

Editor:

Jim Anderson

Newsletter

Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association (Australia)

VOL 5 PART 3 PAGE 436

MAY 94

MEETINGS AND REUNIONS

NEW SOUTH WALES	Annual General Meeting Friday, 20 May 1994 12:00 noon to 3:00pm	Telstra House 12th Floor, Conference Centre 231 Elizabeth Street Sydney
VICTORIA	Annual General Manager Monday, 6 June 1994 12:00noon - 3:00pm	Council of Adult Education Board Room, 1st Floor 256 Flinders Street Melbourne
WESTERN AUSTRALIA	Meeting Tuesday, 29 November 1994 1:00pm	Perth Intl. Telecom Centre 620 Gnangara Road Landsdale
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	Annual General Meeting Thursday, 26 May 1994 12:00 noon for 12:30pm	Telstra Conference Room 7th Floor 26 Flinders Street Adelaide (unless otherwise advised)
QUEENSLAND	Annual General Meeting Tuesday, 24 May 1994 12:00 noon - 3:00pm	The Irish Club Tara House 175 Elizabeth Street Brisbane

Veterans from interstate who would like to attend these functions are advised to contact the Secretary of the branch to get confirmation of the times and venues and indicate their intention to attend so that arrangements can be made for catering.

Oscar

Tango

Victor

Alpha



New International Network Operations Centre

In December 1993 the new International Network Operations Centre (INOC) opened on Level 4 Paddington International Telecommunications Centre, 363 Oxford Street, Paddington.

A tour of this new Centre has been organised for interested Veterans prior to the Annual General Meeting to be held 12 noon on Friday, 20 May on the 12th Floor, Telstra House, 231 Elizabeth Street.

Those interested in making the tour will meet at 10:00am in the foyer at Paddington in order that they have time to get to the Annual General Meeting.

Anyone interested in making the tour should contact Pam Helps on 287-4449 by 13 May.

Credit Given Where It Is Due

I wish to acknowledge those Vets who have contributed to this issue of NEWSLETTER.

My thanks go to:

Kimberly O'Sullivan
Keith McCredden
Ken Mullen
Harry Stone

Pam Helps
Kevin Bobridge
Martin Ratia
AWA 'Radiogram'

Gordon Cupit
Vince Gibson
Derek Walker
George Maltby

Without your contributions there would be no NEWSLETTER. to all of you, my thanks.

(The Ed..)

Our New National Secretary

Yes - that's right.

As you know, with the passing of Charles Carthew M.B.E., nominations were called for in the last NEWSLETTER to fill the position of National Secretary. As ALAN ARNDT remains the sole contender for the position he is hereby elected National Secretary of the O.T.V.A.

Alan is well known throughout the Vets from when he did such an excellent job as N.S.W. Secretary and we are indeed fortunate to have such a dedicated and diligent colleague holding office once more.

CONGRATULATIONS, ALAN.

Chiefs - IBU
(previously OTC)

by Gordon Cupit

It is with regret that I have to announce that Peter Shore, Managing Director of International Business has left the unit to take up an appointment in a most senior position in the Commercial and Consumer Business Unit. Unfortunately, I retired just before Peter joined OTC about 13 years ago, and therefore did not have the pleasure of serving under him.

Peter was first appointed to the Public Relations area, and his talents were quickly recognised by George Maltby who appointed him as Executive Manager, Corporate Relations. His achievements in that area are legend and covered by stories in Transit. This is also evidenced in the Corporation's overseas presence, and the important contracts resulting.

When Telecom and OTC merged, Steve Burdon became Group Managing Director and Peter was appointed Managing Director, International Business. He has been a well liked and popular figure, mixing freely with the hurly-burly, and together with his delightful wife, Di, has taken an interest in and participated in many sporting events.

Under Peter's leadership the International business went from strength to strength. He took a great interest in the Veterans and, together with his Secretary Leanne, assisted us in many ways. He also kept us informed of new and future developments, some over our heads but explained in a way that we understood. Unfortunately, Leanne went with Peter and she will also be missed.

Congratulations to them both. We wish them well in their new and future positions and say 'thank you' Peter and Leanne.

Congratulations also to Warren Grace on his appointment as the new Managing Director, International Business. Warren also joined OTC after I retired. He has held the position of General Manager, Maritime and, being connected with that important and historical area obviously has some bond and interest with the Veterans. He was a leading figure when we obtained the bust of Marconi which now resides at La Perouse.

Congratulations, Warren, we will be looking forward to you meeting the old pioneers at our functions.

Mr. G. Cupit,
President,
OTVA,
80 Marco Avenue,
REVESBY NSW

Dear Gordon,

I am writing to let you know that I leave Telstra today after being employed for over five years as their Archives Coordinator. My decision to leave has been taken fairly quickly and I am sorry that I have not been able to ring you to let you know.

I want to take this opportunity to let you and the other members of the Overseas Telecommunications Veterans' Association know that of my many responsibilities as Archives Coordinator by far the most enjoyable has been liasing with the Veterans. You have all been a pleasure to deal with and I hope that I have been able to be of service to you.

Let me take this opportunity to wish you all well for the future.

With fondest regards,



Kimberly O'Sullivan

2 February, 1994

Copy: OTVA newsletter

AWA Milestones

by Gordon Cupit

The following article on the above subject appeared in a recent issue of the Business Section of the Sun-Herald.

Despite an unwanted skirmish with Chris Skase in 1986 and the regrettable foreign exchange debacle with dealer Andy Koval a year later, AWA's 80th anniversary is highlighted by quite a few remarkable milestones, such as the supply of wireless apparatus to Australian forces in World War I; the first public demonstration of radio broadcasting in 1919; the opening of 2FC, the first high-powered radio broadcasting station in 1923; the support of Charles Kingsford Smith in 1928; the first vehicle-activated road traffic signals in 1933; opening in 1938 of the AWA House and tower, which remained the tallest building in Australia until 1965; expertise to support defence forces in World War II; the launch of OTC in 1946; the first Australian designed and manufactured TV set in 1948; the design and manufacture of Australia's first transistor radios in 1955; the production of Australia's first integrated circuits in 1967; pioneering research into fibre optics in 1983; the design and implementation of the Communications Systems Monitor Network for Aussat in 1984; and the opening of a Beijing office and winner of Exporter of the Year award this year.

This is a commendable list of achievements, but one wonders if the journalist did much research. Some of the facts I query are:-

- (a) The AWA building opened later than 1938 as we were still in Erskine House (temporary abode during building project) when war broke out late 1939. I think that the building was opened in 1940 or 1941. Anyone certain? Also I am sure that Sydney had taller buildings before 1965.
- (b) A most notable omission in the list was the opening of the Beam in 1927, and first international telephone services in 1930.
- (c) I don't think that AWA launched OTC in 1946. They just lost the Beam and CRS.
- (d) I think others were involved in the pioneering of Optic Fibre research.
- (e) Maybe it was OTC International who opened the Beijing Office and won the Exporter of the Year award?

30 Years On: COMPAC Commemorated

(courtesy "Transit")

In the 1950s and early '60s, Australia was still under the influence of a post-war boom: living standards were high, unemployment low, and the country was riding on the benefits of an upsurge in minerals discovery.

It was also a time when Australia still had close links with the British Commonwealth of Nations, a factor which was instrumental in one of the most significant telecommunication events of the period: the commissioning of the Commonwealth Pacific (COMPAC) cable.

Prior to the development of coaxial submarine cables (of which COMPAC was one of the first in the world), international telecommunications was primarily by radio. Unfortunately, despite its diversity of uses, radio was inherently unstable and not capable of supporting emerging new technologies.

Research in the 1950s led to the development of coaxial cable systems. The first commercial application of coaxial technology was TAT-1: a trans-Atlantic joint British, Canadian and United States venture. This development was closely followed by COMPAC, which linked Australia and New Zealand with Canada and, via a microwave radio system across Canada, to a new trans-Atlantic cable, CANTAT, which provided access to the United Kingdom and Europe.

Costing almost A\$70 million, COMPAC comprised more than 14,440 km of coaxial cable and 350 submerged amplifiers (repeaters). The longest telecommunications link in the world at the time, COMPAC had an initial capacity of 80 two-way voice channels, which allowed the simultaneous transmission and reception of telephone, telegraph, phototelegraph, telex, leased teleprinter and audio broadcast services.

This ambitious project was OTC's first investment in submarine communication cables and was achieved through the cooperative efforts of Australia, New Zealand, Britain and Canada, under the direction of a management committee headed by TA (Trevor) Housley, General Manager of OTC.

Despite the enormity of the project and the relative infancy of coaxial technology, the installation and testing of the system was completed ahead of schedule.

At the official opening on 3 December 1963, Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, said the COMPAC cable was 'an example of what can be accomplished within our family of nations when we enter into a common venture as partners and apply to it all the skill and resources at our disposal'.

This speech was broadcast simultaneously to functions in London, Ottawa, Sydney and Wellington, and was heard by millions of radio listeners. Also participating in the launch were the Prime Ministers of each of the four countries involved.

In fact, such was the excitement in the new cable that the Australian Government commissioned a special commemorative stamp which was produced through the Reserve Bank.

OTC also celebrated, with Chief Engineer Bill Jenvey presenting champagne to Paddington staff. The following year, Orme Cooper, Acting Station Manager Paddington, and Stan Wright, Supervising Technician, received a higher accolade: the British Empire Medal in the Queen's New Year honours.

Despite the development of a global satellite communications system (Intelsat) in the mid 1960s, COMPAC continued to play a valuable role in OTC's international network. This value was enhanced in 1976 with the introduction of TASI-B (Time Assigned Speech Interpolation) equipment at Paddington, effectively doubling the cable system's capacity.

However, COMPAC's days were numbered. The relentless increase in demand for global telecommunications, and the cable system's advancing age, saw plans for a new cable emerge in 1977.

Seven years later, the A\$400 million ANZCAN cable was opened, linking Australia to Canada via Norfolk Island, Fiji and Hawaii; with a spur from Norfolk Island to New Zealand. ANZCAN's capacity was 1380 circuits - more than seventeen times that of its predecessor.

On 30 November 1984, just three days short of COMPAC's 21st birthday, the cable system that gave Australia its first-ever 24-hour, interference-free, voice links with the world was officially decommissioned.

18th Annual Reunion OTVA (Queensland)

The 18th reunion of Queensland veterans was held at the Irish Club, Brisbane from noon to 1500 on Tuesday, 16 November 1993. Those attending were:

Ana and Kevin Bobridge
John Burdinat
Blue Easterling
Bob Hooper
Deane Laws
Jim Powell
David Rogers
Vince Sim
Betty and John Toland

Margaret and John Bowes
June and Martin Cresswell
Laz Eliou
Colleen and Alan (Spike) Jones
Mildred and John Norris
John Purdy
Lisa and Jack Silcock
Joan Sutherland

Glenys Baldwin (ex Brisbane Office) was a welcome visitor.

