



# Newsletter

**Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association**  
Registered Address PO Box 8, Georges Hall, NSW 2198

**Tom Barker, President**  
6 Rackham Crescent, Burrill Lake NSW 2539  
Telephone. 4455 1403  
Email: [tombarker@shoal.net.au](mailto:tombarker@shoal.net.au)

**Bernie White, Secretary**  
335 The Round Drive, Avoca Beach NSW 2251  
Telephone & Fax 4381 2405  
E-mail : [evenbern@bigpond.com](mailto:evenbern@bigpond.com)

**Allan Hennessy, Data Records**  
38 Cairns Street, Riverwood NSW 2210  
Telephone. 9534 2237  
Email: [allanrh@ozemail.com.au](mailto:allanrh@ozemail.com.au)

**Laurie, McIlree, Subscriptions**  
Telephone. 9339 6923  
C/ Telstra  
7/363 Oxford Street, Paddington 2021  
Email : [Laurie.McIlree@team.telstra.com](mailto:Laurie.McIlree@team.telstra.com)

**Fred Kannard, Applications**  
23 Lyne Road Cheltenham 2119  
Telephone. 9342 4377  
Email : [fred.kannard@cwo.com.au](mailto:fred.kannard@cwo.com.au)

**David Charrett, Website**  
1 Maitland Street, Killara NSW 2071  
Telephone. 9418 1361  
Email: [charrett@mpx.com.au](mailto:charrett@mpx.com.au)

**Ray Hookway, Archives**  
9/38 Cleand Road, Artarmon 2064  
Telephone. 9411 1873  
Email: [raymond@ozemail.com.au](mailto:raymond@ozemail.com.au)

**Henry Cranfield, Editor**  
26 Weston Avenue, Narwee 2209  
Telephone. 9534 1526

**Keith McCredden, Functions**  
Telephone. 9342 0009 (Bus)  
**Eamonn Fitzpatrick, Subscriptions**  
Telephone. 9792 1791 (Bus)

“Our “ WEB ADDRESS” is  
<http://www.amaze.net.au/~colister>

**Editor Henry Cranfield**  
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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (New South Wales )

Members are advised that the Annual General Meeting of the Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association will be held at the Commercial Travellers Club, Martin Place, Sydney on Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2000 at 12:30pm. Members are reminded that all official positions fall vacant on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2000 and although present committee have signified that they will be willing to stand other members desirous of nominating for a position should arrange nomination prior to Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2000 as nominations close with the Secretary on that date.

### RSVP by 19<sup>th</sup> June 2000 to:

Keith McCredden	9342 0009
Laurie McIlree	9339 6923
Eamonn Fitzpatrick	9792 1791

All these are work numbers.

### Victorian Annual General Meeting.

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2000

See details later in Newsletter.

**FEES ARE DUE - KINDLY FORWARD TO LAURIE MCILLREE. (\$10)**

Check your subs expiry date on your envelope.

*Vale* - Roland Lane, Standly Silver, Ron Knightley  
Sir George Lush and Fred Reeve

*Current Issue:* Some details on Social Service Benefits & the New Tax System.

? ? ? ? ••• ? • ?  
Oscar Tango Victor Alpha

**SOCIAL SECURITY and our New GST.**  
Bernie White.

The best way to introduce this subject is possibly to inform you that not only is a new tax -GST- being introduced but a whole new tax system is now showing its ugly head for better or for worse.

Firstly taxation rates will change as from the 1st July, 2000 and these are noted below for your information:-

Taxable Income	% Tax Rate
\$0 -- \$6000.00	0
\$6001 -- \$20000	17
\$20001 -- \$50000	30
\$50001 -- \$60000	42
\$60001 +	47

\* In addition a low income rebate of up to \$150 continues to apply.

**THE NEW TAX SYSTEM.**

This is called a PAY AS YOU GO system and will basically simplify the tax system as we now know it. It will supplant the old systems such as Pay As You Earn (Group Tax), Prescribed Payments System (PPS), Reportable Payments System (RPS) and Withholding Tax. This will not affect a person who is receiving salary or wages as they will still have their income tax deducted on a weekly/monthly basis by their employer.

PROVISIONAL TAX as we know it will be supplanted by the new PAYG System so any of you in this category will need to talk to your accountants regarding the matter and your present standing -- should you have any Provisional Tax not yet accounted for.

I will not enter into discussion here on what taxes and impost duties will be reduced after 1ST July, 2000 but you can assume that prices- say on motor vehicles- which should reduce by at least 10% - will remain static or increase without any great price control being exercised. After all we are looking at a free trading economy in this Country.

For those of you who are running businesses it is best that you register for an ABN number otherwise your efforts may be taxed at a rate of 48.5% on your invoiced amounts. To avoid this catastrophe you will need to quote your

ABN on your invoice/billings and denote the amount of GST payable on that billing.

