NEWSLETTER

Our Autumn Social.

The Mandarin Club-Goulburn St. Sydney
(NB. Please note new Venue)
Friday 14th March 2003

Cost: $ 12.80 /Head. For a Buffet Lunch. *(Pay cashier at Buffet Table- Drinks at Bar.)*
Please RSVP by Friday 7/3/03 to:
Keith MeCredden. PH9958. 1092 *Email:* **kmccredden@optusnet.com.au**   Or
David Richardson PH 9487.1985 *Email:* **d~s~rich ardson@yahoo.com.au**

All subscription renewals ($10) to;
OTVA.
P0 Box 8 Georges Hall NSW 2198

A Note from the Acting -President..

It is due to my respect for Tom Barker that I have agreed to be A/g President of the Vets. Tom has filled this role very well over the past *5* years and his guidance will be missed. I would like to make it clear that I agreed to look after the position only until the Annual General Meeting which will be held on the 11 1th July 2003.
The Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway function was very successful. There were 50 people in attendance and we had a great time. It was good to have some younger people there who have joined the vets for the first time. The venue proved to be very suited to this type of function.
A number of colour pictures are now available on our Web Page. Check them out!
        www.otva.org

Plenty of undercover area, a kiosk for coffee or ice-cream and a very interesting walk along the memorial track. We will be using this location again in the future.
Tom Barker and Ernie Wan have both been in hospital recently and it was good to have them at the function and looking very well.
I would like to thank all those in attendance who made a contribution to the Memorial Trust fund for maintenance of the area. We donated $80.00, which was very well received by the Trust. I look forward to seeing many of you at the
function on March 14 th   *Keith McCredden*

A ,message from our Past President Tom Barker.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those many Veterans whose messages of comfort and support I have received during my recent health problems. They have been of immense encouragement to me during a very troublesome time.

As one who has always enjoyed remarkable health and whose only experience of hospitals, hitherto, was to visit others, less fortunate, this has been a new and sobering experience for me. I would also like to thank Keith McCredden for the gracious way in which he responded to my request, that he step into the President's chair, at least until the next AGM and, hopefully a bit longer than that. I know that I can count upon the OTVA Committee and membership to give Keith the same unstihting loyalty and support which I have enjoyed over the past five and a half years and I wish him every success in his new role.

1 would also like to take this opportunity to record my thanks to all members of the OTVA Committee, past and present, who have tirelessly worked with me in the task of maintaining the OTVA as a viable and vital association, over these recent years. Pam Helps, without whose support I could not have survived the first few months, Bernie White, Jimmy Anderson, Will Whyte, Keith McCredden, Fred Kannard, Allan Hennessy, Henry Cranfield, Laurie McIllree, David Charrett, Ray Hookway, Eamonn Fitzpatrick, Bob Dean, David Richardson, Bryan Nell and Jeff Hinwood, some of whom have their own, not inconsiderable health problems, have all contributed greatly to the successes which have been achieved over this period of the OTVA's recent history.

Many others, not members of the OTVA Committee have also given me great assistance, encouragement and advice during my time in the Presidents chair.

George Maltby, Gordon Cupit, Joe Collister, Edgar Harcourt, Cyril Vahtrick, Maurice O'Connnor, Gae Pincus, Mick Wood, Harry Stone, Jim Tressider, Derek Walker, Tony Farrugia, Jim Simpson and many others, too numerous to mention, deserve my eternal gratitude for their help.

The past few years have not been without their challenges and disappointments, but they have also been immensely rewarding for me. However, I could not, have maintained my enthusiasm for the task without the constant support of my wife, Fay, who might have expected these years to be a more relaxed time of our retirement.

I can never thank her enough for her personal assistance to me in this endeavour. It is very gratifying to vacate the chair with our Association in such good shape, both morally and financially and I am sure that the Vets will continue to go from strength to strength, in the future. This Association will continue to survive as long as its membership continues to value the kinship and camaraderie which comes from sharing the experience of working in a small and unique organisation engaged in an exciting industry, during a period in Australia's history which saw many remarkable changes.

On a personal note, I am assured that I shall make a complete recovery and although it may take some time for me to fully recover my strength, that I can look forward to enjoying many more pleasant reunions with my old mates in the Vets.

If I might be forgiven for concluding with a homily (humorous but serious):- If your GP suggests that you submit to a routine screening for bowel cancer, don't respond with ribald laughter, as I did. He may save your life.

Best wishes to all Veterans and their families for happiness, health and prosperity in the New Year and throughout 2003.

Tom Barker.

OTVA West Australia A GM

(Our thanks to Secretary! Treasurer Derk Walker for this item;)

The 28th West Australian AGM. Was held on 26th November 2002 at the Telstra Gnangara Communications Station.

