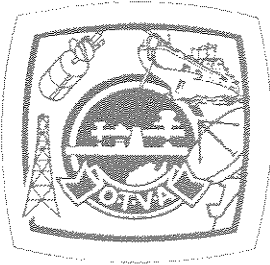


Editor:



Newsletter

Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association (Australia)

VOL 5 PART 1 PAGE 350

APR 93

MEETINGS AND REUNIONS

NEW SOUTH WALES	Reunion - 4 June 1993 12:00 noon	OTC House 12th Floor Conference Centre 231 Elizabeth Street Sydney
QUEENSLAND	AGM & Reunion 25 May 1993 12:00 noon	Queensland Irish Association Tara House 175 Elizabeth Street Brisbane

I regret to say that I have had no advice from our other state branches as to the dates of our proposed AGMs.

This appears to be due mainly to the fact that some of the branches will have to find new venues as the ones they have been used to have closed down, or are in the process of doing so.

Once things have settled down I sincerely trust that we will revert to the old system.

Jim Anderson
Editor



EDITORIAL

It appears that some of our State Branches are in a spot of confusion, mainly because they have to find new venues for their meetings due to the fact that some of them have been closed down because of the change-over.

I have consulted Tony Richardson who is still prepared to act as Secretary of our Branch but finds it difficult now that he has his own business. He feels that a lot of the mail intended for NEWSLETTER is not getting through because some people or departments receiving mail for OTVA are not sure to whom it should be sent.

Well, we can clear up that point. If you have material which you wish to be printed in NEWSLETTER, please send it to:

Jim Anderson
PO Box 9
HOMEBUSH SOUTH NSW 2140

There is a light at the end of the tunnel, and it comes in the shape of Leanne Porter, Peter Shore's Secretary. Leanne has accepted the task of arranging for the material to be typed and produced in Newsletter format, as well as arranging for its distribution. I am grateful for her assistance.

I must also give credit to the contributors of this edition:

Harry Stone
Derek Waler
Wilf Atkin

Lois Carrington
Des Woods
Martin Ratia

Les Brown
Gordon Cupit

FROM OUR SOUTH AUSTRALIAN VETERANS

Got a 'phone call from our old mate 'Hop' Harry Stone, the other day, Harry was in the position of not knowing what was going on, so I told him to send it direct to me. Anyway, here is his report on the Crow Eaters' Christmas gathering.

The annual Christmas reunion of the South Australian branch of the OTVA was held on Thursday, 26 November 1992 at McLaren Vale VIA Adelaide Radio Station through the courtesy of FRED REEVE, who, as usual, waved his magic wand and with the assistance of his capable Secretary, RHONDA HUNT, provided the much appreciated Christmas cheer.

There were twenty two members and their wives present for this 'suspicious' occasion, namely, Mr & Mrs Fred Reeve, Mr & Mrs Dick Inwood, Mr & Mrs Dennis Maher, Mr & Mrs Bob Imrie, Mr & Mrs John McGregor, Geoff Cox (President), Harry Stone (Secretary), Ken Springbett, Keith Parker, Ernie Bennett, Max Lang, Paddy Wilkinson, Max Smith, Gary Kelly (Mgr, AOTC SA), David Herbert, Klaus Hagedorn and Rhonda Hunt, VIA Secretary.

Apologies were received from Dudley Treliving, Ken Collett and George Rowe, all because of health reasons.

This event was noteworthy for two reasons; it was the first time that members' wives were invited, and, on a sad note, it was to the last time that the venue of McLaren Vale would be available for our meetings. This was due to the closing down of the AOTC Maritime Radio station on the 31 January 1993, and the end of another important era in Australia's Maritime communications systems.

At the moment of writing this report, a venue for the midyear AGM is yet to be arranged. If and when a suitable venue can be found, members will be notified by telephone.

It may be of interest to our fellow ex-communicators to note that South Australian Shipping movements are now controlled from Melbourne (on HF radio), as are Aircraft movements due to "rationalisation" of C.A.A. stations and staff. So, if you are thinking of travelling to our Festival State, make sure that your life insurance is paid up. Still, the Global Navigation system is extremely accurate and the authorities will be able to pin-point to within a metre exactly where your ship sank, or your aircraft plunged.

It is understood that our popular President, Geoff Cox, will not be standing for re-election. His guiding hand and courteous manner will be missed by all South Australian members. It is hoped that he will still be able to attend our future meetings.

Our financial status (unlike our National Economic status) is still solvent and in the black (or is it green?) with a bank balance of \$87.81, but apparently, due to the early retirement of our good friend and colleague, Tony Richardson (Secretary, OTVA), this report was lost in the general shuffling around of OTC staff in the implementation of AOTC and integration into the giant Telecom organisation.

This account of the Christmas meeting is therefore being sent direct to our trusty (or is it rusty?) Editor, your good self, Jim. It is understood about the problems involved in re-establishing line of communication within AOTC. This could be aptly termed "passing the buck(s)".

Best wishes,

Harry Stone

VALE VIA

The official function which marked the closing down of the VIA Maritime Radio Station was held on 31 January 1993 and well attended by a large group of local boating and yachting fraternity, as well as, OTC veterans and Head Office notables such as Darryl Smith, Ray Hookway, Gary Kelly and Nick Nielsen.

It was a successful but poignant event and, no doubt, will be fully covered in detail by Manager, Fred Reeve, in his final report. The last sked with ships, yachts and fishing boats was fully occupied with sad farewells and eulogies from all around Adelaide waters.

An item of interest concerning this weekend was the erection and operation of a temporary special events Amateur Radio Station officially designated VI5VIA, staffed by volunteer "hams" of the Adelaide South Coast Amateur Radio Club. This amateur station operated on all "ham" bands for three days and nights -- 30, 31 and 1 Jan/Feb, and made over 500 contacts with various other local, interstate, and overseas hams. This station was built on the grounds of VIA itself and was the brainchild of local amateur, Tony VK5WC, who thought it appropriate that the old station be given a suitable farewell. This keen young amateur operator was so interested in this special occasion that he purchased the morse key used by John McGregor to send the final signal of QRU QRT AR SK, and is very proud of his historic acquisition.

Another item of interest was the availability of a specially labelled eight-year-old port wine supplied by the Pirramima Wines, McLaren Vale (also known as the VIA branch office) in commemoration of 81 years of continuous radio watch on safety of life at sea. Stan Dennis would have been in his element here, not to mention a few other of my thirsty mates, including myself of course.

I, myself, enjoyed the nostalgia and meeting of old friends, particularly as I was chauffeured to and from the Station and home by my daughter and son-in-law and so was able to do full justice to the beer kegs, chicken legs and cheese, etc. I managed to uphold my reputation by being one of the last to leave before being requested to do so.

Well, Jim, you can pick the bones out of the above diatribe for the Vets Newsletter use. I hope that you will be able to re-establish the lines of communication with AOTC so that we vets will be able to receive the current news (welcome or unwelcome) of each other.

Yes, it would be a great pity to lose track of certain classic remarks, like "Was that really necessary, Harry", a response from Jean Bladen to one of my greater efforts in what I thought was an unoccupied corner of the old Beam room.

Or Jean's embarrassment brought about by Mick Taylor's "Bombay Bloomers", or the Beam Wireless date stamp imprint of 22 February 1944 that was still readable on Fred Berry's bald head for months after it was imprinted thereon by our gallant cricket captain, Lyle Gowanloch, not to mention Georgie Brown and the tea bell.

Ah.....memories, memories.....

Very best cheers,

Harry (Baldy) Stone

ED: I love you, Harry and your irreverent but irrepressible humour.

Why is it that every time I see a piece of brown paper that I think of you?