Reporting your financial activities per medium of the new Business Activities Statement means more attention to detail on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. Remember now that when these statements are submitted to the Australian Tax Office they have to be accompanied by a cheque for your income tax and GST assessed at that date. In business, taxation is now to be an ongoing thing, rather than the old - end of the year- approach. Hence no Provisional Tax imposition.

The main thing to consider here is that your cash flow will need to be budgeted more carefully to cater for these more frequent outlays for the benefit of the new tax system.

Read all you can on the GST and hopefully you may eventually see the light as present publications can be confusing to say the least. However whether we like it or not -- GST IS HERE TO STAY.

**SOCIAL SECURITY.**

Our system of Social Security has always intrigued me to the extent that residents who have paid taxes- sometimes in excess of 50 years- do not qualify for a pension or pension benefits. Being a self-funded retiree has its disadvantages. This is definitely discriminatory when you consider the benefits available to those less financially privileged following retirement from the work force.

When in business my approach was always to advise clients to apply for Social Security directly to the Department of Social Security, even though people may personally think, - usually prompted by well-meaning and unknowing friends-, that they are not entitled to a pension or pension benefits. This assumption has proven wrong in many cases.

Introduction of the new tax system has brought changes to Social Security also and some of these changes could place self-funded superannuated Vets in a more beneficial light where the Social Security System is concerned.

Pensions and allowances will increase by 4% as from 1st July,2000

With Social Security you may well know that there are either one or two tests that the Department use to ascertain whether or not a pension or benefits are payable and these are:- **Income.**

Do you realise that a combined income for a married couple of \$45000 p.a will attract a small pension approximating \$84.00 per fortnight. Some of you may be interested in this aspect of the Social Security Scheme. Pensions benefits diminish to zero if your combined income is in excess of \$47177.00 p.a For income assessment the Scheme uses the following Deeming Rate System.

Deeming rates on interest earned will change and will be deemed to attract:-  
3.5% on amounts less than \$32000  
5.5% on amounts in excess of \$32000

#### **Assets.**

The second leg, or alternative test, is the assets test.

Remember that your own principal residence is exempt from this calculation.

Assuming that you all own your own homes the combined assets upper limit is \$407000.

This means that if your Social Security assessment is based on your Assets then if your assets, investments, holiday cottages, cars and furniture are less than this amount, you could be in the running to receive at least some benefit.

Of course even if you get at least some very small benefit from the Social Security Scheme there are still taxation advantages and Commonwealth health cards entitling you to various other benefits that may have eluded you in the past.

When you consider all of this information allow me to suggest to you that action in this matter is entirely your affair.

A word of warning- do not trust your own or your friends instincts- go directly to the Department of Social Security or Veterans Affairs with all your personal income and asset details and let them decide the matter for you.

#### **BONUSES FOR OLDER AUSTRALIANS.**

These bonuses are one-off tax free lump sum payments to compensate older Australians for

the loss of purchasing power from the introduction of GST. There are two bonus payments and these are:-

**Aged Persons Savings Bonus (APSB) & Self Funded Retirees Supplementary Bonus (SFRSB)**

APSB with a maximum payment of \$1000 is available to resident aged persons whose annual retirement income is less than \$30000 and have income from savings and investments.

#### **Group 1**

SFRSB with a maximum payment of \$2000 is available to resident persons aged 55 and over who do not receive DSS or DVA pensions, have a retirement income of less than \$30000 and do not receive more than \$1000 in annual business and wages income.

#### **Group 2**

SFRSB - \$2000 as above- for persons aged 65 for men and 61.5 for women with no DSS or DVA pensions, with an annual retirement income of less than \$30000 and do not receive more than \$1000 in annual business and wages income.

#### **CLAIMING FOR BONUS.**

You will claim your bonus when you lodge your income tax return for 1999/2000.

If you do not lodge a tax return then you must claim your bonus through your local Department of Social Security or Veterans Affairs office.

Your individual bonus payments will be apportioned depending on the amount of your annual retirement income and your savings\investment income.

An example is shown below:-.

If your annual retirement income is say \$23000 and your saving/investment income is \$700 then the equation is :-

$\$30000 - \$23000$  divided by  $\$10000$  equals 7 tenths.

Take  $7/10$ s of  $\$700 = \$490$

The bonus payment is thus  $\$490.00$

NOTE -- your wife or partner may also be eligible for these bonus

payments.---- REMEMBER IT PAYS TO APPLY.

