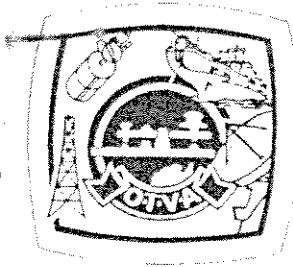


Editor: Jim Anderson



Newsletter

Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association (Australia)

OTVA Website <http://www.amaze.net.au/~colister>

ISN 1322- 1906

Volume VII Part 1 Page 11.

**OTVA (NSW) .
NOTICE OF 1999 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.**

Members are advised that the 1999 Annual General Meeting of the Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association (NSW) will be held at the CTA Club, Cnr Castlereagh St and Martin Place, Sydney commencing at 12 noon on Friday, 18th June, 1999

Election of officers will take place at this meeting and you are reminded that the present committee stands as follows:-

Tom Barker, President.

Bernie White, Secretary/Treasurer,

The committee comprises the following members:-

Jim Anderson, Henry Cranfield, Alf Colludon, Eamonn Fitzpatrick, Pam Helps, Alan Hennessy, Ray Hookway, Fred Kannard, Keith McCredde, Laurie McIlree and Peter Roberts.

Members are asked to nominate for positions on the committee as we now have a good working committee but new members with new ideas are always welcome so kindly nominate at the meeting and help us out if you happen to have the time to spare.

Oscar

Tango

Victor

Alpha

With our small group functions catering is a problem and, as we have lost financially at our recent gatherings, it has been decided that should you advise us that you are coming to future functions and fail to come along without notifying us of your inability to attend within 24 hours of commencement of the function; we will be obliged to charge you the catering cost involved. Unfortunately we have to nominate in advance the number of members attending these functions and pay the charge accordingly whether or not the full number of members notified attend the function. So please help us to help you in future and keep those RSVP's going.

For this particular function your RSVP contacts are:-

Keith McCredden (9342 0009) work.

Eamonn Fitzpatrick (9792 1791) work.

VALE- DAVE REYNOLDS.

Dave commenced with OTC as a HF Radio Technician at Fiskville and was one of the first OTC staff members to be trained in Satellite Communications in 1966. His previous Navy experience proved very handy as he had knowledge of the plant equipment, particularly the complex cryogenics essential to low noise receivers. In 1968 Dave moved to Moree SES to assist with the opening up of Australia's first international commercial traffic via satellite. During that time he was involved in setting up a national link between Perth and Sydney. This was the first national satellite link anywhere in the world. Dave retired from Moree on health grounds about the time the station closed in 1988 and moved to Brisbane. Unfortunately Dave suffered from a serious illness in later years and passed away recently in a home in Brisbane. The OTVA Committee offer their sincere sympathies to Dave's family at this sad time in their lives.

VALE - RON FLOOD.

Ron Flood died suddenly on Friday, 7th May, 1999 at his house in Spain. Ron had retired from MCI WorldCom in March, 1999, after a lifelong career in international telecommunications. He commenced his career as a cadet engineer with OTC in 1954, where he and Graham Gosewinckel were the first cadets employed by OTC, to work on the upgrade of the radio facilities at Doonside and Bringelly for the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. Ron graduated from the University of Sydney and his career in OTC progressed, mainly in the Operations Branch, where he was Deputy Director to the late Edgar Appleton for many years. Ron experienced personal tragedy when his first wife Cynthia, died at an early age, in the 1960's, leaving Ron to care for three young daughters. Later, Ron met and married his second wife, Barbara, who had lost her first husband in equally tragic circumstances, leaving her with three young sons. Ron and Barbara would sometimes refer to their family as the "Brady Bunch". After Ron's retirement from OTC, he worked for a time as a consultant

with Singapore Telecom and then as President of MCI Australia, which position he held until his recent retirement. We offer our deepest sympathy to Barbara and all of Ron's family. It is presently anticipated that Ron's funeral is set down for Friday, 21st May, 1999 at the Palmdale Cemetery near Gosford on the Central Coast.

We have also heard of the recent sad passing of Barry Henson and Alan Cupit and notes on these gentlemen will be included in our next newsletter.

FANNING ISLAND RAID.

KEN MULLEN's story on the "Nurnberg" raid on Fanning Island was most interesting. Regarding photographs of the raid, we have a photoalbum on /fanning Island , including some on the raid and damage in the OTC archives. Some may be interested in the article from Ken which follows:-

FURTHER ON THE GILBERT AND ELLICE ISLANDS.

KEN MULLEN, (may his tribe increase) sent us a note that pursuant to the article on the Fanning Island raid he received a response from a WA chap who wanted to include it in his memorabilia. His name is LIONEL ALLEN who spent a couple of years at Cocos with DCA and has embarked on a project to collate all written material on the islands and transfer it to CD ROM. If anyone can help this fellow then read his request at another point in this newsletter.

Note:-

You know the Vets have been going now since the early 1970's and its little snipbits like this that keep the newsletter going so keep them coming through to Jim Anderson and let him do the rest. hww

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK by Will Whyte.