To our International readers, these are family jokes, but if you are ever over this way, I will be only too glad to recount them.

The following letter is one from LOIS CARRINGTON, daughter of FRED GRIFFITHS.

I reproduce it here in its entirety, with the hope that someone may be able to assist her with regard the book on the BEAM WIRELESS SERVICE.

70 Dryandra Street
O' CONNOR ACT 2601

23 November 1992

Mr Jim Anderson
Editor
Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association Newsletter
c/- OTC
GPO Box 7000
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Anderson

I was so pleased to see, in the *Newsletter* which has just arrived from my mother, my letter of 18 months ago written before Guye Russell retired from the post. I had a delightful letter back from him, then, confirming our wartime meeting and giving me some details about my father, Fred Griffiths, which I have included in my book about Dad's forebears - this was published in October 1992 and is meeting with a very good reception.

In the meantime, I gave a paper at a recent Military History conference at ADFA, run by the Australian War Memorial -- this was on my five wireless operators, as mentioned in my last letter:

Fred Griffiths and his brother, Lock, who went to sea as wireless operators on two of the so-called "black ships" in December 1914;

Frank Hayes who soon followed them into the Mercantile service as a W/O (I've run to earth a nephew of Frank's recently, who is also interested in this project);

Walter Bird who married Fred's sister, Una (she is still alive and keen at 97) and whose W/O service was on cargo vessels; and,

Alec Griffiths (also alive, at almost 93) who was a wireless operator in the Australian Flying Corps. My piece of social history apparently went down very well with the military historians, who appreciate the current trend towards consideration of personal histories like these of the early wireless men, in overall historical fields. If any readers know of others

who served as wireless operators on the Second Convoy, which left Australia in December 1914, I'd indeed like to hear from them.

The next project is still in hand, as not all the source material I need to see has yet been security cleared. I have spent many hours working through ships' logs held by Australian Archives in Sydney, and have listed *all* wireless operators given in crew lists from 1914 to 1927. Among these ventures are, of course, many names known to me and my mother, as they were my father's workmates. I was most interested in the lists (especially of New Zealanders) published in this (November) issue of the *Newsletter*. I hope to have my listing completed to the end of 1927 shortly, and will of course send you a copy to publish, as it will doubtless recall many an old friend, to your readers. Lastly, I must say that I look forward to the book on the Beam Wireless service which you mention on page 334. Please pass my name on to the compilers, as a potential subscriber!

My mother, Gwen, now almost 89 and blind, sends her greetings to all old friends -- she is reasonably well for her age, and mentally alert -- she is an indispensable aide to my family histories!

With best wishes

Lois Carrington (signed)

FURTHER TO THE INIMITABLE LES HUNT from Les Brown

Here is a letter from a bloke we all know and love, Les Brown. It was received just after the November 1992 edition had been put to bed. I know Les won't mind me reproducing it here.

"You will probably go into a state of deep shock on hearing from me after all this time, but just could not resist the chance to, (i) say hello to an old friend, and (ii) pass comment on the late LES HUNT.

I first met Les at Wagga, 1949, and the introduction was made by Les in the middle of the Wagga oval by way of a bright red cricket ball to the rib region! He managed to confirm on two further occasions during my innings that he was "quite quick" and you have my word that they all hurt; and on each occasion he apologised in the usual way, "Sorry, me ole son".

So when Less came into bat, I managed to return the compliment with the first ball, in the belly region, also apologising, "Sorry, me ole son". Knocked the middle stump out shortly after, so we were square.

From then on, Les and I were the best of mates and no further hostilities were entered into.

They were really good matches and thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part. Plenty of good players on both sides, as both Clubs were playing in local competitions in Sydney/Melbourne. Real "fair dinkum" out in the middle, but once it finished we all enjoyed each other's company. Plenty of laughs, too, what with blokes like Jack Sheath and yourself, who could have a dull time!

Congrats on the Newsletter, Jim, and I do hope that you are fit and well.

It is a long time since we met, but I still have many happy memories of the "Sydney Boys". Such quiet times!

Give my regards to any of the fellas you may see.

Yes Les, they certainly were good times. Perhaps you may recall the night when BOB STUDD trained on "Guzzler's Gin", and then had to front the Melbourne boys the next day. By nine in the morning, the temperature had climbed to 90 degrees (on the old scale), and Bob was opener, and you were first up bowling. Bob took stance, and you fired the first delivery. I never saw the ball leave your hand, and neither did Bob apparently, and a gasp went up from the Sydneysiders which may have been heard in Gundagai. The only evidence that a ball had been bowled was a little puff of dust, just outside the off stump.

As you went to turn for the next delivery, Bob raised his hand in distress, and after wandering out into the far outer field and let go one of the biggest chunders I had ever seen. Funny about that! Everyone used to say Bob had a weak stomach, but he must have thrown it out five metres further than anyone I had seen.

He went on to carry his bat, but it must have been the most painful experiences he had ever had.

Every time I see the movie, "The Longest Day" advertised in the TV Guide, I think of Bob.

Thanks for stirring up my memory box, Brownie.

TRIBUTE TO TED BISHTON (continuing)

It would now be about the end of 1923 and after a short stay in Rabaul, I was assigned to Manus where I was stationed until 1926. When I arrived in Manus, I was the only wireless man there and the place had not altered to any extent although the personnel had changed. No white women had every been allowed in Manus but not long after my arrival, some white women began to arrive.

I think the first one would have been Mattie Melrose, then Bert Jones and his wife and their 3 or 4-year-old son, Ken. Bobbie Melrose was the District Officer and Bert Jones was the Medical Assistant. Doctor Hosking and his mother arrived and then I was told by Bobbie Melrose that I would have to vacate my house for Digby Elliot, the Police Master, and his wife. I had to live in a very rough kanaka house until Bobbie had a house built for me.

There were six houses in Lorengau: the DO's, the Doctor's, the House Soldier's, Elliott's house, Bert Jones' house on the point near the native hospital, and my house between the house soldier and Bert Jones' house on the bank of the river. The house soldier was occupied by the other police master and the government clerk.

Practically any time I could sit on my verandah and watch the crocodiles drifting down river towards the native hospital and into the sea. This river was called the Lorengau River. It was not very long and at the source of it, there was a small waterfall which fell into a deep round pool. We often used to go there and swim, but one day the police master said there might be some fresh water fish in the pool. To the astonishment of us all, a crocodile about ten feet long came to the surface. We had swum in this pool several times before and we were about to do so again that day, so how lucky we were.

Manus was becoming more civilised with so many white women around. Every Saturday night, we would have a party at one of the houses and there would be dancing to records played on the gramophone which everyone enjoyed. There was always supper served and I think the ladies used to try and outdo each other. When it came to the turn of the bachelors, who consisted of the other police master, the clerk and myself, to put our social night on, I used to go round to the ladies and ask them to make me scones, tarts and cakes for the occasion. The result was that we bachelors put on the best show of the lot so far as supper was concerned. At one time, most of the staff were out of petrol: the DO, the Doctor, the Medical Assistant and the Patrol Officer. Mrs Elliott stayed with Mrs Jones, but Mrs Melrose and Mrs Hosking stayed on their own during this period. One night, I was woken by natives running and screaming, so I got up to investigate. Mrs Jones carrying young Ken and Mrs Elliott carrying the hurricane lamp came running to my house saying they thought someone had been killed. I got my house boys up and told them to make tea and look after the ladies, then went to investigate and found that Mrs Jones' cookboy's Mary had been attacked by some boy and the cookboy had hit him on the head with a lump of wood. The introducer had decamped, but the police boy on guard at the calabus, hearing the commotion, had come running and chased the intruder, who was eventually captured and brought back to me. He was in a pretty bad way so I sent him to the native hospital for attention, under police guard.

