OTVA NEWSLETTER

Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association (Australia)

Registered Address: 605/41 Meredith Street BANKSTOWN, 2200

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THE OVERHEADS

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Mail Address:
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BANKSTOWN 2200

Website
www.otva.com

Photos from this edition will go up on the website so you will be able to see them in glorious technicolour!

Coming Events

Next Sydney Event — AGM

When;: **Friday 17th June** at **Noon**

Where: **CTA Club** , Martin Place Sydney

Cost: :$20.00 each (plus sub where applicable)

R.S.V.P. by **Friday 10th June** to:
David Richardson, phone.(02)9487 1985
email: <d_s_Richardson@yahoo.com.au>,
Eamon Fitzpatrick: phone:9743 3806
Henry Cranfield: email <henrycra@tpg.com.au>
Agenda: See next page.
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Other dates for the Diary

NSW Spring Function is set for the **CTA Club** on **Friday**, 26 Aug 2005 at 12.00 noon - $20.
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Melbourne AGM -- 8th June 2005

49th AGM at 12noon, Legacy House, 293 Swanston Street, Melbourne (Comradeship Room). Contact Robert Hall (03) 9511 6969 or email rjmdolphin@optusnet.com.au
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Note!   The NSW Xmas function is at the **Mandarin Club,** Goulburn Street on **THURSDAY**, **24th November** at Noon.
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Put the dates in your diary **NOW** and work around them!! Costs for both functions to be advised.
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CORRECT ADDRESS?

Please ensure that Will Whyte has your correct address and latest email address.
****

The Annual General Meeting (NSW)

Commencing 12noon, Fri 17 June at the CTA Club Sydney. RSVP as on front page!!

Agenda

1. President's Report for 2004-5
2. Adoption of Minutes from 2004 AGM
3. Treasurer's Report for 2004-5
4. Election of Officers 2005-6
5. Confirmation of new Rules and by-laws
6. General Business as may arise.
7. Close

Please note that Lisa Enright, the Telstra Museum Consultant, will be attending and will give us some idea for the future of our OTCA heritage. (*Editor will make notes for a future newsletter.*)

Followed by usual lunch and reminiscences.

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50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF OTVA:

Gordon Cupit has written a history of the OTVA which he is working to complete for the first fifty years. The suggestion has made made to turn it into a book or CDROM in time for the 2006 AGM.

NEWS GATHERING:

An essential element of this history is the Newsletter. Work is in hand to scan the earlier issues and issue them on CD to make them more accessible to all members.

All members should regard it as an important part of their membership to contribute reminiscences which are part of our history so that they can be recorded in the Newsletter. The editor will tidy it up if necessary so don't worry that you might not be a polished writer – we want the stories!! I have also found a note from Gordon Cupit which notes that it is nice to hear of your doings while you are alive rather than have them re-counted in your Obituary!

As an incentive, the Committee has resolved that they will offer a reward (Money!!!) for the best contribution for each of the future Newsletters. Get your pens out and start writing.

MELBOURNE REUNION – 6TH DECEMBER 2004

Held at Legacy House, was well attended and witha few new faces welcomed. 29 attended namely; Jim Fes, Les Foley, Bruce Henderson, President Kevin Shea, John Davey, Mary

Tancheff, Joy Light, Mervyn Jessop, Mervyn Cooper, Robert Geake, Ray & Dorothy Birch, Denis Chambers, Gerald McCarthy, Gary Kelly, Vance Findlay, Ray Donald, Brian Williams, Barry McMillan, Peter Dennis, Joan & Cyril Ferne, Graeme McKenzie, Noel Dennis, Steve Llewellyn, John Caulfield, Artie Koopman, Judith & Robert Hall and a good time by all reminiscing.

Robert & Judith Hall receiving their Life Membership Certificates from President Kevin Shea
****

RESCUE OF OUR HERITAGE FROM LA PEROUSE:

In a series of working bees, members have identified, catalogued and packed for transit many items of our heritage which had been collected from various sources and were stored at the La Perouse station. There were some photos in the last issue showing their disarray. They should now find a new home in many of Australia's museums, particularly the Powerhouse in Sydney which has a strong technological focus.