When Optus was formed in 1992, many saw a company without any history and lamented as the good old days came to an end. At the time, Optus entered a regulatory climate established by the government to ensure new competitors would survive to compete vigorously with the dominant monopoly. In return, Optus had to meet very strict milestones for the development of its network and the launch of competitive services.

Optus was required to meet industry development criteria, which mandated high levels of Australian content in expenditure, commitments to research and development, training and employment.

Seven years later, Optus has one of the world's most diverse carrier networks including optical fibre transmission systems, broad band coaxial transmission systems, GSM mobile phone, local telephony, internet as well as owning and operating Australia's domestic satellite network.

Optus now employs over five thousand staff, who enjoy extensive technical and business training. The Optus Technology Centre at Lidcombe boasts a huge commitment to technical research and training with switching and transmission labs and high tech training rooms. Optus sponsor Australia's youth through awards and cadetships, the Arts through various festivals and displays, Australia's environment through the CSIRO and Greening Australia to name just a few areas. We take pleasure in being a sponsor of the Starlight Children's Foundation, an organisation granting wishes for sick kids.

You may of noticed that Optus' full name is Cable & Wireless Optus. We are part of the Cable & Wireless family of companies spread around the world. This parentage gives the "new kid on the block" strong links with the earliest of Australia's overseas telecommunications networks. A little recap on our history, on which I may stand corrected :-

In 1870, John Pender formed the British Australian Telegraph Company to lay a cable from Singapore to Australia. This company was amalgamated with two others, the British Indian Extension and the China Submarine to form the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company, (E.E.A.& C.) in 1873. It was this company, combined with Eastern, that formed the core of the telegraph empire established by John Pender. The first major project undertaken was the laying of a cable from Australia to New Zealand in 1876. The company remained in existence until 1974 when a joint company called Eastern Telecommunications Philippines Inc. was formed by Cable Wireless who took over the assets of E.E.A.& C.

The first cable linking Canada with New Zealand was opened in 1902, 15 years after the presentation of the idea at Queen Victoria's

Jubilee Conference in 1877. In 1929 the cables of the Pacific Cable Board came under the ownership of Imperial and International Communications Limited.

The Beam Wireless Service between the UK and Australia had commenced in 1927. This service also became part of Imperial and International Communications in 1929, with AWA continuing as the operating company.

In 1934, Imperial and International Communications, formerly the Eastern Telegraph Company, became Cable & Wireless to reflect the services offered without reference to the Empire.

In 1942, Australia and New Zealand put forward a national communications scheme which would remove control of communications operations from Cable & Wireless. At the 1945 Canberra Conference, proposals were made for Commonwealth countries to operate communications independently, with central Commonwealth control. In the same year at the Imperial Communications Conference, the Canberra proposals were unsuccessfully opposed by Cable & Wireless, and in 1947 the Overseas Telecommunications Commission (Australia) was formed to take over all Australian operations from Cable & Wireless and AWA.

From the 1960's to the 1980's Cable & Wireless' involvement with Australia focused on major international coaxial cable projects such as COMPAC, SEACOM, and ANZCAN. Since that time the company has grown to have a presence in over 50 countries, has the world's largest fleet of cable ships, (10), and owns one twelfth of the world's undersea cables.

INVITATION TO VISIT THE CABLE & WIRELESS OPTUS SYDNEY TECHNICAL CENTRE.

QTVA Members who would like a tour of a modern telecommunications centre are welcome to visit the C&W Optus STC on :-

Wednesday, July 7th, 1999 commencing at 9.30am.

The tour will be followed by Morning Tea.

The address is:- 65 Epsom Rd, ROSEBERY 2018.

Directions- UBD Map 19, Ref. J9. Epsom Rd at the corner of Rosebery Avenue.

Street parking is generally available in the surrounding area.

Bus route 343 has a stop opposite South Sydney Hospital and requires a short walk to Epsom Rd, a left turn into Epsom Rd, and another 400 metres to the Optus building.

CABLE DISCOVERIES.

Recently we received correspondence from Mr Glenn Blaxland, (IV), a lineage descendant of the famous explorer. Glenn is located at La Perouse and is extremely interested in the area especially its history and is attached to the La Perouse Cable Station Museum.

During a stroll along Fisherman's Beach a few months ago Glenn found what appeared to be an old piece of cable with the assumption that it could be a section of the old LaPerouse/New Zealand cable. In view of this fact Glenn invited our President to view the section and probably confirm that indeed the section was a piece of the original cable.

Our President, Tom Barker, was unavailable to attend on the day invited and hence two other veterans attended and were made very welcome. The day of the invitation coincided with LaPerouse Day and the Vets were present at the ceremony held at the LaPerouse Memorial.

Later Glenn handed over the piece of cable for inspection and identification by the OTVA. Consequently our cable men were consulted without definite recognition of the cable section and a letter was sent off to Cable Makers Australia, Liverpool, (NSW), for some assistance from their cable engineers. At the date of this newsletter we have had no reply from the firm.