The following day, Mrs Hosking sent for me and when I went to see her, she brought out a .44 revolver and asked me to show her how to use it because, she told me, she had heard the noise of the previous night and was frightened. I felt terribly sorry for her, but did not like the idea of her using the revolver, so I told her she could have my dog for protection every night. My dog was an Irish Terrier and all the natives around Lorengau knew him for his ferocity. I only had to soothe him and you would see natives going up trees in all directions. Mrs Hosking was very grateful for the offer and every evening she would send one of her boys down to my place and off Mike would go on guard duty. She would tie Mike to the foot of her bed and she told me she never felt safer and slept like a child.

I had had a bit of trouble with the police master and was pleased when the patrol arrived back in Lorengau -- they had been out nearly three months. After some time, Bert Jones, his wife and Ken, were transferred to another station. Bert Jones was relieved by my old friend Robbie from Kieta. The Burns Philp Ship Mataram used to call at Lorengau every six weeks so we were pretty well off for fresh meat and vegetables, although the fresh meat and vegetables would only last about three days as we had no such thing as a refrigerator. V.R.L. Macdonald left and was replaced by Willie Wilson. The night Willie Wilson arrived, the Mataram was anchored about 7 miles away at Lambrum. When the Mataram left, we boarded the government schooner to return to Lorengau. On the way over, someone asked Willie if we would be opening the mail and he said it depended on how he felt. I said of course the mail will be opened as it always was, irrespective of what the hour was.

We had all been imbibing freely on the Mataram so Willie and I had an argument with the result that he told me that whether he opened the mail or not, I would not be getting mine. When we arrived back at Lorengau it was about 3.00am, so Bobbie Melrose who had not heard anything of the argument, told Willie to open the mail to the others, so I said, "Where is mine". He said, "I told you, you would not get yours in any case". But Bobbie got my mail and handed it to me, but Willie pulled his arm back and said I was not to get it. There was a bit of a scuffle, but I got my mail, so the office was closed. By this time, it was about 4.00am and a beautiful full moonlight night. We started off up the road and when we arrived at my home, Bobbie and his wife continued on, but Willie and I decided we would settle our difference then and there. I soon realised Willie was not much of a fighter, but he made it an all-in affair and I soon realised that he was much stronger and heavier than I. After being tossed and rolled on the ground several times, Willie got on top of me and was choking the life out of me. The only onlooker was Hall Best and he pulled Willie off me which allowed me to get to my feet. I made sure I kept out of his reach and eventually he came charging at me like a wild bull, so I stepped aside and landed one right on his jaw. He went down like a polled ox so when I recovered my breath a bit, Hall Best and I carried him to the House Soldier and put him to bed. The following morning on the way to the office, Willie called in to tell me I could get my mail. He was only joking but I thought it was very big of him to come to me as he did. We shook hands and never had a cross word again. Bobbie Melrose was telling me after, that when Willie arrived at the office he could hardly refrain from laughing outright as he said Willie had two of the most beautiful black eyes he had ever seen. Poor old Willie -- I met him again on the goldfields at Eddie Creek and he died in Salamaua about 1926 or 1927.

During my stay in Manus, I bought about a dozen Java sheep from the government and, at one time, I had over 40. They were more like goats than sheep for they had practically no wool -- I doubt if they carried a quarter of a pound each. However, they were good eating and in between boats, I would get the natives to kill one and distribute it among the Europeans on the station. They generally averaged from 40-45lbs each, which gave us 3lbs a head or a little more. That Irish Terrier dog of mine got amongst them on one occasion and ran them into a small creek on the edge of the station with the result that five of them drowned. I got the boys to dress them right away so we had plenty of fresh meat for some time -- at least 3 or 4 days. It was the last straw as far as the dog was concerned. He used to go mad whenever he saw the sheep and chase them madly. I belted him on many occasions but it did no good. After this last episode, I decided to get rid of him so I sent him to my friend Greg Anderson on Noru Island. Greg told me later that he had a small island about three miles from Noru which was planted with coconuts and also had pigs running on it. Every so often, he would take a team of boys from Noru and go over to this island and clean it up and collect the coconuts and cut copra. They generally stayed a couple of days. On one of these visits, Greg took my dog and no sooner had they landed, than the dog took off after the pigs. Greg got the boys to round the dog up and sent him back to Noru. Some time later on the next day, Greg was surprised to hear the dog barking and pigs going in all directions, so he picked up his gun and shot the dog. It appears the boys had taken him back to Noru and he had swum the 3 or 4 miles back to the island through shark infested waters only to meet a death of ignominy.

During this period of my stay at Manus, old Doepke from the Lugos Mission found the isolation and loneliness too much and decided to get married. It was all done by correspondence and the intended bride duly arrived. She brought with her cases and cases of preserves in glass jars, fruit, vegetables and meat and also a small organ. The organ was to be the pride of the mission, but alas, as the boys were carrying it down the gangway of the ship something happened and the organ fell into the water and was lost forever. It was a great blow for the missionaries and the natives and Doepke's offsider, Kraft, had to be content with Doepke's trumpet.

Charlie Meenster had a plantation about 3 or 4 miles from Lorengau and often came to my place and I often visited him. He had had a very chequered career. At one time he worked on ships on the Australian coast and also told me that he once studied to be a priest. After some years on the Australian coast, he went to Lord Howe Island (On Tong Java), (this Lord Howe is not to be confused with the Lord Howe Island east of Sydney) in the Northern Solomon Islands.

There he met and had a row with Jack London, the author. He threw Jack London off his ship and Jack was not high in his praises when he wrote Charlie up in his book, "The Cruise of the Snark". When Charlie left there he brought his daughter, Annie, with him and put her into the Catholic Mission at Vunapope at Kokopo. Annie became a very good artist and has had exhibitions in Sydney. She came to Lorengau from the Mission and married Jock Kramer who ran a trade store in Lorengau with Alec Burrows. Charlie put on a party at his plantation one night in honour of a girl friend from Adelaide and Charlie's new bride who had just arrived from Germany. As the night wore on, the food and liquor flowed more freely and the party became very hectic. Charlie's wife's brother was killed the last day of the 1914-18 war and she seemed to think that all we chaps at the

party (who were returned soldiers) were responsible for his death -- she even accused me personally. The house stood on piles 10 to 12 feet high and as I was on the verandah edging me way away from her, I came to the steps and, there being no rail, I fell backwards. The next I remember was regaining consciousness by some of the guests pouring bottles of beer over me to revive me. I don't know how we got back to Lorengau, but it must have been safely.

I had a fair amount of spare time in Lorengau and used to occupy my time gardening, rearing poultry and pigs as well as the sheep. It was very hard to grow anything, but I had a certain success because I used to get fertilizer up from Sydney. At one time, I had 69 ducks setting at the one time and after they had hatched I had a boy looking after them. In the afternoon, I would tell him to go down onto the parade ground where the ducks and ducklings used to feed all day and bring them up to their yard where they would be locked up for the night. It was a funny sight to see all this mob coming up the road -- one duck then about 8 to 10 ducklings waddling behind, then another duck with her brood behind and so on. You can imagine how far they stretched, 69 ducks and each with ducklings in single file.

