairs, Strategy, Research, Secretariat, Information, Technology, Audit, Marketing, and Executive Council. These are headed by either a Director, a Secretary, or a Chief. OTC's Executive Pay and Administrative functions have gone to these units. OTC's CHRIS VONWILLER has been appointed Director of Corporate Affairs.

The total organisation is headed by a Chief Executive, FRANK BLOUNT (pronounced BLUNT), from AT&T of America. Group control of the business Units is divided between OTC's STEVE BURDON as Group Managing Director, Corporate & Government and International, and DOUG CAMPBELL, Group Managing Director, Commercial and Consumer. I Believe Doug hails from Canada.

The Board consists of thirteen persons, and is chaired by DAVID HOARE, previous Chairman of OTC.

Prior to and looking towards the merger, both OTC and Telecom had an extensive review of structures, resulting in approx. 250 members of OTC, and 15,000 of Telecom being above requirements, with many being offered redundancy packages.

Following the merger, AOTC management is now in the process of developing a strategy to operate in the new competitive world, and is preparing a number of models and estimates. They realise they will lose some business to Optus, but are hoping to offset this by giving clients 120% service. Marketing staff numbers are being increased considerably. They are also aware that Optus contains both the Bell Telephone Company and Cable & Wireless, who are old and experienced hands in the telecommunications business, and that both management and staff will have to work very hard to be competitive.

My only comment is that it appears that Optus has been given a clear advantage in that AOTC, by government decree, must lease them any facility or service they require. This would mean that, in the case of optic fibre cable, AOTC bears the cost of the whole cable, and Optus can lease just a portion, without any of the capital costs

involved. They could also pick the eyes out of any AOTC service and leave those not considered viable well alone.

Since OTC became International they have picked up some very valuable contracts in the Asian and Pacific regions, and will be seeking further markets in these areas.

Branch Offices have been opened in a number of Asian countries, and they are still expanding in this regard. They should be able to pick up a lot of valuable transit traffic to the Americas and Europe.

Peter explained that AOTC is expecting to see a much better picture of requirements by the middle of 1993. (The Government's proposal for a third carrier will also develop challenges for the future. I trust that there are not many heart attacks!) I can honestly say that I am glad not to be involved and able to watch from the sideline. Much too big a challenge for my feeble brain.

At the conclusion of the talk, we were shown a 20 minute video produced by MARTIN RATIA, titled "MEMORIES", The story of OTC. It is made up of archive material using both slides and film, from 1946 to date. It finished with photos of all past chief executives, namely Sir Jack Stevens, John Mulholland, Trevor Housely, Harold White, Bill Schmidt, George Maltby, Michael Hutchinson, and Steve Burdon.

Well done, Martin. I trust it is not copyright so that I can have a lend of it to make a copy. I wonder if Kerry Packer has seen it?

Ed's Note: Martin thanks you for the kind words, Gordon, and is pleased that you like the video. He has asked me to pass on the message that the video will be available for showing at all OTVA end-of-year functions, when orders for (free!) copies will also be taken.

OTC Internal Telephone Directory

I was recently shown a copy of the AOTC Internal Telephone Directory which is nearly as thick as the A K section of the Sydney phone book. Should you wish to ring, for example, BOB FISHER, Manager Paddington, you will find about a dozen Robert or Bob Fishers. I would hate to think how many Bill Smiths are listed. I would expect that each Business Unit will also publish its own book.

Suggestions and Improvements

A recent edition of the AOTC Staff Magazine records a character named NOEL ROBERTS PTTOL of the Adelaide Telecom Office submitted a suggestion for a PC-based data management program for the ARE11 exchange and was awarded a sum of \$55,000 for the program. During my career I submitted only two suggestions, both of which were adopted and I received 1 Pound for each. I remember another case where TONY EBERT submitted a suggestion. No award was given because the senior officer to which it was referred did not consider it worth adopting. Subsequently the same senior officer instituted the suggestion, and Tony promptly contacted the Board and was given recognition. Things were tough in those days.

Ed's Note) AWW - I dunno, Qdee. What about the 1 Pound award given to one bloke who suggested that there should be a razor blade or some cutting instrument to cut the string in the message bundling section, and the other award of a similar amount given to another bloke who suggested that the wall clocks should be placed where staff engaged in signing off messages could see them. Money for old rope, me ole son.

What About It, Fellers

During my many years in AWA and OTC, I met many real characters, like TED BISHTON, TOM SAGE, JACK BASSETT, JACK SHEATH, DICK HOEASON, GORDON RAMSAY, SID LEGRAND, HARRY HICKS, JOHN PONSONBY, JACK CHANT, ARTHUR WELLS, to name a few. All these gentlemen have passed on and some have been good contributors to NEWSLETTER. There are a number of our members who I know have stories to tell, so what about it, chaps? I am thinking of Ken Stone (Coast watching in Papua/NG, Harry Stone (a great prankster with many tales), Wilf(AKTUG) Atkin and many exploits, Kim Ayoub (living with the aristocracy in Canberris, Eric Bachman (association with TAD), Dick Christoffersen (life in Marisat), Len Dooley (Life in the fast lane of International Affairs) Edgar Harcourt, Cyril Vahtrick, Tom Hughes, Ron Flood, Jack Hansson, Ron Knightley, etc. on the same subject, Ted Gunning (Telecom boys World War II, Jim Anderson (PREI and another prankster), George Maltby (the real story - can it now be told?), George Schultz (Radio pioneering), and many others, especially from those younger guys with more modern stories on the outstations and modern work and experiences. Posterity needs it

