



NEWSLETTER

A P R I L 1 9 7 6

General Secretary

At the time of closing of nominations for the position of General Secretary of the Veterans' Association for the year 1976/77 our present General Secretary, Charles Carthew, was the only nominee. This nomination will need to be considered at the Annual General Meetings and there is no doubt that Charles will be re-elected.

Melbourne Annual General Meeting

The Melbourne Association will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Friday, 28th May 1976 commencing at 5.30 p.m. The usual venue, namely O.T.C. House, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne has again been selected. To save cost of postage individual notices are not being issued and those attending, and this includes any interstate veterans in Melbourne on that day, please call Charles Carthew on 544-2514 so that he will be able to make the necessary catering arrangements. Charles also wishes to remind members that annual subscriptions are now due.

South Australian Reunion

The South Australian Association will be holding their winter meeting on Thursday, 27th May 1976 commencing at 7.30 p.m. The venue is the Public Service Club, 73 Wakefield Street, Adelaide and those attending should contact Brax Horrocks, 7 Miegunyah Avenue, Unley Park, 5061.

New South Wales Annual General Meeting

The N.S.W. Association will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Friday, 21st May 1976 commencing at 6.00 p.m. The venue is the Amenities Room on the 7th Floor of O.T.C. House, which is situated at 32 Martin Place. Those wishing to have a chat before the meeting will find the doors open from 5.00 p.m. and interstate and overseas veterans are cordially invited to attend the meeting and the subsequent social function. Those attending, including N.S.W. members, please advise Gordon Cupit on telephone 230-5000, Extension 546 by 18th May so that catering can be arranged.

Melbourne Reunion

The Melbourne Reunion was held on 14th November and 63 attended. (A copy of the Attendance Record is included in this Newsletter.)

Jean Edwards, now getting on in years, made the traditional cake which she brought up from Frankston by train. This was cut by Cliff Cutler in his usual ceremonial style.

Guests included Telecom Commissioner J. Curtis and ex Commissioners R. Turnbull and Sir Albert Chadwick.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation by President Jack Hunter and George McDonald, of a gold watch suitably inscribed, to National Secretary, Charles Carthew for services rendered to O.T.V.A., Victoria (Charles has been Victorian Secretary since the inauguration of the Veterans' Association 20 years ago). It was such a surprise to Charles that all he could say in reply was "Thank you." Those who know Charles could hardly think it possible for him

to be at a loss for words.

New Zealand Reunion

The Veteran Cablemen's Association held their annual meeting and reunion on 5th December, 1975 in Auckland. Present were:

R.T. Atkins, D.C. Baker, H.C.C. Bradnam, T.B. Condon, W. Craig, O.C. Crossley, L.H. Davison, H.G. Evetts, H.J. Fox, B.L. Giles, L.C. Gladding, M.H.S. Greenwood, F.N. Harry, R.K. Hosking, A.G. Miller, A.B. Mortensen, L. Sedman, R.L.C. Sextie, C.L. Smyth, F.C. Studman, K.R. Clark, R.P. Connolly, P. Cowlshaw, C. Nielsen, W.J. Todd, J. Walker.

The New Zealand veterans have a unique tradition in that they distribute Xmas cakes to widows living in Auckland. This matter was brought up at the meeting and it was unanimously decided to carry on with this action. A hat around the members quickly donated sufficient money to pay for the cakes.

Bill Craig was re-elected Chairman and Fred Studman, Secretary.

South Australian Christmas Meeting - 1975

The South Australian Association not only had a Christmas meeting but it was also the night of the Annual General Meeting. This was held on 27th November at the Public Service Club and those attending were indebted to Ken Collett for making it possible to have their meeting in such pleasant surroundings.

In attendance were:

Bert Dudley, Cliff Birks, George Rowe, Ron Ward, Norm MacKay, Ken Springbett, Norman Giles, Ken Collett, Keith Roberts, Gerald Shaw, Charles Smith, Harold Oates, Alf Kerr, Graham Little and Brax Horrocks.

A number of apologies were received mainly due to ill health. Herbert Muhlhan and Harry Naylor had had slight strokes. Herbert was still in hospital but Harry had returned home. Others unable to come were Leo Gleeson, Rocky Gordon, Eric Symes, Geoff Cox, Cliff Birks, Longun Evans and Bill Lemon.

Brax Horrocks and Bert Dudley were re-elected as President and Secretary/Treasurer respectively.

SYDNEY REUNION

104 veterans attended the N.S.W. Association's Reunion on 14th November, which was held in the Functions Room of the G.P.O.

Special guests were Hal LeQuesne, and his wife, the Vice President of the Canadian O.T.C.'s Quarter Century Club (Western Division). A number of new members were welcomed by the President.

Contrary to past functions, all the food was not eaten and an unusually high amount of liquid refreshment was partaken.

Highlights of the evening were the attendance of Tiny Greenlees after being so ill for the last couple of years, and taped messages from Gold Coast residents Wilf Atkin, Andy McCollun, Fabian Sutherland and Sid LeGrand. In the shades of the old AKTUG days, Wilf sang half a dozen ditties, the theme being lawn bowls.

The following attended

✓ Wilf Ellershaw, Roy Doohan, Keith Vincent, Arthur Oliver, Bruce Collett, John Toland, Jack Guthrie, Jack Burgess, Joe Hawkins,

3.

Audrey Keenan, Jack Whittaker, Dave Bourne, Philip Geeves, Gordon Cupit, Bert Waugh, Tom Hughes, Keith Vincent, Doug Lloyd, Ernie Anthoney, Charlie Maiden, Harry Stewart, Ron Smith, Ron MacKenzie, Ken Walker, Mollie Condon, Fred Doolette, Joe Collister, Harry de Dassel, Ced Dale, Eileen Haran, Keith Burbury, Tiny Greenlees, Bill Chant Jnr., Ron Flood, Gray MacDonald, Bill Chant, Snr., Joe Bonnici, Murray Hill, Stan Gray, Tom Weaver, Val Litchfield, Orm Cooper, Des Woods, Bernie White, John Grosbard, Alf Culloden, Keith Greenhill, Cyril Manning, Randy Payne, Des Kinnersley, Val Moore, Marie Casey, Edgar Appleton, Norm Alderson, Jack Bullen, Eric Cockle, Reg Towner, Claude Dalley, Roy Tully, Norm Harris, Bob Reeks, Jim Vasek, Horrie McInnes, Tony Ebert, Ray Carragher, Len Rourke, Charlie Swinney, Fred St. Julian, Lyle Gowanloch, Stan Ellis, Jim Anderson, Bob Wright, John Mulholland, Kath Morgan, Win Donnelly, Betty Leweniec, Jack Hansson, Claire Brophy, Athol Brown, John Hodgson, Ted O'Donnell, Charlie Watson, Vin Sim, Tom Heatley, Alan Ritchie, Trev Thatcher, Frank White, Jim Bevan, Dave Abercrombie, Hedley Caswell, Bill Jenvey, Eric Norris, Les Hunt, Ray Baty, Albert Sheppherd, John Lee, Cyril Vahtrick, Sandy Sandilands, Tom May, Graham Gosewinkel, Arch Barrie, Hal & Mrs. LeQuesne (Canada).

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

On behalf of our Associations throughout Australia, General Secretary, Charles Carthew, expresses sincere thanks to O.T.C. for kind courtesies and helpful co-operation, particularly the Commission's management for allowing the use of O.T.C. property and facilities for functions and reciprocal representation at O.T.V.A. Functions.

Charles is also grateful to the Eastern Extension & Associated Companies, Retired Officers' Society, Marconi Trans-Oceanic Guild, O.T.C. (Canada) Quarter Century Club, United Kingdom Marconi Operators' Society, Society of Wireless Pioneers of America, Marconi Wireless Operators of America, Cable and Wireless Limited London, O.T.C.(A) and A.W.A. Limited for complimentary mailing lists.

TASMAN CABLE

A new 10.5 million TASMAN communications cable was opened on 20th February, 1976 which is exactly one hundred years to the day after the opening of the first communications cable between Australia and New Zealand.

The original cable, which was capable of carrying only telegraph signals, was laid from La Perouse to Blind Bay in Nelson, New Zealand by the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company. This old cable was laid by two cable ships, "Hibernia" and "Edinburgh", and was actually completed over two months in advance of its contractual date.

It is interesting to note that the new cable has 14,080 times greater capacity than that laid a century ago. It consists of a single coaxial with a total of 155 under sea amplifiers spaced at approximately eight nautical mile intervals, and is laid between Bondi Beach and Muriwai Beach. The prime contractors for the cable were S.T.C. (U.K.) and it has an initial capacity of 480 two-way telephone circuits expandable to 640 circuits. It is approximately 1,200 nautical miles long and the maximum depth of the lay was 2,700 feet, and was laid in two weeks by the cable ship "Mercury".

A further cable project in the course of construction is one from Cairns to Port Moresby. It will have a similar capacity to the new TASMAN cable and is scheduled for completion later in the year.