On one occasion, one of my pigs got out of its banis (yard) so I asked the police master if he could give me a calabus (prisoner) to look for it. The jungle came right down to the outskirts of the station and I thought it was like looking for a needle in a haystack. The prisoner duly arrived, a young lad about 16 years of age from the Sepik River, undergoing a life sentence for murder. I knew him very well around the station, but I've forgotten his name. He had told me his story of why he was in the calabus: It appears there had been some killings in a village close to his village on the Sepik Rober and his village was supposed to have done the killings, so the government sent an expedition to try to apprehend the murderers. When the expedition arrived at the lad's village, all the men fled and as he was only about 14 at the time, eh stayed with his mother and the other women and children. He was caught and eventually tried and convicted and sent to Manus to serve his time. So long as someone was convicted, everyone seemed to be satisfied and the crime was considered solved. Someone had to be convicted and this lad was the scapegoat. He said he knew my pigs and knew the one that was missing so off he went to try to locate it. That evening, he came up to me and I asked if he had found the pig. He said he had but it was still in the bush and he would go out again tomorrow. The next evening he came and told me he had found it and when I asked where it was, he said it was still in the bush and he would like another boy to go with him the following day to bring it in. I got another boy from the policy master and off they went. That evening they arrived back carrying the pig lashed onto a pole. I thought this was one of the greatest pieces of tracking I had ever known. Just imagine the number of wild pigs there are in the bush and the number of footprints around each waterhole the pigs had visited, yet this lad was able to track this particular pig for nearly three days and bring it back to the station.

I had a similar experience in Aitape. One evening, I was at Wally Hook's place and after dinner, we were having a few spots when there was a loud shouting and whooping and some of Wally's boys came running to say that some of his new recruits had got away. Wally was a recruiter and had over a hundred wild natives from the Wapi district waiting for a ship to go to Rabaul. It was a pitch black night and I thought the hopes of getting the 3 or 4 boys who had got away was very remote. Sometime later, they were rounded up

and only one was still missing. About 11.00pm, which was about 3 hours after the breakout, Wally's boys brought in the last escapee. His shins were all cut and his body scarred from running through lawyer vines and running into logs, etc. I asked one of the boys how they managed to find the boy in such darkness and he said, "Me smell 'im". I am well aware that some natives do smell and you can smell them a long way off, but this piece of tracking and smelling in pitch blackness beats me.

There were two old characters at Lorengau who were serving life sentences for murder. They were two of the oldest natives I have ever seen. They were from Bougainville and their names were Kawati and Kanoki. They were in the same boat as the lad from the Sepik River. They were too old to run away when the government force arrived at their village, so they were tried and convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. They were two of the most inoffensive old fellows one would ever meet, but they were happy at Lorengau and possibly better off than they would have been in their village. Good food, housing and medical attention, for which services they did the sanitary work around the station and grew watermelons for which we paid them a stick of tobacco each.

Alec Burrows got tired of the lonely life and decided to take unto himself a wife. It was all arranged by mail and the bride, Billie Hindman, duly arrived from Sydney on the Mataram. The women at the station went out to the ship to meet the bride and do her up for the wedding, which was to be celebrated by Bobby Melrose in the District Office. The weather was very rough and the bride and the women from the station had much trouble getting ashore and by the time they did get back to the station it was very dark and getting late. The marriage laws pertaining to the Territory in those days were that the marriage had to be celebrated before 8 pm. I knew they were cutting it very short, so to make certain everything went smoothly, someone put the clock back. The reception was held in Alec Burrows' store. Jock Kramer mixed the drinks and everyone got very drunk. Jock's idea of cocktails was to go along the shelf and put a bottle of everything available into a kerosene tin and mix the lot together.

It was a great night and that would have been the first European wedding on Manus. Poor old Jock Kramer committed suicide up the Watnut River about 1932. Alec Burrows died a natural death in Sydney. Charlie Muenster was captured by the Japanese and no-one knows what became of him. We were a very happy crowd at Lorengau and everyone got on well with one another. I had now been at Manus for three years and was due for leave.

I left on the Mataram about February 1926. We called at Maron and the western islands on the way to Rabaul. I did not stay at Rabaul, but continued on to Sydney in the Mataram. Towards the end of my leave in Sydney, I got very sick. I thought I was suffering from Haemorrhoids and, as the weather was getting cold, I thought if I could get back to the tropics, I would be all right.

I had had a very enjoyable holiday with my mother, father, brother and sisters and, as on all such occasions, was sorry to be leaving them again. My medical assistant, Robbie, had been in Sydney on leave also and we returned to the Territory together. A few days after leaving Sydney, I was in terrible agony, so Robbie got Dr Pockley, who was going to Madang to visit his plantation on Kar Kar Island, to have a look at me. The ship's doctor had been drunk from the time we left Sydney and was absolutely useless. I knew Dr

Pockley and after he had examined me he decided to perform an emergency operation in my cabin. He arranged with the ship's engineers to have a powerful light installed in the cabin and Robbie was his assistant. The last I remembered was taking the anaesthetic and the next thing I woke up and there was pandemonium in the cabin. It appears that during the operation, or just as it was about finished, the light fused and either Robbie or the doctor knocked the bottle of ether over. They had only given me a small sniff of the anaesthetic and I was just coming to. The stewardess at this moment arrived carrying a lighted candle. I heard the doctor roar, "Get the hell out of here before you blow the bloody ship up". The smell of the ether went all through the ship and everyone left their cabins and slept in the bar and the various lounges around the ship. I felt a lot better after the operation, but on arrival in Rabaul, Dr Brennan came to my cabin and examined me and ordered me into Namanula hospital for a fistula operation. Dr (now Sir) Raphael Cilento performed the operation and made a good job of it. Just as I was coming to after the operation, Jimmy Hunt, who was in the next bed, was just passing out. Jimmy was in charge of the Lands Department before he died. Mrs Adams of Patlangat plantation was also in hospital at that time having a baby. I remember telling one of the nurses that I heard some woman screaming during the night and I thought there may have been a boy prowling round. A little while later, she came back with a baby in a basket and said, "This is what caused the screaming during the night."

After a few weeks in hospital, I was discharged and reported back to our boss, Jimmy Twycross for duty. A report had been received from Witu in the French islands that a European had killed a native, so the Administration ordered an investigation. The Administration yacht "Franklin" which used to frisk around Port Phillip Bay in Victoria before coming to New Guinea, was made ready for the voyage to Witu. Taffy Webb, the harbourmaster, was the captain; Johnnie Walstab, Commissioner of Police, was on board to investigate the crime; there was a doctor, but I have forgotten who he was, and I was the wireless officer. We left Rabaul in July 1926 at the height of the north west season and we struck rough weather from the time we cast off from the wharf. The "Franklin" was a long, narrow craft which seemed to go through the water with a corkscrew motion. The following morning saw everyone seasick. The European engineer and his Chinese engineers were all sick. The Chinese cook and his native offsiders were all sick. The three or four other Europeans were sitting in deck chairs, skidding from one side of the ship to the other, too sick to care whether they went over the side or not. Johnny Walstab and I surveyed the scene and Johnny said, "Well, Bish, it doesn't look as though we are going to get any breakfast, so come down to my cabin and have a spot." We adjourned to Johnny's cabin, which was below deck and very hot. He produced a bottle of whisky which we proceeded to demolish. He had a bunch of bananas hanging in his cabin, so we contented ourselves drinking whisky and eating bananas. We finished the whisky and I went up on deck to do my wireless watch. When I arrived on the bridge, Taffy Webb was heaving his heart out over the side. In his best Oxford accent and cursing all the while, he said, "To think I had four years in the North Sea on destroyers during the war and then had to come onto a bloody lousy packet like this to get seasick." Up to this time, I had been feeling pretty good, but whether it was out of pity for Taffy, or whisky on an empty stomach, I don't know, but I do know I joined Taffy on the other side of the bridge. I had several trips on the Franklin, but this was the roughest trip of them all.