THE MERGER

By QPEE

Challenger is a word bandied around for many circumstances, but it is certainly appropriate in relation to the Merger. This is evident from articles in TRANSIT and the Press, and the range of problems and decisions for success in the initial stages of the merger. Decisions made now will have a large bearing on the future of AOTC, and for the communications well-being of Australia in this high tech. age. It is now helped by the impending competition from the experienced Bell Telephone Company, and Cable & Wireless, our old friendly ally. AOTC has some big guns, with the very experienced men and women in the top management team, and should come out on top.

Congratulations to DAVID HOARE, STEVE BURDON, CHRIS VONWILLER, and any other OTC people included in that team. Also to PETER SHORE on his promotion within OTC, and Veteran LEN DOOLEY for his selection as Chairman of Intelsat's Board of Governors.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS.

OTC recently produced three historical books, one called "GENTLEMEN OF THE CABLE SERVICE", and the other two titled "COAST RADIO CALLING."

A great deal of the material for the books came from the OTC archives and Veterans records, including the NEWSLETTER. The material was researched and written by MARGARET MILLER, ably assisted by archivist KIMBERLEY O'SULLIVAN. Editors were ELIZABETH GRAY and MARTIN RATIA (Managing Editor/Executive Producer of "Transit", and members of the Veterans committee. Steve Burdon's preface to the books acknowledges the part played in the early days by the Veterans, and has dedicated the series to the memory of their pioneering spirit. It is a pity that so many have passed on and are not around to share the glory.

They are a consolidated story of all stations and will be a very valuable record, something which has never existed in the past. The photo of Jack Bassett and natives at Wau is a classic and typical of "Wewak" Jack. No mention was made of his famed donnybrook with Errol Flynn.

An expert, who has spent many years repairing and restoring old and historical documents in the Land Titles Office and Mitchell Library was very impressed with the content and presentation. He considered the choice, quality and condition of the pictorials as outstanding, the whole project enhanced by the type and colour of the paper, with its old look. Congratulations to all concerned with its production.

We are grateful for the copies given to the Vets at the last Annual Meeting. Two further books are to be produced, one on the Beam Wireless Service and the other on OTC.

(Gdonyer, Gordon - it's all the more reason to get the info from the Veterans and store it in the NEWSLETTER before we shuffle the mortal coil, or whatever we shuffle off to these days. Ed.)

Newsletter

Gordon Cupit says

"I am one of the more fortunate vets to have a complete set of the NEWSLETTERS, fully indexed. The NEWSLETTERS now consist of four large volumes, and we will soon be commencing the fifth. I spend many an hour reading some of the old stories and this gives me much pleasure. The Archivist also has a set, and should any member be interested in any particular story, Archivist Kimberley can be found on (02) 339-3954.

Some time ago I listed members (as far as I could recall) of the Beam Room in 1933. This being the fore-runner of the lists of all staff of 1950 published in the last NEWSLETTER. I can only blame myself, as the task of indexing was extensive with over 1,200 entries. Also, as my draft index is not completely alphabetical, it was

necessary to go through each list to avoid duplications. It made me wish that I had a computer or word processor.

and whilst we are on the subject

GORDON CUPIT, OTVA President, had expressed some fears as to the future of the certain areas during the period of change to AOTC. For the information of Veterans it seems pertinent to quote parts of a letter he received from Group Managing Director of AOTC, S.W.R. (Steve) BURDON.

Dear Gordon,

Thank you for your recent letter following the Veterans Meeting and your kind words on the Coast Radio and Cable Services publications. They have certainly contributed to a most successful project and I have passed on your congratulations to Martin Ratia. I have also asked Martin to forward copies of the books to the organisations and individuals you mentioned.

As to the other matters raised, it is certainly correct that the Archives area is to be included in our existing cost centre arrangements. As you know, we are going into a competitive situation and all our activities are fully reviewed. The Archives area will be treated in a similar manner to both the Library and Records areas (which you also mentioned) and which have been charged out for some years now. I would like to reassure you, however, that a basis for charging has been devised and it is considered that the archive activity will not be threatened by these new arrangements.

It was decided that the Welfare position would continue. The situation remains the same and will now come under the management of Alistair Wilson, our new General Manager, Human Resources International.

I hope this letter helps to allay your concerns regarding these matters. for my part, I am glad that the rapport we have allows these issues to be raised and discussed - it can be difficult I know, seeing the company change and evolve at the pace it is, but it is certainly essential to meet the challenging times ahead.

Kind regards

(Signed) Steve Burdon.

