



# NEWSLETTER

VOL 1 PT. 11

A P R I L 1 9 7 8

## National Secretary

The only nomination for General Secretary of the Australian Veterans' Associations was Charles Carthew. Charles is well-known as the most dedicated veteran in Australia; Secretary of the Victorian Association for the past twenty-two years; and General Secretary of the Australian Associations since that office was created. In addition to his state duties he regularly corresponds with kindred overseas organisations. Charles is also quite a good hand as a Magician.

Confirmation of his selection as National Secretary will no doubt be formally approved at all state Annual General Meetings.

## Expression of Thanks

On behalf of all Veterans' Associations throughout Australia, General Secretary, Charles Carthew wishes to express sincere thanks to O.T.C.(A) for kind courtesies and helpful cooperation, particularly to Commission Management for permitting use of O.T.C. property and facilities for functions and for reciprocal representation at O.T.V.A. reunions. And, of course, not forgetting the assistance given to the printing and distribution of our Newsletter.

O.T.V.A. is also grateful to the Eastern Extension and Associated Companies Retired Officers' Society - Marconi Trans-Oceanic Guild - Tele globe (Canada) Quarter Century Club - U.K. Marconi Operators' Society - Society of Wireless Pioneers of America - Cable and Wireless Limited London - and O.T.C. (Australia) for complementary mailing lists.

A word of sincere appreciation also to the Exiles Club for so kindly making available residential facilities at "Meadowbank", 27 Cambridge Park, Twickenham, Middlesex to O.T.V.A. members when holidaying overseas.

## Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion has been received for consideration at all states' Annual General Meetings in 1978. The Notice of Motion is duly proposed and seconded by financial members, and reads as follows:

"We give Notice of Motion that consideration be given to associated membership being granted after 20 years service in overseas telecommunications."

## Victorian Annual General Meeting

The Victorian Association's Annual General Meeting will be held at O.T.C. House, 382 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne (by courtesy of management) on Friday, 26th May, 1978 commencing 5.30 p.m. Annual subscriptions of \$2.00 are now due. Interstate visiting veterans will be very welcome.

### Queensland Annual General Meeting

The Brisbane Annual General Meeting will be held in the O.T.C. Manager's office on Thursday, 18th May, 1978. Any members in Brisbane on that date should contact Jim Banks on telephone 221 6250.

### South Australian Winter Meeting

The Adelaide Branch advised that their Winter Meeting will be held on 25th May, 1978 and those who propose to attend should contact Bert Dudley on 228 2867.

### Sydney Annual General Meeting

The New South Wales Association will be holding their Annual General Meeting in the Amenities Room, 7th Floor, O.T.C. House, 32 Martin Place, Sydney on Friday, 5th May, 1978 commencing at 6.00 p.m. Visiting interstate and overseas veterans are cordially invited.

The meeting is timed to coincide with the O.T.C. Station Managers' Conference and members will be able to meet many of their old colleagues who are now serving in other areas.

### SICKIES

Regret to report that since publication of our Newsletter that John (Ponto) Ponsonby (Tasmania); George Broadbent (Sydney); Jack Davis (Sydney); Keith Wilmot (Sydney); and Bill Unwins (Victoria) have all spent time in hospital. Also Frank McCormack, Les Brown, Arthur Green, Bert Hartley, Joe Moloney, Jim Taylor, Hedley Tyler, Mick Treacey, George Magnus all of Melbourne and Harry Cook of Sydney have all been ill. We wish to these Veterans and any others who have been ill our good wishes for a fast and complete recovery.

Dick Evans recently visited Rocky Gordon at Mannum and reported that he was as cheerful as ever, but unfortunately physically unable to make the journey to Adelaide to attend the meetings.

Pat Sykes, who was in Adelaide on retirement leave from Perth, visited Eric Symes at the Home for Incurables. Eric can now walk a little but spends most of his time in a wheelchair. As always, Eric is cheerful and has a wonderful outlook on life. He is always glad to have a chat to any Veterans who call. This invitation includes interstate Veterans to Adelaide.

On hearing that John Ponsonby had been ill your Editor wrote to wish him good health. The typical "Ponto" reply on his health and an account of his Golden Wedding Anniversary is worthy of publishing:

"It was very good of you writing and enquiring about my health and also my thanks once again for "Newsletter" which as you know gives we old chaps a great deal of pleasure. Until quite recently I visited the Dr once a year in November to get a med. certificate so that I could get my drivers licence renewed - a thing you have to get every year here if you are over 70 years old. In recent times I found that digging, chopping, etc. left me very breathless and finally I was laid low. Dr's verdict lungs not pumping enough oxygen, heart worn out, hernia developing, varicose veins, corns and calluses, spots before the eyes, no sex life but apart from that I am in the pink of condition!! A term in bed and I felt better and started crawling about only to be laid low again. I'm up again today but the quacks verdict I must not exert myself in any way as the heart just won't stand it. What a hell of a way to be. Six weeks ago I felt so lousy I rang the Dr on three separate occasions telling him I was at death's door and asked him to come and push me through!! On my last trip to town I met a

recently bereaved widow and said "It must be hard losing a husband?" "Hard", she said, "It's bloody near impossible!!"

Last December we celebrated our golden wedding anniversary - 50 years of joy and companionship. She is still my number one pin up girl and I wouldn't change one day of it. Mind you any woman could find happiness with a gentle, considerate, loving, easygoing, handsome slob like myself!! Keep your eye on the obituary column, I'm not out of the wood yet!! I know the Almighty will say "Good Me" He's ex O.T.C. How rare anyone from there is!!!"

#### Queensland Reunion

The Queensland Association held their Annual Reunion in the O.T.C. Manager's office on 25th October, 1977 with 19 in attendance. Highlight was the attendance of 92 year old A.W. McMurray, who travelled a couple of hundred miles for the occasion.

Official guest was O.T.C. General Manager, Veteran Harold White, who in an address to the meeting, amongst other things stated:

"Overseas telecommunications has made immense strides but both the pioneer cable and radio veterans laid the foundation and for that they must be remembered and receive fitting tribute."

Another important guest was our own Charles Carthew, per courtesy of O.T.C. Management. Charles spent considerable time at the home of President, George Scott, chatting over veterans doings and old times.

#### West Australian Annual Reunion

The Perth Association held their Annual Reunion on 24th November, 1977 at the Imperial Hotel, Wellington Street, Perth. Although only a small Association, 18 attended with 7 sending in apologies. Official guest was General Secretary, Charles Carthew. Those present were Charles Carthew, Norm Odgers, Fred James, Fred Owen, Ron Cocker, Gerry Tacey, Tony Hanson, Tom Bryant, Pat Gray, Des Else, Harold Burdett, Brian Morrell, Jack Thomas, Des Walker, Peter Seaton, Harry Bromwell, R. Fisher and one signature the Editor cannot decipher.

#### South Australian Reunion

The Adelaide Branch of the OTVA held their Christmas Meeting on 24th November, 1977 at the Public Service Club, Wakefield Street, Adelaide. This is an ideal venue in every way and has been used for a number of years under the sponsorship of Ken Collett to whom the members of that Association are most grateful for making it possible for them to meet in such a pleasant place.

Those present were Geoff Cox, Brax Horrocks, Bert Dudley, Harold Oates, Keith Roberts, Ken Collett, Cliff Birks, Norm Giles, Jerrold Shaw, Norm Mackay and Dick Evans.

The reunion was also a farewell to Norm Giles who advised that he will be moving shortly to his home in New South Wales. All the members are sorry to lose Norm but wish him well in his new location.

The meeting was also their business meeting and Secretary/Treasurer, Bert Dudley, presented his financial statement. President, Brax Horrocks and Secretary/Treasurer, Bert Dudley, do such an outstanding job that they were again re-elected for the coming year.

Apologies were received from Rocky Gordon, Bill Lemon, Graham Little, Cecil Shortt, Alf Kerr, George Rowe, Eric Symes and Ralph Matthews.

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### Victorian Reunion

The Victorian 21st Annual Reunion was held in O.T.C. House, Melbourne on Friday, 11th November, 1977, 61 being in attendance. Guests included O.T.C. General Manager, Harold White and Glen Weile from the U.S.A. The signatures of those in attendance are listed on a later page of the Newsletter.

### N.S.W. Annual Reunion

The New South Wales Veterans' Association held their Annual Reunion in November and had a record attendance of 144 persons. It was the second year that wives were invited and 43 were among those present at the function. Official guests were Mr. Bob Sommerville, Commission Chairman, Mr. Tom May, Vice-Chairman and Commissioner, Mr. N. Stevens. They were accompanied by their good ladies.