We arrived at Witu and after a couple of days there, during which all the investigations had been carried out, the body of the victim exhumed and re-buried and the European defendant brought on board, we returned to Rabaul. We heard on arrival that two schooners had been wrecked along the New Britain coast while we had been away. I don't know what happened to the accused as I was on the Franklin again bound for Salamana and the goldfields.

There was great excitement in Rabaul. Cecil John Levien had come in from Salamana with the news that Bill Royal and Dick Glasson had discovered gold in large quantities on Edie Creek, which was about 70 miles inland, behind Salamana. Levien was urging everyone he met to go to the goldfields. He said Royal and Glasson were getting so much gold they could not store it. They had tied the legs of trousers and filled them with gold and all available empty tins were filled with gold. The gold fever seemed to grip the whole population in Rabaul. Everyone was forming syndicates and raising enough money to send one member of the syndicate to the goldfield. Dozens of public servants resigned to try their luck on the field. The Administration anticipated a gold rush and were making plans accordingly. The Franklin was despatched to Salamana with Dr Dickson and a few other government officials on board. I was also on board and my instructions were to proceed to Samalana and await the arrival of the ship from Sydney with the wireless gear, then proceed to Edie Creek on the goldfield and erect the wireless station. There were no government officials at Salamana until the Franklin arrived. There was one store owned by Burleigh Gorman and built of bush timber with sago leaf roof and sides. It was a two storey affair. The underneath part contained stores belonging to various miners in the field and the upper storey was for accommodation, which was very rough, to say the least. Burns Philp also had a store which had just been opened and was more or less waiting on the arrival of the ship from Sydney with stores to start business. The Franklin arrived in Salamana sometime in August 1926. Dr Dickson set up his tent near Burns Philp's store and everyone journeying to the goldfields had to be inoculated. No-one was allowed to start for the fields unless he had at least ten carriers (this number was later found to be inadequate).

There would have been about six people waiting to go into the fields and we lived in tents pitched along the beach. Most of the men were waiting on carriers or waiting on the arrival of the Burns Philp ship to get stores. We had two or

**OVERSEAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
(QUEENSLAND)**

Secretary/Treasurer: Jim Banks, OAM
50 Trevis Street
JINDALEE QLD 4074
Telephone: (07) 376 1195

**Minutes of the 17th Annual General Meeting
held in the OTC Brisbane Office on Tuesday, 19 May 1992**

PRESENT were: President Keith Vincent and Sadie, Roger Allen, Jim and Beryl Banks, Kevin and Ana Bobridge, Jack Bowes, Martin Cresswell, Blue Easterling, Alan and Colleen Jones, Cecily Lloyd, John and Mildred Norris, David Rogers, Jack and Lisa Silcock, Vince Sim and Joan Sutherland. OTC State Manager, John Blewett, and Glenys Baldwin were also present as our hosts.

APOLOGIES were received from Wilf Atkin, Denis Bloudani, John Burdinat, Laz Eliou, Pat Gray, Bob Hooper, Deane Laws, Doug Lloyd, Paddy Phipps-Ellis, John Taylor and John Toland.

Opening the meeting at 12:30 pm, President Keith welcomed all present with an especial welcome to three new members (Roger Allen, Jack Bowes and Martin Cresswell) and to Cecily Lloyd and Joan Sutherland (widow of Fabian). A minute's silence was then observed for three colleagues who have passed away since our last reunion: Alf Goeby, Sid Gill and Jock Kellie.

MINUTES of the 16th AGM were adopted as circulated. There was no correspondence other than notices of the meeting, apologies and notes for the Newsletter. The financial report was adopted showing current funds as \$379.88, a net reduction of \$2.20 from the previous year.

The President had no annual report to offer but simply stated that all functions had been well attended and that we had enjoyed a year of good fellowship, marred only by our sad losses.

NOMINATIONS were called for the offices of President, Secretary-Treasurer and Auditor.

Kevin Bobridge was unanimously elected as President
John Taylor was unanimously elected as Secretary/Treasurer
John Norris was unanimously re-elected as Auditor

New President, Kevin, then thanked John Blewett for hosting the meeting and invited him to address the gathering. John explained that with the merger of OTC and Telecom, this office will be closing soon but assured the gathering that he was confident space would be available in a new building for the next AGM. It was agreed that the next reunion be held at Brisbane MCS (subject to the agreement of the new Manager) on Tuesday, 17 November. The meeting was closed and was followed by good fellowship.

From the Brisbane Veterans' 17th AGM on 19 May 1992

Only 20 members and wives were in attendance this year, down somewhat on previous years when our numbers swelled with visitors from Sydney for the Aussie Rules contest, held later in the year this time. But we were pleased to welcome Roger Allen, Jack Bowes and Martin Cresswell, each of whom has become an 'honorary canetoad' since moving to the extreme north of 'cockroach-land'.

We were also pleased to welcome Joan Sutherland, widow of Fabian, who thoroughly enjoyed herself on her first visit here, having been given a taste of Veterans' fellowship in Sydney not long ago. Cecily Lloyd also came by herself, Doug having found some good reason to play hookey.

Written apologies were received from Wilf Atkin (a bit too long in the tooth at 89 to make the journey) and from Pat Gray, who keeps threatening to come down from Bargara (near Bundaberg) to see us but also keeps on finding marvellous reasons not to be able to come! Never mind, it's always nice to hear from you, Pat.

Denis Bloudani was away in Melbourne; John Burdinat and Laz Eliou were keeping VIB on the air; Deane Laws is recovering from an operation (hope it's coming good, Deane.....), whilst Paddy Phipps-Ellis, having taken the redundancy offer, is going overseas and resigned from the Association. Another to take redundancy was John Taylor, our recent host at VIB, but he is keeping his Veterans associations alive by taking on the 'ardous' job of Secretary-Treasurer, finally relieving Jim Banks who has done it since we started a Veterans' Association in Queensland 18 years ago.

Keith Vincent also shed the role of President after some successful years to allow himself more time for his many other interests (including frequent world travel to odd spots as per the last Newsletter). Kevin Bobridge was the popular choice as his replacement. We all wish the new officers success and thank Keith and Jim for their past efforts.

With the merger of OTC and Telecom, the Brisbane office will soon be absorbed physically into the new organisation. Current State Manager, John Blewett, assured us, however, that space would be available in the new premises for future meetings in the city, whilst he was confident that Brisbane MCS would continue to welcome us for our annual reunions. Here's hoping so! Those who attend our meetings regularly, gain a great deal of pleasure from them, as we do from the regular Newsletters. Thanks, Ando.

signed Jim Banks

VALE, Jock Kellie

Douglas McAuley Rendell Kellie, Jock to most of us, passed away on Saturday, 16 May 1992, at the Prince Charles hospital, Brisbane. Aged 75, Jock was born in India but educated in England where he obtained his PMG certificate and went to seas as a Radio Officer before WWII. He had left the sea by 1939, the year in which he married his beloved Jean, and joined the Royal Artillery as soon as war broke out. He transferred to the Royal Corps of Signals in 1941 to make use of his morse skills and was engaged for the rest of the way on maintaining communications with secret agents in occupied Europe.

He and Jean migrated to Australia in 1951 and Jock joined OTC as a Radio Officer at La Perouse. He left in 1954 for a spell but rejoined in 1955 at the request of Perce Brown, then OIC at La Perouse. In 1959, he was transferred to Thursday Island and it was there that his beer-brewing activities came to the notice of H M Customs, resulting in Jock being granted the first brewers' licence on that island! He returned to La Perouse in 1963 as SRO1, acting as SRO2 on frequent occasions, before being transferred finally to Brisbane Radio in 1966. He retired on invalidity grounds in February 1977 and he and Jean then spent many happy years in a retirement village on Bribie Island.

