



Newsletter

Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association

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

Editor Henry Cranfield
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(October 2000)

Members are advised that our next social gathering will be the Christmas Function to be held at the Mandarin Club, Pitt Street, Sydney on Friday 24th November, 2000 commencing at 12 noon. The cost is \$25 per person.

The attention of ALL members is drawn to the insistence by the Mandarin Club that the Association pays for the number of meals booked. We remind all who book and fail to cancel prior to the event that they are financially liable for the cost of their meal. We also regret that unless a PRIOR booking is made NO arrangements can be made on the day..
So PLEASE! book and if unable to attend CANCEL your booking. There are no free meals..

RSVP by 20th November, 2000 to:

Keith McCredden 9342 0009 (W)
Laurie McIlree 9339 6923 (W)
Eamonn Fitzpatrick 9743 3806 (H)

MEMBERSHIP FEES.

KINDLY forward to;
LAURIE MCILLREE. (\$10 includes GST.)

Please check your subscription expiry date on your envelope. As an example 5/01 subs expire May 2001. No information line above your name indicates from our records your subscription has expired and this is the last newsletter you will receive.

Vale:

Phil Hay
Murray Ewan
Harold Jones
Vic Carboon

Current Issue:

Presidents Report.
SA. Branch AGM.
NSW AGM
International Colour Fax History.
1956 Melbourne Olympic Games
Portishead Radio closure.

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Oscar Tango Victor Alpha

Presidents Report

This 2000 Olympic year has been one of some significance for the OTVA. It seems we may have "turned the corner" in financial terms, so that the Vet's can be reasonably assured of a viable future, (and our treasurer might relax for a little while) as long as members continue to support the OTVA with their subscriptions. Our social programs are now well established and well supported and our OTVA committee members have settled into established work roles.

On the "down-side" we have not made a great deal of progress in our search for a solution to our legacy problem of how to secure the long-term security and protection of what remains of the OTC Archival collection.

However, be assured that we shall continue to seek a solution to this dilemma.

As those who attended the AGM in July, would be aware, the now-defunct OTC Provident Fund was finally wound up this year and the surviving membership very generously voted to make an ex-gratia payment of \$5,000 to the OTVA, in recognition of some assistance that OTVA members have given the fund, in tracing past members who were entitled to refunds of contributions. While we are extremely grateful to the OTC Provident Fund for this generous donation, it has to be recognised that this amount of money represents only about a one year budget for the OTVA and is not sufficient to enable us to embark upon any extravagant projects. What it does, however, is provide a "cushion" for our treasurer, so that he does not have to look twice in the till before writing a cheque for regular, administrative expenses.

In view of the above, your committee has decided to embark upon a campaign of recruitment and encouragement to those old colleagues of ours who have not yet taken the step of becoming financial members of the "Vets", to do so now.

We assure everybody that these contributions are not used to fund the functions held in Sydney, which members in other States cannot attend, but they are required to cover the expenses involved in administering our association.

We do need and appreciate all our members contributions.

Because of the problems caused in Sydney by the Olympics, we have decided not to hold our usual "Spring reunion" in September/ October, but to extend an invitation to all ex-OTC employees with fifteen years or more international experience, who are able to do so, to join us at our Christmas Reunion at the Mandarin Club, Sydney, at 12.00

noon on Friday, 24 November, 2000. This issue of the OTVA Newsletter will be distributed to as many of those old mates of ours for whom we can find addresses (using a bit of the OTC Provident Fund donation). To those old friends, we hope that you will enjoy receiving the OTVA Newsletter and that you will join us at the Christmas Reunion with your spouses/partners (or friends). We do require prior advice, however and we ask that you RSVP before Friday 17 November, to Keith McCredden on (02) 9342 0009 or

email : keith.mccredden@cwo.com.au

If you know of any old colleague who may not have received his copy of this issue of the Newsletter and who may be interested in attending our Christmas Reunion, please onpass this invitation.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish all Vet's and their families the compliments of the season and a happy, healthy and prosperous 2001....

Tom Barker.

South Australian Branch --Annual General Meeting --

The S.A. AGM was held on Thursday 25th May at the old McLarenVale pub in their dining room and attended by seven members and friends namely, President David Herbert, Sec/Treas Harry Stone, Dick Inwood, Ern Barrett, John McGregor, plus guests Harro Krause (owner and operator of the VIA CRS station & grounds) and Mike Kay. Apologies were received from Max Lang (family illness) and Bob Imrie who has been hospitalised for removal of a tumor on his neck. Ern Barrett was unable to attend Fred Reeve's service as he was also hospitalised suddenly that morning. Dick Inwood is holding well with his past health problem and is looking fit. The past President and Sec/Treas, David Herbert and Harry Stone were re-elected again for the ensuing year and the next Xmas gathering is set for the last Thursday in November 2000 at the same venue of McLaren Vale Pub - Noon onwards Fraternal greetings to all. Harry Stone.