**POWER OF ATTORNEY.**

Did you hear about the case where a retired couple were living quite nicely together until the wife took very sick. For some reason the authorities were called in and they decided that the wife was too ill to be looked after by her husband and subsequently settled her into a nursing home. This event virtually meant that the wife became the responsibility of the State. Being of moderate finances all these couple owned of value was their own home .

Now, as you know, nursing homes cost money and she being a liability of the State, someone had to pay the nursing home fees.

At this juncture the Protective Services Commission comes into play and were responsible for the costs involved in looking after the wife in a nursing home. Government monies are not available in some of these cases to assist the sick and elderly. Consequently the couples home was completely taken over by the Commission who promptly sold it and used the proceeds to fund a trust fund on behalf of the wife.

The end of this story is rather sad as the husband was virtually placed on the street simply because neither he nor his wife had sanctioned a power of attorney to some caring relative or friend beforehand.

So beware --- see your solicitor..

**DISCLAIMER -- details of the GST and new DSS or DVA payments recorded here are quoted from the first draft from the ATO and the DSS and maybe changed or altered even before the 1st July, 2000 commencement date.**

Hope this screed gives you some food for thought.

Cheers for now. Hi Charlie.

The Following information from the Victorian Division is submitted by Robert Hall.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 43<sup>RD</sup>.  
MONDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2000  
12 NOON TO 3PM  
CAE CITY CONFERENCE CENTRE**

**L2A 256 FLINDERS STREET  
MELBOURNE.**

Interstate Visitors Welcome.

Contact: Robert Hall Phone. 03 95116969

**Vale.**

**ROWLAND LINLEY LANE**

**1. 11. 1907 --- 27. 2. 2000**

Roley died at the age of 92 on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2000 and will be much missed by his family.

He had worked for 48 years in the communication industry. He joined Eastern Extension Cable Co. In September 1924 after completing his senior year at Gawler High School in South Australia.

He did his telegraph training through the cable probation training school between 1924 and 1926.

Adelaide was his home station but he served in Darwin from 1930 to 1932 and back to Adelaide till 1937. He then went to Sydney where he worked till 1938.

In 1940 he volunteered to go to Darwin which was the first line of defence during the second world war. He served there until 1942 and was there when the Japanese began to bomb Darwin in February 1942. His account of the first air raid on Darwin is documented in the book "The thin red lines" by Charles Graves. This book was commissioned by Cable & Wireless to commemorate their service to the allied nations in the war.

After his evacuation to Melbourne in 1942 he served with Eastern Extension Cable Company until joining OTC (A) on 1/4/50 as Operator C.O.R. Melbourne on a salary of 565 pounds p.a. Roy was promoted to Sen. Telegraphs 12/11/56 then Traffic Officer 24/11/50 then Area Controller and M.O.R. Shift Controller

until his retirement on the 31/10/1972. On his retirement he was awarded the Imperial Service Medal by the Queen for meritorious service to the Commonwealth and in 1999 he received the Civilian Service medal for his wartime service in Darwin.

Rowley was always a keen sportsman and had trophies for his performances in football, golf, tennis and in his latter years bowls winning his last trophy for a singles bowls tournament in Queensland at the age of 82.

Rowley married in 1947 and with his wife Pearl (Pettsee) raised two children: John, now a doctor with the Australian Medical Service lives with his family in Victoria and Anita who works in the music industry and lives in Europe with her family.

Pearl continues to live in the family home at 21 Bella Vista Road Glen Iris Vic. 3146.

Ph. 03 9885 1512

The funeral; was well attended and included former workmates Geoff Whitmore, Jim Kennedy, Page Barrow, Sam and Audrey Bright.

Vale.

STANDLY SCHLAST SILVER.

27. 6. 1925 -- 21. 4. 2000

It has been reported by Geoff Whitmore that Stan Silver has been found dead in his home at Jacobs Well Queensland.

Stan transferred to Melbourne from being MANAGER Port Moresby in early 1975 ??? to take up a position of Traffic Superintendent M.O.R. until his retirement in 1988/89. ??

Stan and his wife Lona moved to Queensland in retirement, Lona passed away a few years ago. We convey our sincere condolences to the family.

Vale.

SIR GEORGE HERMSAN LUSH Kt., Q.C.

Passed away on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2000 in his 88<sup>th</sup> year.

Sir George was a Commissioner of O.T.C.(A) (I am unable to confirm for what period at this time but he was a Commissioner in 1961 to 1963.)

Report on Mark Wilton.

Mr Wilton was the second OTC person I met in Feb' 57 he was the Staff Officer at Queen Street Melbourne.

Mark will be 95 on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2000, he still lives and looks after himself at home although not very well. He has various health problems, one being a recent hip replacement and he has spent the last two Xmas's in hospital, he still smokes and enjoys a whisky or two and I hope my thoughts and views on current day events are just as good at his age ..

Robert Hall.