A few photos show some of the items discovered. However, there was a wide ranging collection, from samples of the early Darwin telegraph cable through to TWT (Travelling wave tubes) from satellite station transmitters. Some of the photos are relevant to other articles in this Newsletter and will be used where appropriate.

The team on the first working day (The Editor is behind the camera)

Two core submarine telegraph cable ex Darwin

Tom Barker identifies cable samples

Some of the tubes catalogued – the TWT is at the right.

I could go on forever and fill this newsletter with photos. However, I have a better idea. I will assemble a collage and submit them to our website where you will be able to see them in colour and download those which appeal to you. www.otva.com*. Article prizes will apply to stories written about items pictured on the website!*

I also have a great deal of material on Fiskville which could also be put on the website.

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TIME GENTLEMEN PLEASE (II)

In the November Newsletter was an item

about the SOR clock. Conscious that the story was incomplete without a picture, your Editor noted the following item at La Perouse and it has been catalogued and stored for posterity.

It was only some time later that it struck me that the pendulum, essential to all good clocks in those days appeared to be missing. However, close examination of the picture shows that it is stowed on the left hand side of the case.

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DEAR AUNT GORDON

Gordon Cupit, as our OTVA Historian, is often asked questions about the details of various members and ex-members. Here is a recent response which may have wider interest. It is a note to Hector Blemings who was enquiring about his father, Jim's and Bob Scott's service with OTC.

Dear Hec,

As far as Bob Scott is concerned all I could find out that he was one of the original Beam staff in 1927 and was located in the Melbourne Operating Room. Most of the originals and older guys have passed on which makes research difficult.

As far as your Dad is concerned, I found some information under our Vale Section in a Newsletter dated April 1979. I was Secretary then and Editor of the Newsletter, and gleaned some of this from the Eulogy at the Funeral, and from you at the Wake. The rest came from our staff files and from a history sheet that Jim had filled in.

"Jim died on the 10th March 1979, aged 79 after a short period in hospital. He had a full life and served through two world wars. Jim,

an Ulsterman, joined the Irish Rifles in August 1915, and served in that unit for 8 months until it was discovered that he was only 15 years of age. He was promptly discharged and sent back to "civvy life". Two weeks later, on putting his age up to 18, he again enlisted in the 7l Reserve Cavalry Regiment. He saw service in France with the 1st Middlesex Regiment, 2/7 Highlander Regiment, 1st Reserve Regiment, and was finally discharged in India whilst serving in the 21st Lancers. He continued military interests and served as an officer in the Royal Corps of Signals Reserve from 1920 to 1926.

During World War 2, Jim re-enlisted in the RAAF and served from 1943 to early 1946 as a Flight Lieutenant in a meteorological unit for the South Pacific area based at Darwin and Morotai.

Jim joined AWA in 1927, served for many years as a Telegraph Mechanic and finally, after rejoining from the RAAF, became a Telegraphist in SOR.

Jim, no doubt because of his brogue and Irish background, was a well known character with a sense of humour which more than compensated for his occasional outbursts.

He lived at Cammeray and quite often would turn up in the office on Sunday with his monstrous dog, "Bruce", which he had taken for a stroll over the Harbour Bridge.

Jim's son, Hec also served in the RAAF during the 2nd World War and on demobilisation, was one of the group of ex-servicemen known as the Rehab boys who trained in the Marconi School under that pioneer, Joe Hawkins. Hec thought that there were better careers than telegraphy and moved to Melbourne where he made a fortune operating a chain of health food stores.

Jim's daughter, Dorothy, also served in communications, and was one of the lady Telegraphists employed in the Beam Room under Mrs. Rowe during the war years, preparing and transmitting EFM messages to and from the troops"

Further research shows that he was a member of Governing Council of The Professional Radio Employees Union in 1938)For what period I could not find any reference).