Although he was known at times to voice opinions not always complimentary to the organisation, to the last Jock maintained that he'd found the ideal career with OTC's Coastal Radio Service. Despite increasing physical problems in recent years, Jock was ever cheerful and he will be sorely missed.

We extend to Jean our deepest sympathy.

FROM OUR CANADIAN COLLEAGUES

Tony Richardson has given me a letter from Harold H Le Quesne. I make no personal apologies for the communication being received late as Tony has had a hell of a time trying to track down correspondence which was meant for us but which had been side-tracked. I suspect that there is still a lot of correspondence and material which has not been received for us, and of course, if we don't get it, we can't print it.

Harold writes:

"Whilst I have not had time to read through "Coast Radio Calling", Part 1 and Part 2, and Gentlemen of the Cable Service, I wish to hasten to thank you or whoever is responsible for being so kind to send me copies of the above. Having spent exactly 50 years and eleven months in the Cable Services, commencing with the Pacific Cable Board, at 261 George Street Sydney in 1925, I am quite sure that I will thoroughly enjoy the "Gentlemen of the Cable Service" and every place which is mentioned, Bamfield, where I served several times, Fanning Island where I did not serve, and other points in Canada such as Halifax, Montreal and Vancouver; and also I will be able to pass on to one or two Australians still living in Canada who will also enjoy reading the background of the Cable Service.

Alan Arndt has been so kind to send me the "Bulletins" for many years and I have enjoyed seeing many names of chaps I worked with.

My wife, Katherine, and I will, all being well, make our final revisit to NSW Australia this coming November 1992, where we will be staying at the Manly Pacific Parkroyal, and possibly we will be able to once again meet our friends in OTVA/NSW. As immediate Past President of the Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe Canada, I wish to convey warm Fraternal Greetings to all members of OTVA and their wives, continuing good health and happiness.

Thanking you once again,
H H Le Quesne

Harold's address is: Suite 6 - 7163 Ash Crescent
Vancouver BC
CANADA V60 3K6

just in case some of you would wish to communicate with him direct.

A Merry Christmas card was sent to us by another Canadian friend and contributor to our Newsletter, a bloke known as Bob Scott, who wishes all the Veterans' Associations with happy memories of past associations the best of luck.

For those of you who wish to keep contact, Bob's address is:
1173 Hewlett Place
Victoria BC
CANADA V8S 4P6

FROM OUR WEST AUSTRALIAN VETERANS

Jim Anderson
Editor
OTVA Newsletter
3/41 The Crescent
HOMEBUSH NSW 2140

Dear Jim

Enclosed herewith are the Minutes of the WA Branch's AGM of 24 November 1992, for when the next edition of the Newsletter comes out.

Over the years, I've always sent stuff for the Newsletter through Alan Arndt, but with his departure, I'm not sure who's who these days. I know Tony Richardson took over as NSW Secretary, but now I believe its Mick Wilden, so I thought I better deal direct with the fountainhead, as it were. I'm hoping you're still at the above address, as the last Vets Mailing List I have is May of '91.

On the subject of the Vets Mailing List, could you pass on the following amendments to whoever is compiling it these days:

Mr F L Owen, Unit 22, 22 Fantail Drive, BIBRALAKE 6163

Mr G Rogers, PO Box 1917, ALBANY 6330

Mr H Willemsen, 6 Whittington Avenue, CARINE 5020

and the following addition:

Mr B Wendpaap, 10 Cassilda Way, TWO ROCKS 6037

Incidentally, with reference to Gordon Cupit's remarks on Harry Hicks in the last Newsletter (p.316), unless my memory's been playing me up all these years, Gordon has it the wrong way round. Harry Hicks spent one period in the Antarctic (Heard Island I believe) and seven on Willis Island. Indeed he was known in CRS as the "King of Willis Island". The last stint he did there was a few months' relieving in mid-1966 while actually on leave from his position as Manager Lae. He was what might charitably be called a complex character and I believe I'm not alone in saying he would not have been the first person I would have chosen with whom to spend 12 months on an isolated station like Willis.

Keep up the good work on the Newsletter.

Yours sincerely
(signed)
Derek Walker

Secretary: D B Walker
11 Flinders Avenue
Hillarys WA 6025
Ph: (09) 401 8242

MINUTES OF 18TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 24 November 1992
Held at Markalinga House, 251 St George's Terrace, Perth.

The meeting was opened at 1.03 pm by President, Fred James.\

Western Australian Veterans attending were: Jim Bairstow, Coling Benporath, Ron Cocker, John Coles, Paul Cooper, Harry Devine, Des Else, Heb Farrar, Barry Field, Fred James, Norm Johnstone, Jim Keenan, Des Kinnersley, Sean Leahy, Doug Mason, Max Miller, Derek Moore, Barry O'Keefe, Jack Olsen, Val Parker, Rod Pernich, Brent Schofield, Pat Sykes, Gerry Tacey, Jack Thomas, Trig Trigwell, Derek Walker, Graham Watts and Herman Willemsen.

Apologies for absence had been received from: Ron Fisher, Allan Headley, John Knight, Doug Lancaster, Norm Odgers, Les Owen, Roger Pugsley, George Rogers, Bernd Wendpaap and Barry Whittle.

In welcoming all at the meeting, President Fred gave a special welcome to our guest of the day, OTC's State Manager for Western Australia, Ross Fenton.

One minute's silence was observed for two of our members who had passed away during the twelve months since the last meeting, Jim Devlin and John Eales.

The Minutes of the 17th AGM having been circulated, it was moved by Norm Johnstone, seconded by Des Kinnersley, that they be confirmed as a true and correct record. The motion was put and carried.

Reports: The Hon Secretary/Treasurer's Financial Statement having been circulated, it was moved by Colin Benporath, seconded by Jim Bairstow, that it be adopted and endorsed. The motion was put and carried.

A letter to the President from Peter Shore, OTC Managing Director and new OTVA patron, was read. Peter assured members of OTC's ongoing support for the OTVA and sent his best wishes to all for the coming festive season and 1993.

Election of Office Bearers: The positions of President and Secretary/Treasurer were declared open and nominations called for. To nobody's surprise, Fred James and Derek Walker were respectively nominated and re-elected unanimously.

Further Business: Discussion took place on a more suitable venue for future meetings, alternatives mooted being the Wireless Museum at Applecross or OTC's PITC centre at Gnangara. Ross Fenton assured the meeting that OTC would fully support arrangements for future meetings to be held at Gnangara. A vote was then taken which showed an overwhelming majority of members present were in favour of this option. The Secretary promised to investigate transport arrangements for those members unable to drive out to Gnangara.

There being no further business, the President declared the meeting closed at 1.23 pm.

THE QUIET ACHIEVER DEPARTMENT

Contributed by Des Woods

In the Friday, 22 January issue of the "Weekender", a paper which is distributed and circulated in the Warringah Shire, NSW, there is an article relating to Australia Day awards for locals, with LOU and ELGIN BROWN getting a prominent mention. (Lou is one of our Veterans, and a past Secretary of the NSW Branch).

An excerpt is as follows:

"Lou and Elgin Brown are to be presented with Outstanding Service Awards at an Australia Day ceremony being held at Warringah Shire Council Chambers.

Lou has been recognised for many years of community service to Manly Warringah Community Transport and the Cubby House Toy Library for children with special needs.

Elgin is to receive her award for her work with the Cubby House Toy Library where she has been a member of the staff since 1987. Elgin has also been a volunteer at the Tramshed Community Arts Centre and the Manly Warringah Community Information and Service Centre for the past five years.

I know that our NSW Veterans will be pleased with the news, and I add my personal congratulations to Lou and Elgin. I worked with Lou in the early days of the Newsletter and knowing him as I do, he makes a good fist of anything he undertakes. GOODONYER, Lou and Elgin.

GOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Had a little note from Dorothy Bryant, who is the daughter of the late Stan Wright.

Dorothy was contacted by a friend of hers, Helen Belton, whose father, Alf Kerr, worked with Stan at the Pennant Hills Transmitting Station. Helen was a recipient of the Newsletter April 1992, in which was a photo of Pennant Hills employees, together with a few words about them.

Dorothy was appreciative of the fact that Helen had gone to track her down, and finally she contacted me to see if she could get a photocopy of the page. Snatching at a straw, which turned out to be KIMBERLEY O'SULLIVAN, I referred Dorothy to our able Archivist. Dorothy says, "Kimberley went to a lot of trouble for me, not only sending me the info I asked for, but an additional AWA book which gave Dad worthy mention. It took a long time, but everything arrived on Dad's anniversary, which was rather nice to an old sentimentalist like me. Thank you once again for all your trouble, it meant a great deal to me."

I can't take any of the credit -- that all goes to Kimberley, who I thank from the bottom of my bended knee. There is one thing I can take credit for, though, and that is being able to find the right person for the right job.

Thanks Kimberley, from Ando.

AOTC ANNUAL REPORT

Hereunder is a summary of AOTC's Financial results taken from the Annual Report for the first five months of its operation.

"Despite generally depressed economic conditions and a slowing down in demand for some services, we performed well during the first five months of our life, with revenues of \$5,042.6 million (up 8.7% on Telecom/OTC's earnings during the comparable February-June period in 1990/91).

We were very careful in controlling our expenses and, after providing for Income Tax (\$242 million) and abnormal costs, our operating profit for the five months to 30 June 1992 was \$327.8 million (\$474.1 million before abnormals).

On an annualised basis, the figure of \$474.1 million reflects a return on assets of 13.7% (against 12.2% for the comparable period last year for Telecom and OTC combined). This compares favourably with the results of other major Australian enterprises.

With total assets of \$23 billion, we are in fact one of the largest businesses in the country and one of the top three employers. Not many companies can match our customer base of 8.3 million right around the nation, and our activities make a significant value-added contribution to the national economy as a whole. As shown opposite, this totalled \$3 billion for the five months to 30 June 1992; some 2.2% of Australia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

It is vital that the Company generates profits, and healthy profits. Very few industries are as capital intensive as telecommunications, and continued, healthy profitability will play an essential part in sustaining our \$2 billion a year commitment to network development and modernisation: the basis, along with service excellence, by which we will retain our customers' loyalty and business in the face of increasingly aggressive competition."

THE OPPOSITION Contributed by Gordon Cupit

No doubt, most of you have received your package from OPTUS enclosing the teledex of sorts and pricing details. The note from the Chief Executive Officer is most interesting and reads like an election blurb. For those who did not receive the package, here are some of the quotes.

"We promise to deliver superior service to you at what, on average, will be lower prices."

"Real customer service is our promise to you. It is a promise backed at every level of our company."

"Over the next five years we will be employing around 5,000 Australians to deliver to you one of the world's best Long Distance services."

"Promises made to our customers are kept."

"AOTC will still provide you with a telephone set and local service, and bill you in their usual manner."

These claims surprise me, in the fact that OPTUS are using so many of AOTC's facilities and services, even down to the billing.

In my mind, the efficiency and promises of Optus are already in question in that (a) they lost the first satellite launched, and (b) look like paying a penalty of \$10 million for failing to gain (even with a massive advertising program) the specified percentage of the market.

The loss of the satellite could have been bad luck, and no doubt, out of their control, but will prolong them providing their own services.

In the meantime, they are threatening to sue Telecom for unfair practices in that Telecom is offering a package to its better clients, offering better rates for those who are using both their long distance and local services. I cannot see how this is any worse than OPTUS offering cheaper rates, on what must be very attractive rates for the leasing of Telecom's equipment and facilities. I am sure the merged Aussat-OTC as proposed by the Prime Minister, and defeated by the Beasley numbers would have been just as good, if not better, competitor for Telecom than OPTUS, and it would have been fully Australian owned.

Recently, Austel were complaining of the lack of pay phones in low income areas. I have yet to see an OPTUS payphone in any street area, but no doubt they must be around. Also, I have not seen any reports of them providing services which are highly capital intensive and/or low profit earners.

Finally, Optus claim in their handout, that they are an Australian company in that 51% of the shares are owned by Australians. I trust that those converting to OPTUS realise that Bell South of USA, and Cable and Wireless of the UK own 49% of the shares, and accordingly, 49% of the profits will go out of Australia.

It is hoped that legislation restricts the sale of Australian-owned shares in OPTUS, bearing in mind that AMP is a major shareholder. One must take into account AMP's sale of Arnotts shares to Campbells, and its large parcel of shares in Westfield to Rodamco of Holland.

OUR THANKS
by Gordon Cupit

Thanks to the Management OTC for providing the Staff canteen for our Annual Reunion and to all the OTC staff for foregoing its facilities on that day. Thanks, also, to the OTC girls for helping out on the day, and for their valuable assistance in producing the NEWSLETTERS. Again, to management for providing the last two editions of the historical series and for the OTC cassette. These are a most valuable memento of our service with the Cable companies, AWA and the Commission.

THE GREAT DEBATE

Toward the end of the great debate, the leader of the Opposition, in his case for privatisation, claimed that Government organisations do not and cannot run businesses as efficiently as the private sector. Apparently he has never studied the record and achievements of OTC, particularly its recent award as Exporter of the Year. Congratulations to Management and Staff for gaining this highly rated award. In our present climate, exports must be one of the most important aspects of the country's economic recovery.

During the second debate, Dr. Hewson stated that a privatised Telecom would operate a far more efficient telecommunications service and would open up services in the Asian area. It would appear that no one has told him that OTC has contracts and joint ventures in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Hong Kong, Thailand, The Phillipines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, not forgetting the contracts and developments in the Pacific. I am surprised that the Prime Minister did not pick him up on this point, and of the Exporter of the Year award.

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER

Our congratulations go to HUGH BRISLAN for being voted OTC STAFF MEMBER OF THE YEAR.

Hugh is the Functions Manager of OTC who so ably looks after the catering and organising of the Veterans' functions in Sydney. Hugh is not a back room boy, and is always in the thick of it, either serving out the food or behind the bar.

We also vote you the best. Good on you Hugh, and we trust you will enjoy your trip.

LIFE'S LITTLE MERCIES
From Wilf Atkin

Dear Jim

I'm glad I'm not a grandfather, for I can visualise one of them with an innocent look on his face coming up to me and saying, "What did you do in the great war, Grandad?"

When I answered truthfully that I was in the Beam Wireless and worked my guts out, particularly on the night shift, I can imagine, to my horror, the little brat with a great smirk producing from behind his back a copy of "THE BEAMERS" opened at page 14.

It has been haunting me since Kimberley, urged on by officers or the OTVA, sent me a set from the archives library.

Yes, Jim, I'm glad I'm not a grandad, for I would have had to explain that I had just finished five hours of torture, standing on my feet, feeding tapes into the transmitter direct to London. That sagging mass which was me taken by a snide photographer, was of a completely exhausted bloke suffering from a king-sized hangover from the bootleg grog he had consumed at a party before sneaking into the operating room at 11:30pm.

I can also imagine the brat sniggering as he drew attention to the caption, "Asleep on the job!".

I suppose I could sue someone for a million, but what would I do with a million at 90?

Yes, Jim, I'm glad I have no grandchildren.

Kind Regards

Yours fraternally,

Wilf Atkin

(Thanks Wilf. It was really good to hear from you.)

REMEMBER PERCY LOVE?