The venue for the Reunion was the O.T.C. Staff Cafeteria and the staff of the Cafeteria must be congratulated on the quality, presentation and quantity of the goodies. All indications are that there will be a larger role up of ladies for the next Reunion.

Those in attendance were: Charlie Watson, Joe Collister, Trevor and Mrs. Thatcher, Gordon Cupit, Claude Dalley, Jack and Mrs. Whittaker, Ted O'Donnell, John Mulholland, Ted Bishton, Charlie and Mrs. Raecke, Val Litchfield, Len Rourke, Des and Mrs. Kinnersley, Alec Griffiths, George McDonald, Charlie Swinney, Rus Welbourn, Mick and Mrs. Wood, George and Mrs. Maltby, Gareth and Mrs. Thompson, Jack Swift, John and Mrs. Hodgson, Jim and Mrs. Neylon, Lyle and Mrs. Gowanloch, Keith and Mrs. Oxley, Norm and Mrs. Harris, Gray McDonald, Alex and Mrs. Sandilands, Jim Vasek, Bill Luke, Bill Jenvey, John and Mrs. Toland, Bob Wright, Ken Walker, Ken Nutt, Ray and Mrs. Stewart, Ron and Mrs. Smith, Joe Holmes, Bill Hickling, Cyril and Mrs. Vahtrick, Reg and Mrs. Towner, Edgar and Mrs. Harcourt, Bernie and Mrs. White, Ray and Mrs. Moyes, Jim and Mrs. Anderson, Dave Fleming, Randy Payne, Des and Mrs. Woods, Gordon Johnston, Bill and Mrs. Day, Joe Hawkins, Cec Bardwell, Margaret Dobson, Ron Beecham, Phillip and Mrs. Geeves, Roy Doohan, Jack Chant, Joe and Mrs. Bugeya, Shaddy and Mrs. Meynert, Harry De Dassel, Lou Brown, Dave Bourne, Keith Wilmot, Keith Burbury, Jim Blemings, Alec Cilia, Bill Chant, Alf Agius, Horrie McInnes, Tony Ebert, Athol and Mrs. Brown, Stan Gray, Orm Cooper, Edgar and Mrs. Appleton, Percy Day, Wilf and Mrs. Ellershaw, Bill Chant Snr., Jim Davis, Jack Burgess, Peter and Mrs. Frost, Jack Bullen, Alf and Mrs. Culloden, Ernie Anthoney, Keith and Mrs. Bondfield, Fred Doolette, Brian and Mrs. Darragh, Bill and Mrs. Brown, Jack and Mrs. Guthrie, Ray and Mrs. Baty, Harold and Mrs. White, Bob and Mrs. Sommerville, Tom and Mrs. May, Neal and Mrs. Stevens, Harold Baker, Eric Cockle, Bruce and Mrs. Collett, Geoff and Mrs. Day, Alf Flood, Tom Hughes and Nick Hassou.

### Auckland Reunion

The Auckland Veteran Cablemen's Association held their Annual Meeting and Reunion in the New Zealand Netherlands Society on Friday, 9th December, 1977.

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, G. Giles, L. Gladding, M.H.S. Greenwood, H.N. Jacobs, R.C. Langford, A.G. Miller, A.B. Mortensen, L.H. Russell, L. Sedman, F.C. Studman, J.J. Potter, K.J. Healy, C. Nielsen, W.J. Todd, J. Walker.

All officers were unanimously re-elected, that is, Chairman - Bill Craig, Hon. Sec. and Treasurer - Fred Studman, Auditor - Tom Condon, Committee - L. Davison, R. Atkins and L. Gladding.

As well as the actual dinner for the Reunion, the ladies provided afternoon tea.

Special guest was Arthur MacPherson, ex Union Steamship Company at Suva, who was so well known to most of the staff stationed in Suva over the many years at that city.

Sandy Miller gave an interesting account of his recent visit with his good wife to Fiji to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary. A number of those present at the Reunion had happy recollections of attending the wedding in Suva 50 years previously.

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## THE NOSTALGIA DEPARTMENT

(Contributed by Philip Geeves)

In 1928, when the Coastal Radio Service employed a staff of 75, Mr. George Weston described its operations in the course of an explanatory lecture to new employees of AWA.

Many Veterans will recall the shaggy-headed figure of George Weston. What's more, many of them will surely remember taking the train to Carlingford and walking to the Pennant Hills Radio Centre to take their Morse examination under George Weston's watchful eye.

During World War I, as an officer of the Naval Radio Service, Weston was in charge of wireless at Garden Island. By 1922, when AWA took over the ailing Coastal Radio Service, G.J. Weston was deputy to the Commonwealth Engineer for Radiotelegraphy, James Malone.

This is what George Weston told the new AWA employees during his 1928 lecture:-

### Coastal Radio Service

The present Coastal Radio Service was established in 1911, but prior to this, a Station which met the very small demands of Ships on the Australian Coast was operated at the Australia Hotel, Sydney, by Mr. Farmer and others, several of whom are still with us.

The original design of the Coastal Radio Stations, of which there were 19 dotted around the coastline of Australia, provided for intercommunication around Australia, independently of the Telegraph Line Services. This, however, was never accomplished completely, except during the hours of darkness. Of the original 19, 2, Roebourne in Western Australia and Mount Gambier in South Australia have been closed. In addition to the Stations on the Mainland, a station was erected at Port Moresby in Papua and more recently another Station at Samarai.

The Island Radio Service consists of 7 Stations in the Territory of New Guinea. This was originally a German possession, and was taken by the Australians during the War. The Wireless Stations were erected and operated by Members of the Expeditionary Force under Military conditions, and it might be noted that both the original men and apparatus were supplied by AWA. At the conclusion of the War, the Island Stations were brought under the control of the Postmaster General's Department, and the present organisation had its birth under the Military Expeditionary Forces.

Under the Agreement between the Company and the Commonwealth Government, both these Services and Stations passed to the control of the Company.

Other Wireless Stations of interest now closed were the Macquarie Island Station about 600 miles south of New Zealand on the edge of the Antarctic Regions, and Woodlark Island, a Naval Station to the East from New Guinea.

The Sydney Station, originally erected on the present Pennant Hills Site, together with Perth, are remarkable as having the two highest Wireless Masts in Australia, being 120 metres, or approximately 400 feet in height. This great height is not apparent because there is nothing locally available by way of contrast. When it is realised, however, that the Flagstaff on the top of the Post Office Tower in Martin Place is just about two-thirds of the height of these Masts, a better idea can be gained. When erected in 1911 and 1912, Pennant Hills and Perth Station were the last thing in Wireless Science, today, not one scrap of the original apparatus is in use, so complete has been the change brought about by the 12-14 years progress. To work the Pennant Hills Station at its full capacity in 1912 required an Engine of nearly 100 Horsepower. Today the Station has 10 times the range with less than 5 Horsepower.

Townsville Station, which is situated within a mile or so of the centre of the town has been the channel through which all Wireless communication to New Guinea have been conducted. Situated to the North of the Tropic of Capricorn, Townsville possesses the unique experience of having the sun shining on the south side of the houses at certain periods of the year, a condition which is absolutely unknown in Sydney or in any other Southern city. Townsville Station is also of interest in that within its range comes all the danger points of the Great Barrier Reef, and Ships having the misfortune to strike the Barrier Reef can rely on establishing communication with Townsville.

Thursday Island Radio Station has always been regarded as of very great importance from the defence point of view, overlooking Torres Straits, through which any enemy Warships from the Pacific must pass. Thursday Island has been called the Gibraltar of Australia, and is one of the few fortified points on the Coast. Thursday Island is connected with the more settled portion of Queensland by means of a long telegraph line, stretching the full length of Cape York Peninsular, and passes for hundreds of miles through some of the wildest country of Australia, populated by relatively fierce tribes of natives, and involving an enormous expense and danger in maintenance. The value of wireless bridging this difficult section can be easily appreciated, and for this reason Thursday Island must always be considered one of the important Stations of the Coastal Radio Service.

Port Darwin Radio Station is of interest in that it is the nearest point of communication to the Dutch East Indies, and prior to the more recent developments of Wireless whereby the ranges of stations are so immensely increased, it was regarded as a probable outlet for Australian communication with the Old World via Batavia and Java. Although the recent developments in Wireless have shown that this Station is no longer necessary for Australia's international communications, it will undoubtedly come into its own again with the development of the Aerial Route between Australia and India, as this Station will undoubtedly become the point of first communication for Air Ships.