New South Wales Branch -- Annual General Meeting .

The 44th NSW AGM was held at the Commercial Travellers Club, Martin Place, Sydney on Friday, 23rd June, 2000 at 12.30pm. There were 64 members present whose names are listed below;

Jim Anderson	Tom Barker
Ted Bastow	John Bennett
Hec Blemings	John Bragg
Brian Brennan	Peter Bull
David Charrett	Brian Collath
Henry Cranfield	Gordon Cupit
Brian Curran	Jim Davis
Geoff Day	Peter Dean
John Eades	Eamonn Fitzpatrick
Russel Fitzpatrick	Dennis Grant
Edgar Harcourt	Allan Hennessy
Ray Hookway	John Hughes
Fred Kannard	Ted Kearney
Col Kelly	Duyat LeVan
Robert Lewis	Tony Lowther
George Madren	Greg Martin
Noel Martin	Keith McCredden
Ben McGee	Laurie McIlree
Jim Nagy	Brian Nell
Maurie O'Connor	Geoff Oldman
Bob Pearson	Peter Phillips
Ray Pow	Bob Rawkins
David Richardson	Bill Sais
Michael Sais	Peter Skinner
Dave Smith	Dave Stimpson
Ann Taylor	Stuart Taylor
Ken Theaker	Gareth Thompson
Jim Tressider	Robin Tuckfield
Geoff Tyson	Cyril Vahtrick
Cliff Varcoe	Greg Waller
Allan Ward	Bernie White
Brian Woods	

Apologies were received from the following members:

Brian Callaghan	Bruce Collett
Bob Dean	Tony Ebert
Rob Emanuel	Brian Hoschke
David Izatt	George Maltby
Maurie Matthysz	John Moyers
Rob Padgett	Sam Pheiffer
Trevor Pike	Tony Richardson
Peter Roberts	Alex Robertson
Darryl Savage	Bob Swinney
Peter Warrilow	Will Whyte
Dave Wills	Len Wylde.

Tom Barker welcomed all members in attendance and passed a special vote of thanks to Maurice O'Connor and committee members for their assistance during the past year.

Tom also intimated that, whilst he is standing for re-election at this meeting it would probably be his last year as President.

Cyril Vahtrick again acted as Returning Officer and announced the following successful candidates for official positions.

Tom Barker, President

Bernie White, Treasurer.

Brian Nell, Secretary,

Committee Members:- Jim Anderson,

David Charrett, Henry Cranfield, Bob Dean,

Eamonn Fitzpatrick, Allan Hennessy,

Ray Hookway, Fred Kannard, Keith McCredden,

Laurie McIlree and Will Whyte.

Vales:- Gray MacDonald, Sandy Sandilands, Harold Jones, Norbert Pasqual, Roland Lane, Stan Silver, Ron Knightley, Fred Reeve, Sir George Lush, Richard Soulie, Fred Keen, Fred Hinds, Ron Schadel, E Pattison, Alan Ritchie, Charlie Swinney, Jack Doggett, Ian Catt and Frank Hall. A minutes silence was observed in tribute.

Constitution Tom Barker thanked Maurice O'Connor for his extensive research into our need to update the constitution and, perhaps, incorporate. Unfortunately the cost of incorporation is too prohibitive at present but we may have to amend the Constitution as it stands. There is no winding up clause in our present document.

Donation from OTC Provident Fund. It was moved by Col Kelly and seconded by John Eades that the OTVA accept the generous donation of \$5000 offered by the Provident Fund Members on the closure of that particular fund.

Motion approved by all present.

Archives. Whilst we treasure our historical archives they do not really belong to us being the property of Telstra. At this stage it seems that we are alone with our thoughts on these items as other organisations are not necessarily interested in the placement or disposal of the OTC Archives. We are still endeavouring to have archives secured for safekeeping and be made available for public display for future generations to enjoy or research.

Tom Barker closed the meeting at 1.30pm and all proceeded to enjoy the food and good cheer supplied by the CTA.

Vale:

Phil Hay. W.A. Veteran Phil Hay died on the 6th August 2000, aged 65. Phil joined the Coast Radio Service as a Radio Officer when he was 18 and served at Rockhampton and La Perouse [VIS] before leaving OTC to pursue a career in Real Estate for about 7 years. Returning to CRS in 1968, he served at Port Moresby and Sydney Radio before transferring to Perth Radio in 1981, retiring in 1993. Due to ill-health he had been unable to attend the W.A. Veterans reunions for several years. He left a widow, Helen, and a daughter Jennifer. [Our thanks to Derek Walker for the above.]