AND NOW THE OLD

In 1974 nonagenarian pioneer veteran, the late Cliff Cutler, kindly presented the General Secretary, Charles Carthew, with a rare and valuable antique wireless receiver a 1905 coherer with two terminals loosely connected by fine iron filings and a bell attachment. The incoming signal attracted the iron filings so closing the circuit and activating the bell the bell tinkled and the sound upset the equilibrium of the iron filings thus breaks of comparatively long and short duration created - hey presto - the MORSE CODE !

O.T.C.(A) Melbourne Branch Manager, veteran Jim Robinson, kindly arranged to have this interesting and historic relic suitably engraved and mounted and kept in his office under O.T.V.A. (Australia) auspices.

DEVELOPMENTS

O.T.C.'s telex services have been improved by the recent installation of a Hasler Telex Exchange. This exchange will switch an average of ten telex calls per second. Compared to a good manual operator switching twenty-five calls per hour, it should be a big boost to this fast growing service.

A PIECE OF HUMOUR

Tomi Condon writing from Auckland gives the definition of a cable circuit as:-

"A stretch of wire with a good operator on one end and a B..... on the other".

CANADIAN NEWS

P.C.B. Veteran and colleague, Robert Bruce Scott, writes from 1173 Hewlett Place, Victoria, B.C. that he has been appointed Archivist of the Quarter Century Club and would appreciate receiving documents, letters, memos, photos and or other pioneer material with P.C.B. background. Bob has already had two books published and his interesting article on the history of signalling has been accepted by the Maritime Museum and circulated in an amateur radio newsletter. This article is reprinted in the Newsletter.

MODERN PORT MORESBY (FROM JOHN LENNON)

To those who read this and who knew the old town if you get off at the wharf it hasn't changed very much. The new Travelodge has ceased construction. Not enough money available to keep it going. However, the prime site still stands ready for the building that may rise on it.

However, the morning and afternoon traffic rushes aren't so heavy in the town. Most of the Government Departments have departed for the new planned Town Centre at Waigani. The famous Ward's Strip will now become a boulevard along which will rise future Government buildings. However, as I write it is a ribbon of construction with the old asphalt (hard top) surface still being found occasionally as the heavy duty trucks churn up and down.

Further to this area, the old golf course with the Number One hole as a Mall will be lined with further buildings. Already there is an Australia House where as aliens we have to obtain Passports to live here. Registration will commence very shortly and Permits will be stamped into our Australian Passports.

✓

The Development Bank has completed its building and its design has become a tourist must. Well known local artist Rudy Fame has provided some very contentious ironwork as part of the art decor.

The traffic now comes into this area mainly from the dormitory suburbs of Boroko, Kila Kila, Hohola, Hanuabada and Waigani Drive, formerly Racecourse Road, is like a miniature Parramatta Road with the volume of traffic moving along it. The old Racecourse has disappeared with roads smack through the centre of it. The old buildings all disappeared and long kunai grass, waiting for the bulldozer to commence ripping it out for another building. The City Council now overlooks the Waigani Valley and on the other side of the Valley the Supreme Court looks back. Behind the Supreme Court are the new golf course and the Arts Centre. Both well placed and, of course, design-wise a little controversial.

The sloping hills of the north aspect have been laid aside for Embassy Rows to grow in the future. However, the housing development of Tua Guba Hill has attracted many new buildings and among them residences of Ambassadors. These houses overlook Fairfax Harbour and of course are right in the way of the Monsoon winds and rains when they come later in each year.

Having dwelt at length on many changes, back to some of my doings. Again after Xmas holidays, as a Commonwealth employee enjoyed 26th January as a holiday. It does not apply to local employees. Played golf and tennis and had my daily swim.

Inflation of course has hit us and wages have risen within our urban area. In 1965, when I came here, Urban Cash Wage in Moresby was \$6.00; it is now \$25.50 and likely to rise again shortly.

These days we have our own currency the Kina as I write equivalent to the Australian Dollar and the Toea to the Cent. In April they introduced the new coins and currency. On 31st December, 1975 it will be on its own. Already Australian Banks treat us as foreigners and charge a Foreign Exchange Charge on our cheques. My friends say that it now costs 50¢ in exchange on every PNG cheque presented at any ANZ Bank!

NEWSLETTER

A comment from one of our members makes the effort of publishing the Newsletter worthwhile. He quotes as follows:

"Thank you and all concerned for the latest issue of Newsletter which I know will be keenly appreciated by all who get pleasure from hearing about our old pals, and to hear with great regret of the passing of old mates whom we laughed and joked with over the years. I do hope it never ceases to be printed - without it people like myself living in a backwash would never know what was happening in a sphere which occupied a great part of our working life."

This is one of many praises for the Newsletter and we trust that we will be able to publish the Newsletter for many years but the success depends on stories that we can obtain from members. The Newsletter has proved to be a medium which has found and brought many of the old-timers together and our membership has doubled since it was first issued. Also the interest created has just about doubled the members attending our functions.

Your committees wish to acknowledge the assistance given by the management of O.T.C., not only in allowing the use of their facilities for the Newsletter but the many other ways they have helped the Veterans' Association.

✓

NEWSLETTER MATERIAL

The Editor had a comment that the Newsletter contains mostly stories and information on wireless pioneering and very little on old cable activities. Maybe the wireless people have a more vivid imagination or better memories so it is suggested that some of the cable people put pen to paper and recall some of their experiences. Since this comment was made it would appear there has been some telepathy as a number of cable articles were sent in for publication. However, most of these were on Fanning Island and an article by Tomi Condon and another by Recorder are being held over till our next issue. Articles on Suva, Norfolk Island, Cocos, Bamfield or any of the eastern stations would be appreciated. Surely interesting things happened at these places. Stories should be forwarded to Gordon Cupit, O.T.C., Box 7000, G.P.O., Sydney, 2001 or to your State Secretary.

NOTE:

So as the atmosphere will not be lost the Editor is publishing most articles without cuts.

CONTACT WITH OLD COLLEAGUES

Should you wish to contact any of your old colleagues who, for various reasons, you have not heard from for a number of years, Gordon Cupit may have their addresses and will be willing to send these to you.

DIRECT OVERSEAS DIALLING

International direct telephone dialling commenced on 1st April, 1976 to a number of countries including Austria, Canada, Denmark, Fiji, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, Singapore, Switzerland, United Kingdom, the USA and Hawaii. Other countries will be progressively added to the list.

In addition to getting very fast connections, callers will only be charged for the time of the actual call instead of the three minutes minimum. Some of the fast talkers will be able to save considerable money on the new system.

The introduction of this service brings to mind the developments in telephony over the years and the following history of overseas telephony is interesting.

Australia's first international telephone service - by 'Beam Wireless' to Britain - opened in 1930. High frequency radio continued to provide Australia's only international telephone medium for decades and in the early 1960's O.T.C. was operating a total of 58 international radio-telephone circuits. In 1963, the COMPAC trans-Pacific cable was brought into service, bringing with it high quality, totally reliable telephone communications to other parts of the world. Australians were quick to grasp the advantages of the new system and within a very few years the 80-circuit capacity of COMPAC and the capacity of the later SEACOM South-East Asia cable, were fully committed, despite the fact that original projections had shown that they should be able to cope with demand until 1980.

The advanced technology of satellite communications has provided O.T.C. with the means of coping with the growing demand since that time. A balance between cable and satellite communications is now being achieved with the opening of the TRANSPAC II trans-Pacific cable and the TASMAN cable, and the construction of the A-PNG cable. O.T.C. is a partner in all of these projects.

These developments, providing a multiplicity of routes and transmission systems for telephone services between Australia and other countries, mean that the international network is now suitable for the introduction of ISD.

Shortly after the opening of the 'Beam Wireless' service, in the early 1930's, the rate for a three-minute call from Australia to England was \$12. At this time the average male wage was just over \$8 a week. The charge for an ISD call of equivalent length in 1976 will be \$6, at a time when the average weekly wage is \$160.00.

" B A X "

(by Recorder)

Probably one of the most popular members of the Pacific Cable Board in Suva was an Australian youth, Dick Baxendale. Bax was a very likeable character, always willing, polite, kind and thoughtful. Enthusiastic for a party, picnic or other adventure - socially, athletically, or even when working, he radiated good humour and intelligent co-operation. With a pleasant smile, he smoothed over many a squabble between argumentative staff members, showed them a more reasonable approach and sometimes got them to shake hands and call it quits. He was a natural peacemaker.

But Bax had one failing - he was an inveterate stutterer. He couldn't complete a sentence without stuttering hopelessly. The particular letter that bothered him most was the letter B. In starting a sentence with any word commencing with B, Bax could only flounder on, and if the listener tried to assist by attempting to guess the sentence, he only became worse and more agitated. He tried all sorts of ideas designed to cure his failing and he even took an expensive correspondence course which promised a complete cure. He found it useless in his case.

On one occasion, we were both seated on the grass at a staff picnic in the Tamavua region of Suva. Bax who always had a good appetite, was sitting on the other side of the picnic baskets, addressed me thus:

"Bub bub bub Bill will you pass me the bub bub bub bread and bub bub bub." "Oh", he cried out in frustrated disgust and in a loud penetrating voice,

"BUGGER THE BLOODY BEES".