Wyndham is a small Station on the North West Coast of Australia, and is interesting so far that it works not only Ships at Sea, but also communicates with Cattle Stations in the Interior. Wyndham is the Shipping Port for a Cattle District, and there are extensive Meat Works situated near the town. As the Cattle are driven in from hundreds of miles inland, it is desirable, both on account of feeding the cattle, and not overstocking the yards that the Cattle should be drafted in as required. The use of Wireless has facilitated this movement of Cattle to a very great degree.

On the west coast of Australia are stations, Broome, Geraldton and Perth. Of Broome, little can be said except that it is regarded as an alternative point of communication with Singapore in the event of necessity. Geraldton assists Perth by handling traffic when Perth is otherwise engaged. Perth Station from the point of view of extensive range working is unique. It is the point of arrival and departure for Ships overseas either to Colombo or to South Africa, and consequently it is demanded that this station shall work over extreme ranges, two to three thousand miles being quite a normal experience.

On the South Coast, Esperance and Adelaide are very frequently the first points of call from Ships coming to Australia via the Cape of Good Hope, bound direct either to Australia or New Zealand. The route of these ships is sometimes rather far to the South for the Perth Station, and Esperance and Adelaide are their first points of communication.

The remaining Stations, Melbourne, King Island, Flinders Island and Hobart are mainly of use in keeping touch with Steamers on Coastal runs.

The Sydney Station demands a special description. The transmitting Station for Sydney, and apparatus, is located at Pennant Hills, and the Receiving Station is situated at La Perouse. The transmitting apparatus, although at Pennant Hills, is controlled and operated by the Telegraphist at La Perouse, and this permits the quite modern achievement of sending and receiving simultaneously. The Sydney Stations which include both of these points, have maintained communication with Ships right into London, and into Vancouver in Canada, the maximum range that can be reached on this earth.

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A direct service is also maintained between Sydney and Rabaul, Sydney and Noumea, and in a short time between Sydney and Fiji.

The Coastal Radio Service is operated by a Staff of 75 men, and under every kind of climatic condition which it is possible to find in Australia, from the centre of the City to outback where the total of white inhabitants can be counted on one hand. It has always been the policy to relieve Operators at tropical places, or where the conditions of life are extreme, at least every three years.

The most isolated Station which is now in operation is at Willis Island, where the population apart from the Wireless Staff is Nil. Willis Island is a little coral heap about 300 miles from Townsville. The purpose for which this Station exists is because in that neighbourhood, cyclones, which occasionally devastate the Eastern Coast of Australia are "born", and by obtaining the earliest communications of the birth or original formation of a Cyclone, the Meteorological Department are able to trace its probable course, and issue storm warnings. Although the men on this Islet are there for six months in each year, they frequently volunteer to remain the twelve months, so that although isolated, the conditions of living are not so bad as they might be considered.

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#### O.T.C. Annual Ball

The O.T.C. Annual Ball will be held on Saturday, 24th June, 1978 at the A.J.C. Centre, Randwick at a cost of \$19.00 per double.

Roy Doohan is interested in getting together a Veterans party and any member wishing to attend should contact Roy on telephone 406 4244 as early as possible.

#### CONGRATULATIONS

To veteran, Harold White, on his selection by Cabinet to the position of Chairman of the Domestic Satellite Task Force. Harold is a world authority of international telecommunications, particularly satellite communications and the Government could not have made a better selection. He is being ably assisted on the Task Force by veteran, Graham Gosewinckel, and other O.T.C. officers. The Task Force is expected to sit for approximately six months and in that time will consider hundreds of submissions from organisations and people directly interested in the services which would operate from a national satellite. The group will also visit a number of other countries to observe similar facilities.

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To veterans, Dick Christoffersen on his promotion to Director (Administration) of O.T.C. and to Tom Hughes on his promotion to Deputy Director (Commonwealth Relations).

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To Edgar Harcourt, Assistant General Manager (International), O.T.C., who received the O.B.E. in the Queen's New Year Honours.

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To Percy Day on completion of fifty years in communications.

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To Ron Smith on his appointment as Secretary, Mobile Radiotelephone Manufacturers Sub-Committee, of the Australian Telecommunication Development Association.

#### RETIRED OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

At a recent meeting of the O.T.C. Staff Relations Committee it was suggested that a number of the O.T.C. staff could never make the 25 years service required to join the Veterans' Association and suggested that consideration be given to the formation of an O.T.C. Retired Officers' Association.

The Committee would like to know how many retired members of the Veterans would also be interested in joining a Retired Officers' Association on the basis that the Veterans would be able to keep in touch with old colleagues who unfortunately would not be eligible to attend Veterans functions. Those interested are invited to contact Brian Nell, Secretary, Staff Relations Committee, O.T.C.(A), G.P.O. Box 7000, Sydney, 2001 (telephone Sydney 230 5542).

#### VALE

##### Bill Buchan

Bill passed away in November after a long illness. He served in the Beam Melbourne from 1942 and after 25 years resigned to start up his own business as Photographer. Bill was used for a great deal of Melbourne's photographs and many of his excellent group photos taken at veteran and staff "get together" functions hold pride of place in the OTVA scrap book.

Bill was extremely active in community affairs being a member of Rotary and a Past Master of his Masonic Lodge. Bill's father, the late Dave Buchan, was a pioneer in radio serving in the Coastal Radio Service, who's last posting before retirement was at King Island.

##### Ernie Baldacchino

Ernie arrived in Australia as a migrant in 1950 after having served 28 years with Cable and Wireless in Egypt. On arrival he was given employment in O.T.C. Melbourne Operating Room where he served until his retirement. Although of a rather quiet disposition he quickly adapted himself to the Australian way of life and as he spoke several languages fluently was quite an asset on the job.

##### Bernard Kelly

Ned, aged 76, died in March from complications resulting from a broken leg and broken hip. He originally hailed from the Post Office in Sydney and was taken on by the Eastern Extension in 1925 as a Morse Specialist to operate that famed fast Adelaide landline. The whole of his working time was spent in the Sydney Operating Room where he retired in 1965.

##### Peter Finlayson

Peter served with the R.A.A.F. in New Guinea and the Philippines from 1942 to 1946 and commenced his service with O.T.C. in 1949 in the Melbourne Operating Room. Like many of those good solid workers in the Operating Rooms, his photograph or name did not get the publicity that more prominent officers of other Branches receive. He was held in high esteem by both the Commission and his many colleagues. This was evident by the number of active and retired members who attended his funeral as a final tribute.



George Brown

George Brown was one of those initial Beam Wireless Operators who transferred from the Cable Service. From 1927 until his retirement in the last sixties George served in the Sydney Operating Room and on retirement held the position of Shift Controller. During the early thirties George rode a rather large BSA motor cycle which conveyed him to some very good out-of-the-way fishing spots. He was renowned for the way that he could dispose of half a dozen meat pies as an entree to his normal cut lunch. In addition to fishing George grew orchids as a hobby and developed this to the expert stage. On retirement he was convinced by his good wife, Gwen, to join her in bowls and became a member of the Francis Drake Club. Due to his interest in gardening and amazing green fingers he became curator of that Club. Also in retirement he took up masonry and went through the chairmanship of his Lodge.

D.J. Abercrombie

Dave Abercrombie died suddenly on 18th November, 1977 after only two years of a well deserved retirement. Dave graduated from Sydney University in 1933 with first class honours in Electrical Engineering and held both the Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Economics degrees. The majority of his working life was with S.T.C. and he rose to the position of Assistant General Manager in that organisation. He was a world authority on radio transmission. He joined the Commission in 1963 in the position of Chief Engineer which he held until his retirement. Dave took a very active interest in the Institution of Engineers and Sydney University and became a father figure for young Engineers. The number of friends he made and his standing in the industry was in evidence by the huge congregation who paid their last respects at his funeral.

Tom Connolly

Tom Connolly passed away at his home in Canberra at the age of 78. He commenced with AWA in 1927 as one of the original Beam boys and spent most of his working life in the Melbourne Operating Room of AWA/OTC. He was a popular and very capable union delegate for many years. Although quiet in disposition, he was always approachable and a colleague of high calibre.

George Denson

George Denson, who spent most of his life in the C.R.S., died in March. After serving at many stations George retired from Adelaide in October, 1976.