I hope the above is of help, and trust that you and the family are well.

Yours sincerely, Gordon Cupit

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A NORMAL DAY AT THE OFFICE

This story has a long preamble since it is important that we all understand why Percy Day and John Toland were developing films in company time!

Submarine telephone cables (and there will be more on the subject in later stories) had by the late 1950s been established as a concentric, coaxial structure. They were called light weight, since they were not armoured, it being reasoned, with justification, that a cable in the ocean depths, off the continental shelf was most unlikely to be disturbed. Thus it consisted of a number of layers of high tensile steel wire in the centre (with a total breaking strain of about 7 tonnes), over which was placed a copper layer to conduct both the signal and the power for repeaters. Over this was moulded a polythene layer which provided insulation for the centre conductor, (which could be up to 10,000 volts at the ends) and because of the tight control of manufacturing tolerances, a very uniform coaxial cable to carry high frequency signals. Over the polythene was a second "return" conductor, in ocean cable, consisting of six flat aluminium tapes wound spirally around the polythene and covered with a thin layer of aluminium foil which covered the gaps between the tapes. Next a layer of impregnated canvas was covered with a final waterproof outer jacket of more polythene. The whole cable was about 33mm OD and its density was only slightly greater than that of seawater.

Still with me??

The cable was broken about every 28 nautical miles (about 50 km) for the insertion of a repeater (which amplified the weakening signal before the noise made it impossible) but the cable was not manufactured in 50 km lengths. Thus there was need to have methods of joining lengths of cable. Such joints needed to preserve the breaking strain of the centre core, the conductivity of the central copper conductor, the insulating and dielectric properties of the inner polythene, the

conductivity of the return tapes and finally the waterproof qualities of the outer polythene sheath. No easy task!! Needless to say the people who made these joints were highly skilled and needed to practice to keep their skills up.

SEACOM ocean cable (top) and Madang land Cable (bottom)

Because of the difficulties of examining a failed joint when the cable had been laid *(Trevor Thatcher once likened the search for a submarine cable on the ocean bottom, to fishing from a tenth floor window with a bent pin on the end of a length of cotton!)*, there would be a series of quality tests after each stage of the process and a number of these included the x-raying of the joint – a process which would nowadays send the OH&S guys into orbit!!

While the skills for jointing sea cable resided on the cable ships, OTCA had responsibility for the shore ends of COMPAC and SEACOM, so needed similar skills for jointing land cable. This was generally very stable and not often in need of repair.(We had two failures in the SEACOM land section in Cairns where two creek washaways occurred, resulting in a need for our cable jointers. Madang also had its failures as the mud from the Gum River would slide away and take SEACOM with it!). OTC had sent Percy Day and Joe Anderson to England to acquire cable jointing skills which they were to pass on to future generations. These skills then needed to be refreshed from time to time and also new jointers trained to replace those who were no longer available, for whatever reason. These courses were conducted in the Training School

which, at the time of this story, was on the fourth floor of Paddington. Space was at a premium and a dark room for the development of x-ray images had been established in a dark corner of the diesel room in the basement.

Another of the elements of our heritage – the x-ray equipment from our cable jointing kit.

Now read on —

John Toland: A photographic darkroom had been set up in the alcove covering the Sub Soil Drainage Pit just off the diesel generating room in the basement to develop films taken during the cable jointing course. Percy Day and I were in there in March 1975 developing a film. We normally closed the sliding fire door and had a curtain across the alcove to provide a dark space.

Unbeknownst to us, an external fire alarm maintenance technician , who was not familiar with the building, was testing the system. Seems as though he pushed a relay, which released the counterweight that closed the sliding fire door, but as we had already closed it, the counterweight dropped through it's tubular slide and fell jammed in the bottom.

The next thing we knew was the noise it made as well as the alarm bell sounding. We assumed someone was going to test the diesel generators. Percy opened the curtain to have a look and all he could see was the room filling up with CO_2 gas. When we tried to open the sliding door ,we found it would only open about six inches .