Apologies were received from the following:

Wilf Atkin (who advised me he is the last surviving member of the original veterans committee)

Jim Banks (a late scratching due to illness)

Denis Bloudani

Steve Burdon

Pat Gray

Kev Hiscock

Dennis Humphries

Doug Lloyd

Stan Silver who assured me he would be at our next outing.

Members were advised Pancho Vincent, Roger Allen and Cecily Lloyd were on the sick list and all present wished them a speedy recovery.

A special welcome was extended to two new members attending a reunion for the first time:

John Purdy

Ex S.O.R and later B.O.R. John is still employed with Telecom

Jim Powell

Jim was with the Cunard Line and British Telecom. He is at present the manager of Brisbane Radio.

The ladies present were each given a red rose, and Jim Powell (our new member) distributed two publications "The Beamers" and "A Picture of Progress" together with the video "Memories, The OTC Story 1946-1992".

An excellent lunch supplied by the caterers of the Irish Club was followed by the customary "good cheer" which, I might add, was enjoyed by two in particular (both residents of Bribie Island).

Once again a successful reunion was had by one and all.

Kevin Brobrige

President OTVA (Queensland)

9th February

Harry Stone (Sec/Treas.)
Overseas Telecommunications
Veterans Association, South
Australian Branch
10 Sussex Crescent
Morphett Vale 5162
South Australia

To the Editor Jim Anderson
Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association, Sydney

Dear Jim

The following is a report of the South Australian branch of O.T.V.A, Christmas gathering held on 25/11/93 at the Telecom conference room, 7th floor, 26 Flinders Street, Adelaide. This venue was once again made available by Gary Kelly, State Manager, Telstra (ex OTC) and also provided victuals and refreshments which were greatly appreciated by those present. Thanks Gary and Linda. It was advised by President Fred Reeve that it would be necessary to charge a small contribution from attending members at future meetings. South Australian branch is the only one which did not charge its members, mainly due in the past to the good graces of ex C.R.S Manager Fred Reeve and Brax Horrocks.

The meeting was called to order by President Fred Reeve at 12:45pm. Those present were Geoff Cox, Ken Springbett, Ken Collett, John and Irma McGregor, Denis Maher, Bob and Lorraine Imrie, Fred and Daphne Reeve, Dave Herbert, Paddy Wilkinson and Rhonda Hunt.

Apologies were received from Keith Parker, Dick Inwood, Ernie Barrett, Max Lang, George Rowe and Gary Kelly. President Fred Reeve welcomed everyone and called on all to stand and observe a minutes silence to honour the memory of Dudley Treliving who had passed away since the last meeting. It is also our sad duty to inform you that since this meeting, Keith Parker has passed away, on the 23rd December from respiratory problems. His wife Pearl is still recovering from a stroke suffered last year and is progressing very slowly in a nursing home in Victor Harbour. Keith was a regular member of the OTC "Ham" network daily at 0015GMT on 14130 Khz and his now "silent key" will be missed by other regulars.

The minutes of the previous AGM were read and accepted. A financial report was also presented and accepted. There has been no movement in the bank balance which presently stands at \$87.81. Correspondence has been nil with the exception of the previous report on our AGM posted 20/9/93 to Head Office, Sydney.

It was indicated that Peter Shore and Steve Burdon were very interested in continuing support for the association and moves were afoot to establish a common policy covering all State branches. Details of this will be passed on to members as soon as they come to

hand. President Fred Reeve foreshadowed a charge of about \$5.00 would be charged at future meetings. This was readily accepted by those present.

Date of the next Annual General meeting: 26 May 1994 at 12:00pm for 12:30pm. The venue would be the same unless otherwise advised.

John McGregor reported that Max Lang had suffered a heart attack, but fortunately he was now on the mend and taking it very quietly at home. President Fred Reeve proposed a vote of thanks to Linda Lena who had arranged the catering for this meeting and picked up the tab for the food. President, Fred Reeve is to be reimbursed for the refreshments. Fortunately or unfortunately, Secretary/Treasurer, Harry Stone was voluntarily marooned on Kangaroo Island during this period, thereby lightening the grog bill for the gathering considerably.

I am also pleased to report that the new owner of the old Adelaide Coastal Radio Station held an Anniversary barbecue at the site on 30 January 1994 and invited all ex-members of VIA to attend. It was a very pleasant affair with champagne for starters plus an excellent barbecue lunch. The station buildings have been tastefully decorated and furnished extensively with polished timber, ceramics etc, and is now a beautiful home, with the western end converted into a Radio communications museum. He is an active ham and now holds the callsigns VK5VIA and VK5CRS as well as his original callsign VK5HK. Needless to say, the old masts and aerials are now all in use on the "Ham" bands.

Looking forward hopefully! to the next issue of the Newsletter.

Harry Stone
(Cheers Jimmy)

Overseas Telecommunications Veterans' Association (WA)

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

MINUTES OF 19TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 30 NOVEMBER 1993

Held at the Perth International Telecommunications Centre.
The meeting was opened at 1.13pm by President Fred James.

Western Australian Veterans attending were Jim Bairstow, Colin Benporath, Ron Cocker, Paul Cooper, Des Else, Heb Farrar, Barry Field, Fred James, Norm Johnstone, Jim Keenan, Des Kinnersley, John Knight, Sean Leahy, Doug Mason, Max Miller, Derek Moore, Les Owen, Val Parker, Rod Pernich, Roger Pugsley, Brent Schofield, Tom Swarbrick, Gerry Tacey, Trig Trigwell, Derek Walker, Graham Watts, Bernd Wendpaap, Barry Whittle and Herman Willemsen.

Apologies for absence had been received from Ron Fisher, Doug Lancaster, Brian Morrell, Norm Odgers, Barry O'Keeffe, George Rogers, Pat Sykes and Jack Thomas.

One minute's silence was observed for John Coles, who passed away in July and Harry Devine, who passed away at the beginning of November.

The Minutes of the 18th AGM having been circulated, it was moved Derek Moore, seconded Ron Cocker, that they be confirmed as a true and correct record. The motion was put and carried.

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

Election of Office Bearers: The positions of President and Secretary/Treasurer were declared open and nominations called for Fred James and Derek Walker were nominated and re-elected unanimously to the respective positions.

Further Business: It was unanimously agreed that the PITC venue was a vast improvement on the previous year's venue and the President thanked Telstra on the Veterans' behalf for its use. It was also agreed that the provision of a minibus for those Veterans unable to drive to Gnangara was an excellent idea. The Secretary asked those members who had not filled out a Particulars of Service form to do so and return to him soonest.

The next meeting will be at PITC on Tuesday, 29 November 1994.

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

DEREK WALKER

Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association (WA)

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

Dear Jim

Following is for the Newsletter:

VALE HARRY RUMBLE

West Australian Veteran Harry Rumble, ex-Technical Officer with AWA and OTC, passed away on 20 January at the Tuohy Nursing Home, Midland, WA, aged 87.

Harry had been very frail for some time and his last attendance at a Vets Reunion was in 1989.

Going to sea as a Radio Officer in the 20s, Harry came ashore in the 30s to work at Broome Radio for a while. In the 40s he did another stint at sea before finally swallowing the anchor, coming ashore to work at Broome Radio again, Bassendean, Applecross and finally Gnangara.

Harry left a widow and two married daughters.

Thanks Jim

(signed)
DEREK WALKER

Vale

Tom Hughes

Tom died on 14 February from, we understand, a heart attack. He was very well known in the International Communications industry having started his career as a Beam Wireless messenger in AWA in 1932.

He was a colourful character with a good sense of humour and an infectious grin. He was a bit of a stirrer, but a very loyal officer. He had very wide experience and a wealth of knowledge. Could talk on practically any subject, and his achievements were many.

He undertook research into Aero Class 'B' traffic and his recommendations were adopted; this class of traffic became a big revenue raiser in subsequent years. In 1977 he was the recipient of the Queens Silver Jubilee Medal.

After his messenger service Tom was promoted to a clerical position in the AWA Accounts, where he undertook night studies and obtained his First Class Radio Officers Certificate from the Marconi School of Wireless. This resulted in him serving in the Coastal Radio Service at Thursday Island, Darwin and La Perouse. The stint at Darwin was at the time of the Japanese air raids.

After the war, Tom started a Degree course in Economics and transferred to the clerical ranks as a clerk in the Secretary's Branch, a position he was in when he attained his degree. Positions he held from then on were Clerk to the Asst General Manager (Trevor Housley - to work under Trevor was an education in itself). Training Officer, International Relations Officer, Secretary to the Commission, Manager Melbourne, Senior International Relations Officer, Deputy Director Commonwealth Relations, Australian Member of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board, and Director Commonwealth Relations. For many years he was the Contributors Trustee of SLAPS.

Although an active and wiry character he did not have good health in latter years having had a heart bypass op in 1977 and a serious operation for an aneurism in 1990.

Tom was a member of the original Clerical Committee of OTC and was interested in the archives. He spent his honeymoon hitchhiking from India through to Europe, and has done numerous trips to India since, taking a great interest in that country, its people and customs. He had only recently returned from one of these trips; an article written by him appeared in the last Newsletter. One special achievement of Tom's which was not well known, was that he built his own first home, a difficult task in the late 40s with all the regulations and shortage of building materials.

Youth's Bid to Save Man

(Courtesy "Wentworth Courier" and George Maltby)

When 17 year old Vanessa Phillips attended a first aid course in the January school holidays, she had no idea that the skills she was learning would be put into practice so soon or so dramatically.

Only a few weeks after receiving her Red Cross certificate, Vanessa fought desperately to save a man's life after he had collapsed from a heart attack.

A student at Holy Cross College, Woollahra, Vanessa was at Bondi Junction railway station. It was Valentine's Day and the Year 12 pupil was one of many waiting to go home.

The 2.45pm train from the city pulled into the platform and the usual crowd climbed on. As Vanessa headed upstairs in the carriage she saw that a man was lying on the floor.

"It was obviously more than a simple collapse because he was a blue colour," she said.

Without another thought, the teenager checked his pulse and went into action. With another passenger she carried the man down the train stairs and onto the platform, where she stretched him out as she'd been instructed in the Red Cross classes.

"I started CPR - mouth-to-mouth resuscitation - and heart massage to see if I could get him breathing again. I kept it going for seven minutes or so until the ambulance people arrived", she said.

"Then I handed it over to them. They checked him out with their equipment and looked at me and said he was dead - there was nothing more we could do for him."

The man she tried so valiantly to revive was 77 year old Bondi local, Tom Hughes.

In what is a tragic irony, he was returning to his home after a visit to the doctor in the city where he'd had a heart check-up.

Last Tuesday was Tom's funeral and a large crowd of family and friends said farewell to the kind gentleman who loved overseas travel.