It wasn't quite polite to use these expressions even in male company, but a loud roar from the company made him realize that he had used three Bs in a row without any trouble. He was just as surprised as the rest of us and was the subject of many a leg-pull in the years afterwards.

Many years later, after we had both retired from the service, I met Bax and discovered that he had completely lost his stutter. Remembering that one of the Royal Family had cured himself of this handicap, I asked him what system he had used and this was his reply:

"During the second World War, I was stationed on Norfolk Island and as there was only one man on duty each watch, I had to telephone all the cablegrams to the addressees. Now, there were many long and difficult coded telegrams and naval cypher telegrams for the Government Representative on the island and extreme accuracy was called for. Some of the coded messages were hundreds of words and telephoning them required extreme concentration and deliberate pronunciation. That cured me of stuttering."

....0000....

✓

VALE

It is regretted that since the publication of the last Newsletter the following have passed to greener fields.

Scotty Hamilton

Scotty was one of those sea-faring men who spent the most of his life in the Coastal Radio Service. He served on many stations and considered that he had a good knowledge of climates, conditions, etc. all around the coast and finally chose Brisbane as the place to spend his retirement years. At the time of his retirement he was Superintendent of the Coastal Radio Service and had as his assistant Poppy Clark. Scotty kept his brogue even after 40 years of living with Australians and was very active in the formations of the Queensland Veterans' Association, being the first President of that Association.

W.J. (Sed) Hudson

Sed joined the Pacific Cable Board in 1922 and as far as is known spent the whole of his service in Sydney. With many others he was taken over by C & W on the merger and subsequently in 1946 by O.T.C. Sed spent the majority of his time at the counter where he was a very popular figure. He retired in 1967.

Cliff Cutler

Our oldest member, Cliff Cutler (Melbourne Association) passed away last December. To recount all Cliff's experience and exploits would be too much for these pages and in following editions we hope to provide more detailed history. Briefly, Cliff appears to have started his career by enrolling at the Maryborough School of Mines, Industries and Science in 1899 as a student in Electrical Technology. In 1901 he passed the Government examination in this subject and took a position in Melbourne with a firm of Electrical Engineers, Scott and Horton, as a Wireman and General Hand. In 1903 Cliff joined the P.M.G.'s Department as Instrument Fitter at the huge rate of seven shillings per day. He then spent various periods with electrical firms, back to P.M.G., served in the navy during the First World War, took part in early broadcasting, a member of the team that built the station at Willis Island and took charge of the building of various stations including some in New Guinea. There are very few A.W.A. stations, particularly broadcasting, that Cliff did not have some part in establishing.

Eric Burbury

The sudden death of Eric Alfred Burbury at his Castlecrag, N.S.W. home on 10th January robbed our industry of an honoured pioneer.

Born at Derby, Tasmania, on 20th April, 1894, Eric followed his brother, Keith, in making a career in wireless. Moving from Launceston to Sydney in 1914, he roomed at Mosman with his close friend from Tasmania, Harry de Dassel, while they both attended the same course at the Marconi School of Wireless under George Apperley. In an interview with Philip Geeves, Eric Burbury recalled "Harry and I had a small buzzer, battery and key in our bag and on the trip to and from Mosman we used to get up in the bow of the ferry for Morse practice." The two Tasmanians had just completed their course when war broke out in August, 1914. They were sent to sea immediately as A.W.A. marine operators, Burbury on the "Manuka" to New Zealand, where he joined the "Arahura", and de Dassel on the "Zealandia". Later, Eric narrowly avoided being taken prisoner by the German raider "Wolf", but he saw a great deal of the world as a ship's operator.

One of the communication landmarks with which "Burb" was associated was Australia's first public demonstration of radio broadcasting, which took place in Sydney on 13th August, 1919. Ernest Fisk was lecturing the Royal Society of N.S.W. on the potentialities of wireless at the Society's rooms in Elizabeth Street and arranged for a recording of the National Anthem to be transmitted across five city blocks from A.W.A.'s office in Clarence Street. The tiny transmitter employed a single Marconi "Q" valve: Eric Burbury recalled "this valve would stand up to quite a bit of overload, so although the normal anode voltage was about 40 volts, we put 240 on the plate and hooked it up into an oscillatory circuit. The anode glowed a bright cherry red, but it radiated a lot of power just the same." There were no loudspeakers in Australia, so to make the music audible to Fisk's audience at the Royal Society, the A.W.A. team adapted some Baldwin earphones. As Burbury explained, "Baldwin earphones had a mica diaphragm, to the centre of which was fixed one end of a lever. The other end of the lever was attached to an iron armature, so these phones could deliver a fair amount of volume. We got a tinsmith to build 20 tin horns to surround the phones and these were strung along the ceiling of the Royal Society's rooms to act as loudspeakers".

The following year, when members of Federal Parliament were given their first taste of broadcasting at the historic demonstration in Queen's Hall, Melbourne, on 13th October, 1920, the same tin horn loudspeakers were used.

In 1921 Eric was a member of the original team at A.W.A.'s experimental monitoring station at Koo-wee-rup, Victoria, which was established to collect data on radio transmissions from Europe in preparation for Australia's planned venture into a high power long-wave wireless service direct to England. Using a loop aerial, Burb and his fellow monitors soon noticed a curious effect. At certain times of the day, for no apparent reason, the faint signals from Europe faded out, reappearing later from the opposite direction. When scientists began analysing this problem, their answer shed a brilliant light on the grey areas of wireless science: transmission of radio waves was affected by sunlight and signals from Europe arrived in Australia by the path of maximum darkness.

At that period no one in Australia had the faintest notion that Marconi was secretly experimenting with short waves, so it was with considerable astonishment that in February, 1924 A.W.A. engineers deciphered a coded cable from Marconi asking them to listen on 90 metres for a station in Cornwall with the call letters 2YT. Although no one realised it, that message sounded the death knell of Australia's planned long-wave service and also of Britain's entire scheme for a long-wave relay chain. Eric takes up the story: "there was not a set in Australia capable of receiving 90 metres. We thought it was pretty hopeless, but were given instructions to build two sets in a hurry. Syd Newman and I worked all night at Knox Street (the old A.W.A. factory, near Grace Bros.). The transmissions were to commence on a Friday, but by Thursday afternoon we realised that we couldn't build and calibrate two receivers, so we concentrated on finishing one of them and took it home that night. 2FC was at Willoughby in those days. I got up at three o'clock in the morning and journeyed to Willoughby. I confess that I had no faith in this exercise."

Burbury set up his receiver and sat, phones pressed to his ears, with scant expectation of hearing much more than the crackle of atmospherics. Then suddenly, just before dawn, out of the clear void of space, the unmistakable piping of copybook Morse filled his headphones. "I found that by waggling my foot under the table I could tune it in and out, because the set was not screened". By 5.30 a.m. Sydney time the signals from 2YT, Poldhu, were roaring in at strength 9 and were readable three feet from Burbury's phones.

✓

The reception report, cabled to London, delighted Marconi. A whole series of tests followed, using wavelengths down to 10 metres. 25 metres was found to give the best all-round results - and that was the frequency eventually adopted for Beam Wireless.

Eric was deeply involved with the early years of 2FC, which first came on the air in December, 1923, operating from a studio on the roofgarden of Farmer and Company's city store. He had a fund of wonderful stories about the curious antics of Australia's first broadcasters who learned their craft on the "suck it and see" principle.

In later years, Eric filled a number of important appointments with A.W.A. His many friends remember him as a quiet, helpful and courteous man who was universally admired both for his technical ability and his warm personality. We are all the richer for having known this exceptional pioneer.

L.E.R. (Ted) Jacobs

Ted joined the Eastern Extension and China Telegraph Company in 1921 and after serving at various stations including Darwin he retired as a D/N pensioner in 1929. Following the outbreak of war he took up duty with Cable and Wireless in 1940 in Melbourne and from then until his retirement in 1969 carried out duties of Telegraphist and Investigation Officer in M.O.R.

Ted was a very athletic type in his younger days and whilst at the Adelaide office was a member of the cricket and Australian Rules teams. One of his claims to fame was the trip from Darwin to Adelaide in the company of Bruce Sutherland on Indian motor-cycles when the road was merely a track.

Win Donnelly

Win, one of our newer lady members, passed away suddenly just before Christmas. She joined O.T.C. just after the war and served as a Senior Machinist in the Accounts Branch. This valuable officer was responsible for most of the machining in the Pay area and O.T.C. members are in debt to Win for the correct amount of money in their pay envelopes each fortnight. Win was very popular with her workmates and was a member of a relatively senior group of ladies who regularly dined and attended functions together. Her passing at the young age of forty-two was a great loss to all her friends and colleagues.

Joe Williams

Joe, although not a Veteran, was well known by many of our members. Prior to his retirement Joe was Administrative Officer of A.W.A., Melbourne Office. Unfortunately for the last couple of years he had been suffering from a mental disorder. His friends appreciate the regular visits by General Secretary, Charles Carthew and Staff Officer, O.T.C. Melbourne and their help to Joe during his latter years.