A.N. Wells

Alec (Bill) Wells died in Perth last November at the age of 67. Bill joined the PCB in Sydney in October, 1925 as a Trainee Cable Operator. He completed his training in late 1926 and served in Sydney as a junior in that capacity for the next 18 months. During this time he was also trained in Electrician duties. In 1928 he transferred to Bamfield later serving at Halifax & Montreal until 1948. The next two years he served in Sydney finally transferring to Cottesloe where he remained until his retirement in 1964. Bill was very well known to the PCB people living in Canada.

Sad news from Canada is the passing of Stan Wallace, Gus Dawe, Bill Birdsell and A. Dickson-Hawkins.

Stan Wallace

Went to Canada in 1917 from the U.K. and started his career with the PCB in Halifax. He served at Fanning Island, Southport and Montreal. In 1930 he was loaned to the West Indies and Penang Telegraph Company in Jamaica for three years. He then returned to the PCB at Bamfield followed a few years later by a transfer to Montreal in 1938 where he remained until his retirement in 1965. At the time of retirement he was City Traffic Chief.

Gus Dawe

Joined the Western Union Telegraph School at Bay Roberts in Newfoundland in 1920. In 1928 he transferred to the Canadian Marconi as a Beam Wireless Operator, Montreal. He remained in Montreal until his retirement in 1969.

Bill Birdsell

Joined the PCB at Bamfield in 1944. In 1950 he went to Montreal and 1958 to Vancouver. At that station he was promoted from Telex Operator to Technical Assistant, to Leading Technical Assistant and finally in 1967 to Technical Supervisor.

A. Dickson-Hawkins

Sydney Veterans will remember Dickson-Hawkins by his attendance at our Annual General Meeting in 1972 whilst on a visit to Fred St. Julian who had recently moved from Canada to Sydney.

OBITUARY

R. Oblath

R. Oblath died in January this year after a short illness. He had suffered from an incurable disease for some time. Ray was an Eastern Veteran and Secretary of the Eastern Retired Officers' Society for many years. He kept in constant touch with our General Secretary and always passed on news from the old dart.

Auckland Association

From Fred Studman in Auckland comes the sad news of the passing of Eastern members O.G. Robertson, G.S. Rees, W.H. Lampen-Smith; ex PCB members C.L. Smyth, F.N. Harry; and R.L. Sextie.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION SCRAPBOOK

The La Trobe State Library of Victoria, 328 Swanston Street, Melbourne has kindly agreed to accept the twenty-one year old scrapbook of OTVA(Victoria) which contains a written and photographic record of the activities of overseas telecommunicators.

This important library has a professionally trained staff to ensure correct storage and preservation of the scrapbook so that it may be of continuing use to interested members of OTVA, to historians and to the public.

In addition, this Library has asked for copies of all published OTVA Newsletters and to be placed on the mailing list for future publications in token of well deserved recognition of an organisation which is helping to preserve past history of the industry and of the people employed.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Bill Jenvey, who resides on the South Coast of N.S.W., is quite a globe trotter and recently was guest speaker at the annual dinner of the Radio Amateurs Old-Timers' Club held in Melbourne. Membership of this exclusive Club is restricted to Radio Amateurs with a minimum of twenty-five years' operating experience and, of course, holding a Radio Amateur "Ham" operating licence. The Club is affiliated with the Wireless Institute of Australia Organisation in which Bill has always been very active.

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Bon Voyage to Marjorie McKittrick who will be travelling with the Women's Weekly group leaving Melbourne on May 16th for a four months overseas cruise aboard the luxury liner "Ellinis".

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Congratulations to Judy and Jim Robinson on the happy occasion of their Silver Wedding Anniversary. Jim is that well-known character who manages the O.T.C. Melbourne Office.

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Sydney Bob Wright, Bob Junior and Bill Jenvey recently departed on the Oriana bound for Canada via the Pacific. They then intend travelling overland and hope to get a ship back from the East Coast.

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Interesting to the hams is that Geoff Warner is back at Bringelly after a few years in Perth but is still using VK6EG/P2 until he is allotted a N.S.W. call sign. ✓

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PCB Veteran, Wenty Quirk and his good wife, Poppy, (Toronto, Canada) recently completed a three months' holiday in Sydney looking up relatives and old friends. During their stay they resided at Manly, Wenty's old home town.

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From Canada we hear that Peter and Eleanor Crakanthorp recently flew around Arizona which included the Grand Canyon. On the way home the nose of their plane was struck by lightning between San Diego and Los Angeles.

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Good tripping to Ron Smith and his good wife who leave in June for an extended tour of the British Isles and the Continent.

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Keith Parker back from an overseas trip to the U.K. has bought a house and settled down at Port Elliot in South Australia. He would appreciate any of his old mates calling in and seeing him at No. 3 Pioneer Avenue, Port Elliot should they be in the area. Keith is in good health and is again active as a "Ham" with callsign VK550.

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Very pleasing to report that the Mitchell Library in Sydney has requested copies of past and future OTVA Newsletters for the use of students, historians and for posterity. This has been followed by a similar request from the La Trobe Library in Melbourne.

#### THE STORY OF A SUBMARINE CABLE

The Archivist of Telecom Australia in Adelaide has been seeking information on old cables to and from Australia. Mrs. Mac. Smith, O.B.E., of Orange has come up with some very interesting information which is as follows:

#### The Story of a Submarine Cable

One day I was listening to the News. To be exact, the day was December 21, 1973, and I heard the announcer say that a contract had been completed for the laying of a cable between New Zealand and Sydney. My thoughts immediately went back to my childhood and to a very special occasion; a day

when I was taken over the cable ship "Sherard Osborn" which was in Western Port Bay at Flinders. Not only did I think of that ship but I thought of Flinders - Flinders as it was then. I was only six years old at the time and, as a member of the Sproule family of "Palafia", Flinders has always had a very warm spot in my heart. At that time, it would have been considered to be a fishing village but its importance would really have been on account of its cable communication with Tasmania. It was at the western entrance of Western Port Bay - what you might say really, was the Eastern point of the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria. We had Bass Strait on one side of the Golf Links, which are now very important Golf Links, in those days it was just sort of a paddock where you played around - Flinders was a place people went to for their Summer holidays in the days when families went away together and they had simple holidays.

There were two quite simple boarding houses and a hotel but the people who actually lived there were either fishermen or were staff of the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company, and the young men who went there to take up that profession lived at what we called the Cable Station. We were fortunate enough to have a home down there and went there for every holiday - we didn't just wait until the Summer holidays - and I suppose the Cable Station and "Palafia" were two of the best known spots on the outskirts of the village.

Now, to get back to the Cable. The "Sherard Osborn" was a cable ship and it had been sent by the Company, Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company to Flinders. We met the Captain, at least I presume my parents did, and we were invited to go over the ship. I can remember so plainly being rowed over to the ship and everything was so clear in my mind. *over*

Then I remembered that I had a letter somewhere that my elder sister, who was then fifteen, had written to our Grandmother and she described that week that the "Sherard Osborn", was in Western Port and in particular detail she described the laying of the land portion of the new cable. Being of an inquiring turn of mind, I began to wonder had there been a cable laid between 1869 and 1898 and also how long a deep sea cable would last. So I began to make inquiries. I knew the first cable laid in 1859 from Cape Otway in Victoria to North Western Tasmania had been a failure and abandoned after twelve months.

My first inquiry was to the Historian at the G.P.O. in Sydney. I knew that in my day the Eastern Extension Company had a Cable Station at La Perouse, because the boys at the Cable Station always hoped they would be sent on to La Perouse rather than to George Town and Tasmania. They thought La Perouse would be nearer to Sydney and they would have more fun I suppose. The Historian there was very good and sent me a lot of information on cables; about the first cable, the second cable and every other cable and he said there was a cable in 1885 which, of course, was the question I wanted answered. Unfortunately well perhaps I should say fortunately, he went on to say there was no cable laid across the Bass Strait in 1898. Certainly they might have doubted my memory, but I had my sister's letter and, for almost the last three years now, I have been doing research - writing to this person and that person and asking different people I met. So many would try to help me and say they knew someone here and there and they would find out for me etc., but it was always the same answer - that all the records showed there was no cable laid across Bass Strait in 1898.