TRIBUTE TO TED BISHTON

Bill Stower pulled into Kieta one day, on a recruiting trip. He stayed with me for a day or so then headed down to Buin and that area. Bill was a good recruiter and it was not long before he was back in Kieta with a goodly number of native recruits. He had on board quite a few natives he had pulled (forced or otherwise blackbirded). He made out all the contracts and took the boys along to the District Office to sign them on. Those who were unwilling to sign one, he filled in all the particulars on the contracts, but instead of the unwilling natives appearing at the District Office, Bill replaced them with his own boat crew, who answered yes to everything. Baill sailed from Kieta very happy, but it was only a few months before he was back in Kieta to answer a charge of pulling natives. When the unwilling natives learnt to talk pidgin english, they complained to the District Officer wherever they were, hence Bill's appearance back in Kieta. He was with me for a couple of weeks awaiting trial and when the case was heard, he was fined some hundreds of pounds and the natives returned to their villages. Bill was great company in gaol. I next saw Bill on the goldfields at Edie Creek in 1926. He didn't have much luck as a miner and the last I heard of him was that he died in Sydney of cancer about 1929.

There was a Mrs Caulder who used to come into Kieta pretty often. She owned a plantation a few miles down the coast called Toboroi. Mrs Caulder was a niece of Queen Emma of Rabaul fame. She also owned the Mortlock Islands. I went out to the Mortlocks a couple of times. The people were Polynesians. The men were a pretty poor type, but the women were the biggest I had every seen. They must have been up around the 20 stone mark, their arms and legs were like hams. It seemed so funny to see these mountains of flesh nurshing and cuddling a new born baby; the baby nearly disappearing in the wrinkles of the mother's arms. After the ship left Kieta, she always went on to the Mortlocks and on three consecutive trips the plantation overseer was found to have died and been buried. There did not seem to be any suspicious circumstances as the natives were always so very friendly. However, the fourth chap to go out there was named Marley. He took with him three dogs for protection and stayed there for about 12 months and was then relieved. He was later killed by the natives in the Bainings just outside Rabaul about 1928 along with Noel Collins, Nichols and someone else; Thurston Brittin and another fellow got away. They were on a prospecting trip at the time. Mrs Caulder's daughter was married to Dr Kroening who was medical officer at Kieta when the 1914-18 war started. He was interned during the war. I think Mrs Caulder ended her days by being blown up by dynamite when she was dynamiting fish.

The Melusia arrived one day with a new medical assistant on board. He was Eric Robinson, known throughout the Territory in later years as Wobbie, as he had difficulty in pronouncing the letter R. When the boat arrived, which used to be about every three months, everyone let their hair down and the drink flowed freely. The ship generally only stayed the one day and by the time the ship was ready to sail everyone was well under the weather. I said to Wobbie that he had better come to stay at my place. He accepted the invitation and when we were ready to go ashore he said wait till I get my coon to get my things and my dog. He came along the deck leading the silliest looking Kanaka dog I have ever seen. It had long spindly legs, a small short body and ears about 6 inches long which stood straight up. I said you're not bringing that silly looking thing to my house and Robbie got very upstage and said - if you don't want my dog you

don't want me, so I said, all right bring him along. Robbie thought the world of his dig, but I have never seen a worse type. Robbie went on a patrol down to Buin where a chap named Gittos was police master. Robbie was telling me that they were having a few drinks and the next thing he knew was that he had been shot through the heel. He attended to the wound himself - he was a good medical assistant - and arrived back in Kieta on a stretcher. Robbie was soon up and about again; Gittos went south on the next boat.

There was no wharf at Kieta, so the Melusia always anchored offshore. One of these visits, Robbie and I got drunk as usual and Robbie decided to have a swim - he was a very good swimmer - and jumped overboard. Passengers on the ship yelled 'Man Overboard' and a boat was lowered and the crewmen rowed towards Robbie who was treading water and enjoying himself. Just as the crewmen went to grab Robbie, he dived down, under the ship and came up on the other side. The passengers were yelling to the crewman that Robbie was on the other side, so they pulled round to the other side of the ship and the same thing happened. This pantomime went on for some time, then Robbie swam ashore. The captain, Jazz Williams, was very wild and barred Robbie and myself from going on board at any future arrivals, but the suspension only lasted one or two trips and then we were back on board as usual.

One day a boat arrived from Rabaul, it would be some time in 1922, and on board was a police master called Ward, Wardie as he was popularly known. He was nothing much to look at. I had met him during my travels while returning from Dutch New Guinea, when he was stationed at Madan and now he came and stayed with me. He was an Englishman, cross-eyed, about 5ft 4 inches, thin legs and weighed about 7 stone. He had a native servant called Mice who used to look after him like a baby. He was the most unpretentious looking guy one would ever encounter, not the type to impress the natives, but somehow there was something in Wardie's makeup that more than impressed the natives; it may have been his cross-eyes. He had a way of handling natives which no one else to my knowledge possessed. He left my house on his first patrol and was back in two or three days time with hundreds of natives. He had brought them in to Kieta to have them put on the census books. I asked Wardie where they came from and he said only about 5 miles behind Kieta, but they had never been visited by a European before; they were all naked, men, women and children. After a few days rest and some heavy drinking, Wardie went on another patrol with the same result. He must have put thousands of natives on the census book from within a few miles of Kieta.

During my stay in Kieta Dr Calov left and was replaced by Dr Watch; Rajah Pascal was replaced by Les Corfe. Of course the medical assistant Horsley has been replaced by Paddy Nolan, who in turn was replaced by Eric Robinson (Wobbie).