W.F. (Bill) Bardin

Bill Bardin was born in England and came to Australia with his parents early this century, while still a child. The Bardin family settled in Townsville, Queensland and it was there that Bill first became interested in the new-fangled thing called wireless. His parents thought it was no sort of a career and persuaded him to enter a solicitor's office, but the urge of radio was too great: Bill took a correspondence course with the Marconi School of Wireless, graduating in 1919. To gain experience, he then joined a Melbourne radio firm and in 1923 opened his own radio and electrical business in Townsville. Two years later he joined the engineering staff of 4QG, preparing the station for its official opening in April, 1926. He remained at 4QG during its pioneering years until the P.M.G.'s Department

assumed control of the station following nationalisation of the original "A" Class broadcasting stations. In 1931, when Station 4BH, Brisbane was being organised, Bill joined the original engineering staff of that station. 4BH eventually commenced service on 2nd January, 1932. He remained with the station during its first year of operation and then took up radio servicing. In 1933 he joined A.W.A. as an operator in the Coastal Radio Service at VIT, Townsville Radio, and a year later was transferred to the A.W.A. Radio Centre at Pennant Hills. During the war he did two tours of duty in Rabaul. On the closing of Pennant Hills, Bill transferred to Doonside. Unfortunately at Doonside he suffered a nervous breakdown and O.T.C. transferred him to Head Office as a Technical Officer where he was employed in compiling and updating ionospheric prediction information. Bill was always a charming gentleman with a ready smile and will always be remembered for the way he pampered and looked after Frank Marsden when Frank was so crippled with arthritis. During his life and particularly since his retirement in 1964, Bill was a very active "ham", call signs being 4AB and 2ABZ. Many amateurs and members of the Wireless Institute were in attendance at his funeral.

R.S. (Roley) Smith

Reg, or who most people knew as Roley, passed away in December, 1974 and this information has only just come to hand. Roley served at a number of eastern stations and spent some time in India. He left the company under the D/N scheme but rejoined Cable and Wireless at the outbreak of war. At the time of his retirement Roley was serving in the Sydney Operating Room.

Les Fransworth

Another long service Coastal Radio man, Les had a very colourful career and there are many tales to be told about Farny. One story goes that during the Japanese occupation of Rabaul he evacuated a number of civilians from the town in a small boat during a very heavy squall. There were a number of Japanese war ships in the harbour at the time and the squall gave him cover. The small boat was sailed across to Port Moresby.

Maurice Bramley

Although Maurice was a member of the N.S.W. Association, news of his passing was received from our Canadian colleagues. Maurice served for many years on the Pacific Chain and on retirement took up residence at Tuross Heads. He was one of the P.C.B. lads who were trained by Sid Zuber.

CANADA

Bob Scott, Publicity Officer and Archivist of the Canadian O.T.C. Quarter Century Club, advises the passing of the following members of their club:

James A. Lobb	Jack Reeves
Tom J. MacGregor	Eddy Joyce
Neil Steinburgh	Duncan McPhee
Joseph Lawlor	Bill Forder
Dan Vittery	Alan Leslie
Douglas Bowie	

Jack Triggs

From Brisbane is the news that Jack Triggs passed away some time ago.

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand reports the passing of K.M. Baker, A.C. Leake, G.A. (Gerald) Thomson, R.J. (Bob) Collins and L.N. (Les) Brown. Also the widow of the late Sid Morris.

SYMPATHY

Our sympathy to Jack Hansson and Jack Turnbull on the loss late last year of their life partners.

V O N L U C K N E R

(by Recorder)

(Bill Carie)

There was great excitement in Suva one day in September 1917 when the little island steamer "Amra" drew alongside the wharf to land its most precious cargo, Von Luckner, his crew and the boat in which they had sailed from Mohepa Island far away to the East. I happened to be on duty in the cable office when the prisoners were escorted through the streets of Suva, past the office, past the Grand Pacific Hotel to the native rest-house. It seemed that the whole population of Suva had heard the news and turned out to line the streets as the procession wended its way along the Parade. Of the crowd lining the streets, the Europeans mainly preserved a dignified silence, but the natives were rather more demonstrative and showed their disapproval vocally. We neglected our circuits for several minutes as the column approached and proceeded past the office. Eventually the prisoners were delivered safely to the rest-house and there they remained until an opportunity arose for them to be moved to the local jail.

As most of the European young men of Fiji had left to join the army - mainly to the Kings' Royal Regiment, it was left to the Defence Force - the equivalent of the Home Guard, to provide the necessary guards for the rest-house. Several of the cable staff were members of the Defence Force - Tom Bailey, Bill Christian, Norman Dusting, Dick Baxendale and others; but of course, guard duties were not allowed to interfere with cable office duties. Normally we drilled one night a week, but for this emergency we had to provide for two-hour spells of guard duty.

During the time that the prisoners were in Fiji, many rumours circulated around Suva. It was "reliably" reported that more of the See Adler's crew had reached Fiji and were proceeding overland to Suva. That meant they would have arrived in force near the Tamavua-Lami area. We had quite a few skirmishes in that area, entirely due to false alarms, the product of the nervousness and tension which had seeped into the whole community.

Most of the guards thought Von Luckner was an out and out skite, but he could be forgiven for his little lapses of temper and his arrogant boasting, when one considers how he was captured a few days before. The steamer Amra which had collected or was about to collect cattle from the island of Taveuni, had canvas screens erected on the sides covering the deck. This convinced Von Luckner that there were guns hidden behind the screens and so he surrendered to a District Officer who was armed with only one revolver.

When I examined the boat in which he sailed to Fiji, there was a machine gun, many hand grenades and plenty of ammunition. He could have captured the Amra without any trouble. I believe there was also £2000 in bright gold sovereigns, but these had been removed earlier. The boat was about eighteen feet long - a very small craft to travel hundreds of miles.

We took rather a fancy to the Chief Officer Lieutenant Kircheiss who was also a prisoner in the rest-house. Kircheiss was very like our own

naval officers, quiet, efficient and with a good sense of humour.

Although the jail was much safer than the rest-house, we were greatly relieved when the steamer arrived to take the prisoners away to Auckland. Little did we know that Von Luckner and his crew would escape from New Zealand and that his eventual recapture would be by our own cable ship H.M.C.S. "Iris".

.....0000.....

TO PASTURE

The following have retired from active employment and starting on a new life and well earned rest. We wish them all a long, healthy and happy retirement.

Gordon Johnston

Gordon joined A.W.A. on 7th February, 1927 and served in telecommunications for just on forty-nine years. The majority of these years were in Traffic Accounting areas where he was an authority in Coastal Radio, Marine, Papua New Guinea and Pacific Island Radio Accounting. This included also the mainland outpost radio system with eight hundred odd stations, the last thirty years being spent as Officer-in-Charge of Coastal Radio Accounts. During the war Gordon served four years in the Army as an Instructor Wireless Operator. At his farewell presentation, the Commission presented him with the highly coveted gold watch and from his colleagues he received a bowls bag and set of bowls which will now augment his hobbies of fishing, golfing and gardening.

Vin Sim

Vin, who recently retired from Doonside, started in communications in 1925 as an office boy in the Sales Accounts section of A.W.A. A year later he was transferred to the technical division, where he studied for the First Class Certificate and became a fully fledged technician in 1931. He spent the majority of his time with A.W.A. at the Pennant Hills Radio Transmission Centre and was still there at the time of the O.T.C. takeover in 1946. With many others, Vin was transferred to Doonside when Pennant Hills was closed in 1954. He remained at Doonside until his retirement.

Having completed 50 years in communications, Vince was the recipient of the traditional gold watch. He decided Sydney was not the place to wear such a valued possession and so decided to make the Gold Coast his abode for retirement. Veterans will remember Vin for his prowess at the piano at the "singalongs" at some of our past functions. Vin would be pleased to see anyone finding their way up to the Gold Coast and his address can be obtained from Gordon Cupit.

Ron Smith

Ron recently retired from A.W.A. and has just departed with his good wife on a visit to the U.K. and the Continent. In Ron's words, his first contact with the noble art!! was brought about by participation in a 3AR broadcast in 1924. Later in 1933 he joined A.W.A. at the Ashfield Works and was engaged in domestic receiver testing. After a year the Works thought they had Ron so they transferred him to Head Office Engineering Branch under Murray Johnson, where he was engaged in the correlation of Coastal Radio installation data; also scheduling back-ups for the first comprehensive Aeradio/Navaid installations for D.C.A. A man of many parts, he was transferred in 1939 to Control Room duties at 2SM and 2FC. During the following two years he undertook broadcast technician duties and later Manager of 3BO and 2AY.