I thought I can't trace the cable - I'd had letters from Libraries, Archives of Hobart, the Historians at the G.P.O., Melbourne and Sydney and many other people who did research for me and everybody looked on my cable as a "phantom cable". At last I thought if I can't trace the cable, surely someone will have heard of the "Sherard Osborn". The "Sherard Osborn" was called after a very famous man, Admiral Sherard Osborn and he had been an Arctic explorer when he was in the Royal Navy and had taken part in the search for Sir John Franklin who was lost in the Arctic - Sir John Franklin, of course, was Governor of Tasmania at one time (1836-1843). On his retirement, Admiral Sherard Osborn joined the Board of a European based Company, Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, which specialised in Submarine Cables, and he became Chairman of that Board. In 1870 that Company was taken over by the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company and Admiral Sherard Osborn was Chairman of that merged Company until his death in 1875. In 1878 the Company had a new cable ship built and it was only natural they called it the "Sherard Osborn" after the famous man. I knew all these things and I couldn't understand why other people didn't know and more especially I couldn't understand why there was no record in official circles. Then I started to trace the ship "Sherard Osborn" without success.

Sometimes I didn't even get an answer to my letters. I started with the Port Authorities - when I wrote to the Port Philip Authority in Melbourne, I had my own letter returned "change of address". It was a very important body that Port Philip Authority and the extraordinary thing is that the very day I had my letter returned, I heard over the air that the Chairman of the Port Philip Authority had died and he sounded a very important person but, evidently, the G.P.O. in Melbourne was not going to worry about that.

A short time later I wrote to the Hobart Port Authority and I had a reply from there saying as I was referring to George Town they had sent my letter on to the Launceston Port Authority. I had a report from them saying there was no record of any ship named the "Sherard Osborn" in their files. That was that! I hadn't got very far. One day in July someone brought my mail in and said there was a letter from Telecom and I said, "Oh! It will be the same thing, somebody's evidently got in touch with Telecom about the cable" and I quite expected to end up with 'there was no cable laid in 1898'. However, to my surprise, this letter from Telecom Australia, Tasmanian Branch, Public Relations, and signed by the Historian, A. Tulip, began:

"Dear Madam, Your letter to the Post Master of the G.P.O. in Hobart has been forwarded on to me." Well, it seems I must have dictated a letter to the Post Master at Hobart but I had dictated so many and I really had forgotten that - he went on ..... "I am just writing to inform you that everything you say in that letter regarding the "Sherard Osborn" is quite correct". Mr. Tulip then went on to say that he hoped I would take this as a preliminary letter as he would be doing more research on this intriguing problem. You can imagine what I thought ..... "at last I am getting somewhere, I have struck someone who is a dedicated Historian" and, as well as that, I felt that I must give credit to the Post Master of the G.P.O. in Tasmania too because nobody else seemed interested in following this up.

A few days later another letter came from Mr. Tulip in which he said he wanted to let me know that everything in my letter regarding the "Sherard Osborn" and the laying of the cable from Flinders to George Town in 1898 was absolutely correct. He said the Manager of Telecom Tasmania hoped I would accept, with their compliments, a book called "A History of the Post Office in Tasmania". He went on to say "no reference will be found to a 1898 cable. It's existence was not suspected until the arrival of your welcome letter".

Mr. Tulip made reference to "The Cyclopedia of Tasmania" published in 1900 and where he found a summary of electric cables in Tasmania and in that summary was the 1898 cable, which was given great prominence in both the mainland and Tasmanian newspapers. You can imagine, I was very pleased - this seemed like the end of the line and, having that wonderful letter, I couldn't understand how there was no record of it in any official postal documents. In the next letter I had from Mr. Tulip he enclosed copies of the extracts from the Tasmanian newspapers and the Melbourne Age so I thought, "that's the end of it, we know it is true now" and I sent him a photostat of my sister's letter which he said would be of great historical interest to them because they had nothing about the laying of the cable in 1898.

Mr. Tulip still looked for more information and wrote to London. The next thing, I received copies of the Minutes of the Eastern Extension Company in 1898 and there, sure enough, was the record of the "Sherard Osborn" arriving in Western Port Bay on July 5, 1898 and arriving in George Town a week later.

I think that here I should quote the exact Minutes, because to me it is so wonderful that Mr. Tulip was able to obtain those Minutes, particularly as I have since heard that a great many of the Minutes of Overseas Submarine Cable Companies had been destroyed by fire but these Minutes in 1898 were still there:

"Extracts from the Original Minute Book No. 5 of the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company Limited for the year 1898."

Directors usually Present: The Marquis of Tweeddale - In the Chair  
F.A. Bevan Esq.  
Hon. George Peel  
Clement S. Colvin Esq.  
Sir Albert Cappel  
J. Denison Pender Esq.

4357 May 11th 1898:

Confidential letter was read dated 3rd instant from the Foreign Office in reference to cable communication with Wei-Hai-Wei and it was reported that the S.S. "Sherard Osborn" had been instructed to proceed to Tasmania to renew original cable and carry out other renewal work en route.

It was resolved that Mr. R.H. Dunmall be appointed to the command of the S.S. "Sherard Osborn" rendered vacant by Captain Madge's resignation and that Mr. G.D. Rushton be appointed Chief Officer of the S.S. "Sherard Osborn" in succession to Mr. Dunmall.

July 6th 1898:

Chairman reported the arrival of S.S. "Sherard Osborn" on 5th instant at Flinders and that she was then engaged in renewing the original Tasmanian Cable.

July 20th 1898:

Chairman reported completion on the 17th instant of renewal by S.S. "Sherard Osborn" of the Tasmanian original cable."

That is the story of the "phantom cable" and I feel it is important that I tell this story to encourage others to follow up something they know and have seen and heard and have written records to prove, yet cannot convince officialdom because they are not in official records. Another thing, never destroy an historical letter.

There are many interesting things about those cables across Bass Strait, which were leased to the Tasmanian Government by the Cable Companies. After Federation the Post Office was taken over by the Federal Government so those cables were leased then to the Federal Government and when the lease was up in 1909 the Government wanted to buy the cables from the Eastern Extension Company, but they thought the price was excessive and the Federal Government decided to lay their own cables. At that time there were the two cables, there was the 1885 cable and the 1898 cable which had replaced the 1869 cable. After being taken up the 1869 cable was taken by the "Sherard Osborn" to Singapore to be laid in shallower waters. After 1909, when the Government decided to lay their two cables to replace the two belonging to the Eastern Extension Company, which then became inoperative. The 1909 cables that the Federal Government had laid between Flinders and Tasmania were taken up during World War II and relaid up around New Guinea - I presume between Australia and New Guinea.

There is so much to tell about cables - about the Cable Station at Flinders and about the people, the Staff Superintendents and the young men who started their careers there, how many may have lost their lives in the First World War. Also about the different people who stayed at "Palafia" which, after my father's death, became my mother's main residence. People who went on to become famous - none of whom are here today. I am fortunate to have such memories but I just have to think about them myself because I am the last of the Sproule family to whom "Palafia", our home at Flinders, with all its associations, meant so much. But it is wonderful to be able to think, and one thing that impresses me so much is the fact that a girl of fifteen could have written such a letter to her Grandmother, which really may be said to have been the very source of all this discovery. I certainly had my memory, but only for the highlights, whereas her letter is so full of detail and here is the letter:

"Palafia", Flinders.  
July 12, 1898.

My dearest Grannie,

Thank you for your letter I got yesterday. We have been having grand holidays and we are all so glad the "Sherard Osborn" came down here during the holidays. On Friday we all went over the ship. The Captain, who is very nice, asked us to tea. The sea was very rough but no one was at all inclined to be sea-sick. The ship was about three quarters of a mile away from the shore. We all enjoyed the row over to her very much. Five Malays rowed us.

They were all in uniform and they did look so nice. The waves kept breaking against the side of the boat and splashing over us but no one minded that. When we got to the "Sherard Osborn" we all felt sorry the row hadn't been longer. The Captain showed mother and the other ladies round and the second mate and the electrician took all the rest of us over. Darby, the first electrician, took us into the testing room and gave us electric shocks and showed and explained the different instruments. He also showed us the room where the electric light for the whole ship is made.

The ship has three great tanks with the cable in. It is coiled round and round. There is over 200 miles of cable on board at present. It is to be laid between here and Tasmania. That which is put down in the shallow water is much thicker and stronger than that which is put in deeper water. All the work connected with the cable is done by Chinamen and all that to do with the sailing, etc. of the ship, by the Malays.

The Chinamen on board are terrible thieves. They take anything they can possibly lay their hands on, even bolts, brass fittings, nails and nobs belonging to the ship. Whenever they are working, a Malay is put on to watch them. The Chinamen eat anything. The ship's cook is a Chinese and his one idea is to make everything into a stew of some sort. The other day they had a crayfish sent them for a treat. You can imagine their disappointment when it was sent in chopped up hot.