This fax was originally sent to MARTIN RATIA, and finally found its way to me.

The letter was sent by Perce's son, Richard and it says"

"Re: OTVA Branch Reunion - Friday, 27/11/92

I reply to your invitation on behalf of my father whose mail is still being forwarded to me.

Unfortunately my father, COLIN PERCIVAL LOVE passed away on 4-3-92, aged 87 years. As you are aware he was a veteran of the OTC and spoke highly of the many good friends he made during his years with OTC.

Perhaps you could find space in your next NEWSLETTER to inform other vets of my father's passing. I would be pleased if you could forward me, if possible, a copy of the OTC video called "Memories", as I would be very interested to see it.

I did not know much about my father's work with OTC, however, since his passing, I have read with interest the items in your Newsletters. I know my father welcomed these publications as it still gave him a sense of belonging to an organisation to which he devoted so many years of his life.

I wish you well for your reunion on Friday. Keep up the good work."

AOTC ANNUAL REPORT

The AOTC Chairman's introduction in presenting the Annual Report makes interesting reading.

I take pleasure in presenting the first Annual Report from the new Australian and Overseas Telecommunications Corporation, formed by the merger of Telecom Australia and OTC Limited on 1 February 1992.

This new enterprise has faced an unparalleled series of challenges: the integration of two major businesses, each with its own heritage and culture; the introduction of significant and widespread competition; and the imperative to perform commercially and deliver appropriate returns to our shareholder, all within the context of delivering an essential service - equitably and affordably - to people and business throughout Australia.

In this new environment, the organisation faces the need for change of a prodigious dimension and scale. There are many facets to this change; all are important, but two are pre-eminent.

First there will be a need for us to realise that in a competitive environment the needs of the customer are of overriding importance. For the first time in Australia, the telecommunications customer now has a choice, so that if the quality of such things as our installation, our billing or service is below expectation, we are very likely to lose business and it may be difficult to win back.

Our Chief Executive has said that we will simply have to delight our customers in order to retain their loyalty, and the significance of this under competition will have a profound impact on every aspect of our operations.

The second major challenge concerns our people. They are our most vital asset, and we must ensure - much more effectively than we have in the past - that they become involved in the business in a way where they see their interests and the interests of the Corporation as identical.

This will require management to communicate with, involve and inform our people in new ways and to an extent not previously achieved by the organisation.

To respond effectively to competition, decisions will have to be significantly decentralised, so that people at all levels are involved in influencing the operations of the business.

All this will entail significant work place reform. Jobs within AOTC will become not only more demanding, but more stimulating and more fulfilling as well. Management will have to ensure that the programs implemented to develop the skills our people need are vigorous, meaningful and effective.

Our continuing objective will be to serve our customers better and to improve efficiency across our operations. In this way we will build a vital national enterprise that is able to compete and win for Australia within the global telecommunications market.

COMMUNICATIONS IN ANTARCTICA

Apologies have been received from Vince Gibson for the omission of his continuing article. Vince has assured us that it will appear in the next edition of the OTVA Newsletter.

OTC ABBREVIATIONS & JARGON

by Gordon Cupit

Here comes more abbreviations for the records.

AMPS	- Advanced mobile Phone Systems
ASC	- Australian Securities Commission
ASS	- Australian Silicon Structures
ATSR	- A Long Track Scanning Radiometer
BCC	- Business Cooperation Contract
BVS	- Business Video Services
CAST	- Chinese Academy of Space Technology
CDR	- Critical Design Review
CNCC	- Customer Network Control Centre
CSCW	- Computer Supported Collaborative Work
DACOM	- Korea's Second Carrier
FPA	- Full Performance Antenna
GOSIP	- Australian Government OSI Profile
INP	- International Network Products
KDD	- Japanese Communications Carrier
LAN	- High Speed Wireless Local Area network
LOS	- Loss of Signal
LRE	- Low Rate Encoders
MMIC	- Monolithic Microwave Integrated Circuits
MUSE	- Multiple Sub-niquist Encoding
NHK	- Japan Broadcastings Corporation
NMS	- Network Management Systems
OTCSSS	- OTC Staff Superannuation Scheme
PKM	- Per-igee Kick Motor Satellite
QOS	- Quality of Service
SBC	- Society of Business Communicators
TA(I)	- Telecom Australia (International)
TIMS	- Telephone Management Systems
TOC	- Telecom Television Operating Centre

(Note - In the 60s this was the abbreviations for "Teleprinters on Cables")

With the merger and no doubt many abbreviations also within Telecom, this record should go onto a higher plane and so I am resigning from this column and its necessary research.

MINUTES

36TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING O.T.V.A

NSW BRANCH HELD ON 15 MAY 1992

1. The President, Gordon Cupit, opened the meeting and welcomed official guests. Gordon also made welcome the new members and introduced them to their first meeting. A total of 110 members attended our 36th Annual General Meeting.
2. **Apologies**
 - a) All apologies are recorded in the attendance book.
 - b) The President read a letter of apology from the Managing Director of the International Division, Mr Peter Shore, which pledged future support to the veterans association.
3. Fraternal Greetings were read from the Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe Canada and the Veteran Cablemans Association of New Zealand. Presidents and members of our Victorian, Queensland, South Australian and Western Australian branches on the occasion of this our 36th Annual General Meeting.
4. One minutes silence was observed to mark the passing of the following members during the past six months - Jim Devlin, John Eales, Clive Tressider, Alex Robertson, Ken Erickson, John Rowley, Norm Alderson, Alf Goeby, Sid Gill and Bill Bentley.
5. **Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of our previous meeting were distributed to members in our October 1991 newsletter and were declared open for discussion. There being no discussion it was moved by Alan Arndt, seconded by Des Woods that the minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting be confirmed.
Carried Unanimously.

6. **Balance Sheet and Annual Accounts**

The Balance sheet was presented to all members present and opened for discussion. There being no discussion, it was moved by Keith McCredde and seconded by Norm Harris that the balance sheet and Auditor's Report be accepted.
Carried Unanimously.

7. Election of Officers

The President declared all office's vacant and called for nominations for returning officer to conduct the annual election.

Mr Goeff Day was nominated and duly elected as returning Officer.

Nominations for the Office of President were called for, Mr Gordon Cupit was nominated by Alan Arndt and seconded by Tom Hughes. There being no other nominations, Mr Gordon Cupit was declared President.

Mr Tony Richardson was nominated as Honorary by Alan Arndt and seconded by Henry Cranfield. There being no further nominations, Mr Tony Richardson was declared Honorary Secretary.

Mr Mick Wilden was nominated as Treasurer by Tony Richardson and seconded by Des Woods. There being no further nominations Mr Mick Wilden was declared Treasurer.

Messrs Ron Connolly and Peter Roberts were nominated as Auditors. There being no further nominations Messrs Ron Connolly and Peter Roberts were declared auditors.

8. 36th Annual Reunion

The suggested date for the reunion was Friday, 27 November 1992 subject to the availability of a venue.

9. Sick List

Roy Tully was on the mend and Frank White was in Thornleigh Hospital.

10. Business Arising from Previous Meetings

Nil

11. General Business

- a) Tony Richardson thanked Alan Arndt, Mick Wilden and Steve Arndt for their assistance in his absence from OTC.
- b) Books of archival records were to be distributed after the meeting.
- c) President Gordon expressed our appreciation and thanks to OTC Limited for its continuing and generous support to our association and in particular to the Manager of Paddington, Bob Fisher, for his assistance in making today's meeting possible in difficult circumstances.

- d) There being no further business to discuss, President Gordon closed the meeting after inviting all present to adjourn for refreshments in the foyer.

Tony Richardson
Honorary Secretary