President Des Kinnersley opened the meeting at 1 2.47PM

1. President Des welcomed W.A. Veterans Jim Bairstow, Cohn Benporath, Tore Boe, Ron Cocker, Jim Congdon, Paul Cooper, Barry Field, Kevin Hills, Derek Kaighin, Jim Keenan, Sean Leahy, Doug Mason, Tom McKnight, Barry O'Keefe, Val Parker, Bob Smallwood, Tom Swarbrick, Derek Walker, Graham Watts, Bernd Wendpaap and Barry Whittle.

2. Apologies for absence were received from Neil Attwill, Herb Farrar, Ron Fisher, Geoff Goddard, Fred James, Reg Jones, John Knoght, Derek Moore, Ray Parkinson, Rod Pernich, Roger Pugsley, George Rogers, Brent Schofield and Gerry Tacey.

3. The minutes of the 27th AGM were approved and signed as a true record.

4. The Hon Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement were approved and endorsed.

5. Election of Office Bearers: President Des Kinnersicy and Sec./Treasurer Dekek Walker were-elected unopposed.
6. Other Business: Fraternal Greetings were onpassed from Harry Stone in S.A. and Geoff Warner, Ex W.A but now long residents in the East.
7. The Next AGM will be on Tuesday 25th November 2003

The Meeting closed at 12.58 p.m.

Adelaide Radio (VIA) 90,h Anniversary Function

A commemorative barbecue luncheon, celebrating the opening of Adelaide Radio VIA on the 1st Oct 1912, was held in the station's building on 1st Oct 2002 by courtesy of the present owners Harrow & Yvonne Krause. Those present were Dave Herbert, Max & Virginia Smith, Max & Todd Lang, Em Barrett, (VK5EGB) Harry Stone (VK5EC), John & Irma McGregor, Dick & Annette Inwood, Paddy & Anne Wilkinson, Tony Van Lysdonk (VK5WC), Mike Kay & Harro (VK5HK) & XYL Yvonne (VK5YK) Krause. A barbecue lunch, featuring delicious locally produced Turkey steaks complemented by the last few remaining bottles of Port wine especially produced by the Pirramimma Vineyards (McLaren Vale) exclusively for the closing ceremonies of VIA Adelaide Radio in 1993. A minutes silence was observed for those who have become silent keys since the closure, with special thoughts for Fred Reeve ex-manager of VIA.
An inspection of the station, which is now a fully computerised "Ham" station VK5CRS was then conducted by Harro & Mark Kay with a demonstration of the operation capabilities. The station was open for HF radio contacts using a special events callsign of VIS VIA for the week, with numerous QSOs being established, all which will be acknowledged by the specially printed QSL cards provided by Harro. A special CD containing the history of VIA Coastal Radio station since its opening in 1912 at Rosewater until its closing in 1993 was compiled & produced by Paddy Wilkinson & Harro Krause. It contains many interesting photographs and items of historic information. Harro burned several copies of this disk and gave me a copy which I was fortunately able to have reproduced by my very good friend Brian Stevens. (VK5FV ex-Army Radio Station Bringelly) These I have dispersed to Deane Laws! Blue Easterling (Brisbane) Ellis Watts/John Lawler (Sydney) & Ron Cocker/Sean Leahy (Perth). Harro has done a magnificent job in transforming the whole station from commercial activities to a very hitech amateur setup which also includes a very interesting museum of Coastal Radio

equipment especially morse keys. He & his XYL (who is also a radio operator) are to be congratulated on such a sterling effort .It may also be mentioned that the many & varied aerial systems have also been extensively modified, adapted and upgraded for amateur worldwide HF radio work.
Our annual Xmas luncheon of the OTVA SA branch was held on the 28th November at the old McLaren Vale pub, In attendance was Dave Herbert, Harry Stone, Paddy Wilkinson, John McGregor, Dick Inwood and Em Barrett .Apologies were received from Max Lang who had prior commitments.
Max informed us that his brother Tom Lang is in hospital in Melbourne and still going ok despite his longevity (over 90 years)
Dave Herbert is relinquishing his Presidential office of the OTVA/SA and Paddy Wilkinson should be taking over this position at our next AGM in May 2003. This will be held on the last Thursday in May at the same venue same time, same arrangements.
We at VIA all send our best wishes to our National President Tom Barker for his oncoming surgical operation and wish you a speedy recovery Tom as well as a Happy & Merry Xmas to all our OTC/Beam/Cable/Telstra friends and ex-colleagues73s Cheers & Beers
Harry Stone **(Sec/Treas, SA)**

Victorian Notes

Our thanks to Robert Hall for the following and we hope we can look forward to future information from" The Garden State" Unfortunately the items were received after some events were over but we hope this will not occur in the future.
OTVA Victoria's AGM was held on 29th May 2002 art Legacy House Melbourne with 48 in attendance.
Michael Murray was elected President and Robert Hall Secretary /Treasurer
Robert is interested in those prepared to attend a social gathering to be held in a private function room at a hotel.
All interested please advise Robert of their ideas, wants etc.