The rest of the story is in the attached sheets.

J Toland's Report: "At approximately 11.15am on the 6 March 75, I was assisting Mr. P. Day with the developing of films in the

temporary darkroom, situated in the Paddington Basement, Engine Room. Both doors were closed and all lights switched off and the blackout curtain was dropped.

The first indication of an alarm was the sounding of the engine room bell and the release of the CO_2 gas.

Mr. Day raised the curtain, saw the gas releasing and suggested we leave immediately, on reaching the sliding door we found it would open only a few inches and with repeated efforts we could not increase the opening size.

At this stage I looked out of the opening and noticed Mr. Neylon and .Mr. Kinnersley and attracted their attention. They tried to assist: with the opening of the door without success. That is all I remember until I regained consciousness outside the building.

I was later taken to St. Vincent's Hospital where I was treated and released some 4 hours later."

Percy Day: "A darkroom is situated in Paddington basement, for developing X-ray films used in the training of Jointers and for jointing Tasman Cable. Mr. J. Toland and I had just completed developing a film and the basement was in darkness with both doors closed, when the fire alarm bell gave a short ring - approx 8-10 seconds.

Pulling aside the blackout curtain, it was obvious that the CO_2 System was in full operation, and we decided on immediate evacuation. As I am familiar with the properties of CO_2 there was no panic as no difficulty was expected in making the few paces from the darkroom to the fire door and then to safety.

The fire door jammed after opening about 6in. Mr. Toland then assisted me in an attempt to force it further without result. We then repeated the operation of closing and opening without any better result, -Breathing was becoming difficult and I asked Mr. Toland, who was at the opening, to call for help as we were in trouble. At this stage I considered the second door but as it would have meant crossing through a very heavy .concentration of CO_2 decided against it. Mr. Toland also advised me at this time, that he had attracted attention and our best chances seemed to be to stay where we were with some little air being obtained through the 6in door opening.

I was on my knees from the attempts to open the door, now found I was unable to stand to slow the effects of the. CO_2. I also noticed we were still in darkness. I was able to reach around Mr. Toland and switch on some lights, at this stage I passed out. I recovered consciousness whilst being carried up from the basement and was then taken to hospital by Ambulance where a rapid recovery was made.

Other reports will doubtless cover the steps taken to recover Mr. Toland and myself from this saturated CO_2 area but I wish to express sincere appreciation of the rapidity and efficiency with which rescue operations must have been instituted, thus enabling our rapid recovery from conditions which could have easily have caused severe damage or even death."

This incident was fortunately a near miss but it is described in a number of other reports none of which indicate the real cause of the problem which came out following an investigation.

In the final report on the incident the major failing was, that because the sliding fire door was already closed when the gas release triggered a mechanism to close it, the mechanism jammed, preventing the door from being re-opened.

The sliding door was a very heavy affair, so needed a powerful force to close it. This force was provided by a very heavy set of weights hanging on a steel cable over some pulleys which would drive a pushing pad to close the door in the event of a fire. This mechanism was held in the open position when all was normal by a pin, which would withdraw in the event the CO_2 was released. Also, the pad was not attached to the door, permitting the door to be moved manually. The weights were contained in a length of metal duct fixed to the wall, so that they were not disturbed by movement of people and equipment around the doorway,

The crunch came when the gas release triggered the weights and there was no door to push. Their descent to the floor was unhampered and they fell with the crash described in the above reports. However, here

is where the difficulties arose. The steel tube which prevented the weights from being disturbed did not go fully to the floor, so the weights bounced and became jammed under the bottom of the tube. Recovery was also hindered by the steel cable coming off some of its pulleys. Thus opening the door by about 6in was all that was possible. Fortunately, it allowed in enough air for John and Percy to stay alive,

We all have 20-20 hindsight and this story illustrates several points:

Despite best efforts, systems weren't fail safe, particularly those early fire alarm systems. Also the fact that someone who didn't know what they were doing could be sent to service this sort of equipment which could put people's lives in danger.