They took up the old cable last Thursday, but could not lay the new one till yesterday. They were waiting for a calm day. The cable cannot be put down when it is rough, as the ship rolling about jerks and breaks it.

The Captain said that when they decided to lay the cable, he would blow a whistle and let us know and we had three false alarms before the whistle went yesterday, about 8.00 a.m. We all then went, minus breakfast, at a break-neck pace down to the jetty. We got there just as the boat with the ropes to bring the cable-end ashore went off from the ship. The cable was floated ashore by five boats and three large buoys. First came a boat with the end, and then two buoys, all tied to the cable at a distance of 100 yards from each other, then another boat, then a buoy and lastly the three other boats. The end was on a rope which went through a pulley on shore and was worked by steam on board.

As the top rope was pulled, the under one came nearer and nearer to the shore till at last the cable was landed. They did not finish till after 4.00 p.m. We waited down on the beach the whole time. All the fishermen had to take their boats out of the way of the cable.

I had two pieces of cable given me - one piece of the new and one of the old. The second mate said he would give us some of the cable they are now laying when they return from Tasmania, which will be in about a fortnight. Directly the end of the cable was fixed on shore, the ship started for Tasmania. They can only go slowly, five or six miles an hour. They reckon it will take 30 hours to get to Tasmania.

On Saturday there was a "silver reading" in aid of the Mechanics Hall - Marjorie and Kitty played their violins. Mother read "A change of Treatment" out of W.W. Jacob's book "Many Cargoes". It took very well. Mr. Ladds, the

first mate on board the "Sherard Osborn" sang several comic songs. The third electrician gave me a Mexican dollar. It is about the size of a five shilling piece.

With love from your affectionate Granddaughter, Florrie Sproule.

CORRIGENDUM - OCTOBER, 1977 NEWSLETTER

Apologies to Cecil Shortt in the article "Know your Colleagues". Unfortunately his name was given as Cecil Shott.

In the article on "Marconi Veterans" the dates shown are those taken from the AWA Archives. Ted Bishton started in communications in 1915 not 1920 as quoted and Dave Fleming started as a Telegraph Messenger at Thursday Island in 1905.

Sorry Gents.

RANDOM NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A WIRELESS OPERATOR.....

Speaking of personalities there were plenty of 'em to be found among pioneer Cable and Wireless pioneer veterans. Well remembered is the chap who had a "thing" about "frequencies" up to a point when it became an obsession. Another colleague openly said he could just simply relax-go into a kind of trance-and then release his "other self" to go walk-about.....everyone gave him the benefit of the doubt! Several others were really keen on music and bought every new recording; one collected the "classics" exclusively and enthused on opera.....in fact, he still does to this very day!

Then there was the handy-man who built his own boat and caravan besides mastering the art of bee-keeping. When it came to the gees-gees and dogs we had experts aplenty capable of naming "sure things", weights, pedigree-the lot! All for the benefit of the "S-P" bookie! The ability to pen doggerel and topical script came natural to one or two of the staff and their work was popular at the smoke-ohs held in those far-off times. The "Aktug" orchestra left its mark. An attempt at theatre ended dramatically when, in a court scene, one member of the jury kept imbibing gin cleverly disguised as water and messed things up properly!

Football, cricket and golf clubs were formed.....golf especially proved popular for it helped provide a family picnic atmosphere as well as tournament play for the late Roy Mancer Cup which is to be seen in M.O.R. nowadays right alongside the Wagga Cricket Trophy!

Collins House, Melbourne, in the early C & W days had their Olympic champion, a top class Bandsman, a well known Wrestler and a good cricketer or two in addition to above average tennis players.....in all the old brigade sure were versatile.

"LOOKING FURTHER BACK"

(by Harry Tuson)

I don't think I mentioned in a previous article that my Father was a Master Mariner. He ran away to sea on a sailing ship where he served his apprenticeship "Before the Mast". The sailing ship was the "Fort George" and my Mother was on board with him until he was appointed to a steamship. Meantime he made many voyages between England and Australia, including a voyage from Australia to South Africa with troops to the Boer War.

Incidentally, my Brother was born on the "Fort George", of Chile.



One of the stories was told to my daughter by my Mother which she prompted me to relate as she thought it would appeal to the ladies of the Village -

It was usual in those days when a ship was in port, on a Sunday, for the Chaplain of the port to hold a service to which all the members of the crew were invited. My Mother also went along and, of course, me, with my "wee gog" (my way of referring to my small dog).

All the crew went along, my Mother vowed it was to watch me and hear what I had to say, more than the preacher and apparently all went well until I kept telling my Mother "wee gog, wee gog", to which she tried to stop me by "shushing". It wasn't until after the service she realised what I had been trying to tell her when the parson looked under his chair for his panama hat which I retrieved a few yards away and which "wee gog" had been busily chewing while the service was going on. The crew, according to my Mother, were nearly convulsed by my actions imitating the preacher throwing his arms about and trying to repeat his words.

I must have often amused her when I decided to follow "wee gog's" example by eating off the deck and even walking on all fours until he ran down the companionway when the ship gave a roll, resulting in me and the "wee gog" landing on the deck accompanied by cries and howls.

Naturally I always followed my Father, holding a match or piece of wood up to my eyes every time he held the telescope. I was only about three years old at the time so was not in a position to give a first hand report of the actions outlined in the article.

I trust it will give you some amusement.....

D/N??

(by Mark Wilton)

On numerous occasions the question has been asked "What is the origin of the title 'D/N Retiring Allowance'?"

It is a term applied to an allowance granted to certain retired officers of the Eastern Extension A. & C. Telegraph Co. ("Eastern") and of the Pacific Cable Board (P.C.B.) and its origin stems from a method of reference then used by the Eastern Tel. Co. in all service messages between Branches (or, as they were then known "Stations") and from and to Head Office in London and took the form of letters of the alphabet, placed at the commencement of the text, representing date and time.

For date, the letters A - Z represented 1 to 26 with the addition of BG, BH, BI, CJ and CA representing 27 to 31. For time, the 12 figures of the clock were similarly translated A to M (with the omission of "J") signifying 1 a.m. to 12 noon and N to Z (with the omission of "U") 1 p.m. to midnight. Thus L/KC represented 12th/10.15 a.m. and P/XP 16th/10.15 p.m. If other than the current month, then the month (and, if necessary, year) was inserted after the time - i.e. "P/XP your L/KC April". It was effective and convenient in that letters were much shorter than figures and it could be used at any time or place without consulting a "check sheet".

All who were employed in the service during the depression years will recall that international traffic fell to a very low level resulting in the company making an offer to staff to permit early retirement under certain terms and conditions. The service message conveying this offer was sent from Head Office on the 4th March at 1 p.m. and thus bore the date and time reference "D/N".

There was, of course, a great deal of subsequent correspondence with Head Office referring to "your D/N" or the "D/N scheme" and just as the "Man from Snowy River" became a household word, so the "D/N" stuck, even to the point of official use as a "D/N Retiring Allowance".

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN & HENRY OLIVER

From Charles Carthew

John and Henry were identical twins liked and highly respected by everyone during their lifetime of service with overseas telecommunication ..... first with Cable and Wireless, Collins House, Melbourne, from 1937 to 1947 and from then on with O.T.C.(A).

Although always temporary in status and happy to work at any casual job that came their way John and Henry were contented with their lot, spoke ill of no-one and really liked to mix with and meet people.

During their Army life in the medical unit one twin was offered a Sergeants three stripes but resolutely refused to accept promotion unless his brother gained similar recognition ..... obviously both remained in the ranks!

When Henry died suddenly of a heart attack in 1965 John was completely lost without his once constant companion and slowly deteriorated in health until his inevitable demise four years later.

FOOTNOTE:

Because of the difficulty in identifying the twins experience by people not closely associated with them, each came to be known as "John Henry". At Wagga weekends both enjoyed the dilemma of the Sydney visitors and each gleefully answered to "John Henry".

HOW TO MEASURE UP

by Brax Horrocks

To measure up is to achieve a standard by which anything is compared. We all, throughout our lives, spend much of our time in measuring up, sometimes we do this consciously and sometimes unconsciously.

BUT HOW TO MEASURE UP IS THE PROBLEM.

I once had a friend, Ted Johnstone, who was an undertaker. Of necessity he spent much of his time in measuring up, but whether he measured his boxes to accommodate his bodies, or measured his bodies to fit into his boxes, he never said. I do suspect however that on occasions he used a shoe-horn, or the equivalent, to ease bulky bottoms into standard boxes, and sometimes placed a few bricks judiciously here and there to prevent the skinny ones from rolling around.