About 20 miles down the coast was a plantation called Toimonapu which was managed by a very fat man of about 18 stone named Tom Ebery. Tom was a very fine chap and used to come into Kieta to sign labour on and off. Toimonapu was called New Britain estates Ltd. I asked Tom how it got that name and he said that when the place was planted up before the 1914-18 war they thought they were on the island of New Britain. I never saw Tom Ebery after I left Kieta, but I know he was captured by the Japs during the 1939-45 war and was decapitated.

There was a small island a couple of miles off Kieta where the incorrigible prisoners were sent; they used to saw timber for the station and were controlled by a few policy boys. The police master used to pay periodical visits to see how things were going, for there were always fights among these prisoners and during my stay a couple of murders. I went to the post mortem on one of these victims; he had been hit on the head with a lump of wood and had died from a cerebral haemorrhage. There was one particularly bad prisoner at Kieta named Tuti who belonged to New Hanover near Kavieng. I think he had broken out of nearly every prison in the Territory. At one time he was being transferred from one place to another district by ship, jumped overboard at night when the ship was at sea and was apprehended some months later in Dutch New Guinea. Another time he escaped from prison in Rabaul, stole a police boy's lap lap, rifle and bayonet and went out into the Kokopo district lining up the natives in their villages and collecting head taxes. He told me he had killed several natives. I asked him how many Chinese and he said none yet. He was not very tall but very powerful; I have seen him carry 2 bags of copra at one time - this would be about 310 pounds. I have also seen him carry a crate of native tobacco - a crate consisted of 6 caddies of 30 lbs each. Just before I left Kieta, he broke out of prison one night by lifting part of the iron roof off. He came to my place and stole the best part of a case of beer, but had the decency to leave me a couple of bottles. After stealing the beer, he buried it in the boat shed at the foot of the hill where I lived. It was some time after the theft that a police boy noticed Tuti go into the boat shed and followed him, catching him red handed. No one had any suspicion that Tuti was the culprit. I left Kieta before the case came off and never heard the result. I imagine Tuti would have died in prison as he had a worse record than Darcy Dugan.

While in Kieta I spent some time trying to train a lad of about 12 years of age in the gentle art of cooking. His name was Pikai, coal black in colour as all Bougainville boys are and he suffered from Filaria which affected one of his shin bones to such an extent it looked like a boomerang. I would sit down with the cookery book on my knee and read out the ingredients of the particular article we were about to make. We had moderate success with pies, custards, tarts etc. We had no self-raising flour, only plain, so made our own self-raising flour by adding cream of tartar and bi-carb, so I used Eno's fruit salts instead, to make some scones; they rose beautifully and were good to eat. After coaching Pikai for some months he was pretty good, but only under supervision. One day I told him what to cook for dinner, which generally meant open a tin of that, cook some sweet potatoes or taro and make a pudding. I said can you make a rice pudding and he said yes, so I said well go ahead and put a couple of eggs in it. After I had completed my dinner I asked Pikai to bring in the pudding and I must say that when the pudding arrived I was more than mildly shocked. He had cooked the rice alright, but like most natives he had forgotten to put in the eggs, so to carry out my wishes as an afterthought, he had broken 2 eggs on top of the rice and when he brought it onto the table it was just boiled rice with 2 fried eggs sitting on top of it.

I had another boy who used to do the housework and the washing and ironing. I taught this fellow how to make starch and he must have loved the stuff for he used to starch my handkerchiefs so hard that I would tear them trying to get them open, and my socks were so hard they would stand up and look at me. In time they both turned out good boys. I had one of them named Namur for 18 years. He was with me right up to the time the Japs arrived in Rabaul in 1942 and I never saw him again. When I returned to

Rabaul in 1945, I made enquiries and some of his one-talks told me he only lasted a couple of months under Japanese rule and died from being over-worked.

Some time in 1923, I received word that I was being relieved by Henry Holland to go on leave. Knowing Harry was a married man, I naturally thought he would have his wife with him, so the boys and I set to cleaning out the bungalow, scrubbing the floor and cleaning the windows so that when Harry arrived we had the place looking quite presentable. When the boat arrived I was there to meet Harry and after the usual salutations, I asked where was Mrs Holland and he informed me that she was still in Australia and would be coming to Kieta at a later date. I told Harry about the cleaning campaign in Mrs Holland's honour and he thought it a great joke. After handing over to Harry I returned to Rabaul and then proceeded to Sydney on leave.

After my leave in Australia I return to Rabaul about June 1923. In May 1921, military occupation of the Territory of ex-German New Guinea ceased and civil administration was introduced. It was not until December 1921 that we naval personnel received our discharge. All the wireless stations in the Northwest Pacific which had been manned by the Navy were now taken over by Amalgamated Wireless (A/Sia) Ltd. Those wishing to remain in the Territory were taken over by AWA, the rest returned to Australia. When I returned to Rabaul in June 1923, George (Nobby) Clarke was in charge of the island radio service, which it was called after the AWA takeover. The government ship Sumatra was in Rabaul about to leave for Sydney for her annual survey. Nobby was trying to get one of his staff who was due for leave to go on the Sumatra as the wireless operator, but was not having any success as any of those due for leave preferred to go south on the bigger Burns Philp ships. Eventually, Nobby asked me if I would like the trip. I jumped at the chance and was all set for the trip, but at the last moment Don McIntosh volunteered and as he was going on leave, he naturally got the trip.