There had been breathing apparatus supplied but people didn't realise the importance of learning how to use it.

Finally, there were the problems caused by a mechanical installation which could have been thought through a little better.

Thus ended a normal day at the office!

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THE HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS.

Following earlier exhortations for people to submit material for this Newsletter, which is after all about your experiences, I was thinking I had little to use from the fertile pen of Gordon Cupit. Then I looked deep in my Inbox and found his history of the communications that were the reason for the creation of OTC. As it is a comprehensive document, I have cut it into five sections which will be dribbled out over the next five issues. But essentially, it is about the framework of the industry in which we worked and played and about which this newsletter is intended to be the vehicle for carrying the human stories of our association.

Prior to the advent of Electric Telegraphs, Australia as virtually isolated from the rest of the world. The only communication was by ship and these were few and far between. Most ships from Europe sailed direct to Australia, returned via the Spice Islands or any port from which they could pick up a cargo. Return voyages could take months. Europe could be at war and the Colonies would not know for approx six months. It was extremely difficult for the Governors of the Colonies to receive despatches and send return information.

When Clipper ships commenced on the wool trade, despatch times improved, as these vessels did not have to search for a return cargo.

It was not until the mid nineteenth century that Electric Telegraphy was invented, resulting in a dramatic change in the method of carrying information within and to and from Countries in Europe. Transmission was per open hard wire, assisted by the newly invented Morse Code.

The use of open hard wire transmission was not suitable for underwater usage as insulation was required. Many substances were tried for a suitable insulation, but it was not until 1849 that a short cable, using Gutta Percha, a latex type substance found in rubber trees in Malaya, as insulation, was laid from London to a ship close by in the channel that a satisfactory transmission was carried out.

The following year, the first submarine cable was laid between Dover and Cape Gris Nez in France. This cable only lasted 24 hours when it failed. A second, but successful cable, was laid on the same route in 1851. This had been insulated by tarred hemp and galvanised wire covered with gutta percha.

The fact that this cable was successful caused a boom in cable production by British Companies which were formed to lay cables to ail parts of the world. The greatest feat being the laying of a Trans-Atlantic cable from the UK to Nova Scotia. After many unsuccessful! attempts a special cable laying ship the "Great Eastern" (this being the largest ship in the world at the time), the cable was finally completed in 1866.

By 1870 there was a cable linking the UK with Suez, Bombay, Madras, Penang and Singapore. This allowed news and despatches etc., to be sent to any of these ports and conveyed by ship to Australia. However ships were still few and far between in those days,

but it did allow communications to be received in Australia, at times within three to four weeks, as against the previous months.

Prior to Electric Telegraphs, methods of communication was by runners, horse riders, stage coaches and sailing ships. As Electric Telegraphs developed within Europe and America, Australia was not far behind with the opening of the first Telegraph line from Williamstown to Melbourne in 1854. This was quickly followed by many others. The first undersea cable was laid in 1859 across the Bass Strait linking Tasmania with the Mainland.

In 1870, a Company called the British Australian Telegraph Company (BAT) was formed to link Australia with the British cables by extending the cable from Singapore to Darwin via Java. This plan created problems within Australia, as this was before Federation and each State was a British Colony with separate Governors within Australia etc. Queensland wished the cable to terminate there, and South Australia proposed that it be terminated in Adelaide. South Australia was the winner and it was decided that a landline, the Overland Telegraph Line, be constructed to link Darwin with Adelaide, and to be completed by 1st January 1872. The Singapore/Darwin hook up was commenced in November 1871, but due to problems with the cable and also on the Telegraph Line due to the wet season, the connection, Singapore to Adelaide was not opened until October 1972. A cable from Adelaide to Sydney landing at La Perouse, giving direct communication from London to Sydney was completed the following month.