Murray Ewen. Murray served in a number of H.F Radio stations including Suva, Bringelly and Port Moresby. He also was at Paddington and Madang Cable stations. On retirement he moved to Noosa Heads in Queensland. He is survived by wife Joan and daughter Rosemary.

Harold Jones. Harold started work at "L.H. Lobers" the car dealers and joined the RAAF and trained in Melbourne with T.W. Thatcher. On discharge from the RAAF in 1946 he attended the "Marconi School" graduating with a 1st class ticket. He met his wife Wynne on a pontoon at Manly Pool in January 1947 and became engaged prior to transfer to Tarawa [Now Kirabati] with AWA. He joined OTC in 1956 and went to Lae PNG. He also served at Thursday Island and Townsville. He returned to Sydney Radio in 1967 retiring as Deputy Manager in 1989. He passed away on 26-3-2000 after a long illness.

Vic Carboon.

We have been advised of the recent passing of Vic. More details as they come to hand.

Ron Knightley. We advised of the passing of Ron in the last newsletter.. Cyril Vahtrick provided this additional information on Ron's career.

Firstly, there was another chapter to Ron's history before he joined OTC. After he left New Zealand, (I think) he spent a term down at Macquarie Island, working as the expedition cook. He was always a great snow lover and a keen photographer- his photos of Macquarie Island were particularly interesting.

Ron joined OTC as a Senior Engineer working in the Planning and Construction Section. He was involved with the introduction of the Telex service and also as OTC Project Engineer when our very first submarine cable repeater was installed off shore at Cottesloe on one of the Cocos Island telegraph cables.

He was promoted to Sectional Engineer and then participated as one of the OTC representatives in establishing the COMPAC cable terminal at Paddington.

After further submarine cable work on SEACOM, he was promoted to Supervising Engineer (Planning) and was a member of the OTC team concerned with planning for the introduction of Satellite services to Australia.

In the early days, not much was known about the possible interference to Telecom's domestic microwave systems which might arise from the very powerful satellite earth station transmitters. It was part of Ron's job to find suitable sites which would minimise potential interference to the satisfaction of Telecom. Ron picked the Moree and Ceduna sites.

Ron was also a member of the INTELSAT technical committee which established the original technical and operational specifications for the INTELSAT global public telecommunications system.

My recollections of Ron's subsequent activities (after the early 1970's) are hazy because I became more involved in overall management and did not have direct dealings with Ron after that.

Other News.

We wish to advise that Horrie McInnes is feeling fine again after a fall at home on the 11th July. He was found two days later and admitted to hospital with bad bruising but no broken bones. He returned home on the 26th.

For those who remember Gareth Davey and Bill Finlen we have some news from Gareth who is in business in Canberra.

"Hi again Allan. I recently went on a flying trip with a guy called Bill Finlen. Apparently he's ex-OTC and knew quite a few managers at Paddo when I was a trainee. Small world, isn't it? Not sure if he's eligible to be a Vet, but here's his website address if you want to see what he's up to now:"

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~billfinlen/2000.htm>

This edition of the Newsletter is being sent to over 600 financial and non-financial members of our Association . We hope those who are now unfinancial for one reason or another may reconsider and send their \$10 annual subs to Laurie McIllree (address on front sheet) to ensure the continued viability of our Association and Newsletter distribution.

Our editor is also in need of articles of general interest to include in the newsletter. Any information, brief as it may be, will be of interest. As an example; the impact modern technology on communication as we all use to know it .i.e. the old analogue 80 channel cable systems and their modern equivalents, or perhaps your interesting experiences in recent overseas postings. (.doc .txt. email, etc)
(Allan Hennessy)

International Colour Fax

The following article was originally published in the Telecommunications Journal of Australia. It was written by Graham Gosewinkle, in response to another item which appeared in an earlier edition of the TJA, referring to an unsubstantiated story which claimed that colour pictures had been transmitted from the UK to Australia in the days before equipment had been developed to facilitate colour fax transmissions. The TJA article (understandably) questioned the veracity of such a story.

Graham's response explains exactly how this historically significant event was achieved. We are grateful to Graham for giving us permission to reprint his article in the OTVA Newsletter.

(Tom Barker)

The Editor,

Telecommunications Journal of Australia.

I was interested to read your article on International Picturegrams in the recent edition of the *Telecommunications Journal* where it was noted that:

There are unconfirmed reports that history was made in 1946 when the first colour picturegram was transmitted from England to Australia, featuring the latest fashions by English designers (*how this could have been achieved remains a mystery as equipment capable of transmitting in colour was not adopted for some decades after this time*).