The Sumatra duly arrived in Sydney and stayed only a couple of weeks. When she was ready to return to Rabaul, Ossie Egan was due to return from leave, so it was arranged that he would return on the Sumatra as wireless operator. After clearing Sydney Heads, the Sumatra ran into very rough weather and sank somewhere off Seal Rock on the NSW coast. There were no survivors. Captain Bell and the First Officer Fuetrell were the only two washed ashore, but were beyond human aid when found. Captain Bell's mother was on board at the time of the tragedy and the chief engineer was a chap named Kennedy. There were 19 native crewmen and some Chinese who went down the ship. I have always felt I was very lucky for had I taken the ship from Rabaul to Sydney, I most certainly would have been on her for the return trip and I am always grateful to Don McIntosh for changing his mind at the last minute.

At this time there was a smallpox scare in Dutch New Guinea. It was reported that the Dutch New Guinea natives were crossing the border into our territory, so the administration organised an expedition to proceed to the 14... parallel which was the imaginary line separating the two administrations, the Dutch and our territories; surveyors, doctors and medical assistants, myself as wireless operator, policy boys and Cecil John Levien who was in charge of the expedition. The administration supplied all the food and drink and when all the stores were loaded onto the government ship Mekalong, we set off to Aitape. We had a very rough trip and at times it was impossible to stand up. As usual there were a lot suffering from sea sickness and by the

time we arrived at Aitape there were quite a few of us showing bruises and scars where we had been bumped about during the voyage. Arriving at Aitape we were met by the schooner *Ida*, captained by Jack McDonald. This schooner was to take us to Vanimo about 80 miles up the coast. All our stores were transferred from the *Mekalong* and in due course we were on our way to Vanimo where we duly arrived without further incident.

Vanimo is a pretty spot with a very good, but small harbour. It was a substation controlled from Aitape. The only European on the station was the police master who had under this command about 25 native police boys. On our arrival the police master sent police boys to the surrounding villages to collect natives who were to be used for clearing a path along the 141 degree parallel, which would then be patrolled by police boys to prevent any Dutch New Guinea natives crossing into our territory. Jock McDonald thought it a good opportunity to clean the hull of his schooner, so at high tide it was pulled up as close as possible to shore and then shored up with timber so that when the tide receded she was practically high and dry. Then somebody prevailed upon Levien to let his head go and dole out some of the liquor. He did the right thing and we had a very hectic night on the schooner. Most schooners in the territory at that time had a table aft with two long seats on each side of it. These seats were used as bunks and on the *Ida* were occupied by Jock and myself. After the party ended the table was littered with crockery and cutlery, glass and bottles and rubbish of all descriptions. McDonald decided the boys could clean up in the morning so we got under our mosquito nets and turned in for the night. Somewhere about 3 or 4 in the morning I was awakened by an awful din, the tide had risen and in doing so had washed away the timbers which were keeping the *Ida* on an even keel and over she wen onto her side. All the rubbish on the table tipped on to me and the din was terrific. I was in a deep sleep and with such a rude awakening I thought that we were still at sea and that the schooner had capsized. I could hear Mac and the native crew screaming as I tried to extricate myself from under the debris which were tangled up with my mosquito net. Daylight revealed a horrible looking mess, but the crew soon had the *Ida* in good condition - fortunately no damage had been done and life went on as serenely as every.

It was while I was on this expedition that I first encountered natives using (what we knew in New Guinea as) Kanaka dynamite. The coral reef on the sea front of Vanimo harbour extended for quite some distance and this reef consisted of quite a few large holes. They would pound the vines on the coral and then swirl it around in the holes and practically instantaneously the fish floated to the surface in a stunned condition. They were quickly gathered up by the natives and in a very short space of time would be kicking and wriggling as though they had never been drugged. The natives would work a lot of these water holes and their hauls of fish were generally very large.

Another time we were dynamiting fish in Vanimo harbour. One of the policy boys had the fire stick and the dynamite waiting the opportunity to throw into the large school of fish that was hovering just off shore. There were dozens of natives standing up to their waists in the water ready to retrieve the fish when the dynamite exploded. Eventually when the policy boy threw the dynamite the natives advanced further out into the water and by the time the dynamite exploded that natives were nearly on top of it. There were screams and everyone rushed into the water to their assistance for when the dynamite exploded they all got a terrific shock in the stomach which doubled them over. They were all taken ashore safely and after an hour or so they were back to normal.

Most the expedition were working around Wutung Bay which is on the 141⁰ parallel and while there they picked up a German by the name of Lange, the same fellow I knew in Mokerang Manus. He had been working from Hollandia in Dutch New Guinea and had crossed over into our territory shooting birds of paradise. The shooting of birds in paradise had become prohibited in our territory but it did not deter people crossing the border where the birds were more plentiful. After some weeks the expedition had completed its task and the ship Mekalong came and picked us up. We left the Aitape where we stayed a few days.