Subsequent to the above, Glenn Blaxland has again approached us with the information that he has uncovered further pieces of old cable which bears a greater resemblance to an old cable than that previous presented to OTVA.

The original piece received by the OTVA was a piece of piping of 18 inches in length bound by manila rope, insulated with a tar-like substance but without any centre section. We could not identify it as a piece of cable because of the lack of centre-piece. The core was hollow.

Glenn's new discovery has a centrepiece and he has invited our President to view the material at the LaPerouse Museum when convenient and Tom will no doubt report on his findings in a later newsletter.

From the Secretary's Desk.

Members are reminded that their annual subscriptions of \$10.00 per annum are now due and we look forward to those early remittances.

Kindly forward all subscriptions to Laurie McIlree who will issue you with a receipt. These receipts will be forwarded to you at a later date when the next Newsletter is sent to your address.

The Annual General Meeting is upon us again and the perennial question of which members will form the committee comes to mind. In this regard members are sincerely requested to consider, either applying to be on the committee or, to offer help in some way in an effort to keep the OTVA Group together ensuring that we have an ongoing association for future years.

We have lost the services of two extremely good committee people in recent months with Pam Helps entering semi-retirement prior to leaving Telstra and Mick Wood going north to become a bananalander. In addition, Peter Roberts, who has always been a willing and helpful committeeman has also recently retired from Telstra.

Our Editor is still seeking stories from that wealth of experience contained in the memories of our Members and would dearly like to receive more submissions for inclusion in the Newsletter. Don't let Jim down – send him a postcard a mile long with your story/stories.

From the Derek Walker, WA Branch.

Two WA Veteraas recently celebrated their 90th birthdays, PAT SYKES, on (appropriately) St Patrick's Day, and OTVA (WA) President, FRED JAMES, just two days earlier on the Ides of March, the 15th.

Pat is now quite a chipper as he used to be whilst Fred is as busy as ever, in fact even more so as he and his wife have recently moved into a villa in Bicton, having moved from their long-standing residence in Applecross. Incidentally, by coincidence their new villa is in the same complex of units as Pat.

At the time of writing Fred was still going through the throes of sorting out the packing cases involved in the transfer.

As well as Derek and his WA veterans we extend our congratulations to both Pat and Fred on reaching such a milestone.

CALLING ALL COCOS ISLAND VETS.

We recently received the following from Lionel Allen who says,

‘ Now living in Western Australia, I worked on West Cocos Island during 1962 and 1963 as a senior technical officer with the Department of Civil Aviation. Now retired, I have embarked on a project to collate all written and photographic material on the Cocos-Keeling Islands and produce it on CD ROM. The aim is to provide a pointer to research material for future students or simply some good armchair travelling. In CD format this material should last another 100 years, will occupy little shelf space, and make reprints readily available.

The working title of the project is “The Cocos-Keeling Islands – an Information Review”

To date Ken Mullen has generously allowed photographs, maps, etc, and allowed me to scan his books, and the text is now on CD together with material gathered.

Similarly, I have received permission to scan three other books and a thesis by Robert Linford, a former Administrator of Cocos.

It is also my hope that the last 'King' of Cocos, John Clunies-Ross will consent to the publication of his family history but he resolutely refuses to be drawn on the subject. However, I continue to press him.

So if there are any veterans out there who retain worthwhile experience of Cocos-Keeling such as written accounts, photographs, reminiscences – please let me know as I undertake to reply to all correspondents and would be most grateful for additional input.”

Lionel may be contacted at 80 Saw Avenue,
ROCKINGHAM WA 6168

OUR MAN IN YEPPOON by QP

DES Woods reports that he has now settled in and living in grand style in Yeppoon. Yeppoon is in that part of “beautiful one day, perfect the next’ Queensland, about 40 miles from Rockhampton. It is a beautiful coastal town where Des can sit on the balcony of his two-storey mansion and see North Keppel Island. He says he has a guest room but it is not clear if he is taking boarders or just tourists- maybe a B & B. (Ando would go but he hasn’t got a Japanese passport.)

Up to now Des has had a perk with his daughter, Bev, living on Lord Howe Island where he always spent any spare time living it up and relaxing. Bev has now moved to a 25 acre property in Yeppoon so Des now finds that most of his spare time is taken up in fencing, jackerooing and herding 40 or so goats. Bev has always had a great love for horses and is now a fully-qualified veterinarian. The granddaughter is a member of a pony club.

It all sounds great. Irene has had her eyes on a paradise like this for many years, and has been nagging Des for some time to move.

The Woods can be found at 32 Strow Street Yeppoon but it would be wise for intending visitors to ring first on (07) 49391461 in case he is out on the farm with the goats.

Editor’s Note – What QP didn’t tell you was that the great goatherder had fractured his wrist whilst tending the goats’ needs and it is taking a fair while to mend, which just goes to show you that city slickers don’t always make the best jackeroos. If you do go out to see Des on the goat farm he is easily distinguished – he’s the one wearing the shirt.