In the early part of the war, Ron was transferred to the Marine Department where he saw sea duties on a Norwegian tanker for a short period when he was brought ashore and posted to Braybrook on C.R.S. and Beam international circuits. At the end of the war back to Head Office in the Commercial Engineering Section, initially on broadcast engineering and later took over control of land and mobile communication equipment. When the engineering products division transferred to North Ryde, Ron followed them and left the big smoke. For the last couple of years prior to his retirement Ron has been engaged as Liaison Officer (Sales) for A.W.A. mobile communications where he dealt with Government and local Government bodies and travelled extensively throughout the State. As an offshoot to these duties, Ron did some very good work as liaison with our Association and A.W.A. members. The editor will miss his smiling countenance appearing from time to time around the office door.

George McDonald

George McDonald joined the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Co. Ltd. in 1927 as a probationer "DOC" (Distributing Officer's Clerk) in the Operating Room, Perth.

In 1942 he was promoted to the position of Manager's Assistant, Perth/Cottesloe Branch, where duties included all general accounting and handling of traffic returns and settlement with the West Australian Government for Cable & Wireless, London.

Some of the lighter sides of service in the Perth Office were connected with the handling of the "Tin Can" mail from Cocos Island, which was put aboard the passenger liners passing Cocos by the staff of Cable & Wireless and also the Clunies-Ross Malay employees.

On one occasion, conditions were so bad that they had to abandon two yachts and board a vessel for Fremantle. George met them on arrival and the party included John Clunies-Ross and several Malays who had never before left their home island in the Cocos group. They were entertained by the various charitable organizations during their short stay in Fremantle.

This particular shipment of the "Tin Can" mail finished up on the dining room table at George's home, because it was all wet, much to the amazement of his wife and young family.

Just after the commencement of the second World War, supplies for the Cocos Islands were obtained through the Perth Office, including fresh meat, vegetables, etc., and of course, "grog". These duties carried on after the closure of Perth Office through the Manager of Cottesloe Cable Station.

On resumption of international sporting fixtures after the War, such as M.C.C. v. Australia Test Matches, George carried out Press Liaison duties with all visiting sporting authorities and attended the first cricket fixture after the War, at Northam in Western Australia, as Press Liaison Officer assisting the Post Office staff. He worked directly with Sydney and the operator receiving in S.O.R., Charlie Wallace, was congratulated by the Post Office as one of the best operators they had ever worked with.

George's companions for breakfast at this opening match included Denis Compton and Len Hutton.

In March, 1954, Perth Office closed and George transferred to Sydney and was eventually appointed acting Clerk in the Secretarial Section, remaining there until seconded to Fanning Island in March, 1955. During his stay on Fanning Island, his daughter Beverley married O.T.C. Technician, Alan Watman, only the second European marriage on the Island.

Highlights of his stay on Fanning Island included several excursions into the Gilbertese quarters, having a drink with such characters as Anton (German-Gilbertese extraction) and Tong Ting Hai, the last of the Hong Kong expatriates, who married Kiki under duress from her family.

Other lighter interludes were pleasant Saturday afternoons spent with the Wise brothers, sampling their curried chicken and receiving on departure, a loaf of home-cooked bread, which was very acceptable.

Whilst on Fanning Island, George tried the art of grog making. At the Saturday sampling, after the first couple of bottles, the staff considered his beer "not so hot", but after quaffing the whole of the brew, 28 bottles, it was judged the best grog they had ever tasted. Naturally there were several nasty hangovers next morning.

In June, 1957, George returned to Australia, commencing duty in the Traffic Accounts Section, Melbourne as Relieving Officer; then, in December, 1959, accepted a transfer to Suva, Fiji, on secondment to Cable and Wireless, taking charge of the Traffic Accounts connected with eleven island stations throughout the Pacific for each Government concerned and the handling of ships' radio traffic accounting for overseas radio telephone calls.

Several currency changes were involved with the island stations, namely, Tarawa, Honiara, Port Vila, Nauru (Australian), Nuku'alofa (Tongan), Apia and Raratonga (Sterling), Wallis Island and Papeete (Francs) and Pago Pago (U.S. Dollars).

As Accountant (Manager's Clerk), Suva, George carried out the accounting procedures for Suva, Samabula Receiving Station, Vatawaqa Transmitting Station and the Compac Cable, Samabula, plus general and traffic accounting for the Suva Branch.

After the completion of the laying of the Compac Cable in December, 1963, a permanent cable repair ship was stationed at Suva, necessitating quite a considerable amount of accounting, but on the other hand, giving much enjoyment in entertainment by the ship's officers and crew on various occasions.

George was promoted to Supervisor, Accepting Office, Melbourne in April, 1964 and resumed duties after taking Recreation Leave, in August that year.

In June, 1967, he was appointed Traffic Accountant, Melbourne, and subsequently Administrative Superintendent, Melbourne, in which position he has relieved the Manager on several occasions.

During his 49 years of telecommunications service, firstly with the Eastern Extension, then Cable & Wireless and from 1946, with O.T.C., George maintains that he had the pleasure of working with a grand bunch of workmates in all spheres, both within and outside Australia.

WAGGA - CRICKET OR ORGY

Surely the Wagga weekend must awaken nostalgic and humorous memories. For instance, way back in the early 1950's, five of us left Melbourne by car and joined the cavalcade Wagga-ward.

After travelling all day the Saturday night at Wagga was REALLY something! A smoke-night plus and no mistake!

The M.O.R. boys provided colourful entertainment - mostly blue! Wilf Atkin wrote the script with talent aplenty in support ... mirth provoking right through! A ventriloquist on stage introduced into his patter the question "What is the difference between cable and wireless?" and the dummy's answer "100 words a minute" was topical then but hardly applicable now!

Later, much later, at the hotel, it was difficult to sleep with the ceiling moving about and an interlude when a worried colleague appeared at the door pleading for help to find his glasses so precariously balanced on his forehead! A subsequent raid on adjacent rooms and the up-ending of beds plus discomfiture of inmates gave way to release of inhibitions and/or mere exuberance of spirit ... who cared!

At the cricket match next day a niner was placed in a conspicuous position ... bets were made ... instead of the 12th man taking out the drinks, all players left the field and resumed the game without apparent effect except for a dropped catch or two and a couple of run-outs!

All told, it made the journey home on Monday less tiring. A memorable experience!

- C O N T A C T -

O.T.C. is to be congratulated on its recent edition of "Contact", describing the laying of the new Tasman cable. The historical article of cable laying and telegraphy in early infancy was a delight to the old cable pioneers.

ANOTHER PAGE FROM THE DIARY OF A WIRELESS OPERATOR

Starting as a country town telegraph messenger in 1916 was an experience quite in contrast to modern post office procedure!

Delivering telegrams by bicycle until all-clear six days a week, with emphasis on race days, when the results were taken over to the local barber S/P bookie quick smart with appropriate recognition thereof!

Routine jobs included relieving the postman from time to time; assisting on the switchboard and counter; clearing and sorting the mail; staying back to learn morse at 25 w.p.m.; climbing the post-office tower spiral steps once a week to rewind the heavy weights controlling the mechanism of the outside clock on which everyone around relied for correct time....and generally keeping the post-office spick and span!

Even now one remembers the names of the staff from the Postmaster down, all of whom were ever ready to help a chap learn the ropes. It was all good training when individual skills counted so much and, most important, liking the work in hand was half the battle as an introduction to a near half century of telecom service.

CANADIAN COLLEAGUES

Hal LeQuesne, who recently toured Australia and met many of our members, advises that many Australians ex P.C.B. are now retired and living in Canada. Some of them you may remember and should you wish to correspond with them, I am sure Hal would provide their addresses.

In British Columbia, we find Perc Bailey, Bart Fletcher, John Fisk, Bill Forder, L.P. Crakanthorp, Alf Gallagher, Alan Leslie, Don Schutz,

Robert B. Scott, Carl Lassau, Jack Knight, Keith Spark; and in Montreal are Dixon Hawkins, Boska Garred, George Woods.

ADELAIDE RADIO, 1916

We have in our possession a photograph of Adelaide Radio staff in 1916, all wearing naval round rig. Those identified are O.I.C. Burgoyne (Commissioned Warrant Officer), a Non-Commissioned Warrant Officer, Chief Petty Officer Alan Longstaff and Petty Officer Frank Gowlett. We would appreciate it if any old-timer could let us know who the unidentified member might be.

SICKIES

We are very sad to find so many members on our sick list and no doubt there are some others whom the editor has not been informed of. To all those on our list and those who are ill and not listed we would all like to wish a very swift and complete recovery.

Dave Fleming

Dave recently underwent cataract operations to both eyes. The operation was done by one of the leading surgeons in the field but unfortunately does not appear to have been 100% successful. Dave, who has always been a very active man, is very despondent although not completely blind, his vision has deteriorated. His many friends and colleagues wish him well and trust that with time his sight may improve.

Mrs. V. Carthew

We are extremely sorry to advise the General Secretary, Charles Carthew's wife, Vi, has not been so well of late. Vi is better than Charles' right arm and has been such a wonderful help to him in his Veterans' activities.

Frank White

Frank is on extended sick leave from O.T.C. and it is doubtful as to whether he will rejoin before retirement. As a retirement programme Frank has bought a small farm at Glenorie which should provide therapy and an early recovery.