Unfortunately cable techniques were still in their infancy and messages had to be received and transmitted by operators at each relay point (15 along the Overland Telegraph alone). This together with the fact that all telegrams between London and China had to use the one telegraph cable, meant delays of up to three weeks for non priority traffic. One can imagine the infighting for traffic priority within the Australian Colonies..

In 1873 the three British Companies, The British India Extension Telegraph Company,

The British Australian Telegraph Company and The China Submarine Telegraph Company were merged to form The Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company (commonly known as Eastern Extension)

Their first major work was a cable from La Perouse to Wakapauka in New Zealand, which opened for traffic in 1876.

In 1880 the Java to Darwin section was duplicated, and in 1889 a cable was laid from Java to Roebuck Bay, Broome. (The substantial Cable terminal office in Broome is now the Court House). - In 1893 a French Company laid a cable from New Caledonia to Bundaberg in Queensland to link with the Eastern Extension Cable with other traffic to Europe.

There was very little change in the Australian Cable Services for the next 30 years, except in relay methods and the Eastern Extension Company retained its monopoly. A move to set up a second cable system from the UK to Australia was made in 1879 under a plan to link Great Britain to all its Colonies. It was proposed that this cable would traverse the Pacific Ocean and would pass through only Empire Colonies. With the then present Eastern Extension Companies cables it would result in a round the world telegraph chain and would be known as the All Red Route. (This was taught when I went to school and at that time all British Empire Countries were coloured red in the Atlas)

In 1896, a Pacific Cable Committee was appointed to consider all aspects of the new venture, and in 1901 the Pacific Cable Board was established comprising eight members , 3 from England, 2 from Canada, 2 from Australia and 1 from New Zealand. Funding and ownership of the cable was to be shared between the British, Canadian, New Zealand, New South Wales, Victorian and Queensland Governments, and laying commenced in 1902. The cable was to start from Bamfield in Vancouver, to Fanning Island, Fiji, New Zealand, Norfolk Island and terminating at Southport Queensland.

Our mirror galvanometer is missing the glass bell jar which went over the whole mechanism to keep out air currents which would have affected the reception of signals

The Pacific Cable had problems not encountered on the previous Eastern Extension Cables, in that relay stations had to be located at great sea distances apart. The Vancouver to Fanning Island section being the longest, a special vessel had to be built which was capable of carrying 8000 tons of cable. As the cable could only be powered at the relay points and these being thousands of miles apart, large banks of batteries were required at each station. Due to the resistance of the cable, by the time that the signal reached the next relay point, the current had diminished to a couple of milliamperes. Such a small current was not sufficient to activate sounders, buzzers or other receiving devices normally used in the early morse era.

Cable Engineers found that this minute current was strong enough to twist a very thin wire. To this wire was attached a miniature mirror and a beam of light reflected from it on to a graduated scale. This device was known as a Mirror Galvanometer. By using the positive side of the signal for dots and the negative side for dashes, operators were able to read the morse from the graduated scale. Great skill

and concentration was needed to read the signals for any space of time.

The Pacific cable would be a rival to the Eastern Extension system so, in 1901, Eastern laid a cable across the Indian Ocean. This cable was linked to the London - South Africa service and started at Johannesburg to Mauritius then Cocos Island and Perth. A Perth to Adelaide link was laid a year later. The Eastern Extension also lowered its rates.

During the next 20 years increased traffic started to increase transit times and technology developed devices to amplify the signals to activate sounders, to record signals on paper tapes, and later to automatically relay signals between relay stations. Transit times improved, the service became more efficient and operating staff were reduced.

A major break through for cables had come in 1926 by the development of a cable capable of transmitting telegrams at a speed of 150 words per minute. This was known as a Loaded Cable, the technology being the division of the cable into three channels each of 50 words per minute. The only other improvements were in minor terminal equipments. There was no significant improvement in long submarine cables until the advent of the submarine amplified coaxial cable which was laid across the Pacific and opened for service in 1963.