Vales:

We regret to advise, and extend the sympathies and condolences of President Keith MeCredden and our members, to the families of the following.:
Bright, Samuel Milton died 17/11/02 aged 74.
Crabtree, Douglas James died 12/11/02 aged 90.
Vagg, Alan George died 24 /07/02 aged 97.
Wilton, Mark died 06/09/0 1 aged 96.
Patrick, Frank died September 2000 aged 97.
Sim, Vince died 15/12/02.
Cook, Harry died 19/11/02.
Mclnnes, Horrie died 20/11/02.

(We have received tributes to some of the above which will be in our next issue. Ed)

VALE VINCE SIM.

This life history of Vince was penned by his daughter Pam for her father's memorial service an we are indebted to the family for permission to publish same.

Vince Sim was the eldest of four children born to Beatrice and Daniel Sim on 23 November 1910 at Peak Hill. The family lived at Peak Hill, with a short time spent in Dubbo, until Vince was about 10 years of age when they moved to the inner city and then out to Carlingford. Vince's schooling took place in Peak Hill, Forest Lodge and Carlingford. His happiest childhood memories were associated with Peak Hill playing with younger brother, Ron and following his grandfather, Papa, around the Government Tank agistment property of which Tom was the manager. He remembered with deep affection his grandparents, Tom and Kate, especially their love and guidance administered firmly but fairly.

After the family moved to Adderton Road, Carlingford, in 1922, Vince found himself living next door to the grandmother of his future wife, Thelma. They married in 1937 and had five children, two daughters and three sons.

When he was 14, Vince left school and joined AWA in Spring Street Sydney. Vince was a pioneer in the world of radio communications and continued as a wireless technician with AWA and then with OTC when AWA was absorbed by them, going to Tech to obtain his qualifications. He worked shift work for many years, firstly at Pennant Hills and then at the Transmitting Station at Doonside. He stayed with OTC until he was *65,* making 50+ years of service. In 1974 Thelma suffered a life threatening case of meningitis but thankfully survived and she and Vince retired to Mermaid Beach in December 1975. Here they lived in their own unit quite close to the beach until Thelma suddenly died in May 1983, aged just 71. During their time together at Mermaid Beach Thel and Vince enjoyed two overseas trips for which the family was grateful they had been able to do together. After Thel's death, Vince continued to live by himself in their unit and despite being severely affected by glaucoma, was able to manage his independence until the end. On 5 December, his brother died and Vince went to Sydney to attend the funeral on Monday 9th December. Sadly Vince never made it to the funeral instead he was rushed to Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick in the early hours of 9 December suffering a brain stem stroke, which took his life on Sunday, 15 December 2002.

A devoted family man, Vince is survived by his five children, 11 grandchildren and 9+ great grandchildren as well as a brother and sister.

PS. This is an excerpt from a paper we found re Vince's retirement dinner. -Vince started with AWA in 1925 as "general boy" in the Sales Accounts department, becoming part of OTC's technical staff when the Commission was founded in 1946.(Vince was then a senior technician, having been transferred to AWA's technical division way back in 1926).On August 31,1975, Vince, by then technical officer grade 2, had completed 50 years service in overseas telecommunications.

A Short History of Telegraphy. Pt. 2 (Continued from previous issue)

The Creed System

In 1897 there was a young telegraph operator with the South American Telegraph and Cable Company in Chile. He decided that there had to be some better way of making perforated tape than playing a xylophone. Fired with enthusiasm, he threw up his job and set sail for Britain determined to put his ideas into practice. He started work in a garden shed in a suburb of Glasgow. With the aid of an old typewriter, bought for 15 shillings *(75* pence) in the Sauchiehall Street market, his ideas began to take shape. The young telegraph operator's name was Frederick George Creed. His machine was operated by compressed air and the first order for a quantity of 12 came from the British Post Office in 1902. Next, Creed produced a receiving perforator, what we now call a reperforator. From the received signal it produced a tape identical to the transmitting tape. Then he designed a printer that took the tape and printed plain characters on a paper tape. And so the Creed high speed automatic printing telegraph was born. It could run at the astonishing speed of 200 words per minute.

Parallel Improvements.

At the same time the Baudot system was improved by switching to punched tape, prepared off-line like the Morse tape used with the Wheatstone and Creed systems. A tape reader, controlled by the Baudot distributor, replaced the manual keyboard. The tape had five rows of holes for the code, and a sixth row of smaller holes for feeding the tape through the reader. Baudot's code, which you will remember was made to be easy to memorise, was later standardised as the International Telegraph Alphabet Number One. In 1902 the New Zealander, Donald Murray, devised a combination of the best bits of the Baudot multiplex and his own automatic system. Murray also used a five unit code, but his great contribution was that he chose the combinations so that the most used characters needed the fewest mechanical movements of the works. This was important, and was significantly different from Baudot's code, which you will recall was made to be easy to remember. Murray's code was never given

any international recognition and, like the Baudot code, is no longer in use, although both their names are still remembered as pioneers of telegraphy.