I can confirm that these reports are in fact true. I was a young technician in Melbourne at the time and operated the picturegram equipment.

It was achieved by transmitting three black and white pictures from London to Melbourne using the Beam Wireless Service. Each picture represented one of the three basic colours: red, blue and green.

The pictures were received on the original Marconi facsimile equipment which was installed in the early 1930's at the offices of the AWA Beam Wireless Service in Queen St, Melbourne.

The three pictures were sent to the Melbourne *Herald and Weekly Times* who overprinted them, restoring the three basic colours in their printing process.

The colour photograph was of a London model showing the latest dress designs. It was subsequently printed in (I think) the *Women's Weekly*.

Each of the three pictures took about 15 minutes to transmit, using Sub Carrier Frequency Modulation (SCFM); and since they were to be overprinted very high quality was required. It took two days to achieve the desired result, due to erratic radio conditions at the time.

Naturally the whole exercise was experimental but I believe a world first. Its aim was mainly to publicise the Beam Wireless Phototelegram Service.

Regards. Graham Gosewinkle

Olympic Games. by Gordon Cupit.

When Melbourne won the 1956 Olympic Games, it was to be the first Olympiad ever to be held outside Europe and North America, and the international telecommunication requirements were completely unknown;

At that time Australia did not have international TV nor Broadband coaxial cable, Optic Fibre cables or Satellite facilities. We had the old Pacific Cable, the old Indian Ocean cable and Beam Wireless Telegraphy, Telephone and Facsimile services together with Island and ship/shore radio.

All our services were running at full capacity with day to day traffic, which was fully realised during the 1954 Royal Tour.

Three developments saved the day, they being the opening of Doonside and Bringelly Transmitting and Receiving HF Radio stations, Rhombic aerial Systems and Teleprinter Error Detection.

These gave extra capacity and allowed for the operation of lease channels.

Unflappable Arthur Shepherd was put in charge of organising requirements and arranged for the use of Army, Airforce and Navy facilities.

During the period from 22nd November to the 8th of December we saw 9,408,254 words being sent over 22 leased channels which operated for 5,465 hours - 32,661 minutes of radio telephone communication - 285 hours of broadcasting on radio telephone channels - and 2,296 picturegram transmissions.

It was the first time ever of collaboration of major international news agencies responsible for reporting all events. A combined Olympic reporting Agency {CCRA) was set up by United Press of America, Associated Press, Agence France Press, AAP/Reuters, and Russia's TASS.

An amusing story by Ken Mullens appeared in the Newsletter of April 1994 telling us of the part played by Telegraphists working at the Games. Have you a story ?.

The statistics of the 2000 Games should be interesting.

From Gareth Thompson we received the following from Ex Merchant Navyman and expect it would be of interest to many of our members as it was to me.

' PORTISHEAD RADIO / GKB
The Final Broadcast By Ted Miles'

Portishead Radio, the largest coastal radio communication station in the world during the 1960's closed down at 1200z 30thApril, 2000. Starting at Portishead near Bristol in 1920 it communicated with both the Navy and Merchant Navy and in later years, commercial flying boats.

Technology has taken over, shown especially by the absence of human radio watch-keeping at sea.

To commemorate this, a special "cross band" communication event was arranged whereby Portishead Radio would transmit (using Morse code) on their normal commercial frequencies but would listen for calls to them on designated amateur frequencies.

This event took place on Saturday 29th April, 2000 from 0700 to 1900z (UTC) on H.F. Acknowledgment cards will be sent to those making contact. It is believed that 2000 made contact. The event closed with a message part of which reads 'let us remember all those who did not make it back to port both in war and peace time. Their log books can now be closed and they can go off watch as will Portishead Radio tomorrow. To all of them we say many thanks. We are now entering port and closing down. See you tomorrow for the last time. Thank you and goodbye. AR SK.'

Following this on the 30th at 1200z the final message was broadcast by Radiotelephone, Telex and CW (Morse code). It reads;

CQ DE GKB 2/4/5/6 THIS IS THE LAST BROADCAST FROM PORTISHEADRADIO FOR 81 YEARS WE HAVE SERVED THE MARITIME COMMUNITY. WE SAY THANK YOU FOR ALL THOSE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED AND USED OUR STATION. WE PAY TRIBUTE TO MARCONI WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE. HIS FIRST TRANSMISSIONS ACROSS WATER WERE MADE FROM NEARBY HERE AND SO STARTED THE RADIO ERA. AS THIS HISTORIC TIME COMES TO A CLOSE, THE MANAGER AND RADIO OFFICERS WISH YOU FAREWELL FROM PORTISHEAD GKB AR SK ***