I wrote a limerick about this fellow Johnstone and when I handed it to him he was visibly affected, in fact, tears came into his eyes. It went like this:

There was a young man named Ted  
Who's job was to measure the dead  
Short ones no trouble,  
Long ones bent double  
A matter of judgement he said.

When thinking about this important subject, I, of course, consulted my dictionary, and found that a measure is a divisor leaving no remainder, from this I assume that when one measures up there is nothing left, and "Nothing" is, of course, best described as being a bung-hole without a cask around it. This brings to mind of course the case of that remarkable young man from St. Paul. He was able to demonstrate in a most unusual way that any amount, multiplied by zero, itself becomes nothing. Indeed a limerick was written about him which no doubt you have heard, the following is the algebraic result of this findings:-

$$W^2 + 8(P) = \frac{4}{5} \times \frac{5}{8} \times 0$$

To me, how to measure up is one of the most difficult things. At school they told me of some fellow named Pythagoras, (or was it Archimedes? No, I think he was the chappie who was buoyed up) and of strange things called sines, cosines and tangents, which when juggled around by this fellow Pythagoras, were supposed to reveal the height of a tree! All utter poppy-cock and nonsense of course, all one needs to do is climb the tree and drop a tape-measure to the ground.

When I left school, not many years after the turn of the century, I joined a company which had to do with submarine telegraphy. Sometimes faults and breaks occurred in the cables so it was necessary to "Measure-up" to the point of the trouble so that a cable repair ship could locate it. But HOW to measure up was the problem: they told me of strange things called ohmic equivalents of earth currents and of exposed ends (lovely expression), and then there were some oblong boxes with plugs in them, and a thing called a galvanometer which when manipulated together were supposed to give (in nautical miles mind you) the distance to the fault or break. Every time I tried my hand at this all that happened was that the reflected light from the galvanometer kept flashing from one side of the room to the other, MOST frustrating. SO much easier to bounce a signal off a satellite and forget about sharks biting holes in one's cable.

What constantly puzzles me is why we persist in measuring up when it is SO much easier to measure down, but quite apart from measuring, there are many things which we do "UP" and others "Down". For instance we size up a person, then run him down, and in any case, whoever heard of "Running-up" a person, so much more fun to run him down, also it is better to stay up when doing some things, such as swimming, and to stay down sometimes, this applies particularly to boxing when you haven't measured up to your opponent.

At this stage of my investigations into this important subject, I again consulted my dictionary and found that "Up", among other things, could mean a state of prosperity, from this I assume that to "Measure up" could mean to assess one's financial position. However, with the present varying state of inflation, I feel it is at least seven or eight times more than somewhat difficult to come to any conclusion whatsoever other than the whole thing is hopeless and utterly impossible.

I feel that I have covered every facet of this fascinating subject, so conclude by wishing each and everyone of you happy measuring and a bright New Year.

#### CABLE HISTORY

Mrs. Mac. Smith's article on cables is so interesting that the Editor thought the members might care to have a history of cable laying from the inception of submarine cable into the 1920's. The following is an extract from the Cable and Wireless publication, "A Century of Service".

#### The Principal Primary Cables Laid for the Companies Finally Merged into Cable and Wireless Ltd 1868-1928

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cable</u>	<u>Cable Layer</u>	<u>Owners of Cable</u>
1868	Florida/Cuba	Dacia	Cuba Submarine Tel.Co.
	Malta/Alexandria (I)	( Scanderia ( Chiltern	Anglo-Mediterranean Tel.Co.
1870	Suez/Aden/Bombay	( Great Eastern ( Hibernia ( Chiltern	British Indian Submarine Tel.Co.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cable</u>	<u>Cable Layer</u>	<u>Owners of Cable</u>
1870	PK/Carcavellos Carcavellos/Gibraltar  Gibraltar/Malta  Madras/Penang/Singapore  Singapore/Batavia Cuba/Jamaica & Puerto Rico/ St. Thomas	Hibernia Scanderia ( Scanderia ( Edinburgh ( Scanderia ( William Cory  Hibernia Dacia	Falmouth Gibraltar and Malta Tel.Co.  Falmouth Gibraltar and Malta Tel.Co.  British Indian Extension Co.  British Australian Tel.Co. West India and Panama Tel. Co.
1871	St. Thomas/St. Kitts/ Antigua/Martinique/ St. Lucia/Barbados  St. Vincent/Grenada/ Trinidad/Georgetown B.G.  Singapore/Saigon/Hong Kong  Java/Port Darwin	Dacia  Dacia  ( Agnes, Belgian, ( Kangaroo, Minia  ( Edinburgh ( Hibernia	West India and Panama Tel. Co.  West India and Panama Tel. Co.  China Submarine Tel.Co.  British Australian Tel.Co.
1872	Puerto Rico/Jamaica		West India and Panama Tel.Co.
1873	Jamaica/Colon (Panama)  Recife/Fortaleza/ Sao Luiz/Belem  Recife/Bahia/Rio de Janeiro Carcavellos/Madeira	  Hooper  Hooper Seine	  West India and Panama Tel.Co. Western & Brazilian Co.  Western & Brazilian Co. Brazilian Submarine Co.
1874	Madeira/St. Vincent/Recife  Rio de Janeiro/Santos/ Florianopolis/Rio Grande/ Chuy	( Hibernia ( Edinburgh  Ambassador	Brazilian Submarine Co.  London Platino-Brazilian Cable Co.
1875	Rio Grande/Chuy/Maldonado/ Montevideo		London Platino-Brazilian Cable Co.
1875/ 1876	Lima/Mollendo/Arica/ Iquique/Antofogasta/ Serena/Valparaiso	Dacia	West Coast of America Tel. Co.
1876	Sydney/Nelson N.Z.	Edinburgh Hibernia	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.
1877	Rangoon/Penang	( Hibernia ( Kangaroo	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.
1879	Penang/Malacca-Singapore/ Java  Durban/Delagoa Bay Delagoa/Mozambique Mozambique/Zanzibar/Aden	( Scotia ( Edinburgh  Kangaroo Seine Calabria	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.  Eastern & S.African Tel.Co. Eastern & S.African Tel.Co. Eastern & S.African Tel.Co.
1880	Hong Kong/Manila	Calabria	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.
1883	Foochow/Shanghai	( Sherard Osborn ( Scotia	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.
1884	Hong Kong/Foochow- Hong Kong/Macau	Sherard Osborn	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cable</u>	<u>Cable Layer</u>	<u>Owners of Cable</u>
1886	Bathurst/Sierra Leone/ Accra/Lagos/Bonny	Britannia	African Direct Tel.Co.
	Dakar/Bathurst/Conakry/ Sierra Leone	Silvertown Dacia Buccaneer	West African Telegraph Co.
	Grand Bassam/Accra/ Sao Thome/Principe/ Loanda	Silvertown Dacia Buccaneer	West African Telegraph Co.
1889	Capetown/Port Nolloth/ Mossamedes	Scotia	Eastern & S.African Tel.Co.
	Mossamedes/Benguela/Loanda	Scotia	Eastern & S.African Tel.Co.
	Halifax/Bermuda	Westmeath	Halifax & Bermudas Tel.Co.
	Banjoewangie/Roebuck Bay (Australia)	Seine	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.
1890	Zanzibar/Mombasa/Dar-es- Salaam	Recorder	Eastern & S.African Tel.Co.
1891	Penang/Medan	Recorder	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.
1893	Zanzibar/Seychelles/ Mauritius	Scotia	Eastern & S.African Tel.Co.
	Carcavellos/San Miguel/ Fayal	Seine	Europe & Azores Tel.Co.
1894	Singapore/Labuan/Hong Kong	Scotia	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.
1897	Jamaica/Turks Island/ Bermuda	Scotia	Direct West India Co.
1899	Capetown/St. Helena	Anglia	Eastern Telegraph Co.
	St. Helena/Ascension	Seine	Eastern Telegraph Co.
1900	Belem/Recife/Rio de Janeiro/ Montevideo	Scotia	Western Telegraph Co.
	Ascension/St. Vincent	Anglia	Eastern Telegraph Co.
1901	PK/Madeira/St. Vincent	Anglia Britannia	Eastern Telegraph Co.
	Mauritius/Rodrigues/Cocos/ Fremantle	Anglia	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.
	Durban/Mauritius	Anglia	Eastern Telegraph Co.
	Ascension/Sierra Leone	Anglia	Eastern Telegraph Co.
1902	Canada/Norfolk Island/ Australia	Colonia	Pacific Cable Board
	Norfolk Island/New Zealand	Anglia	Pacific Cable Board
	Fremantle/Glenelg (Adelaide)	Scotia	Pacific Cable Board
1906	St. Vincent/Fayal (Azores)	Colonia	Western Telegraph Co.
1910	Buenos Aires/Ascension	( Colonia ( Cambria	Western Telegraph Co.
1913	Aden/Colombo/Penang	Colonia	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cable</u>	<u>Cable Layer</u>	<u>Owners of Cable</u>
1914	Singapore/Hong Kong	Colonia	Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co.
1919	Rio de Janeiro/Ascension	Colonia	Western Telegraph Co.
1920	Maranham/Barbados	Stephan	Western Telegraph Co.
1922	Aden/Seychelles/Colombo	Colonia	Eastern Telegraph Co.
1923	Suva/Auckland	Stephan	Pacific Cable Board