The Start of "Start— Stop

So far all of the systems we have looked at have been synchronous systems. This needs very good speed control at both ends, and some means of correcting any lack of synchronism Around 1906, Jay Morton and Charles Krumm of Chicago started experimenting with machines that worked on what is known as the startstop principle. It still used a five unit code, like the Baudot and Murray systems, but the transmitters and receivers come to rest when not actually processing a character. To send a character, first a 'start' element is sent to line. This starts the receiver going. Next come the five code elements, and finally a 'stop' element. The stop element can go on until the start of the next character, but it has to have a minimum length to let the receiver come to a halt. So minor speed differences between ends are automatically put right at the start of each character. This means simpler governors and no need for special synch signals. Morton and Krumm formed a company with the totally unmemorable name of Morkrum to make their machine. It started to be used around 1920. However, they chose a better name for the machine: it was called the "Teletype." The Teletype printed straight onto paper tape at up to 40 words per minute. When these machines started arriving in Britain, Creed lost no time in meeting the challenge with a whole series of machines. Starting with the Model iP page printer, then the 2P and finally the Model 3 tape printer, Creed's first combined start-stop machine, was introduced in 1927 for the Post office telegram service. The famous model 7 page printing teleprinter came in 1931 and was used for the inland Telex service. It worked at a speed of 400 characters a minute, about 66 words a minute, using a code based on the Murray code. It was later recognised as International Telegraph Alphabet No 2 - the one still in use today for Telex and RTTY. Over the years, many fine teleprinters, such as, the Model 444, have been produced by Creed in Britain, Teletype in America, Siemens in Germany and Olivetti in Italy. All of these machines work on similar principles. They have not changed much since the 1930s, except in matters of individual detail. Today, however, most of the machines in commercial service have been replaced by semi-electronic machines. The coding, transmission, reception and decoding are all done by integrated circuits. The only moving parts are the actual print heads. The Telex service itself is under threat from the widespread use of FAX and electronic mail.

Radio takes to the air.

Of course, all these early telegraph systems were intended to be used over cable circuits. But at the same time as telegraphs were growing from infancy, radio

was also growing up as means of transmission. It all started with the experimental work of Oersted and Hertz. They showed it was possible for the unknown waves to travel without wires. Maxwell's theoretical calculations showed how it all worked. The earliest transmissions used spark gaps to make the radio waves, and magnetic detectors, and coherers to detect them. It led in 1901 to the milestone of Marconi's first transatlantic transmission. The first transmissions used hand sent Morse code, but so as to get as much traffic over the air- waves as they could, the telegraph companies were soon using automatic transmitters and receivers - and later, printing teleprinters.

The Facts on FAX.

We have looked at telegraphy, sending letters, character by character, but what about facsimile transmission, or FAX, sending pictures by wire or radio? It comes as something of a surprise to find that FAX has a history nearly as long as telegraphs. The first working system was invented by Alexander Bain - who invented the Morse recorder mentioned earlier - as long ago as 1842. Bain had invented a system of synchronised clocks and he saw that the pendulums, linked together electrically, swung together, reaching the ends of their swings simultaneously. By fitting a contact at one end, moving over letter shaped contacts and a stylus at the other end, he was able to reproduce the patterns of the letters at a distance. The stylus moved over chemical coated paper and the paper was moved forward on each swing, so tracing the shape of the letters. Its success was limited and in 1850, Frederick Bakewell's invention of a cylinder and screw, rather like the phonograph cylinder, set the pattern for later FAX designs. The real advance in FAX was the discovery of the light sensitive properties of selenium. In 1902 Dr Arthur Korn made the first photoelectric FAX for transmitting photographs and in 1921, Edouard Belin used equipment like this to send pictures across the Atlantic. The first radio FAX transmission across the Atlantic took place in 1928. FAX has moved along with technology, driven by the needs, mainly, of the newspaper business. Improvements such as white space skipping, and run length coding have speeded things up. Even comparatively recently, machines from Muirhead and others still used the basic revolving drum technique, though pictures are now sent in colour -originally by three separate transmissions, later by simultaneous transmission. FAXs today use raster scanning, like a television picture, and print on heat sensitive paper or using ink-jet technology.

Correcting the Errors

Anyone who has ever used a radio will know that they suffer from noise. What happens to a data transmission is that the wrong characters are received. Now, with ordinary text, enough is still left for the human brain to make some sense of it. But if there is a mistake in

coded text or pure data, of course, there is no way of guessing what the right letters should have been. Thanks to many mathematicians there are ways of detecting and, if possible, correcting errors. The trick is to send more data than is needed - this is called redundancy. If there is bad reception, then the extra bits help to put the message back together. One of the best known names in this field is R.W. Hamming of Bell Labs who published his paper on error correcting codes as long ago as 1950.Picture: AT&T A fairly simple way of correcting errors was called Telex Over Radio, better known as TOR. This was developed in the early 60s for long haul radio circuits and for sending telex to ships. If the receiver spotted an error it signaled back to the sender and the characters were sent again