The details of Vanessa Phillip's act of caring for here fellow human being would never have surfaced if not for the efforts of Tom's family and a woman who describes herself as his best friend.

They traced Vanessa to her school and visited the principal to inform her of their appreciation.

They also invited young Vanessa to attend the funeral of the man she never met. Vanessa went with her father, who is a former ambulance officer.

For this special Year 12 student, a career in nursing will suit her just fine.

She has already done work experience at St Vincent's Hospital and has plans to specialise in casualty and emergency once she completes the three year Bachelor of Nursing degree.

Keith Parker

Keith died on 23 December 1993. Keith completed a course at the Marconi School of Wireless in 1931 and obtained his First Class Ticket. His first job was in a small country broadcasting station in South Australia, where he was manager, technician and announcer. This lasted for about twelve months, when the call of the sea was too much for him and he undertook freelance marine work. This resulted in Keith joining the AWA Marine staff in 1935. After four years in the marine, Keith was called ashore to take up aeroradio duties. His first station was on the Nullarbor Plains at Forest where his duties included all communication, D/F, and Met work for aircraft flying the east/west route. Keith was not particularly happy in seclusion out on the Nullarbor, but was more content when he heard that his last ship, the "Niadic" had been sunk off Nauru by a German raider.

As seemed to be the procedure with AWA, he was only in aeroradio two years when he was transferred to Perth, initially as an Operator and then as a Technician. Due to his versatility he was required to also service aviation equipment and to undertake a relief duties at sea, in addition to an eighteen months posting to Geraldton to run a Navy H.F. Radio Watch. Keith was still at Perth when OTC took over, and was transferred to Fiskville in 1947. It was then that his nomad life took a change and he remained just on twenty years at Fiskville until his transfer to Bassendean in 1966 as Manager. In 1971 he was appointed Manager Madang and in 1973 to Manager Cairns until his retirement in 1977.

Keith as been an ardent "Ham" radio operator for many years. After cyclone 'Tracy' in Darwin when there was communication isolation, Darwin Manager Bob Hooper, a Mobile ham, contacted another ham in Cairns and requested he get hold of Keith Parker and get him on the air on the amateur band. As a result Bob and Keith ran a "Ham" circuit between Darwin and Cairns, and Keith followed through to Head Office per telephone.

On retirement Keith settled down in Port Elliot in South Australia, and was a regular participant in the Veterans "Ham" hookup with call sign VK5SO passing on Veteran news from that state.

Trevor Hughes

Joined AWA late 20s or early 30s in the Marine Service. On leaving the sea he transferred to accounts where he rose to Officer in Charge, Beam Accounts. During the war he enlisted in the RAAF. On return to civvy duty he was given the job of outside representative for the Beam and in 1950 was promoted to Senior clerk Engineering Branch where he remained until his retirement in 1972. After an extended overseas trip he settled down at Crescent Head on the north coast of NSW. He returned to Sydney in 1981. Trevor was the older brother of Tom Hughes.

Charlie (Cec) Watson

Joined the PMG's Department in 1914 and trained as a Telegraphist. Applied for a position in AWA when the Beam Service commenced in 1927, as a telegraphist. Subsequently promoted to Senior Telegraphist, Assistant Supervisor and Supervisor. Donated a number of historical items to the archives. He retired in the 60s.

Fred Jenkins

One of the original Beam staff, Fred also served as Telegraphist, Senior Telegraphist, Assistant Supervisor and Supervisor in the Beam. He had the distinction of training lady telegraphists during the war. He was a well-liked boss who retired to the Blue Mountains.

Ron Turnbull

Although not a Veteran in the true sense, he always attended the Sydney and Melbourne functions. Ron died on 21st July, 1993. He had a very distinguished career in the PMG's Department and was General Manager, Telecom Engineering. He was appointed an OTC Commissioner and retired in 1975.

Les Waters

Died on 27.10.93. Transferred to OTC from C & W on the take-over. Initially with Eastern Extension. On retirement in 1962 he was a clerk in the Melbourne Traffic Accounts. Eastern pensioner for 31 years.

Ken Banks

Died of a heart attack on 20th December, 1993.

Joined Cable & Wireless early in the war years and trained in Adelaide. He was selected for the Telcom Unit which was sent to Sri Lanka where the members of the unit were incorporated in the British Army. Each was given the rank of Lieutenant. Members were divided into teams and sent to various points in the Far East. Their main tasks were to travel with and provide communications services for war correspondents, restore cable and radio communications from places recaptured from the Japanese and provide commercial telecommunications capability pending the restoration of normal facilities.

On completion of his duty with the Telecom unit, Ken was transferred to Suva for several years, where he met his wife, Pat, returning to Sydney and OTC in the mid-fifties. For many years he was the staff representative on the Promotions Appeal Board. Ken served the rest of his career in the SOR and occupied the position of Shift Controller when he retired a few years ago.

Frank White

He passed away on Good Friday (Easter) and was one of the original Beam Wireless group of operators recruited in 1927 to launch the new fangled use of high speed morse circuits between Australia, Britain and the USA via Canada. There are not many of this illustrious band left, Wilf Atkin of Aktug fame, Lyle Gowanloch are the only two survivors that I (Harry Stone) am aware of. Frank White obtained his pilot's flying license about the same time that Captain Bert Ritchie (Qantas General Manager) got his. They were both junior Beam telegraphists at the same time along with Orm Cooper and Hedley Caswell. Frank was one of nature's gentlemen, always friendly, unflappable and ready to help anybody in difficulties. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends. He was 82 years old.

Phil Ryan

Died 20 April 1994. Phil was employed as one of the early trainee technicians in the late 1950's. He was in the first COMPAC course under the auspices of Orm Cooper and went on shift in IMC (COMPAC Cable). He spent all of his career at the Paddington Terminal where he was a well respected and popular figure. Phil retired approximately 18 months ago.

Telstra Finances

by Gordon Cupit

Telstra (Telecom/OTC) Chairman, David Hoare announced the 1992-93 Annual Report which reveals some amazing figures. Profit increased by 11% to \$2356 million before tax and abnormal items, whereas revenue only increased by 3.5%.

The yearly dividend paid to the Government was increased to \$674 million compared to \$478 million the previous year. This, together with tax, resulted in a net payout to the Government of \$1900 million. Pretty good considering the competition by Optus.

Other interesting facts are:

- Total assets now \$23.2 billion
- 511,000 new telephone services connected
- 12.3 billion telephone calls were made
- 95.6% of homes are connected to the telephone
- \$150 million spent on Research & Development
- Cellular mobile customers increased by 57% (now more than 1 million!)

Telstra is now required to lodge a six-monthly 'interim' report. Released in March, this first interim report showed an after tax profit of \$997 million (+26.3%). The International Business Unit (ex-OTC) performed strongly, with 1/2 yearly revenue of \$794.9 million (+4.43% over target) and before tax profit of \$203.9 million (+12.09% over target).

Once again, I must wonder why any sane Government would want to sell this valuable asset.

Woe and Alas

by Gordon Cupit

It is with regret that we have to report that our Super Special Archivist, Kimberly O'Sullivan has departed Telstra/OTC for an Administrative type position with the Commonwealth Public Service Union. Although sorry to lose her we wish her well in her new career. During her five years with the Commission she gained a thorough knowledge of OTC, its Archives and history and has most of the Archives on a database.

In a letter to me (see Page 439), Kimberly said that she wanted to take this opportunity to let me and the other members of the Veterans Association know that of her many responsibilities as Archives Co-ordinator, by far the most enjoyable has been liaising with the Veterans. You have all been a pleasure to deal with and she hopes that she has been able to be of service to us. She also took the opportunity to wish us all well for the future.

Good on you Kimberly, we also found you marvellous to work with.

We understand her colleague Mark Kitchener will be looking after the Archives for the time being .. His phone number is 287 4771.

More on the Emden

The following article from the North China Daily News, Shanghai dated April 1931 reports.

The glory of the Emden, second of three German cruisers of that name, will never die. The new Emden bearing on her stem a replica of the Iron Cross awarded for her predecessor's exploits is now being feted in Shanghai.

After its successful cruise in the Indian Ocean during the early months of the World War, and its ultimate sinking off the Cocos Islands, Kaiser Wilhelm II, by special act of cabinet, granted permission to the 150 surviving members of the crew to adopt as their surname that of the ship, Emden. The present (1931) German cabinet repassed this act to propagate the name through the ages.

(extract from Telegraph-Mirror Feb 1994)

War Massacre Officer Charged

Rome. An Italian court formally charged a former German army officer today for ordering and leading a massacre of Italian civilians during World War II.

The charge creates another chance to convict Wolfgang Lehnigk-Emden, freed last month after a German court ruled too much time had passed to try the case.

Cocos Island - Sinking of the Emden

November 9th this year marks the 80th Anniversary of the sinking of the Emden by HMAS Sydney off Cocos Island. Numerous articles have appeared in the Newsletter on this event, but recently whilst doing some research on the subject, Archivist Kimberly O'Sullivan turned up an article from a 1930 edition of the AWA magazine 'Radiogram', which contains a diary of the action kept by Len Thorndike, a radio officer on the Sydney. Len is well remembered as Senior Telegraphist, Supervisor and Training School Instructor in the Beam Service.

Here is the story from the Radiogram.

Sinking of the Emden

AWA Men in Australia's First Sea Battle - Mr Thorndike's Version

Many AWA men - and perhaps not a few of the women - have a story in the backs of their minds of duty performed in circumstances of stress. For this month's "Radiogram" we have extracted from the retiring Mr L.J. Thorndike, of AWA's Beam Service, Sydney, the story of the battle between the cruisers "Sydney" and "Emden," as seen by him when a junior wireless operator on the Sydney.

Of the six wireless men on the "Sydney," four are now with AWA. They are Nat Clifford, who is in the Coastal Radio Service stationed at Adelaide - it was Mr Clifford who received the SOS from Cocos Island; Jack Kennedy and Jack Ward are also in the Coastal Service, being now stationed at Thursday Island. As they were not on wireless duty at the time, their job was to help pass up ammunition to the gunners.

The other two operators were Tom Perry, Petty Officer Telegraphist in Charge, and D. Herlihy, Leading Telegraphist. Mr Perry was recently in the Postal Service, and Mr Herlihy is now in England. None of the wireless men saw much of the fight. Their duties required them to keep below, but every now and then they would slip up for a minute or two to have a look round and help cheer. They all escaped injury.

Following is the story as recorded in Mr Thorndike's diary. It is a very human document, written shortly after the battle by a mere boy (Mr Thorndike is still under 35), and is some of the expressions used are slangy, readers may bear in mind that the diary was intended for private consumption, and Mr Thorndike had no idea that, fifteen years later, it would be published.

November 9, 1914.