Although the shooting of birds of paradise was prohibited, practically everyone along the coast and at Aitape indulged in the sport. The house soldier at Aitape was like an armoury - there were shot guns all around the verandah - dozens of them. There were a few deck chairs along the verandah and one day I went to sit in one but for some unknown reason I changed my mind and sat in another one. Just then there was a loud explosion and the canvas in the deck chair of the one I was going to sit in was blown to pieces. It was the same old story - one of the chaps picked up one of the guns and didn't know it was loaded. I had a very lucky escape and got away with a few pellets in my arm.

We left Aitape and set out for the Western Islands. We called in Wuvululu and/or Arwa to pick up copra. The people of these islands are of the Micronesia type. The women have long hair and very fine physique; the men are a very poor type and consumptive looking. They live in round wooden huts which they keep very clean and they line their houses in rows. Before the 1914-18 war a German warship had called here and when she left two of the crew were missing. One was killed by the natives and the other, Charlie Mathies became the guide, philosopher and friend of the natives. No doubt he instilled a little German discipline into them, hence the well-laid out and clean villages. Old Charlie had a son Peter who used to work for Burns Philp in Rabaul.

Our next port was Pellaluan a very good plantation managed by Charlie Booth who later made a fortune with his wife Doris on the Bulolo goldfields. Charlie, of course, came out in a small dinghy to meet the boat. Dr Honman who was on board wanted to go ashore and make an inspection, so I went with him in Charlie's boat. On the way to the plantation the rain came down in torrents so that by the time we reached our destination the boat was half full of water. When we arrived, the boys pulled the boat up on the beach and pulled the plug out to let the water escape. We then went to Charlie's house where he insisted we should strip off and he would dry our clothes in the copra dryer. He supplied us with a towel each which we used as a lap lap. We had a few drinks and the old doc got very annoyed when he realised Charlie was not going to supply a meal. Charlie had two massive bulldogs which he greatly admired - all round the house were show ribbons which his dogs had won at various shows in Queensland. The old doc asked for our clothes as we were going back to the ship. They arrived but they were just as wet as when they were taken from us and it looked as though they had been pulled through coal shutes. We got down to the beach and the boys launched the dinghy into the water and we were on our way back to the ship. We had not gone very far when we discovered we were making water very fast and, looking down, I noticed that the plug had not been put back in, so I inserted one of my fingers in the hole while the old doc did the bailing. On arrival back at the ship, the doc could

not get on board quickly enough and when he did get on board he told Charlie Booth without any qualifications what he thought of him

We next called at Longan, then on to Maron in the Hermit Island group. Maron used to be the headquarters of Wahlan who owned most of the western islands. He had built himself a fine big mansion, beautifully furnished and used to entertain German royalty whenever any of them visited New Guinea, he even imported deer for the pleasure of his guests. I saw this old mansion a few times in later years; what with souvenir hunters and being uninhabited for long spells, the mansion was rapidly deteriorating. Our next port was Noru where I once again met up with my old friend Bill Southcote. We still had little Lange on board - he was being taken to Rabaul for trial for being in our territory without a permit. Lange and Bill greeted each other like long lost brothers. After loading all Bill's copra we proceeded to Mokarang then on to Rabaul. Lange was put into prison and was eventually tried and sentenced to the next time I saw him he was at Namanula hospital carrying out his sentence as a medical orderly.

**OVERSEAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS VERTERANS' ASSOCIATION
(Victoria)**

R E P O R T

**35TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MELBOURNE HELD AT
TELECOM HQ BUILDING 199 WILLIAM STREET MELBOURNE
3RD JUNE 1992 AT NOON**

*PRESIDENT JIM KENNEDY CHAIRED THE MEETING WHICH WAS
ATTENDED BY 30 MEMBERS. ONE MINUTE'S SILENCE IN RESPECT OF
OUR PASSED AWAY COLLEAGUES: DOUG BATTEN, ALF GOEBY, BILL
BENTLEY. NORMAL MEETING FUNCTIONS PERFORMED, REPORT ON
SICK MEMBERS, NEED FOR THE SUPPLY OF MEMBERS UPTO DATE
SERVICE DETAILS AND LIFE HISTORY WELCOMED.
IMPLEMENTATION OF A PHONE CONTACT LIST FOR WHEN SOMEONE
PASSES ON.*

*APOLOGIES: TOM LANG, MARK WILTON, GEORGE FRASER, CLIVE
PURVIS, DARRYL GARLING, TOM SMITH, IAN REED, LEN HINGLEY,
GOERGE MALTBY, STEVE BURDON.*

*ELECTED OFFICE BEARERS: PRESIDENT DENIS CHAMBERS
SEC/TREASURER ROBERT HALL.*

*MEETING CLOSED IT WAS INTO A TWO HOUR BARRAGE OF FINE
FOOD AND PLENTY TO DRINK AND TALK OF OLD AND CURRENT
TIMES.*

*ATTENDEES: R HALL, J KENNEDY, S BRIGHT, A BRIGHT, T HODGES,
W FERGUSON, D CHAMBERS, J WHITE, D CRABTREE, P SARROW, V
FINDLAY, P PEAT, W PIERCE, A STEWART, A MCLEAN, J FEZ, H
NEWSOME, J NICHOLSON, G WHITMORE, B STANDFORD-STARR, J
DAVEY, A GREEN, L FOLEY, G RUSSELL, T READ, J ROBINSON, N
STUBBS, M FERNANDO, J FERNE, J CAULFIELD.*

LETTER RECEIVED FROM MRS. JUDITH HOLLAND DAUGHTER OF THE LATE
"SCOTTY" HAMILTON.