Jim Davis

Jim is on extended sick leave from O.T.C. and indications are that he could be retiring from invalidity. However, his friends wish him a complete recovery and early return to work rather than retirement.

Fred Davis

Regret to report that Fred Davis is far from well these days but never complains. This is typical of Fred and all his many friends wish him a quick and complete recovery.

Herbert Muhlhan

Herbert has had a slight stroke and admitted to hospital.

Harry Naylor

Like Herbert Muhlhan, Harry also has had a slight stroke and spent a short term in hospital.

Leo Gleeson

Has been suffering lately from acute respiratory troubles.

Rocky Gordon

Rocky has been not so well of late with hip trouble which has kept him from going very far from home.

Eric Symes

Eric has been far from well for a long time and now is practically confined to a wheel chair. This has allowed him restricted movement.

Wilf Ellershaw

Another Veteran to suffer ticker trouble, and admitted to hospital. He confirms that there is no better way to gain good health again than the sight of those pleasant nurses busily carrying out their duties. The Credit Union staff, Directors and members are missing you, Wilf, and wish a speedy recovery.

A HISTORY OF SIGNALLING

(by Bruce Scott VE7VG)

Man's ability to communicate at a distance was originally limited by the factors of sight and sound. Grunts, shouts and waving arms covered intermediate distances, while drums, fires and smoke signals carried information to distant horizons; these forms of communication are still in use among some native races.

The need of some form of signals to control the movements of large armies and navies led to the use of flags. As early as 800BC the Persians used the apron of a blacksmith as a standard around which they rallied in revolt. An operational signal was used at the naval battle of Salamis in 480BC, when a red cloak tied to an oar instructed the Greek ships to swing around and attack the Persians. The Chinese, too, used flags to control military operations.

The first to suggest an actual system of signals to control the movements of a fleet appears to have been the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI in the tenth century. "Let there be some standard in your ship", he said, "either a banner or a streamer or something else in some conspicuous position to the end you may be able thereby to make known what requires to be done." He then drew up a system of signals relating to tactics that could be understood and carried out by ships in a fleet at sea.

In the sixteenth century the practice of firing a cannon or of lighting a lantern were also used to convey information.

In 1673 the first book of signals was issued by James, Duke of York. In it he co-ordinated all existing signal flags, which had become too numerous to remember. Over the next century flag signalling became extremely complicated, each admiral having his own system of communication. In 1799 the Admiralty issued the first universal signal book so that now a ship joining a fleet no longer had to have that particular admiral's private code in order to understand a signal. Signals consisted of 3- and 4-flag hoists and, by using a combination of alphabetical letters and numbers with 3- and 4-flag hoists, the signalling vocabulary was increased to 30,000 words.

✓

Around this time a new form of signalling called semaphore was devised and introduced. A sailor with a flag in each extended arm, or a mechanical apparatus consisting of oscillating arms, used various positions for letters of the alphabet. Later, lanterns were used for lighting the arms at night. Verrey lights, rockets, whistles and bells were also used to convey specific kinds of information.

In 1840 communications changed radically with the invention of the telegraph, a system of signalling over a wired circuit, using a key to make and break the continuity of the electrical circuit with a system of dots and dashes known as the Morse Code. This 'make and break' system also lent itself to artificial light as well as sunlight and in 1867 the first flashing lamp appeared. There were two types, the first using shutters to obscure and expose the light and, latterly, an incandescent light was keyed like a telegraph circuit. The heliograph (meaning sun writer) a set of mirrors which gave a brilliant flash when positioned to reflect the sun, was also introduced around this time.

The telephone closely followed the invention of the telegraph. This system depends on the use of a diaphragm which vibrates in response to sound waves as does the tympanum of the human ear.

The first telegraph systems were simplex, meaning that only one message could be transmitted in one direction at a time. Later duplex systems were introduced, using a 'balanced' wire so that a message could be sent in each direction at the same time over a single wire. Quadruplex systems followed until, nowadays, systems using hundreds of simultaneous transmissions, both telegraphic and telephonic, over a single wire have been evolved. The invention of facsimile transmission, by means of which photographs and documents can be transmitted over wires and by radio, followed.

It was natural that the system of telegraphy should be extended overseas and in 1866 the first successful cable was laid across the Atlantic Ocean, although unsuccessful attempts had been made ten years earlier. Submarine telegraphy required a new system of signalling because the great electrical capacity of the cables, and the subsequent time lag, inhibited the make and break system. So a system of cable code, similar to that of a seismograph, was used wherein dots were of the same duration as dashes, but appeared above an imaginary line along the centre of a tape and the dashes below.

At the turn of the century Marconi's system of wireless, or radio telegraphy, using a simple spark coil to generate low-frequency radio waves which radiated outwards from an antenna suspended in air, like ripples generated in a pond by a falling stone, revolutionised communications. Since these signals could be intercepted by an enemy, or anyone having the requisite apparatus, codes and cyphers were introduced to circumvent interception of intelligence.

Today, radio telephony, whereby the radio carrier wave is modulated by superimposed audio frequencies, has almost superseded radio telegraphy. Latterly telephony has been extended to submarine cables which previously had been capable only of telegraphy. With a new type of co-axial cable containing built-in amplifiers, every twenty miles across the oceans, a system of broadband transmission, containing scores of telephonic and telegraphic channels of communication, has been introduced, making the old telegraphic cables obsolete. They have been abandoned on the bed of the oceans.

With the comparatively recent invention of television, what seems to be the ultimate in the transmission of information has been reached.

The weakness in radio telegraphy and telephony lies in the fact that its electro-magnetic waves rely upon the Heaviside layer, a region of ionized air sixty to two hundred miles above the earth, which under favorable conditions, reflects the waves back to earth and, in fact, bounces them around it for long-distance transmissions. This system is subject to various degrees of fading, noise interference, and complete blackouts during magnetic storms. This was the barrier that radio propagation had reached, and the only way that conditions could be improved was to place a number of satellites in fixed positions around the earth so that the waves could be reliably reflected under most conditions. This is being done. Eventually a system of communications may be evolved which will link all peoples of the world more closely in everyday life.

The more people communicate the better they can understand each other.

....0000....

WHEN I AM O.I.C.

(by Ted O'Donnell)

In response to 'Ponto's' memory revival, I heard of the incident from Wolfie many times and from recall, it went something as hereunder.

HMAS "Sydney" had sunk the raider "Emden" off Cocos Island and all were agog with the sense of Aussie achievement. Not so Harold E. Cox, who rather derided the victory as anything especially great.

Perth-Radio, VIP, was the then counterpart of SydneyRadio then at West Pennant Hills. Both were Telefunken installations; VIP mast was 397', VIS was 395', and on a hill overlooking the Swan River to Peppermint Grove.

The O.I.C. was James Lamb, a big man and a fine chap, and who was on transfer to VIS. Soldiers guarded Applecross site 24 hours and the on-duty lads used to share a cup of tea - handed thru the window. A staff member and a soldier mate contriving put a supposed official advice advising that he hand over the Station to Mr. Cox. Meanwhile, over the week-end, staff members on duty were congratulating Harold upon his appointment. In an aside to Wolfie, he said, 'You know old boy, I was rather expecting it.' The pundit went something on these lines.

I'm Harold Cocos Emden Cox and
I am to be VIP's new O.I.C.
I'll make these blighters hop & even
the soldiers will get their chop -
I'll make them even bring ME, tea,
when I am O.I.C. I can write to Pontyprid
and tell them of the things I did
when I am O.I.C.
Altho' I'm but a little worm,
I'll make that buzzard Wolfie squirm,
When I am O.I.C. For he, I do not care a damn
I must be, and feel, as big as Mr. Lamb.
For I am now VIP's new O.I.C.
I'm Harold Cocos Emden Cox.

Monday morning saw the 'advice' ripped down and, later, the dinky-di message that Mr. Sweeney departed ex "Karooola" ETA Fremantle 5th Instant.

Harold was a popular chap, serving at Perth, Broome, and for many years at Geraldton. He was one of the first appointees as a

Broadcasting Manager to A.W.A. "B Class": After researching at 2FC and 2BL recordings, he opened Bendigo in 1931 and later 4TO, Townsville, where he served for many years.

I was at Samarai-Radio and selling A.W.A. broadcasting sets and often memoed him thru VIT to greet clients - and likely buyers - on Misima, Milne Bay, Normanby, Woodlark and on Trobriand Islands, Papua.

It is hoped that I may get down to settling the argument on the first Teleradio point to Moresby - in the 'Pedal-Wireless Transceivers' days.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

From Canada we have heard that C.O.T.C. recently changed its name to "Teleglobe Canada".