Steaming about 50 miles east of Cocos Island, S.W. of Java, heading for Colombo. About 7am wireless began to rattle. Seemed pretty handy. Message taken in "SOS" - strange warship in harbour - "SOS". Things begin to move some. "Blood expected." We ask, "What ship making message?" Reply, "Cocos." Orders received from Senior Officer to "hawk our mutton" and proceed to investigate. At 9.15am tops of cocoa nut trees hove in sight. At 9.20 enemy sighted on the horizon beating it for other climes. It could be seen by anyone using their optics that we were overhauling her a million. At 9.40am seconds out of the ring was called and the gong went. She broke the ice and fired a 4in; pretty slick in picking up the range first. We began to retaliate. We were now sure she was the notorious Raider "Emden."

"Sydney" Opens Fire.

The hottest part of the "Scrap" was the first half hour. We opened up with our Port Battery. Our first casualty was Able Seaman Hoy, a 4.1 taking his leg completely off - severing it from the trunk at the hip. He was sitting at the rangefinder at the time. He toppled over "Monkeys' Island" on to the Chief Yeoman on the Bridge. We now began to key the "Emden" up. Down comes her foremast funnel and then her funnels began to pile up, accompanied by cheers from our side.

Hit By "Emden's" Shells.

Our next mishap occurred at No. 2 Starboard flaking out all the gun's crew except one. Next shell connected with No. 1 Starboard, but did not do any serious damage. Next the "After control" got "sorter" hit; all hands and an officer being wounded. It looked like one big colander when the smoke blew away. At 10am we were winning on points.

Cordite Ignited.

A fire broke out on our starboard side, owing to some cordite becoming ignited, caused by explosion of a hostile shell. It was quickly fixed, thanks to the smart working by some of the junior hands, some of them being severely burnt about the hands and face. It really was a good piece of work and merited recognition.

A Running Fight at 27 Knots.

We had steamed up to 27 knots odd during all this time, it being a running brawl all this time, lead being pumped in from both battle wagons. Sea funerals a treat. It was afterwards ascertained that we had fired 500 rounds. Ordinary Seaman Bell was killed early in the fight, and Able Seaman Sharp gave up the ghost 48 hours later, his body being riddled with shrapnel bullets. Our mainmast had a close shave, a shell taking her about 2in from the centre; but she stuck it like a dingo. We had a large hole in our fo'c's'le, which was shipping a lot of "green," there being about three feet on the fo'c's'le messdeck.

"Emden" Beached.

Suddenly the "Emden" dips from view. Mucks cheer, thinking she has dipped south, but when the smoke clears away it is seen she is still right among them where the whips are cracking. We turn now and engage her with our Port Battery, setting her on fire aft. We turn again and connect up with our starboard guns. She by now appears in a bad way, staggering and slithering, giving us a St. Vitus stunt. We expect her to dive any minute now; but she is seen to slew round suddenly and head for the beach. Ten minutes later she is high and dry on Cocos Island.

Fight Won in an Hour and Forty Minutes.

So was the notorious "Emden" put "hors-de-combat" by the little Kanger fight-ship "Sydney". Orders for cemetery neatly executed. The "Emden" had run ashore to save herself from sinking. At 11.30am the "Sydney" ceased fire, the action lasting, roughly, one hour, forty minutes. The "Emden" not rising on the count, the "Sydney" gets the decision.

We were knocked about a little but nothing serious. When we opened up the "Emden" was accompanied by her collier, but she streaked for the horizon on our approach. We now proceeded in that direction, soon overhauling her. We took the crew aboard us and then put it across her. She responded readily, obliging us by getting off the face of the sea in two acts. We then blew back to the "Emden" and discovered that she still had her filthy flag flying, so we let rip at her again when, after a little more than a fraction of a second, a hairy-legged son of a sea cook was seen to grease up the mast and haul it down.

Wounded Germans Picked Up.

This was at 4pm the same day. Dusk was coming on quickly and we were not sure whether the "Karlsruhe" ("Emden's" sister ship) was seulling in the vicinity, so taking no chances, we beat it for the night. We heard several cries in the darkness emanating from wounded Germans in the water. Sea boats' crews were despatched to rescue them. When

they were brought on board they were found to be in a very bad way. Some of them had been in the water for over nine hours. They collapsed as soon as they were rescued. We cruised around all night, and next morning at 11am buried our dead, giving them a sailor's grave. Three volleys were fired over the spot where they disappeared from view.

A Prince Among the Rescued.

We then went back and took all the wounded off the "Emden," also the prisoners, among whom were Captain Von Muller and a Prince of Hohenzollern, a nephew of Kaiser Bill. Later we received word from the Island that a party from the destroyed ship had landed with a machine gun. So about 30 from our ship were landed to ask them to take a glove. We had orders to serve out stoush, or punishment in the form of stoush, but when we arrived we were informed that the birds had flown - at least, sailed.

A Royal Welcome at Cocos.

The inhabitants had witnessed the fight from the time the gong went until the enemy had chucked the towel in. They freezed on to our flippers and damned near dislocated them. "Come along, me bonny boys in blue, and have some light refreshment," they said. The bonny boys in blue afore-mentioned., never guilty of saying no to "Harry Freeman," toddled along. I can safely say, without fear of contradiction, that more booze-water flowed there on that tropical isle in ten minutes than ever was mopped up at the "Star," when it was free drinks at Christmas time. We all blew aboard talking about our friends; coconuts under one wing and tins of fags under the other.

The final scene to the "Sydney" and "Emden" action (a most appropriate ending).
CURTAIN.

Anyone Remember Cora?

from Ken Mullen

A reference to the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games in the he last Newsletter triggered quite a few memories for me and I am wondering how many OTC veterans of CORA are still around?

CORA was the acronym for COMBINED OLYMPIC REPORTING AGENCY - the first ever collaboration by major international news agencies (United Press, Associated Press, Agence France Press, AAP-Reuter, Tass) responsible for reporting all events. Taking place in pre-satellite days, the 1956 Olympiad relied entirely on cable and wireless networks for the transmission of results, with none of today's state-of-the-art telephone cables or instantaneous worldwide TV coverage.

In the last analysis however, it must be said that the success of CORA depended on the sterling efforts of a number of hand-picked telegraphists and technicians from the Sydney and Melbourne operating rooms.

As I remember, volunteers were called for from SOR staff, although some of us were unceremoniously drafted for Olympic duty. Had we known what a ball it was to be, we would have hammered on the Traffic Superintendent's door day and night to get in on the act!

On the 'plane out of Sydney I travelled with the following: (not listed in order of seniority): Eric Wickham, "Torchy" Ellis, Joe Camilleri, "Fraj" Fradgley, Jack Whitaker, "Ned" Kelly, Lyal Gowanlock, Jack Swift, Ron Waugh and Frank White. (Can anyone out there add to the list?)

Arrangements for the transfer and accommodation of Sydney staff for the duration of the Games was not without incident. Those of us who knew we would be going to Melbourne keenly perused any service messages emanating from the Melbourne end. And as so often happened in those days, the SOR humorist was wickedly active.

One transmitter clerk - Mr Nixon or "Nicko" - came on duty to learn that a MOR service message had been "intercepted" and was displayed on the SOR notice board. To his mounting horror, Nicko read that he would be staying "... with an elderly widow, some 20 miles from the Olympic Stadium, in an outdoor sleep-out with minimal but acceptable facilities. No food would be provided but the sleeping accommodation (four to a room) was "reasonable".

Breathing fire and speaking in tongues, Nicko immediately barged upstairs to the Traffic Superintendent's office, stating in definite but indelicate language that the arrangements were not at all to his liking.

Traffic Supt at the time, Mr H J Hutchinson, managed to calm him down but when they both descended to the operating room to investigate, the message had mysteriously vanished.

Even today, I am loathe to reveal the identity of the SOR prankster but I do believe he has had a long association with this Newsletter

No sooner did we arrive in Melbourne than we were all imbued with the Olympic spirit. In company with Fraj and Joe Camilleri I recall having a few convivial beers in Young and Jackson's hostelry, while trying to convince Arthur Greene of MOR that I was indeed THE Ken Mullen and that no, I was not really responsible for The Great Name Stamp Debacle. My most enduring memory is of Arthur laughing so heartily that he fell over backwards, precipitating an argument with a gent who preferred to drink his beer rather than throw it around the hotel! He was obviously not one of our fraternity.

For the duration of the Games we were accommodated at Ormonde College at Melbourne University, where most students were on vacation. For a reason which now escapes me, Ormond College was immediately dubbed "Hormone House". As key communication operatives, each of us was allotted a bedroom and an adjacent study. The arrangements were most comfortable and I do recollect some SOR staff burning the midnight oil while engaged in earnest study with new-found friends.

A quaint College custom concerned the relaying of telephone messages. As there was only one telephone in the main hall, whoever answered it had to march into the quadrangle and bellow "John Smith, Fred Nerk" - or whoever the caller wanted. It was not long before a steady stream of requests for "Mr P Ricky" and N E Grummitt" were heard echoing around the University's ivy covered walls.

In those far off days, governments did not think it essential to go broke spending millions to host the Olympic Games and the Melbourne Stadium was actually the MCG beautifully tarted up for the occasion. So far as OTC operations were concerned, a public counter was soon established, together with an adjoining operating room and, on the ground floor, the CORA setup.

CORA's main function was to flash the results of each event as soon as athletes crossed the finishing line. Since the gold medal winner was the main attraction, messages conveying final results were slugged "GoldReut" and given top priority.

A crucial installation at the Melbourne stadium was the Press Bar, where one could eat and drink in relative comfort and without having to join a mile-long queue. The entrance to the Press Bar was guarded at all times by a stalwart member of the Australian armed forces and strictly speaking, we were not entitled to use its amenities. However, a visit to the OTC counter, a quick bash with the large red "PRESS" stamp used for press telegrams on our Stadium admittance pass, and we were in. This device also proved effective in gaining admittance to the many other Olympic venues located around the city.

The official opening was a sell-out which, in that era, was most unusual since there were no athletic events scheduled. No doubt the fact that this was Australia's first Olympics, plus the arrival of HRH Prince Philip, proved an irresistible combination. Or was it simply the presence of Prime Minister Robert Menzies?

In those days, security seemed to be much more laid back than it is now. Just how relaxed it could be was revealed when the Duke of Edinburgh, having been driven around the Stadium to the roars of the crowd, alighted from his limousine to be welcomed by the PM

and escorted to his place of honour. During this short journey, Mr Menzies became engulfed in the horde of official guests and VIPs swarming around the uniformed Duke and rapidly lost ground. Fortunately, he managed to regain his position at the Duke's side by the time HRH arrived at the official dais.

The day-to-day operations of CORA proved to be an unqualified success and the excitement and enthusiasm generated by the occasion in large measure made it a stimulating experience. A harmonious - and sometimes hilarious - working relationship quickly developed between journo's and telegraphists and was to continue until the closing ceremony. As the days sped by and the final events drew near, reduced transmission times for all telegraphic traffic was a universal goal.