Up to Today

Nowadays, integrated circuits and microprocessors have made it possible to send data by radio for all sorts ofjobs, without the errors caused by poor reception. Here are a few examples. The public utilities often have plant in the middle of nowhere. Radio telemetry lets them read instruments, and work controls from the comfort of a central control room. Many people now have a television set with Teletext. The data is coded onto spare lines in the television frame to broadcast an electronic magazine. Key personnel who are out of reach of a telephone often carry a pocket pager, or bleeper. And again that is just a simple radio data receiver. It is now possible to connect portable data terminals, computers, or even FAX machines via the cellular radio network. One can now get straight through to the company's mainframe, wherever one happens to be. Combinations of Forward Error Correction (FEC) and Automatic Repeat Request (ARQ) virtually guarantee an error-free connection. A good example I can quote is that (British) Railtrack use a secure radio data system to keep the safety of single line working using an electronic token system without the expense of laying cables to the furthest flung parts of the network.

Summing it all up.

We have come a long way from Wheatstone, Baudot, Morse, Creed, and Marconi, but we hope that you will remember when the talk turns to packets and satellites that it all goes back to the pioneers who had the vision of communicating round the world that has put us where we are today.

Acknowledgments
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These articles, copyright 1987, AG Hobbs & SM Hallas.

0. T. C.ARCHIVES.
By Gordon Cupit.

A good description of the OTC Archives appears in the OTVA Newsletter Part 4 pages 105/108 issued in November 1989. This article was supplied by O.T.C. Archivist, Kimberley O'Sullivan, who also put our archives on a data base.

My experience in Records and Archives commenced in the Army. I was the Orderly Room Sergeant of the 2nd Armoured Regiment AIF for a period of three years. The Orderly Room in the Army is the Administrative Headquarters of the unit. My boss was the Captain Adjutant, who could be compared to a Company Secretary in Civy life. I was in charge of the actual Orderly Room and had a Corporal and a Trooper clerk to assist. Here I learnt Registration, Records and files. I was also responsible for a weekly field return, which was the document that Command used to supply a unit with reinforcements. I also had to daily compile a return estimating the number of troops who would be in be in the unit four days hence. Personal files of the troops were simply filed in alphabetical order. The subject file system was a fairly complicated affair used by the Army. This was followed by a two year term at the Eastern Command Records Office as a Staff Sergeant in charge of the personal records of all Hospital, Field Ambulance and Works Units in
NSW. The 113 AGH Concord alone bad an Army staff of 1,100. I had fourteen Sergeant Clerks under my supervision, The Records Office used the" multiple number" filing system.
I was demobbed in 1946, and returned to SOR, which had now been taken over by OTC from AWA. For various reasons, I wished to get off shift work and

started to apply for clerical vacancies. In 1952, the Records Officer Nell Johnson died suddenly and Charlie Raecke got the job. He only carried out the duties for a few weeks and conceded that it was too much for him, and asked for transfer. Next, the young clerk in Records Kevin Keen was selected to act. I appealed and won the appeal. Subsequently, it was found that I was not a bad Records Officer and I was promoted to the position. From 1952 to my retirement in 1981, no matter what job I was in, it was always my lot to have the supervision of Records in my Duty Statement.

Now hack to 1952, when I took over OTC was operating on the Public Service Yearly Record System. The good point of this system was that all files were closed at the end of year and new ones opened. The advantage was that all files for the year were together. It had been wrongly operated in that as a file was opened, it was given the next number, this necessitating a very good indexing system which OTC did not have. This system is known as the single number system and only works when a subject is given the same number each year. The only subject that I can remember where this was done was the Telephone files which were numbered 46/1, 47/1, 48/1 etc. The staff remembered a few of the files that were used a lot, but for the majority of files, requests for a file could take 2 to 3 days. This brought about the habit of not calling for files and sending loose papers to Records for filing, resulting in a huge heap of loose papers accumulating in the Records Section. The danger of this practice was that letters and minutes had been written with completely wrong information, and often contradicting content.

About a year after I took over in Records, the young clerk resigned to Join the Order of St John. I understood that he had completed all the filing of loose papers, but subsequent events proved that these had been disposed of, and many files will be found to have blank periods in them.

Having been used to the Multiple Number System in Army Records, I could see the disadvantage of the Single Number System, and immediately started to convert over. This took the rest of *1953* and all 1954, and greatly displeased Athol Brown who was the Senior Clerk in Administration. It was not until after he retired and I invited him to a meeting of the Vets that he had a kind word for me. But that is history.

You will find in our records under the multiple number system, that like subjects are filed together. Examples are file I-I-I is Station Sites, Policy, and the subject. 1-2-1 is if I remember Station Site. Applecross, Leases and Deeds. 2-1-1 is Station Buildings, Policy, and the subject. It hard to understand, but a scrutiny of the Index Cards, shows it up better. Benefits are that the

file lasts for more than one year, subjects are more defined, files smaller, no requirement for miscellaneous-general files, files are all located together in the cabinets, When a file fills up the normal practice is to start with a different number, but you will find that this only carried on for a period and from general preference, that Parts were used. Example I -I -I Part 11.