(To be continued)

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THE MALTESE FALCON- ASLEEP IN THE DEEP!

by Henry Cranfield

On Guam, the manager's house was opposite the station motor generator room and late at night you could hear the hum of the 400 cycle motor-generator sets. Any power hits on the AC Mains would be reflected through the rectifiers, causing variations in the 140 volt battery voltage and a change in tone. At 450 cycles they tripped off which would result in de-powering the cable, a situation to be avoided at all costs. On this particular night, there was a typhoon brewing and I awoke at about 2.30AM to hear the rain pouring down, wind shrieking, lightning flashing and above it all the M.G sets hunting! After some time I could stand it no longer, so I went over to the

station and let myself in though the back door with my master key.

I switched the rectifiers to manual, reset the alarms and went into the main equipment room to find "The "Power Feed " equipment working on one rectifier unit only and the "Maltese Falcon" sound asleep with his head resting on the log book. After resetting the power feed equipment, cancelling the alarms and telling Madang and Hong Kong via telex order-wire all was well, I sneaked the log out from under the sleeping one. I then entered the time, together with the appropriate comments all in red ink, signed it and went home to bed. The sleeping one slumbered on, blissfully unaware of what had happened.

In the morning, when the STO (Mick Wood) came in at 8.0am, the night shift man was still there, terrified at what had occurred and what was to come and would not go home. I deliberately took my time getting to work and strolled over at about 8.45am and was met by Mick who told me he had a very frightened night shift man in his office. So I said "send him in and I will talk to him." On arrival, he was indeed very pale, nervous and full of apology. I told him that I too had fallen asleep once on night shift and was awakened by the fire brigade knocking on the door with a fire axe, as the fire alarm had gone off and I had slept through it. There were fire engines and the police all, waiting at the door! "Forget it! but don't let it happen again" was my final comment.

I don't think Len ever slept on shift again!!

****

VALE

Martin Creswell (22nd December 2004)

Martin passed away in Tweed heads of a heart attack.

Alan George McLean (31st July 2004)

At the Emily Lenny Nursing Home, Coburg aged 77.

Alan joined AWA Beam Wireless on 5/8/1942 serving in Filing, Censor, Traffic, Circulation and Service Clerk positions until February 1946, then attended Telegraph Training School from February to May 1946. On passing out he was promoted to Telegraphist

and periodically acted as Senior Telegraphist until January 1965 when promoted to Senior Telegraphist then S.I.T.O. until retirement/redundancy on 28/11/1986.

Alan was raised and lived in the family home all his life at 12 Carrington Street Pascoe Vale South which was sold recently while Alan was cared for at the Nursing Home. Alan enjoyed playing golf, travelling and reading. Alan is survived by his sister, Joan, and brother-in-law, Bob, and family. Our sincere sympathy to his family and friends.

Alan, I think, was one of the first people I knew to have had a heart bypass many years ago ??? early 80's.

About 50-55 attended the funeral service at Fawkner Crematorium, OTC colleagues in attendance were Mervyn Cooper, John Caulfield, John Davey, Les Foley, Don Dunstall, Robert Geake, Vance Findlay, Gerald McCarthy, Kevin Shea, Bruce Henderson, Brian & Betty Williams, Geoff & Silvia Whitmore, Joan & Cyril Ferne, Robert & Judith Hall and Jim Kennedy.

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THE LAST WORD

I seem to say a lot but certainly there is a lot to say. I am leaving this newsletter here with a few reminders that this is your newsletter. Please contribute.

Now that the possibility of retribution for past incidents is gone, and before too many of those we worked with are no longer with us, perhaps it is time the story was told! Others wish to remember those happy incidents which are an important element of the Australian psyche – the way that we can achieve.

The next Newsletter will have lots in it. I have more of the Gordon Cupit's History, another piece from Cyril Vahtrick, more of Denis Grant's snippets and an article from Erik Bachmann on the Enigma coding system used during the Second World War.

A number of photos are turning up but I am always looking for more. I will endeavour to put them on the website if I can't use them in the Newsletter

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