The late Arthur Shepherd deserved much of the praise lavished on him for organising the OTC effort. I glimpsed him briefly on one occasion but he was a rather reserved person who was probably more active - and happier - behind the scenes. Another visitor to the Olympic venue was Sydney Traffic Supt Mr H J Hutchinson but his sojourn was less than successful. Feeling in need of some nourishment he repaired to the Press Bar, but since he had no official accreditation, he was refused admittance.

Enter one Eric Wickham, in search of a refresher.

"Eric" smiled Mr Hutchinson, "would you please tell this chap who I am?"

Wick looked him up and down with a blank stare.

"Never seen this joker in my life" he told the guard - and disappeared inside.

History does not record where the Traffic Supt dined that day, nor what he and Eric Wickham discussed when next they met.

The '56 Games made household names for Australian athletes Dawn Fraser, Betty Cuthbert, Shirley Strickland, Murray Rose, Lorraine Crapp etc. Even today, Shirley de la Hunty (nee Shirley Strickland) appears in the Guinness Book of Records as the female who has won most Olympic medals. Competing in the 1948, 1952 and 1956 Olympiads she won a total of 3 gold, 1 silver and 3 bronze medals.

Occasionally, we could sneak out for a quick look at what was happening in the arena. My most lasting memory is that of the final of the 10,000 metres, with Britain's Gordon Pirie and Russia's Vladimir Kutz equal favourites. Despite a valiant effort from Pirie, the Russian proved too strong and anyone who witnessed the event will remember the incredible gesture of the Russian in turning around in the final straight and taunting Pirie to beat him to the finish line.

It was not the most popular of wins as there was considerable animosity in some quarters towards the Russian team. Only a few weeks previously, a popular uprising in Hungary had been ruthlessly suppressed by Russian armed forces. And when the Russian team took on the Hungarians in the water polo event, blood flowed in the Olympic pool as tempers ran hot.

The solitary Russian in our group of overseas journalists represented the TASS agency. Whether he had been made to feel uncomfortable or had encountered the hostility of other European visitors I cannot say. But I do remember that when the time came for a farewell CORA party, he enjoyed his fair share of Australian beer. As the party wore on, he weaved across the room and insisted that he top up my glass. When I politely declined, he pushed his face close to mine and roared:

"LISTEN, I LIVE IN A DEMOCRACY, YOU WANT ANOTHER BEER."

And, laughing uproariously, he proceeded to fill my glass to overflowing before staggering off to find another victim of free speech.

The closing ceremony was an incredibly emotional affair. As the Olympic flag fluttered to the ground, a choir sang "Will Y No Come Back Again" and as they say in the trade, there wasn't a dry seat in the house! But all good things come to an end and it was a somewhat subdued mob of OTC Olympic veterans who returned to the SOR routine.

Some 15 years later, a Melbourne business associate kindly invited me to dine at his old alma mater and yes, it turned out to be Ormonde College!

I dutifully jointed the procession of old boys and resident academics behind the Master of College as we wended our way to the high table to partake of a very ordinary meal.

Gazing down at the noisy stew of students, I must confess that my thoughts were not of learning or of Academe. Above the hubbub of communal dining and the drone of learned debate, I seemed to hear the faint call of a young telegraphist seeking someone to answer the college telephone.

"Mr P Ricky?" it cried, "N E Grummit?"

Alas, I could not answer.

(With apologies to others who were there, are here today, but whose names have slipped through this tattered fishnet which now serves as my memory).

Communications in Antarctica (Continuing)

by Vince Gibson

The ship arrived at 5am and by 8am unloading had commenced. After the ship being delayed so long in the ice it was a bit of an anticlimax when it arrived and there was not the enthusiastic welcome for it as there would have been if it had sailed in without delay, not that we were not pleased at its arrival. The new expeditioners arrived ashore, all dressed out in their new bright clothing, they were dressed in big thick jumpers and windproof jackets with warm headgear. We walked around in short sleeves and some even wore shorts, we were by this time well climatized, in fact by spring time we thought a nice day was when the temperature was about -12°C. At this time of the year it was mostly around 0°C.

The new men were so full of energy and enthusiasm, which pleased us as all our eyes were on the unloading of the ship, we anxiously looked at the ship's waterline and were pleased as the ship rose further out of the water.

The unloading was carried out mainly by the new expeditioners, most of the men at the base were so busy with work imposed by the influx of so many new men. The radio room was like a beehive, flat out all day and into the early hours of the morning. We not only had more than double the men at the base, but also ship's traffic from the ship going to other bases and at times aircraft when the helicopters were operating, which was quite frequent.

Army LARCS were used in the unloading operation, amphibious vehicles manned by army personnel; there was also an aluminium barge powered by two outboard engines. All unloading was done by manpower at the shore end. It was some years later before fork lifts and cranes were provided. The helicopters were used for small jobs to be completed before our departure. One of these was to place a marker and take readings well up the Vanderford glacier, a helicopter being the only means of access. Two of us went on this trip taking a tent, a ten day ration pack, radio and all the necessary gear to complete our work. The beacon which consisted of five fuel drums welded together, and the guy ropes, were to be dropped to us the next day by helicopter.

We loaded the gear between the two helicopters, had lunch and then took off on our trip, flying at 3,000 feet so we could keep in touch with base on VHF radio.

It was about an hour's trip to our destination, such a wonderful view of everything as we flew along; the glacier itself was a maze of crevasses. We arrived at our location, the helicopter I was in stayed at 3,000 feet to keep radio contact whilst the other landed and unloaded the gear. Upon landing, the other man tied himself to the helicopter whilst unloading. There were crevasses everywhere and it was not safe to walk anywhere before we could test the ground. Finally, I came down to land, I did not have to tie myself to anything, I stood in the same footprints as the previous man whilst he stood close beside me. We finally unloaded and the helicopter took off. To our dismay we forgot to hold our sleeping bags and with the strong downdraft of take off they went rolling across the ice ending up two or three hundred yards away. Fortunately, the pilot saw what had happened and skilfully manoeuvred them back to us where we waited flat on the ground with outstretched arms. He was so skilful that they both rolled right into our arms.

We first of all had to find where it was possible to walk safely, so with our ice axes and being roped together we carefully found a place for our tent and a path to where the beacon could be placed. The ice had cracks of varying widths everywhere and large crevasses were all around us. the crevasses were covered with snow with a very slight depression, maybe about ten to fifteen yards across. There were cracks in the ice inside the tent, I remember going to sleep that night thinking whether the cracks would open up suddenly during the night as the glacier was moving about a thousand yards a year. The tent also was an orange colour and it was so bright trying to sleep with the sun still shining.

We had a bit of a feast that night. We picked some of the choice items out of our ration pack. If we had been held up for any time by the weather we would have been living on hard tack.

The beacon arrived the next mid morning. We erected it and took some readings of our position. The beacon was to establish a point from which the movement of the glacier could be measured in later years.

We stayed another night and the helicopter called for us mid morning, packed all our gear and eventually returning to base in time for lunch. It was pleasing to see, on our return, that the ship was riding much higher in the water, so we assume downloading had been progressing favourably. The new radio men were briefly instructed in the equipment and procedures and any relevant information that might help them, but there just was not much time to familiarise them fully. They would find out like we did, by sweat and tears.

Eventually a time was given for the change-over and our subsequent departure. We were busy with last minute packing, looking forward to when at last we could relax away from the responsibility and constant work of the radio room.

A party was held after lunch on the day of our departure and about four in the afternoon we embarked on the LARC and set off on our return trip. When on board there was the familiar smell of ships. We unpacked our gear, changed our heavy gear and put lighter shoes on. We went out on deck as we receded from the base, wondering whether we would ever see the continent again. About twenty five percent of the expeditioners return again for another term, some for more than two trips. We had our evening meal, meeting again some of the old crew of the ship when we came down. We went out on deck to absorb the beauty of the ice in the evening sun, the majestic splendour of the icebergs as the ship slipped through the quiet waters inside the packice. We were not held up by any heavy ice, as was the ship on the way down, and by 10:00am the next morning we were on the outer edge of the pack and heading for the open sea.

We had to find our sea legs again, so filled ourselves up with sea sickness tablets for a few days. By the time we reached the roaring forties we were recovered and often stood in the stern of the ship watching the continual massive waves rolling in from the west lifting the ship up like a small cork. There was a darkness at night at this point and auroras were now visible some nights. The albatross were now with us continually day after day, just circling the boat with barely a flap of the wings, so economical in flight.

We had a quick trip home, under two weeks, we were going more or less with the prevailing wind and waves, vastly different to heading into it as we did on our outward journey.

We eventually had a date for our return. That night the captain gave a party. It would be the last night we would be together as a group, rather a sad moment. After the meal we sat out on the deck, rather quiet with our thoughts, seeing in the distance odd car lights moving along the land, it seemed like another planet.

We were sitting on the deck in short sleeved shirts, the temperature 16C it felt warm and balmy, our skin felt moist, it had lost the dry parchment feel from the intense dryness of the Antarctic. We went to bed thinking tomorrow would be a big day for us. We awoke about six, the ship was already in Port Phillip Bay, the pilot had boarded during the early hours of the morning.

It was a calm, hot, late summers morning, the faint smell of bush fire smoke in the air, the water in the bay red from the dawn and like glass as the ship glided on.

After breakfast the customs boarded and inspected our luggage, there was much speculation and rumours and apprehension about their visit, but they were extremely courteous and helpful to us.

We pulled into the dock about eleven, came alongside, and the gangplank lowered. Looked out the porthole and saw all these people on the wharf and felt like shrinking back and hoped I could just have slipped away quietly. Others felt much the same.

However, we all disembarked and I went to a place out towards the Dandenongs where I had lunch. After lunch I went out and had a quiet stroll up to the local shopping centre, just a small village-like place. As I walked along noticing the colours of the many flowers, the wind in the trees, the smell of the hot brown grass, all the myriad colours of dresses, the noise of cars, the birds, the feel of the hot sun on one's back, I began to realise that I had been in a state of sensory deprivation for over a year. I had seen all these things before but I had not been appreciating them. I had been missing so much.

After a few days debriefing and finalising employment I returned home by air. It was good to be home.

I will conclude this episode with an extract from the last page of the diary for this particular year, partly repetitious but it had such an impact.

"So quiet and peaceful writing this last page of the diary out at Kilsyth. A beautiful day, fortunately, not excessively hot.

Everything so colourful, the trees, blue skies, colourful flowers, it is like another world, almost, and to smell all the different odours in the warm air"

..... to be continued

The Editor
OTVA Newsletter,

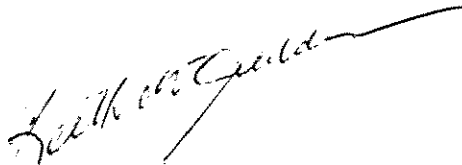
Dear Jim,

I received the following from Don Charles, Telstra Perth, and thought it would be of interest to the next Newsletter.