From 1946 to 1952, the closed yearly files were stored in an Archives area located in the Tower Room of the AWA Building. This room was a large open area divided into rooms with timber frames covered with bird wire. The centre was a large area used as a stationery store. Around the sides were smaller rooms of about 8' by 7' and allocated to different departments of AWA. OTC had one of these rooms. With the bird wire sides, everything was very dusty and dust-coats were provided. Files requested from archives were not returned but stored on top of the filing cabinets in the Records Section. This laziness turned out to be a bit of a god send, for in July 1956. a fire started at approx 3pm in the stationery area and spread to other areas before the Fire Brigade arrived. There being so much paper in a confined area, the room had no windows and little ventilation, and only an entry door. The heat was so intense that the firemen could do little but to locate six stationery hoses on stands, directed into the fire. Salvage and the saving of damage to lower floors was a big task, and I and two cleaners were left in the building all night to protect and look after OTC interests. The firemen did not get into the seat of the fire till 1. 30 AM and a couple of hours later I was let in to see what I could salvage. All was ashes, and even some Secret Files which we stored in a supposedly fireproof steel cabinet, were not burnt but roasted to nothing but ashes also. We lost in the vicinity, if I remember correctly, 1100 files these were the initial and early history of the Commission. I did a report of the fire at the time, which included a list of the files lost. The files lost were also recorded on the Index Cards used to book out files. In addition, files in relation to the Beam Wireless and Cable Services handed over by private companies were also lost.

DOCUMENTS HANDED OVER BY CABLE AND WIRELESS AND PACIFIC CABLE.

Ships Charts and Engineering Reports of the 1901 Pacific Cable Lay. (These were used in the planning of the 1982 lay.)

An album of photographs of Norfolk Island taken from 1902 to 1905.(These used in planning the Norfolk Island Station Building in 1982) Numerous cable engineering books and manuals.

C & W Station Code Books used for confidential messages to Managers. A list of personal particulars of staff taken over by OTC. (These consisted of sheets

secured at the top) Numerous books and publications some now held in Veterans archives and others in the OTC Library.
I think that the only living C & W takeover people are Dick Christoffersen, Joe Collister, and Brian Morrell (Perth Veteran)

DOCUMENTS HANDED OVER BY A.W.A.
Personal files of all takeover personnel. Taken over.
Staff Cards of all personnel taken over.
The Staff Cards of CRS and ISLAND personnel held by the Superintendent CRS

OTC DOCUMENTS AND FILES, The following information is correct at the time of my
retirement in 1981 and Fred Kannard may have later knowledge. I think that it was about 1955 or *1956,* we were directed by the Commonwealth Archives that our old records should be deposited with their organization. However, they must be all listed, indexed and culled before they would take them. Also, that the culling would have to be done by an officer of A.G.M. or higher. As we had never thrown or destroyed any papers this would have been a long term task and an AGM could not be considered. From time to time, consideration was given to using the Commonwealth Archives, but the culling problem was always there. In the early 1980s George Maltby obtained approval from the Archives for OTC to keep our own Archives. Subsequently Kimberly O'Sullivan placed all our records on a data base. At the time she quoted that if all the General Records were placed end to end that they would reach a length of 31 Km.

Personnel Records were kept in the Staff Records Section, Industrial Branch under the control of Ken Johnson. They were filed in alphabetical order.

Personal History and Leave Record Cards were originally kept in tickler boxes, but
later kept in steel folders. David Richardson was well versed in he personal files and history cards and would be the best person to give detailed info in this area.

General Records Files were located in the Archives in the Basement of Paddington and at the Ramsay Building Broadway and are still there as far as I know. Following me as records Officers were Roy Doohan (deceased), Des Woods now living at Yeppoon in Queensland, Fred Kannard , and Laurie Endre (deceased). Ms Hinchey would know the present locations of these records.

ASIO Staff Security checks, and related correspondence, and Staff Confidential files, Disciplinary Files were located in a safe in the D.As office. Last person to have custody of this safe and the

dial code would have been Fred Kannard. and possibly Peter Jontulavic.

The Secretaries Branch Clerk was the custodian of the Agenda Notes and meetings (these you have already spoken to Ms Hinchey about.) Previous custodians have been Pat Greenland, Edgar Harcourt, Tom Hughes, David Richardson, and John Hopley. David would be your best man for up to date info. The Secret Files were originally in the Records Section, but taken out of that area and put in the Secretaries Branch fairly early in the piece.

ITU, CTB, and other international arrangements files were also originally held in Records, but when the Edgar Harcourt took charge *of* the Secretaries Branch it was felt that they needed specialized attention, which I agreed, they were extracted and passed to the Secretaries Branch. Later these, together with **INTELSAT and INMARSAT** files were taken under the wing of the Internal Arrangements Branch when it was formed.