THE ARTICLE FOLLOWING HER LETTER RE THE HUNT FOR THE
"WARATAH" HAS ALSO BEEN SUPPLIED BY HER, FOR WHICH WE SEND
OUR GRATEFUL, THANKS.

Dear Mr. Russell,

Quite some time ago, I sent you a cutting about the then possibility of the "Waratah" having been located off the Eastern Cape of South Africa. Nothing further eventuated about that project at the time, now, however, you will see from the enclosed cutting, from our local newspaper "The Eastern Province Herald" (Port Elizabeth), that the investigation is really picking-up again.

There has always been so much interest in the mysterious disappearance of the "Waratah" and of course, many theories about what happened, that it will be very gratifying if this new addition to the search for the vessel - a mini-submarine, no less - can in fact prove once and for all, if the wreck thought to be the "Waratah" is indeed so.

I am to return to South Africa for a while, next week, and shall endeavour to follow-up the result of the expedition, as I think the venture should have been carried out now. More later!

Wishing all Vets wherever they may be within Australia, all the very best.

Yours sincerely

(Signed) Mrs J E Holland
Daughter of the late 'Scotty' Hamilton SCRS

5/5/91

Mini-sub to help in hunt for Waratah

SALVAGE DREAM:

Emlyn Brown with a photo of the ship Waratah in which 211 passengers and crew lost their lives when it sank in 1909

Picture: TERRY SHEAN



A MINI-SUBMARINE will be used to try to solve one of the world's most intriguing maritime mysteries, the disappearance of the passenger liner, the SS Waratah.

The Australian liner, with 211 passengers and crew on board, left Durban for Cape Town on July 28 1909, but failed to arrive in Table Bay.

No trace of the ship has been found and it is believed to have gone down off the Transkei coast.

Now the West German owners of the three-metre submarine Jago, belonging to Professor Hans Fricke of the Max Planck Institute in Germany, have agreed to conduct a series of dives over a wreck site off the Transkei coast in the first

By IVOR CREWS

week of June. Professor Fricke and his submarine are being brought to South Africa by the JLB Smith Institute of Ichthyology at Rhodes University to undertake two research projects. He has agreed "in principle" to conduct a series of dives for the Waratah.

Four major expeditions to discover the whereabouts of the wreck have been undertaken by Emlyn Brown, 35, of Cape Town, but all were dogged by misfortune, faulty equipment and bad weather.

The opportunity of using the German submarine to identify the wreck would be the culmination of a lifelong ambition for the

intrepid explorer and free-lance film-maker.

But finding sponsorship has been a major headache — it will cost about R200 000 to hire the submarine and the dive support ship, Deep Salvage One.

"It's a great chance to prove finally the wreck is that of the Waratah, but it will be a tragedy if a sponsor can't be found and I may be forced to abandon the project," said Mr Brown.

Convinced

"After eight years of methodical scientific research, I'm convinced the wreck of the Waratah lies on the seabed off the Transkei Coast between the Bashee River and the Xora River in the middle of the Agulhas current.

"The dive would be a fitting end to the mystery of the Waratah," he said.

A number of attempts have been made to locate the ship, and even clairvoyants were called upon and seances held to provide clues to its final resting place.

In 1989, a search had to be abandoned because of bad weather, but not before a wreck was found in the area pin-pointed by marine historians as the ship's last resting place.

● The Jago, which is being transported to South Africa by Safmarine, was due to arrive in Port Elizabeth this weekend.

THE BAD NEWS FROM VICTORIA.

Herewith a list of VALE's from our Victorian colleagues:

Quentin Shepley

Quentin passed away suddenly 19th July, 1991 aged 48 years. He commenced at OTC office Melbourne Operating Room in 1959 as Circuit Assistant then progressed through MOR to SITO also working in facsimile section, then transferred to Marketing until he resigned in May 1989 Venturing into private business.

Our sincere condolences to his wife, Elizabeth, and their three children. Melbourne Vets who attended his funeral were Sam & Audrey Bright, Denis Chambers, I. Reed, Bill Bentley, J. Kennedy, J. Gowans, Robert & Judith Hall, Les Foley, J. Caulfield, G. Whitmore, P. Dennis, Ted Read, M. Cooper & his wife, C. Micallef, J.W. Murphy and C. Tancheff.

Robert (Ron) Thaddeus Roger

Passed away on 14/8/92 at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital after many years of ill-health, several operations, and lately, strokes.

Ron served in the Army from 14/6/40 until 2/10/45 and was an ex-POW, He joined OTC on 27/4/56 as temporary Traffic Assistant and upon retiring in April 1978 as a Service Clerk.

William Charles Bentley

"BUNG", as he was affectionately known, passed away suddenly on 16 February, 1992, aged 78 years.

Bill was born at Albert Park, Victoria, on 16/11/13. He commenced work with AWA Beam Wireless as an outdoor messenger on 30/1/29 and progressed through the ranks: Bundler, Telephonist, Traffic Clerk, Checker, Service Clerk, Telegraphist, etc. until retiring as Supervisor MOR in 1978. Bill was survived by his wife Irenen, and two children, Norm and Annette and their families.