Apparently Bruce Weber is trying to coordinate this Direction Island reunion on an annual basis in association with the Cocos Island Golf Club reunion, so even if this year's notice will get to the Vets a bit late they may be interested for future years.

By giving Bruce their addresses they will get a direct mail advice in future years as well.

The following is the text of a letter sent to the West Australian Newspapers, Perth



regards Keith McCredde

17/1/94.

During the 50's and 60's, a number of Australians served on Direction Island within the Cocos Keeling Islands group. They were employed by both the former Overseas Telecommunications Commission and the Department of Civil Aviation. The OTC staff manned the Cable Station and the DCA staff manned the Air/Sea Rescue Base.

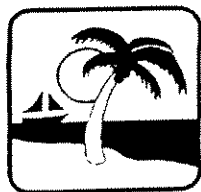
We are trying to contact as many of the OTC "Exiles" and the DCA "Outcasts" (as the workers were affectionately known) as possible to combine with the 1994 Cocos Islands Golf Club Reunion. The reunion will again be held at the Aviat Golf Club, South Guildford, Saturday 5th March 1994.

It would be a great help if you would be kind enough to publish the details of the contact for this event in your Reunion Notices section of your newspaper.

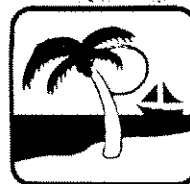
Contact: Bruce Weber,
31 Ireland Way,
Bassendean.
Ph (09) 377 2103.

Thanking you in advance,

Bruce Weber
Coordinator
4th January, 1994.



COCOS ISLANDS GOLF CLUB ANNUAL REUNION 1994



Calling all ex-Members of the Cocos Islands Golf and Cocos Clubs, Club Pulu, ex-Cocos'ites, ex-Direction Island based "Exiles" and "Outcasts", their family and friends

You are all cordially invited to come and enjoy yourselves at the 4th Annual Cocos Islands Golf Club Reunion

COME and HAVE a HIT and relive those memorable Golf Testimonials !!!!

VENUE:	WEST AVIAT GOLF CLUB Kalamunda Road South Guildford (Adjacent to Perth Airport)			
DATE:	SATURDAY 5th MARCH 1994			
COST:	\$20.00 each PLAYER Includes Green Fees, On Course drinks, Trophies & Prizes \$ 5.00 each FAMILY <i>(Note: You don't need to pay the \$5.00 if you, your partner or one of your family pays Green Fees. The \$5.00 assists in covering the costs of postage, stationary, phone calls, hire fees etc.)</i>			
TIME:	GOLF: 1pm ☉ for a 2pm ☉ Shotgun Tee-Off for the golfers REUNION: 5pm ☉ for all Ex-Cocos'ites, Family and Friends			
BYO:	Food and Drinks for the after game BBQ and Fellowship Cocos Memorabilia			
Contact:	<i>Bruce Weber (Coordinator)</i> <i>Chris Downey (CAA)</i> <i>Gerry Brennan (Lynwood Senior High School)</i>	<i>Phone</i> 302 0353 476 8610 457 1222	<i>Fax</i> 302 0377 476 8634 354 3346	<i>After Hours</i> 377 2103 291 8784 387 5838

It would be appreciated if your nomination, regardless if you play golf or not, can be returned as soon as possible to one of the above, and please, ☉ **BY FRIDAY 25th FEBRUARY** ☉

Following your many suggestions and idea's from last years Reunion, we are pleased to announce the incorporation of some new groups of ex-Cocos'ites within the Cocos Islands Golf Club Re-union, they being, ex-Cocos Club Members, ex-Club Pulu Members from Home Island, and the ex-OTC Cable Station ("Exiles") and DCA ("Outcasts") Marine Crash and Rescue staff from Direction Island.

ALL - please make it your challenge to provide us with the name and address of somebody you know who was on Cocos so they can be contacted in time for this and other Reunions

THANK YOU / TERIMA KASIH

(Bruce, Chris and Gerry)

COCOS ISLANDS GOLF CLUB ANNUAL REUNION 1994

(Coordinator - Bruce Weber, 31 Ireland Way, Hassenden 6054, Phone 377 2103)

Dear ex-Cocos'ite

1994 is the 4th year of the now Annual Cocos Islands Golf Club Reunion. Each year is seeing more and more old mates and families getting together to reminisce at the BBQ about the great times had on "Paradise". Following the huge success of previous Reunions, and acting on the ideas and suggestions of many of you that were there in 1992 & 1993, we are happy to announce the inclusion of some new groups of ex-Cocos'ites within the Cocos Islands Golf Club Re-union.

This year, a warm invitation is being extended to all ex-Cocos Club Members, ex-Club Pulu Members from Home Island, and the ex-OTC Cable Station and DCA Marine Crash and Rescue staff from Direction Island to participate in this years Reunion.

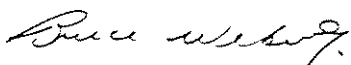
It is now over 20 years since the Crash Base and Cable Station closed and we have about 8 names from both of these groups. It would be of great assistance if you can scan through the list provided and see if you can add some names (and hopefully addresses!) of anybody connected with the above groups or any of the ex-Cocos Club/Club Pulu Members. If you can, please contact them yourself, or pass the information on to myself, Chris or Gerry so that they can be contacted in time for this years Reunion. (there is an extra nomination form enclosed)

Please return the nomination forms to myself, Chris or Gerry as soon as you can so we can get an idea of the numbers, prepare name tags etc. Even if you don't intend to attend the Reunion, please take the time to fill out the form and return it so our records can be checked and updated if necessary

Also, don't forget that every year, on the first Sunday following the New Year, there is the Annual Cocos get-together at Point Walter.

Look forward to seeing you all at this years Reunion

Kind regards



Bruce Weber

COCOS ISLANDS GOLF CLUB ANNUAL REUNION 1994

(Coordinator - Bruce Weber, 31 Ireland Way, Bassendean 6054, Phone 377 2103)

LIST OF EX-COCOS'ites WE HAVE ADDRESSES FOR:

AJBERTI Steve, APPLEHOF Bob, ARNDT Alan & Joan, ASH Brad, ASPEN Warren, BAIN Chris, BAIRD Kim & Pat, BANNON Bernie & Rose, BARKER Hugh & Linda, BARONS Grant & Helen, BARTLEY John, BARTON Mike, BEECK Gordon, BELTS Tony & Sharon, BERGIN Bob, BINGHAM Harry & Colleen, BOASE Bryan, BRENNAN Gerry & Buz, BRIGGS Bob, BRIGGS Harry & Fiona, BROCKMAN Mark & Melida, BROOME Gerry, BUCHANAN Jim Snr & Jnr, BUCKINHAM Hugh & Maxine, BURNS Bob & Pam, BURTON Tom, BUTTERWORTH Alan, BUTTSWORTH Fred, CAHILL Mike & Narelle, CAMPBELL Ivan, CAREY Ron, CAPLSEN Jack, CARMAN David & Sadie, CARTLEDGE Denis, CARTY Gerry & Meg, CHARLES Don, CHIPMAN Peter, COCHRANE Danny & Tina, COCKS John & Marie, CONSTABLE Scott & Kerrie, COOK Laurie, COONEY Graham, CRANSTON Dennis, CRISFORD John, DARWIN Chris, DAWSON Ron & Minnie, DAY Bob, DILLON Jim, DOBSON Bill & Joyce, DOGGETT Ian, DOWNEY Chris & Monica, DUFF Butch, Rose & Corey, DUNNE Walter & Wilma, DYBING Cyril, DYSON Ray & Mary, EARP Lionel, EAST Phil & , EATON David & Margaret, ECKHART Peter & Marjorie, EDMONDS Gavin, EDWARDS Marion & Jim, ELKINGTON Max & Margaret, ELMS Alan & Helen, ELVARD Ron, FAIRS Don, FLETCHER Ken & Vickie, FRAZER Tanya, GAMBLE D & W, GARDNER Bill, GARDNER Geoff & Wilma, GOSS John & Jan, HALL Bob & Gail, HAMBLETON Dan, HAMILTON Ted & Pat, HAND Jack, HANSON Tom, HARDAKER Noel & Aldyth, HARDINGHAM Peter & Colleen, HARDY Andy, HARRISON Ian, HARRISON Maurie & Irene, HASTIE Ivan, HATCH Eric, HAWKINS Hefney, HAYES Bob & Dianna, HAYES Colin, HEALY Rob & Kaye, HEATH David, HEAVEN Michael, HEBBARD Kel & Val, HILL Terry & Judy, HILLIN Julie, HOAR Tony & Allison, HOBSON Darryl, HOFFMAN Bill & Pat, HOLLINGSHEAD Rob, HOLMES Eric & Toni, HUNT Alan & Rox, HUNTER Lawson, HUTCHINGS John, JAHN Bruce, JAMES Ken & Glenda, JAMES Trevor, JARMAN Bill & Jean, JARRETT Tom, JENNIESON Graham, JOHNS Jan, JOHNSON Craig, JOHNSON Trevor, JOHNSTON Annette, JONES Ross, JOPLING Mike & Denise, KEAN Bob & Marlene, KEARTON Peter, KING Annette, KOWALD Brian, LADSON Ray & Alison, LANE Tom, LEDGER Richard & Sue, LIEBIG Klaus & Wilma, LITTLE Jack & Merlene, LOGAN Carl, MacAULEY Bruce & Lynnette, MacDONALD Andrew & Mary, MacDONALD Don & Christine, MACKIN John & Ghonda, MADIGAN Dave, MALEY Michael, MANDER Trevor & Shirley, McCARROLL Ken, McCREDDEN Keith & Gai, McGRATH Vic, McKEIVER Fred, McKIE John & Joan, McLEOD Don, McMILES Bob, McMURTRIE Lloyd, MEARS Peter, MEDWIN Frank, MELKUS Dot, MELKUS Martin, MICHALAK Ray, MILNER Gordon & Betty, MINERS Lee & Dianne, MOORE Brian & Stephanie, MORGAN Phil & Sandy, MORIN Polly & Margaret, MOYLE Geoff, MUIR Roy, MULHERIN Dan & Linda, MUNDAY Greg & Cheryl, MURRAY Bob, NEGUS Brett, NELL Bryan, NESBITT Gordon, O'NIEL Lisa, OATS Bob & Fran, OLSEN Brett & Debbie, OSMOND Ken, OSWALD Ian & Trish, OWEN Melanie, OWEN Wally, PARKER/MORT Angela/James, PINK Bob & Kate, PITCHER Bruce, PROWSE Rosslyn, READ Rolie, REDMOND Adrian, REECE Bill & Dee, REES Steve, PEILLY Paul & Jane, RIMMER Alan & Margaret, ROBERTSON Clive, ROBERTSON Phil & Sandy, ROSS Malcolm, POWORTH Ross & Joe, SADLO Wolfgang & Nancy, SANDFORD Trevor, SAUNDERS Bob & Lee, SCOTT Phillip, SCREENE Derek, SHANLEY Marion, SHARP Stewie, SHARP Trevor & Jennie, SHEEN Tod, SHERIDAN Leo, SIMPSON Doug, SLEIGHT Ron & Lynette, SMITH Daphne, SMITH Norma, SPENCER Cluif, SQUANCE Kevin & Marion, STEARNE Kevin, STOCKTON Ray, SWEETAPPLE John, TAPSALL Anne, TAYLOR Jim, THOMAS Pat & Dave, THOMAS Phil & Sue, THOMPSON Gareth & Vere, THOMPSON Jim & Ethel, THORPE Gary & Paula, TOEY Bob, TOMLINS Richard & Maryan, TREWIN Robin & Hazel, TRUTWEIN Wally & Shirley, TUOHY Dermott, VICKERY Bob, VINE Bob, VOISEY Alan, WALLWORK John, WARD Keith & Georgina, WARREN Rod & Kaye, WATKINS Kevin & Dorcen, WATSON John & Sue, WAYNE Ernie & Angela, WEBER Bruce & Brenda, WEBER Grant & Liz, WEBSTER Graham & Sheila, WELLS George & Freda, WHARTON Bruce & Jenny, WILDEN Mick, WILLOUGHBY Ray, WILSON Paddy, WILSON Patrick, WRIGHT Greg, WRIGHT Pat, YAPDLEY Neil & Sandy.