The Library was the depositary of all books and publications, both internally and externally. Full copies of Transit, Contact and the Vets Newsletter were held there. A specialist librarian was employed as GIC who had a small staff.

Engineering Branch General Records were held in the Records Section, but other project files, Drawings and Instruction Books were held by the Engineering Branch. All drawings were transferred to microfiches , these were stored for security at Paddington and are now in the archives stored there. The hand books formerly held in the library, are now stored at La Perouse.(These have all been sorted and catalogued. Ed.)
A number of **Commercial and Marketing Branch** files were held in the Records Section, but they retained their own working files. Here again you would know more about these than me.

Other than **Policy files** held in the Records, I do not have much knowledge of the **Accounts Branch working files.** These must be quite considerable.

The various sections of Admin all used the Records Section, but many working files were held by the Industrial Section, Properties Section, Recruitment Section and Supply Section. In Recruitment employment files were placed on a persons Staff Section file, but we held advertising files, Full sets of Staff Circulars, Promotions and Higher Duties Appeal files, travel files, Welfare files, Staff Establishments, Staff Estimates, First Aid files to name a few.
Industrial Section held copies of all Industrial awards

and related files. For Recruitment, Fred Kannard would be the man, Industrial, Peter Jontulavic, Properties Norton Harris, *Staff* Section David Richardson, Supply Des Woods.

All copies of telegrams, and transmitting and receiving tapes were kept by the Traffic Branch for 6 months and then destroyed under supervision. This in effect was a daily chore. As telegrams have been obsolete for a lot longer than 6 months I doubt if one would find any evidence of this. I don't know what happened to the Traffic Branch working papers, or if in effect they still survive. Examples of undulator tape and trial facsimile are held in some General Records files on circuit working arrangements.

As far as the Vets is concerned I doubt if we have a comprehensive list of past and present members. We could prepare one from names on the Honour Board (last I saw of this was hanging on the wall at the Ashfield Tclecom Museum. I think that from the time that this was abandoned, I could get the names of deceased from the Newsletters, and finally the rest could be picked up from your present membership file. The only ones missed would be those that have left our ranks and we haven't heard anything about them, but this would be few. The story on the Constitution would be left well alone.

The CRS kept working files and Phil Chapman could give the early history of these, and you would know better than anyone, the story of late. Station files may exist in some places and must be considered.

I am most concerned about the Marconi Bust. It was presented by the Lions Club of Turin, Italy, to the Sydney Lions, and delivered by the son of Marconi on the occasion of his visit to Sydney to commemorate the lighting of the Sydney Town Hall by Marconi by a radio signal from his yacht in the Mediterranean. As the Sydney Lions did not have an appropriate place to display it, they gave it to AWA as caretaker and it was installed at Ashfield. When AWA sold their Ashfield property, Veteran George Schultze contacted me and we arranged for it to come under OTC as caretaker. Sydney Lions members were present at the La Perouse unveiling. Now that it has been moved, they should be informed. They used to meet at the Commercial Travellers, but that Club has no record of their present whereabouts. Neither the Sydney Lions Club or the name of the President that we did business with appears in the Phone book. I think that it is important that steps be taken to find the Club and inform them of the present location of the Bust.

Editor's note: All of the OTC Records, drawing fiches, etc now held at Paddington Level 2 will go to the National Archives and are currently the responsibility of Telstra's "Archives Section". The Commission's Minutes and Agenda notes etc are all currently held by Telstra' s Secretariat.

The artifacts etc held at La Perouse are of concern and OTVA is currently looking for a suitable repository for these. The bust of Marconi was transferred to Ningi near Brisbane (Brisbane Radio Site) on the closure of Sydney Radio (VIS) but as this also is about to be closed permanently, some action is required to preserve same. The Marconi Club in Sydney has offered to take the bust on the proviso we carry the transfer costs. This offer is currently being followed up by OTVA.

Fannin2 Island. An adventurous Trip!

This item was contributed by Geoff Day to whom we extend out thanks and again is a piece of unrecorded history.

A family of Cable & Wireless staff were on transfer from Sydney to Fanning Island. They had embarked on their ship in Sydney and arrived in Auckland on June 18th, 1940. Shortly before midnight, they headed north on a quiet fine night. This is unusual for the middle of winter, as one passes the extreme Northern tip of New Zealand's North Island and the seas are usually very rough indeed. The meeting of the two streams from the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean cause treacherous seas. At around 3.3Oam on a bitterly cold and grey night the ship hit a German mine.

Of course the ship was the R.M.S. Niagara, and our gallant Cable & Wireless staff were Jack Guthrie with wife Thelma and children Wal and Joan (Baty). All crew and passengers were evacuated into the life boats with no loss of life, and the Niagara eventually sank at 5.3Oam.