HOBART

(by Ponto)

Many years ago, whilst stationed at Hobart Radio, we worked Maria Island six days a week but never on Sunday. One Sunday afternoon whilst on watch and reading a book (very slack on Sundays), I suddenly got a feeling that Maria Island wanted us. I switched on the receivers to Maria Island's frequency and lo and behold, Maria Island was on the air, calling "Will anyone hearing this call please contact Hobart Radio and ask them to come in as we need urgent medical attention". I answered Maria Island the second he ceased calling and said, "What's the trouble Mr. Cobb?". They wanted a doctor from Triaburna to go across immediately as a man was dangerously ill. To say Mr. Cobb was astounded was putting it mildly. For days after, every time I worked him, he said, "I will never understand what prompted you to listen to me at the crucial moment". I ringed the log entries with a red pencil. A few days later our then Superintendent, Hec Moore, paid a visit to the station and when I showed him the log entry he said, "Definitely a case of extra sensory perception". Unfortunately, it has never worked on the Monday before Cup Day.

TURN OF THE CENTURY

We are in debt to Ned Newell's family for supplying photographs and letters originating at the turn of the century. It is interesting to note that when Ned took up duty in June, 1901, he was directed to report to Flinders in Victoria and that he would be required to pay his own travelling expenses. Salary would be at the rate of £48 per annum. The following year on transfer from Flinders to La Perouse, Ned was advised that he had been transferred to La Perouse Station and he would leave by the first coach and train the following morning. On arrival he was to report to the Superintendent and submit an account of his travelling expenses. To help him with these expenses, his monthly salary of £4 was included.

One wonders how the present members of P.R.E.I. would take such short notice and the requirement to provide the money for transport.

INCIDENTS ON FANNING ISLAND

(by Ambie Sextie)

The year 1926 was destined for some unusual events on Fanning. The first, and one of great impact, was the dramatic escape from death of Doug Passmore, Izzy Towner and Charlie Bennie. Firstly,

to get the picture right, one must understand the lagoon, passage to the sea, which divides the island at this particular point, and general conditions pertaining to the story. Fanning is shaped like a horseshoe with the opening constituting the passage through which runs the tide alternately at ebb and flow and at perhaps some seven knots. Herein lies the drama which will now be unfolded. These three adventurous youths left the Cable end of the lagoon late on one fine afternoon to explore the upper reaches of the lagoon beyond English Harbour. Their outrigger canoe wended its way through the many rat tail passages and coral outcrops and the sail was uneventful. On the return trip, however, inexperienced and oblivious to the dangers inherent in the passage with its fearsome rip, they encountered big trouble. By now, the tide was running out and this small craft was unable to withstand the enormous current manifest and were at its mercy. Ahead lay the Pacific Ocean and beyond that perhaps Manzanillo, Acapulco, who knows where they may have ended had it not been for one Japanese fisherman fishing on the banks of the passage. Hirada was aware, in the gathering gloom, of cries for help but could not accurately discern where the cries emanated until, how lucky can you be, he sighted the glint from Towner's glasses from the beam of his torch. This was enough to convince him someone was in deep trouble so he bounded to the not too distant home of that tower of a man, Hughie Greig, who in his usual efficient manner manned the anchored launch and sped through the passage to the open sea beyond. Being expertise, was there ever anyone better, on Fanning, than Hughie? He immediately directed his craft to the course of the canoe and upon picking it up it was now well out of sight of the island. The formal trip back to shore was a very glad one for these three Sinbads and one could say that, apart from perhaps the danger of sharks, exposure and the doubtful seaworthiness of the craft, it may have been a disastrous outcome. However, to this day all are well and happy.

Smallpox. No one on any island and for that matter anywhere welcomes this febrile and contagious disease. It so happened on Fanning when a trading vessel arrived with two of the crew laid low with this disease. Much concern was naturally in evidence by all, particularly the cable staff, who of necessity did not wish anything to impede their important line of duty. Therefore grave threats were issued from the Cable end of the island that any native contacting anyone thereon would be for serious trouble, yes, even in the very shadow of death. The warning was, however, adhered to and all ended well.

An occurrence reminiscent of the once wellknown film "Marcus Welby MD" was evidenced on Fanning when, with the one and only Doctor on the island, one Harry James Fox ran foul of stomach pains which were diagnosed as severe appendicitis. It was necessary for the Doc to perform the operation but the question arose as to who was to administer the anaesthetic when the Doc had to wield the scalpel. That calm and unperturbable joker, Reg Conolly, duly did the honours and administered the ether drop by drop to the satisfaction of the Doc and to the joy of the many who had gathered to witness the event which illuminated the versatility of man when placed in a position such as this. Harry made a wonderful recovery and for that time being on his feet three days after was indeed an historic phenomenon only, but recently adapted in medical practice.

Any impediment to shipping was always a danger to Fanning in that supplies covering a three-month period between boats were eagerly sought. It was true that a reserve was carried and this, although adequate for most contingencies, was not sufficient to withstand a prolonged and worrying time. During this time when the Hauraki was involved, however, the fishing members of the staff saw to it that we had plenty of Mulateer, Pihere and other species and this together with rice formed a good and nourishing diet. Grog was short, too, and we rationed the medicinal Brandy in a most miserly fashion for this time.

During World War I the German battleship Nurnberg called and played havoc with the cable and installations but without, fortunately, no loss of life and it was freely echoed that during World War II perhaps Nippon would also 'have a go'. Precautions were therefore implemented and one bears repetition. Some few days before the war actually started there arrived the navy sloop Wellington with one Lewis gun on board for us on the island to defend our lines of communication and lives. How silly can you get. However, this had its lighter side. I, the writer, can recall asking the Cockney sailor who formed the squad to bring this gun ashore, what that side handle was and he replied "Why Sir, that is the Cockin' 'andle".

There was quite an exodus from the island on one particular trip to Vancouver on the Hauraki and something in the nature of ten left on this particular voyage. Most of them had a case of whisky each and were for the most part very much awash with grog on going aboard. This buoyant state contributed to one Stan Denison generously giving a steward a bottle of Scotch and, from memory, it could well have been Hairy Hinton's renowned and potent Ballater. However, the mountain dew had its effect in that this steward became missing and the Captain ordered a sea search of some three hour duration but without avail. Imagine the chagrin of the 'old man' when the miscreant was discovered asleep in one of the lifeboats. After that episode drinks were held at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. in the Captain's cabin under supervision. He was a lovely man, that Captain. He told us that he had contacted the L.E.V. in Vancouver to come down in force and meet the ship. We bit and asked what the L.E.V. was and were told Ladies of Easy Virtue. No objections by anyone. No sir.

- THE RADIO EXILE -

(by Jack Bassett)

The Veteran went to Heaven;
Stepped through the Pearly Gates,
And said goodbye to Earthly woes
And rising council-rates.
He danced with glee, I'll guarantee,
Removed from toil and strife....
He'd worked so hard at O.T.C.
All through his bloomin' life.

Yet habits of a lifetime
Cling harder than we think;
From Paddington to Martin Place,
Or out on Heaven's brink.
While Angels suffered anguish
(More deep than tongue can tell)
He made a small receiving-set
That tuned in 2BL.

This crime was mad and vicious,
It simply left me numb;
But yet I knew instinctively
That worse was yet to come.
He built a rough antenna
From harp-strings more-or-less....
Then made a crude transmitting-set
To work with V.I.S.!

THOSE DAYS (by Ponto)

Many years ago, whilst serving at Townsville, there were often periods when the cable between Thursday Island and the mainland were broken.

On those occasions we worked all night long on 500kc handling landline traffic and ships got a very poor hearing. On one of these occasions Jerry O'Hare was receiving and a ship badly interfered with the reception. No break in, in those days. When Thursday Island ceased sending Jerry said "I am sorry but that GOAT kept sending and I have missed several messages". It so happened that a ship-going English Inspector logged the remark and on his return to London reported it.

Weeks later, a file big enough to choke an alligator arrived at Townsville via the Minister for Overseas, the Australian Government and A.W.A.; and the O.I.C. sheeted the blame home to Jerry. Jerry stalled as long as possible with the O.I.C. asking every day for a reply. You must reply, Jerry, as it is handled by everybody from the Foreign Office down to A.W.A. Jerry was worried and kept saying, "I did say it and what am I going to do. If I admit it I may be sacked". (They could sack you in those days.) I was thinking about it in bed and a brilliant idea suddenly struck me. When I saw Jerry the next day I said "Brother, you are home and hosed! You didn't say that GOAT, you said that BOAT." Jerry almost fell on my neck, promptly sat down and wrote a most indignant reply stating he would not, under any circumstances, call a brother operator a GOAT and what he had said was "THAT BOAT" and that the English Inspector had mistaken the 'B' for a 'G'.

Some day someone should relate what Dave Fleming said to the Japanese operator! How could he have possibly known that his mother was never married! - the Jap's, not Davie's.

NEAR AND FAR

Geoff and Mrs. Whitmore departing in June for a twelve months overseas tour.

Alan and Mrs. Vagg departed per "Arcadia" on 1st February for a six months world tour.

Gordon and Mrs. Campbell leaving for London after Easter to visit their son in the U.K.

George Morrison has seen the light after so many years and moved back to Sydney.