Sadly, his wife Irene subsequently died at Frankston Hospital on 1st August, 1992, just 52 months after Bill.

To their families go our deepest sympathy.

Cliff Millbank Allison

Passed away on 4/9/92. He was an associate member of the Vets having served with AWA Ltd until retirement in December, 1969 (believe that he would be at least 88 years old).

He was a member of the Society of Wireless Pioneers Inc. of America, and was a very keen amateur radio operator.

VICTORIANS VETERANS 35TH ANNUAL RE-UNION.

Due to the closure of OTC House, Melbourne, in July 1991 we had to find a new venue for our re-union, which was held at the Celtic Club, Melbourne, on 3rd December, 1991. The function was well attended by 43 veterans with 14 apologies received, including letters from Mr. Steve Burdon and Mr. George Maltby, and Mr. Len Hingley. Everybody had a good time, with plenty to eat and drink and a great deal of reminiscing of past good times.

70 Dryandra Street, O'Connor ACT 2601

9 May 1991

The Secretary
OTC Veterans' Association
382 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne

Dear Mr Russell

You'll not remember me, I imagine, as it must be around fifty years since we met - that is, if you are that Mr Russell who worked (inter alia) on the facsimile beam photographs in the early years of the war! My father (who did as well) was C.F.W. Griffiths, indeed a veteran of the service, as he was employed by AWA/OTC from 1917 until retirement in 1962 - for 45 years. I well remember coming up to the office in Queen Street and being shown how the "fax" (we knew that word long before it gained its present connotation) worked, for a project I was to do at school. That is when I met you (or your namesake).

My father, as you probably know, has been dead for nearly 25 years, but my mother has been an enthusiastic recipient of "Transit" and especially of the Veterans' newsletters, all these years. She is 87 now, with little left of her sight, hearing, or even sense of smell, but her intellect is as good as ever, and whenever I go up to Queensland to visit her one of my first tasks is to read them through, picking out all the items that will interest her. Can you imagine how very thrilled she was, with the newsletter that arrived a few days ago while I was actually with her - and there was the staff list for 1927, with my father's name along with all the others! It made her day!

I've been working away for some years now (I am a full-time researcher at the Australian National University, so don't have a great deal of spare time) at a book about Fred Griffiths' mother's family (Munt, they were called). My mother had already compiled for me a lengthy AWA/OTC staff list. One of the most fascinating vignettes to be included deals with Fred and his brother Lock, 15 months younger, who went off to sea as Wireless Operators at the end of 1914 - Lock had just had his 16th birthday. He kept a diary of his first year of service; Fred kept letters and other documents. Later, also by advancing his age somewhat, the next brother, Alec, joined the Flying Corps as a Wireless Operator, about the same time as their "adopted" brother Frank Hayes (who like Fred and Lock had served his time as a PMG messenger - I have a photograph of them - and had been through the Marconi School) went to sea; and there was a fifth one, Walter Bird, later to become their brother-in-law. The story of the five young Wireless Operators makes fine reading.

In the process of gathering the data I have been in touch with your nice archivist, and also visited the sister Archive in London. I am also in the process of checking through *all* the shipping logs held by Australian Archives, noting *all* names and designations of Wireless Operators; this step is not quite done, as the logs have to be specially cleared before being perused - something of a slow process. When all of this is complete, of course, not only will my account be published in the history of the Munt family (several

months ahead) but expanded copies of that section will be lodged with the Australian War Memorial, Australian Archives, the London Archive and of course OTC's. Wish me ~ speedy conclusion to the task!

Now, before this letter grows too long, may I greet you and all the Melbourne veterans on my own and my mother's behalf. That mention of Fred delighted us! I can remember going to a children's party at the Carthews' when I was about eight, and enjoying Charlie's never-to-be-forgotten conjuring tricks!

With best wishes

(Signed) Lois Carrinton

Tony Richardson
39 Whittle Avenue
Milperra 2214 NSW

Tony

I am assuming you are still secretary of the OT Veterans and therefore am bringing this matter to your attention. If you are no longer in office would you please forward my letter to the right person.

The Queensland branch of the veterans has relied on the AOTC office in Brisbane for administrative support ie preparing correspondence and mailing letters to our Queensland members. This assistance has always been given generously. In addition the old Brisbane office was always readily available for us to use for our annual meetings.]

Since the move to Telecom associated premises the Brisbane manager, John Blewett has indicated to our Queensland secretary, John Taylor, clerical/administrative support is no longer available. It could be assumed that we may no longer have the use of AOTC premises in the future, although our November get together will still be held at the Marine Station.

I have endeavoured to contact Martin Ratia in Sydney regarding the above but he was unavailable due to a trip to Melbourne. One of his assistants, however, took details of the situation together with my telephone, and will pass the details to Martin.

Both John Taylor and myself are concerned that our branch of the veterans associations could face a growing problem if AOTC continues to withdraw support for the OT Veterans.

Any assistance or advice you can give would be appreciated.

Best Regards

(Signed) Keven Bobrige
President Queensland Branch OT Veterans)

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