LIST OF EX-COCOS'ites WE DON'T HAVE ADDRESSES FOR:

DUCKRELL Laurie, JACKA Allan, NOVA Jim, PEACOCK Ron

YOUR HELP IN ADDING TO THIS LIST IS APPRECIATED

Tribute to Ted Bishton (Continuing)

Just before Easter 1927, I received word that a plane was arriving at Wau on Easter Saturday. Warden Maclean and I went down to Wau for the occasion. We stayed with the medical assistant Cyril Lambert who was a fine host. To pass the time while waiting for the plane's arrival, we played poker. No one had money, but everyone in the game had gold at Edie Creek. After playing a couple of nights, Cyril Lambert held most of the IOU chits. These he tore into small pieces and said - Gentlemen you are my guests, so forget about the IOUs. Easter Saturday arrived, also Easter Sunday, but there was no sign of the plane, so Warden Maclean and I decided to return to Edie Creek. We thanked our host and started up the Kaindi mountain. We had been on the track some hours and were about halfway up the mountain, when we saw the plane arrive at Wau. We were too far up the mountain to return and the thought of having to do the climb again deterred us, so we continued on the Edie Creek where we arrived in the late afternoon. If I remember rightly the pilot of that plane was Pard Mustar and his navigator was Joe Bourke. Mustar tried a few times to find his way into the Wau drome, but could not find it, so Joe Bourke, who had been into the field, said he would show Pard in and successfully did so, but it was just a matter of luck as it was like trying to find a needle in a haystack. They had to fly over mountains of over ten thousand feet high and there were ridge after ridge of them to negotiate and then find this little green patch in the wilderness. However, the feat was accomplished and within a few months planes were coming in and out every daylight hour.

While on the field, I was the correspondent for the Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney and for the Argus, Melbourne. Anything of interest I would radio to the Herald. There were other correspondents, Normie Neal represented the Sydney Telegraph and the Melbourne Age and Tex Thomas, the Sydney Truth. Most of the miners' meetings were written up, but I was the wireless operator who had the job of sending the press messages, which were cluttering up the ether as they all went from Edie Creek to Salamaua, then to Morobe, who sent them to Rabaul, then on to Townsville and by landline to Sydney. All these messages of thousands of words had to be sent manually with the result that we correspondents and the doings of the miners' association were roundly cursed by all who had to handle the messages. Eventually we correspondents decided to all send the same message, which relieved the tension everywhere and made my task much easier. I was always writing to the Herald which used to pay me threepence a line which was pretty lousy, but the idea was to keep the Australian public interested in Edie Creek. This was before and during the Royal Commission. At this time Bill Royal was in Sydney. Bill knew me very well and it must have irked him to see all these articles of mine, so he got in touch with my boss, George Clark of AWA and told him to remove me. He even accused me of divulging information from radios passing through my hands. I demanded an enquiry, but I understand Bill Royal retracted his accusations and I was told to forget the whole occurrence. When next I saw Bill Royal I approached him about his accusations, but he just laughed and said I was a bloody nuisance and he wanted to get me out of the way.

The Big six eventually sold out to some company and with the thousands they got from the company plus what they made beforehand, soon went. Bill Royal went broke following the horses, where he used to bet in thousands. He returned to the Territory and was getting a very small amount on a goldfield behind Wewak. Joe Sloane did most of his money on the horses and I don't know what happened to Dick Glasson, though I did

hear he went back prospecting in the Northern Territory. Chisholm went practically broke and had very little when he died. Bill Money died about 1965 at Lae, practically a pauper. The only one who seemed to have hung on to his money was Albert Royal; I didn't like him, but I liked Bill.

There was a chap named Jack Mitchell who brought a government line of carriers in and of course when the line returned to Salamaua, Mitchell was on his own. There were a few fellows who got onto the field in this manner. Any man taking a line of government stores to the field was allowed to pack ten of the carriers with his own personal belongings and food. The result was these chaps could sustain themselves for about six months and after that they had to buy from fellows leaving the field. I put Jack Mitchell on to a piece of ground where he did very well. He used to use the water from my race, so he could only work at night. He had a couple of tilly kerosene lamps and would work through the night, but he had no idea of washing up his box, so I used to do this for him before I started on my claim. While I was washing his box he was getting about 20 ounces a night. He was soon able to wash his own box, so I didn't see results after that, but he told me he was averaging 20 ounces per night. I didn't charge him a penny for the ground and I was pleased he did well. Poor Chap, he was later killed up the Sepik River with a chap named Eichorn and two other fellows while on a prospecting trip.

A chap I knew when I was in Kieta, Diwai Wood, found the biggest nugget while I was on the field. It weighed over 500 ounces. He had been playing poker the night before and had lost over 500 pounds so his find more than compensated for his loss. There was no money on the field and all debts were paid in gold, which we valued at £2 per ounce. When we sent our gold to Sydney it used to return us about £2.7.6 per ounce, but the odd 7/6 went in agency fees, freight, insurance etc.

I had two boys on the field and they worked my claim and, when I was not busy with the wireless, I would work with them. My best day was 87 ounces and for months I was averaging 40 and 50 ounces per day. Old Ned Coakley had a Scot partner named Strawbridge. Strawbridge got sick and went to Sydney to get well. He was away for some months and, during his absence, Ned had got onto good gold and was making plenty. When Strawbridge returned, old Ned tried to make out there was no partnership. The case came before the warden's court and, expecting a lot of fun, I went along for the hearing. These two old characters were at each other for everything and they made use of adjectives I had never heard. There were more bastards in their families than would populate a large island. When John Meehan tried to restore order, Warden Maclean told him to let them go. The Warden eventually awarded Strawbridge £1,000 and dissolved the partnership. I saw old Ned after the court finished and asked him how he felt about the decision. He said it was cheap at the £1,000 to get rid of the old bastard. I know Ned got much the better of the decision as he would in those days have got £1,000 within a week and he was getting over £100 a day.

Boss Adelskold was telling me that one day on the track going to Salamaua he pulled into camp one day and saw some boys there and asked them who they belonged to and they said Master Coakley. They said Ned was sick and asleep in the hut, so Boss said he thought he had better wait and see if he could be of any assistance. He said he waited about three hours before Ned came out of the hut. The first thing he said was to ask Boss - Do you belong to the Faith - Boss said - No, Ned I don't - so Ned told him to get the hell out of there as he didn't need his help. Boss said that was all the thanks he got for wasting

his time. When Ned was on the road he only wore a lava lava, no shoes and his hair was right down over his shoulders and his eyes were right back deep in his head. He was a wild looking character and the natives feared him. There was a tale going round the field that Ned had sent a large nugget to Archbishop Mannix in Melbourne. Some wag on the field heard about it and sent Ned a letter of thanks and signed it Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne. I believe Ned brought forth his vocabulary of adjectives that would shame a bullock driver. Ned was a rich man when he left the field to enjoy the rest of his life in his beloved Ireland, but fate stepped in and deprived Ned of his dream - he died in St. Vincent's Hospital, Sydney.

Life on Edie Creek was very rough and hard. There were no roads and whenever one moved about it was via Edie or Meri Creeks. In most places the sides of the creeks were very precipitous which compelled one to walk along the creek bed. The water was icy cold and, if the creek happened to be flooded, which was quite often, it was extremely difficult to get along without stepping into a hole and then finding oneself being washed rapidly down the creek. Most of us lived in tents. It was very cold and I used to have a fire going all night and have five or six blankets on my bed. When pitching our tents we would drive stakes into the ground to a height of about 4 or 5 feet, about 6 inches apart and fill in the six inch space with dirt, then erect the tent over this, which meant that the tent, instead of being down to the ground was 4 or 5 feet about it; this enabled one to stand erect inside the tent and made it more roomy. My bed was a piece of heavy canvas about 7 feet long by 7 feet wide. This was stitched up along one side, making it about 3ft 6ins wide. Two poles were pushed through this lengthways and fastened onto four stakes driven into the ground. When travelling from Salamaua to the goldfield, this canvas bed was very handy. I used to put all my clothes in it and roll it up like a swag. It didn't matter how much it rained on the track during the day's march, I always had a dry change of clothing at the end of each day. I made several attempts to grow things, such as beans and lettuce, but had no success. The ground was covered with a thick mat of moss, three or four feet deep and I think this had the effect of souring the ground. The trees were all very high and constantly dripping with mist, consequently everything I ate came out of a tin and this lasted for 14 months. My health was feeling the effects of this hard life and I asked to be relieved. Charles Beckett took over from me and I gave him my claim on leaving. I heard he made between 3 and 4 thousand pounds out of it.

I left Edie Creek and went down the Kaindi mountain to Wau to await the single-seater moth plane which was to take me to Lae. One of my boys wanted to walk, so I sent him to Salamaua with a line of boys going down for stores. When we were ready to leave, I sat in the front of the moth plane with one of my boys sitting on my lap and the pilot was behind. It was my first adventure in a plane, but I was prepared to take any risk rather than face that walk back to Salamaua. The trip was quite uneventful and we arrived in Lae in 40 minutes; my trip going in had taken me five weeks and six days. When we arrived in Lae, my other boy, Boha, were there to meet me. The boy who flew down with me, Pikai, was nearly white from fright. We went by pinnace to Salamaua to await the arrival of the Burns Philp steamer "Montoro". There were quite a few graves in the local cemetery at Salamaua. Most of them had died from Japanese River Fever, later called Scrub Typhus. This scrub typhus was the cause of a lot of deaths among the Australian soldiers during World War II. The Montoro duly arrived and I was soon on my way to Sydney for a good holiday.