Following the Melbourne Reunion, Doug Crabtree and Charles Carthew went to the Kingston Centre and delivered the top tier of the reunion cake to veteran Norm Seabrook, who is totally deaf and walks with the aid of an aluminium support stick. Norm has mastered the art of making cane baskets and his work is of championship class. In 1966 he gained three third prizes, 1970 five seconds, 1971 fifteen firsts and was champion in 1972, 1973 and 1974. All his work was exhibited at agricultural and horticultural shows. Norm is also skilled in mosaic work by inlaying lamp shades and coffee tables with miniature coloured tiles. In a tape recorded interview, Norm sent greetings to old friends and colleagues and Charles made certain that everyone concerned heard the recording over the telephone later on.

New South Wales Veterans are pleased that George McDonald is retiring to our sunny State. Sorry Victoria, your loss.

Another Victorian settling down in Sydney is George Morrison. During his working life George seemed to oscillate between Melbourne and Sydney but settled in Melbourne for retirement. It will be nice to see George again at our functions.

Sid Legrand sends greetings and best wishes to his colleagues from his home at Bannora Point on the N.S.W. north coast just short of the Queensland border.

"ELECTRA HOUSE", ADELAIDE

(by Brax Horrocks)

Electra House, a building of brick and stone, in King William Street, Adelaide, located just north of the G.P.O. and opposite the Town Hall, was erected in 1901 for the Citizens Life Assurance Company.

In December, 1919 the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company bought the property and shortly after transferred their activities from the old Advertiser building nearby into the new premises which they named "Eastern Telegraph Building". In 1940 it was re-named "Electra House" by Cable & Wireless Ltd.

In 1872 the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company had completed an undersea cable link between Singapore and Darwin to link, by manual relay, with the Overland Telegraph line from Adelaide, which had been completed a few months earlier.

Although the Company had premises in Darwin from 1872, an office in Adelaide was not established separately from the G.P.O. until 1893 when R.W. Bernard, as Manager, opened an office in Victoria Square.

In 1902, L. Webster was Manager at that time, a cable was completed from Durban via Mauritius, Cocos and Cottesloe to Adelaide. The original plan was for the cable to land at Glenelg, but a more suitable landing was found to be at the Grange. From the cable hut at the Grange, a 4-core VIR cable, with lead sheathing, was laid along suburban streets, then along Grote Street, through Pitt Street to Franklin Street, finally entering the back of Electra House. The portion of the cable from the Adelaide office to Underdale was subsequently replaced with a 4-core paper insulated, lead-covered cable through Waymouth Street and Henley Beach Road. In 1903 a cable depot, at Cable Company's wharf at Port Adelaide, was established; the electrician in charge was H.K.C. Fisher, later it was under the care of R. Rodman, then George Hill, and finally Maurie Pearn.

In 1904 the Company's office was moved from Victoria Square to the old Advertiser building. Messages passing between the Company's international system and the Australian telegraph network were conveyed on printed forms through a twin pneumatic tube system with blowers located in the basement of the old Central Exchange building.

W.D. Proctor was Superintendent when the Company moved to Electra House. Busy years followed, except during the depression period of the late twenties, and early thirties. Heaviest loadings were during the second World War. Company staff reached a peak number of over 100 and telegraphists, with support staff, worked in four shifts of six hours every day of the week, often with overtime added. Sometimes they worked eight hour shifts on Sunday by arrangement to have one Sunday in four free of duty - no extra money was paid for Saturday or Sunday work, it was just

✓

part of the job and accepted as such.

In Electra House the operating room was on the top floor, the pneumatic tubes, which linked with the operating room at the G.P.O., and the international circuits, terminated there. Lead-acid batteries in the basement, under the care of Bill Lee, supplied 30 volts positive and negative for the cable circuit to Cottesloe. Incoming signals on the cable circuit were ink-taped by siphon recorder until the late twenties when the "Regenerator" system was installed.

The Company's two international cable circuits (one undersea to Cottesloe, the other via Government landline to Cottesloe, where it was connected by relay to the "loaded" cable to Cocos) were connected to the Eastern States through relays by the use of Government landlines.

At about the time when the move was made into Electra House, the Company's staff formed the Eastern Extension Sports Club and much activity followed. Opposite the lift on the first floor of Electra House was the "Championship" board. I recall seeing such names as Harry Crawley as Bowls Champion: Harry Chinner and Herbert Muhlhan under Tennis: Keith and Aubrey Barnes, and Arthur Geary under swimming. Leo Gleeson, Malcolm Tregenza, Norm MacKay, and myself under Athletics and so on. And there were good cricketers too, such as John Hallifax, Harry Cowham, Arthur Shepherd and Leo Gleeson.

Some of our footballers had played with League and Interstate teams, Lance Leak, Arthur Geary and Leo Gleeson (what a wonderful all-round sport Leo was). Bruce Sutherland represented South Australia in lacrosse.

In 1949 the Overseas Telecommunications Commission took over the responsibility of all overseas communications and they decided to cease activities from Electra House. Some of the Company's staff were transferred to other States and some retired locally - these "Veterans" still meet from time to time maintaining the fellowship and friendship developed over so many years of working and playing together.

MESSENGER SERVICE

The following story from Frank Dunstall:-

This happened about two years after the "Beam Wireless Service" was established to London. The Beam was controlled by A.W.A. and various departments were located in their building in Queen Street. The Operating Room was on the first floor and at the back of the ground floor was the Despatch Room. There was a small hand-operated lift, I think we called it "the shute" in which messages were sent to the despatch clerk for delivery by messengers.

One morning on the early shift, I answered a phone; the caller was wishing to speak to Mr. Tim O'Leary, the despatch clerk. I went to the shute and told Tim he was wanted on the phone. Tim replied through the shute "I am busy, ask who is calling". I asked the chap on the telephone his name and just as he began to answer, the phone slipped from my ear for a second and on replacing it I heard the word "father". Not wishing to ask him to repeat, I told Tim his father was on the phone. Within seconds, Tim came up the stairs into the Operating Room and said "Good heavens, man, where is he phoning from, he has been dead for the last five years." (The call was the father of a messenger.)

BEAM ANTICS

At the reunion this story of the Beam Wireless days really emphasised the mischief to which the boys were then prone.

The Sunday supervisor on duty sent the traffic distributor up to the fourth floor with a picture for the Facsimile Department. Now this chappie sported a "Jimmy Edwards" moustache in itself an invitation for the horseplay that followed.

Returning to the Beam floor, conspicuous in white underpants studded with blue polka dots, the victim stood immobile at the door, a picture of misery!

Looking up from his desk and quite obviously surprised, the supervisor enquired "Where on earth are your trousers?" and the answer "ON THE WIRELESS HOUSE FLAG-POLE, SIR!" prompted immediate verification of this startling fact!

The incident was duly logged and what happened at the subsequent "carpeting" of the culprits was never divulged!

Another real "GEM" concerned the very same supervisor who happened to pass by a public telephone booth in the city on his way to work and by sheer coincidence or devilish bad luck, recognised one of his staff making a call.

On arrival at the office, the supervisor signed on and was then told by the colleague whom he relieved that "so-and-so" had just phoned in that he was ill in bed at home and unable to report for duty. Yes, it was the very same chap spotted earlier on who was quite philosophical about it and quoted as saying, "Ah well, you can't win all the time!"

S T O P P R E S S !

Members will wish Jack Guthrie, N.S.W. President, best wishes for a complete and quick recovery from his recent slight heart attack. Trusting you are well enough, Jack, to conduct the Annual General Meeting.

Also, best wishes to Jack Swift, who is on extended sick leave.

OVERSEAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
(VICTORIA)

President...J.R.Hunter.

- 19th Annual Reunion -

Friday-14th November, 1975.

O.T.C. House,
382 Lonsdale Street,
Melbourne.

(By courtesy of Management).



HON. SEC.:

C. CARTHEW

7 LANTANA ST.

CLAYTON, VIC. 3168

TELEPHONE 844-2814

John R. Jordan	John R. Hunter	Jean Edwards
John R. Magnus	John R. Hunter	One Available
W. A. Shea	Ted Howell	D. R. Lister
L. H. Jupp	J. M. Bright	J. B. Heather
R. L. Lane	C. J. Green	Bee Munnis
D. C. Humphries	H. G. Lake	Elvie Dunn
Sep Harvey	C. Waite	R. Stoddart
John McKeen	W. W. Cunnand	W. Kagan
John W. Carmichael	Peter Lintayon	J. R. Ash
W. B. Rae	John E. Reynolds	S. Alexander
R. W. Turnbull	Cliff Lister	Robert Earl
E. Iresine	Jean Butler	W. L. Chittenden
John I. Cooper	John E. Reynolds	J. Curle
F. B. Davis	John E. Reynolds	Les Brown
W. R. H. H. H.	John E. Reynolds	J. B. White
W. Bentley	John E. Reynolds	J. Benson
J. J. G. G.	John E. Reynolds	A. Thorton
	John E. Reynolds	W. B. B.
	John E. Reynolds	Robinson
	John E. Reynolds	Red Inner
	John E. Reynolds	M. H. H.
	John E. Reynolds	W. E. W.
	John E. Reynolds	B. J. J.