To digress There is the other story of the raising of the bullion which had been stowed on board in secrecy in Sydney prior to sailing. Being from Melbourne, I fully recall that Diver Johnstone (the best diver in the southern hemisphere) and his brother were selected to raise the bullion. Mick Wood may recall 'Diver' as he came from Ivanhoe. (Read "Gold from the Sea" by J. R. W. Taylor)

How fortunate that the seas were so calm, as the 148 passengers and 203 crew sat in their lifeboats half frozen. A plane flew over at 7.3Oam but it was not until ll.OOam that the first rescue vessel arrived. Rescue was not easy as the lifeboats had drifted and were miles apart. Large ships stood well off and away from the mined area. Eventually all passengers and crew were shipped to Auckland on the Wanganella. Joan has newspaper cuttings showing the bedraggled Guthrie family landing with nothing, other than what they were wearing at the time of the sinking.

A week later they sailed from Auckland on the Aorangi and eventually reached Honolulu. From Honolulu to

Fanning Island they sailed on the Cable Ship Dickinson which took 4 days and 5 nights to get there. At least they had eventually arrived. With German raiders in the Pacific and the foreseen entry of Japan at sometime or other entering the war, it was decided to evacuate the women and children back home to Australia.

Fanning Island had a contingent of New Zealand army personnel who had one large cannon and a lot of pretty old and useless 303 rifles. It was fortunate that Fanning must have been considered as a bit remote and unimportant. Anyway! the women and children were evacuated on the Monterey back to Honolulu where they landed and awaited a ship back to Australia.

Two weeks after their arrival in Honolulu on the 7th December 1941 the Japanese struck Pearl Harbour. So after about 18 months of turmoil, Thelma, Wal and Joan were now thrown into absolute, chaos and confusion. Where now? There was absolutely no way in which they could leave Honolulu, which was now in complete blackout condition and they were given Gas Masks. Wal says that his 'Gas Mask' consisted of just a cloth and a bottle of Calcium Carbonate solution. He says that be doesn't think it would have done anything but we had to carry the rotten thing around with us. There were also evacuation drills and in between all this Wal and Joan attended school and tried to learn a little. Joan recalls that when she returned to Australia she had difficulty in writing as she was never taught longhand in Honolulu. only printing.

Eventually, they were shipped to San Francisco on the "President Grant" a freighter and from San Frisco to Melbourne on the "Goonawarra" a "neutral " ship and crossed the Pacific with all lights blazing. (scary)?'?

After six weeks they eventually landed in Melbourne and Thelma rang her relatives in Sydney to let them know they had arrived and. would be heading to Sydney. The reply from Sydney was 'Are you safe? I guess not much more can be said other than the staff on Fanning must have been going grey with worry but yet enjoyed the quiet and blissful life of Fanning with no other worries.

In formation Requests:
Cecil Brent:

A request has been received from Robert Lloyd Jones for information about his wife's father CECIL BRENT who served on Fanning Island from! 1940 to 1950? She lived there from 1944 to 1950 and believes from photos held he was there in 1940. As both parents are now passed on she is trying to find out if this is so? So if anyone with information could pass this on to Robert whose F. Mail address is: lljones@acay.com.au it would be greatly appreciated. (or please contact the Editor.)

Murray Hunter Ewen:

A request has also been received from Rosemary Howard , daughter of the late Murray Ewen who served in Fiji, Madang PNG & Paddington etc., enquiring if anyone knew the name and shipping line of the Ships her father was torpedoed on in WW2 off the Southern tip of India. He was working for AWA at the time as a ship's radio operator. If anyone has any information would they please let your editor know, as she is trying to put together his "Life Story" and this is a missing part of his life.

Editors Notes:
Our immediate Past President Tom Barker has laid a firm foundation for the incoming President to build on. All must agree we are indebted to him for his leadership and the tremendous effort he has made to improve the organization Keith McCredden has indicated he is prepared to serve only until the AGM Thus we all need to consider prior to that date who should fill this vacancy. So please give it some thought and attend. Participation is the lifeblood of an organization such as ours.

This issue begins Volume 8 of our Newsletter and looking back over past issues we have come a long way; be that as it may we do have some ideas for further improvements. **May I also make a plea to our contributors that they forward their contributions by e-mail or floppy disc. This aids in reducing the time to copy, edit and reformat plus it soothes your editors nerves!! If forwarding by e-mail please forward same as an attachment in "Word "or "Text" formats.**

My thanks to all who have contributed to this issue. Unfortunately some material has been held over to our next issue, due to space limitations!

Please forward material for our June Issue by Friday 30th May.

Our new Meetin2 venue
As a trial we will hold the next Sydney social function at the "Mandarin Club" in a screened off area with a buffet meal at cost $12.80. This includes 8 hot Chinese dishes as well as cold collation, sweets and coffee, and is an attempt to reduce the cost to member and improve the food quality. Please let one of the committee know your thoughts after the event. The AGM will be held in a private room as befits such an occasion at a venue to be advised.

Notes for your Diary
The 2003 AGM will be held on Friday IJi~~ July 2003 at 12 Noon at a venue to be advised.