After a couple of months stay in Sydney, I returned to Rabaul - this would be early 1928. When I arrived in Rabaul, Jimmy Twycross who was in charge of A.W.A., asked me to go to Manus, as the wireless man there, Gordon Read, was having some trouble with the wireless gear. I jumped at the opportunity as I had some knowledge of prospecting, now and I wanted to have a good look at Manus. Jimmy Twycross told me to get back to Rabaul as soon as possible. I arrived in Manus on the Mataram, which stayed there a couple of days. I waited until the ship had left before looking at the wireless set. I forget exactly what the trouble was, but it took no time to fix and everything was soon working well. This meant I had to stay in Manus for six weeks before the next ship arrived, which suited me down to the ground.

Alex Burrows and Jock Kramer were partners and ran a store at Lorengau and, after some talk, it was decided that Jock and I would go on a prospecting trip looking for gold. We left Lorengau on Jock's schooner and headed for Peri on the south-east coast of Manus. We landed our stores somewhere around Lohan and instructed the boss boy of the schooner to meet us on the north coast at Bundralis Mission. We passed through Drabito and on to Tingau panning all the rivers and creeks we encountered. It was somewhere around Tingau that we entered a very large cave with water running through it and full of flying foxes; from memory the ceiling would be 30 or 40 feet high, or higher. We passed through this cave and came out on the opposite side. It was a very big cave and seemed to go right through the mountain. Up to date we had had no luck, not even a spec of gold, so we continued on to Mundiburua where we stayed one day. When the women saw me they recognised me as the one who looked after them when they were hostages after the murder of Reisz in 1920. As I said before, when they were hostages, several children were born at Lorengau and now they were bringing the children along for me to see. By now all these children would be 8 years old, but the women kept saying - do you remember this one or that one." We were now in the Drukal country and although it was 8 years since they murdered Reisz, they were still on the arrogant side. We stayed the night, but as soon as it was daylight we were up and about. The big boys came and told us to move on and gave us to understand we were not welcome. We left Mundiburua and passed through Mundrau and Badlock, where Reisz's murderers were hanged and where George Naess had had his police post in 1920. The police post had disappeared, the jungle had taken over again.

Still we had not seen a spec of gold, so we continued on the Mission Station at Bundralis. The Mission was run by Father Borchardt and Father Clearwater and four nuns. One of the nuns was an Australian, Sister Adela and there were three Dutchies. The schooner had arrived and was anchored off the mission station. We went aboard the schooner and proceeded up the coast to a village called Sori. Here we landed our stores and carriers and instructed the boss boy of the schooner to meet us around at Malai Bay on the opposite coast. From Sori across to Malai Bay would be roughly twenty miles. We prospected practically every creek we encountered, but still not a spec of gold. As a matter of fact I only remember entering or seeing the one village in this area. I do not know the name of this village, but it was very well fortified. The whole village was surrounded with growing bamboo. To enter the village we had to get down on our hands and knees and crawl through the bamboo for a distance of about 100 feet. It would be impossible to penetrate the bamboo except by these small openings. I do not know whether there were any other entrances, but I did not see any as we used the same opening for our exit. When we had crawled through the entrance we suddenly came out into the open village. When we arrived the natives were having a sing sing and were done up in all their war paint and full of betel nut, which has the same effect as alcohol has on us Europeans, only the native

becomes more belligerent. The natives were as much surprised as we were although we could hear the garamuts and drums going long before we arrived at the opening. However we realised we were not welcome and we beat a hasty retreat. I have never seen a village so well fortified. With the entrance opening blocked up, it would be absolutely impossible for anyone to enter the village as there would not be more than 3 or 4 inches between each bamboo and they grow to a height of 50 or 60 feet.

It was a nice sight to see the schooner anchored in Malai Bay and we were soon on board having a shower and change of clothing a few beers. We anchored at Malai Bay for the night then on the following morning we started on our way back to Lorengau. We sailed round the south west coast of Manus and eventually arrived back at Lorengau. We had been away for nearly a month and I had not seen a spec of gold on the whole trip. It was only a matter of a few days when the Mataram arrived and I said goodbye to Lorengau. We returned to Rabaul via the Hermit and Western Islands. It did not seem that I was in Rabaul very long before I was notified that the Administrator, General Wisdom was to make a tour of the Solomon Islands (Bougainville), the Mortlock and Tasman Islands on the Administration Yacht, the "Franklin" and I was to go as the wireless operator. It was on this trip that I first met Father Wade, later Bishop Wade and Chaplain General of the Southwest Pacific Area during World War II. He had an old wireless receiver which was on the blink and he asked me to try and get it fixed. I took it on board, but it was an old Attwater Kent and well past the repairing stage. The next time I met him was in the shower room at Lae, during the war. He was the Bishop of Bougainville for many years, but owing to failing health he returned to his native America, where he died about 1965.

We called in to Buka Passage, then proceeded to Kieta. From Kieta we went to the Mortlock Islands. The inhabitants here are Polynesians. I have never seen such big women. They must have been anything from 15 to 20 stone in weight. It seemed ludicrous to see one of these huge women nursing a newly born baby of 7 or 8 pounds weight. The men are a sickly looking crowd, but they were a very happy lot and didn't seem to have a care in the world. Our next call was the Tasman Islands. They are the furthest east of the Mandated Territory and very close to the northern British Solomon Islands. The people here are a mixture between Polynesian and Melanesian and don't seem to have the virtues of either. We only stayed there for a day, or it may have been two, then sailed for Kieta. Just before entering Kieta Harbour I was in touch with Bitapaka (Rabaul) wireless station and told them as we were entering Kieta Harbour I would not be on the air again until we left Kieta. When we anchored at Kieta, Scriven, the wireless officer stationed at Kieta handed me a message addressed to the Administrator. While we had been away on this trip a chap named Edmonds (who was one of the survivors of the Nakanai massacres in which 4 Europeans had been murdered) was murdered on a plantation down Gasmatta way on the south Coast of New Britain. The murderers had been apprehended and sentenced to death. This message which Scriven had handed to me for the Administrator was a plea from the Missions and other interested parties to have the executing deferred until the arrival of the Administrator back in Rabaul. The hanging was to take place next morning. Johnny Walstab, who was Chief of Police, was sort of acting private secretary to the Administrator on this trip. He came to me and told me that the Administrator wanted me to send a message to Rabaul to stay the hangings until his arrival back in Rabaul. I told Johnny the wireless was closed down until we left Kieta. He conveyed this information to the Administrator, who, I gleaned from Johnny, went into a towering rage and told Johnny to tell Bishton that he had to get that message through to Rabaul to stay the executions. The wireless set on the Franklin was

not powerful enough to get through to Rabaul as Kieta was sort of land-locked and the wireless radius was only a short distance, so I went up to Scriven and used his set which was more powerful and had a much wider range. After what seemed an eternity I eventually contacted Bitu Paka. Atmospherics were practically at their maximum and the operator at Bitu Paka (Denis O'Sullivan) and I battled for nearly three hours before the message got through. It was after ten o'clock at night when we finished and I had no hesitation in waking Johnny Walstab when I got back to the Franklin, to notify him that the message had got through. He in turn advised the Administrator, who waited till the morning to tell me he was pleased. However, the murderers were never hanged. Their sentences were commuted to various terms of imprisonment, but I can say those boys went very close to being hanged.

It was about this time that the Custodian of Expropriated properties was calling tenders for some of the ex-German plantations. I put in my tender for Ulul-Nono plantation situated on the east coast of New Ireland, about 18 miles from capital Kavieng. My tender price was £33,200. The terms were for 10% deposit and the remainder over a period of 20 years. I had most of the deposit from my earnings on the goldfields, the rest was advanced to me by Burns Philp and Co., who made me sign a contract to sell everything through them. Any outstanding balance would carry 8% interest charge. Ulul-Nono was supposed to have 44,000 coconut trees on it, but George Hill, whom I sent to manage the plantation made a round of the trees and found a shortage of 11,000 trees. I immediately made a claim against the Custodian for a refund and a reduction of the purchase price, but he referred me to a clause in the agreement which stated "that the Custodian would not be responsible for any shortage of palms etc.". The Custodian was run by the Commonwealth Treasury, so that my claim was actually against the Commonwealth Government. I made several trips to Canberra and put my case before several influential men who all agreed I had a good case. I had volumes of correspondence with the Custodian and Members of Parliament, but I always seemed to run up against a brick wall. When I bought the plantation I signed the contract which was drawn up by Bill Thomas, who was then the delegate for the Custodian. Later he became Custodian and eventually Secretary to the Commonwealth Treasury. At one stage the delegate was sympathetic and forwarded my appeal on to the Custodian. By this time Thomas was Custodian and promptly knocked my appeal back. On another occasion I got as far as the Custodian, who sent my appeal on to the Treasury and recommended compensation, but by this time Thomas was the big noise in the Treasury and again dismissed the appeal. My first claim against the custodian was in 1928, but it was not until about 1956 that the Commonwealth Government settled my claim. I engaged Eric Miller Q.C. at £100 per day and a day was set down for hearing in the High Court, but the morning of the day the case was to be heard, the Government solicitor decided to settle out of court. I received £5,500 compensation. It had been a long fight. I eventually sold Ulul-Nono to Harry Croyden of Rabaul in 1968.

..... to be continued

What is a Senior Citizen?

A Senior Citizen is someone who was around before the pill and the population explosion. They were here before television, penicillin, antibiotics and microwave ovens, frozen food, radar and credit cards.

Time-sharing meant togetherness - not a holiday apartment. Hardware was hardware and software wasn't even a word. Before men had long hair and earrings, and being stoned meant having rocks thrown at you.

Senior Citizens were before yoghurt, the 40 hour week, and the minimum wage. They got married before they lived together - how quaint can one be? Closets were for clothes - not for coming out of; gay meant merry; and aids were for assisting.

Senior Citizens were before pizza, McDonalds, instant coffee and decaffeinated anything. They thought that fast food was what you ate during Lent. They were before FM radio, compact discs, word processors, and the post punk period. Senior Citizens remember the days when cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass was for mowing and pot was something you cooked in. If you asked a Senior Citizen to explain DSW, CIA, UFO, ET, MOW, Ms, and IUD, they'd say it was alphabet soup.

We must congratulate today's Senior Citizens. They are indeed a hardy bunch when you consider how the world has changed and the adjustments they've had to make.

GOD BLESS ALL SENIOR CITIZENS