### Greetings from VETERAN CABLEMENS ASSOCIATION (NZ)

We are all aware of changes which affect groups such as ours, but this is an attempt to maintain the connection we have had with OTVA for many years. We thank Pam Helps and Bernie White for their assistance in this regard. Grant, our NZ group is specifically for Veteran Cablemen and almost exclusively for ex-Cable & Wireless Ltd employees and their predecessors. But your accounts of Beam Radio days or other earlier activities are all of interest to the Kiwis.

VCA Auckland, was formed 44 years ago by the late - and well respected- Bill Craig in 1955. He was the NZ TELCOM team leader 1945-46. He had been the last C & W Station Manager, Auckland, before the transfer to NZ Government. He was determined to enable ex-staff to keep contact. The group is now understandable smaller, membership of 25 only. It included men who were ex-Eastern, ex-Extension and ex Pacific Cable Board, as well as ex-C&W. It includes the remainder of those who passed through "Class of '44" at Auckland C&W training school, and who served with C&W TELCOM in South East Asia. That particular service was in conjunction with "Class of '44" from Adelaide. One of that latter group was the late Randy Payne, known to OTVA during his days as General Manager OTC.

The group meets annually in Auckland, but maintains touch throughout the year, under the

Chairman David Thompson and Secretary John Walker. In 1998 the spouses of members

held their own separate luncheon function and renewed friendships formed over the years.

Larger reunion gatherings have been held from time to time. More recently we have been joined by our Australian Class of '44 TELCOM colleagues - namely Sydney 1985, Auckland 1988, Bay of Island NZ 1994, Singapore 1995 (with UK colleagues) , and latterly in Adelaide Oct, 1998.

Our oldest member is A.G. Miller (Sandy) now aged 99 and living in Hamilton City. Allen joined Pacific Cable Board (the predecessor of C&W in this area) in 1916. He served mainly in Auckland, Suva and for two and half years on Fanning Island. This relay cable station was a mere atoll, about 500 miles south west of Hawaii in the Line Islands group. Technology has by-passed this island with modern cables. This island is reported as unoccupied these days. Sandy can still talk with enthusiasm of cable-code ink writers, Kleinschmidt keyboard perforators, printers and of "balancing the cable". A true gentleman held in high regard and who still attends our functions in Auckland. He retired in 1954. He looks forward to celebrating the millennium which will bring him into his third century!

Two other members are also in their 90's and we shall report on them another time.

VCA (NZ) sends warm regards to all OTVA members, especially to all Adelaide 'Class of 44' friends.

Ray Connolly.

#### "DROPPING A WEE LINE"

I have come across correspondence from Mrs Judith E. Holland, who is, for those who don't know, the daughter of S. "Scotty" Hamilton, a well-known identity within the old OTC. Among many things she has advanced the idea that perhaps, one day, a small area of our publication could be set aside for veterans who are now scattered far and wide around Australia to record their whereabouts so that old friends can "drop a wee line" to one another. The idea is food for thought, but I have been in trouble for revealing the whereabouts of people who "wish to be alone"

so it is a matter which needs consideration by my publishing peers.

Judith, who has recently returned from Edinburgh, did send along an article which could be of interest in the vein of Tom Barkers "1971 Darwin Ding" and the article on Trevor Housley.

"I can clearly recall going down onto the beach below where the cairn is located and dedicated, and with my parents we located the cable end... We picked it up and could have followed it out to sea 'forever'."

Judith's article on the Darwin episode will be published in our next Newsletter

Henry Cranfield.

#### OTC'S FIRST 'WHITE NEW GUINEAN'.

Whilst finishing off the Madang Cable Station building, the painting contractor was nicknamed "Picasso" by the install staff because of the way they did things - dribble and daubs.

The colour scheme was white concrete block exterior, yellow doors, blacks gutters and steel work and aluminium on the roof.

On return from checking our incoming equipment from the wharf, on my arrival at the station the walls were a yellowy colour with the steelwork "Royal Blue". Picasso was summoned from the pub, shown the drawings and he admitted 'his blue'.

So more paints were bought the next morning and work to repaint began. At about 11.00 am one of the staff rushed into the office and said come to the door quickly and see own first 'white local' and there he was - white from top to toe in white enamel oil paint - with paint dripping everywhere.

The painting crew then dragged him behind the diesel room and proceeded to wash him down with turps!! Great screams when it got to his more private parts. We managed to stop them and wash him in warm soapy water but couldn't get it out of his scalp. He went around like it for weeks. One other aspect of the painting job was that Picasso failed to put the price of painting the roof in his quote so that was a bonus for us. Needless to say he went broke when a large "raintree" walked into the path of his "Datsun UTE" on a rainy night. ..

Henry Cranfield.