Ships that Laid the Principal Original Cables for  
Cable and Wireless Ltd

<u>Name of Ship</u>	<u>Details of Ship (As far as known)</u>	<u>Cables Laid</u>	
Kangaroo	Built by Hill & Co. - Port Glasgow in 1853, 1,719 tons, 257'x36'. Bought by T.C.&M. 1876. Sold by them in 1898. Broken up 1910.	1871	With Agnes, Belgian and Minia laid Singapore/Saigon/Hong Kong cable.
		1876/7	With Seine and Hibernia laid Suez/Aden/Bombay (duplicate) cable.
		1877	With Hibernia laid Rangoon/Penang cable.
		1879	Laid Durban/Delagoa Bay section of Durban/Aden cable.
Edinburgh	Built 1855 by Tod - Glasgow, 295'x39', 2,300 tons. Chartered by T.C.&M. 1869. Bought by T.C.&M. 1873. Sold 1880. Broken up 1893.	1870	With Scanderia laid Malta/Gibraltar section of PK/Malta cable.
		1871	With Hibernia laid Java/Port Darwin cable.
		1876	With Hibernia laid Australia/New Zealand cable.
		1879	With Scotia laid duplicate Penang/Singapore and Singapore/Java cables.
William Cory	Built 1857, by Mitchell Co. - Newcastle, 1,600 tons, 244'x35', screw steamer owned by J. Fennick & Sons, London. Chartered by T.C.&M.	1870	With Scanderia laid Madras/Penang/Singapore cable. Also helped at Suez end of Bombay/Suez cable.
Calabria	Built 1857, by Thompsons - Glasgow, 3,321 tons, 332'x42'. Bought by T.C.&M. 1877. Sold 1898.	1879	Laid Mozambique/Zanzibar/Aden section of Durban/Aden cable.
		1880	Laid Hong Kong/Manila cable.
Great Eastern	Launched 1858, 26,000 tons 690' long, Great Eastern Co. Chartered by T.C.&M. in 1869 for Bombay/Suez Cable lay. Broken up 1888.	1866	1st successful Atlantic Cable.
		1869/70	Bombay/Aden section of Suez/Bombay cable.
Seine	Built by Thames Ironworks in 1859, 3,553 tons, 338'x44'. Paddle converted to screw in 1872. Bought by T.C.&M. in 1876. In 1885 given new engines and boilers, 2,250 HP. Sold 1905.	1873/4	Laid 1st Carcavellos/Madeira section of Carcavellos/Pernambuco cable.
		1876/7	With Hibernia and Kangaroo laid Suez/Aden/Bombay (duplicate) cable.

<u>Name of Ship</u>	<u>Details of Ship</u> (As far as known)	<u>Cables Laid</u>	
Seine (cont'd)		1879	Laid Delagoa Bay/ Mozambique cable.
		1889	Laid Banjowangie/Broome (Australia) cable.
		1899	Laid St. Helena/Ascension section.
Hibernia	Built 1860 by Palmers-Jarrow for the Anchor Line, 3,000 tons. 361' x40'. 1869 converted from paddle to screw. Chartered by T.C.&M. in 1873. Wrecked off Brazil 1877.	1870	Laid Suez/Aden section of Suez/Bombay cable with Chiltern.
		1870	Laid PK/Carcavellos section of PK/Malta cable. Laid Singapore/Batavia cable.
		1871	With Edinburgh laid Java/ Port Darwin cable.
		1876	With Edinburgh laid Australia/New Zealand cable.
		1876/7	With Seine and Kangaroo laid Suez/Aden/Bombay (duplicate) cable.
		1887	With Kangaroo laid Rangoon/Penang cable.
Scotia	Built 1862 by Napier - Glasgow for the Cunard Line. 3,900 tons. 379' x48'. Paddle steamer. Converted to screw and bought by T.C.&M. in 1879. Sold to Pacific Cable Co. in 1902. Wrecked at Guam 1904.	1879	With Edinburgh laid Penang/Malacca and and Singapore/Java cables.
		1883	With Sherard Osborn laid Foochow/Shanghai cable.
		1889	Laid Capetown/Port Nolloth/ Mossamedes and Mossamedes/ Benguela/Loanda cables.
		1893	Laid Zanzibar/Seychelles/ Mauritius cable.
		1894	Laid Singapore/Labuan/ Hong Kong cable.
		1898	Laid Jamaica/Turks/ Bermuda cable.
		1900	Laid Recife/Belem/Rio/ Montevideo cable.
		1902	Laid Fremantle/Glenelg cable.
Chiltern	Built 1866 by Denny - Dumbarton, 1,390 tons. Bought by T.C.&M. in 1867, 262'x31', 240 HP. Sold to British India Sub.Co. in 1870. Broken up 1902.	1868	With Scanderia laid Malta/ Alexandria (1) cable.
		1870	With Hibernia laid Suez/ Aden section of Suez/ Bombay cable.
Scanderia	Built Glasgow in 1866, 2,000 tons, 339'x34'. Chartered by T.C.&M. 1868. Sold 1872.	1868	With Chiltern laid Malta/ Alexandria (1) cable.
		1870	With Edinburgh laid Malta/ Gibraltar section and herself laid Gibraltar/ Carcavellos section.
		1870	With William Cory laid Madras/Penang/Singapore cable.

Name of Ship	Details of Ship (As far as known)	Cables Laid	
Dacia	Built by Laing - Sunderland in 1867. 1,856 tons. 283'x35', 170 HP. Purchased by India Rubber Gutta Percha & Telegraph Works Co. in 1870. Torpedoed off Funchal December 1916.	1868	Laid Florida/Cuba cable.
		1870	Laid Cuba/Puerto Rico/Jamaica/St. Thomas cable.
		1871	Laid inter-island cables from St. Thomas to Georgetown B.G.
		1885	Laid Bushire/Jask Persian Gulf cable.
		1886	With Silvertown laid West African Coy's cables from Dakar via Sierra Leone, Accra etc. to Loanda.
Sherard Osborn	Built by Scott's - Greenock in 1878 for Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co. 1,481 tons. 275'x32', 900 HP. Sold to E.T.C. in 1903. Sold by E.T.C. in 1920.	1883	Laid (with Scotia) Foochow/Shanghai cable.
		1884	Laid Hong Kong/Foochow and Hong Kong/Macau cables.
Britannia (2)	Built in 1885 by Lairds of Birkenhead for T.C.&M. 1,525 tons. 247'x34', 12 knots. Bought by E.T.C. in 1904. In 1924 became cable hulk Zanzibar. In 1933 sold for scrap.	1886	Laid Bathurst/Sierra Leone/Accra/Lagos/Bonny cable.
		1901	With Anglia laid PK/St. Vincent/Madeira cable.
Recorder(1)	Built 1885 by Napiers - Glasgow, 1,200 tons, 237'x32', 200 HP. Eastern Extension Australasia & China Tel.Co. Sold 1925.	1890	Laid Zanzibar/Mombasa/Dar-es-Salaam cable.
		1891	Laid Penang/Medan cable.
Anglia	Built 1898 by Vickers for T.C.&M. 6,514 tons, 467'x54' twin screw, 13 knots. Sold 1906.	1899	Laid Capetown/St. Helena section of Capetown/St. Vincent cable.
		1900	Laid Ascension/St. Vincent section of Capetown/St. Vincent cable.
		1901	Laid Mauritius/Rodrigues/Cocos/Fremantle and Durban/Mauritius cables. Laid Ascension/Sierra Leone cable. With Britannia laid PK/Madeira/St. Vincent cable.
		1902	Laid Norfolk Island/ ) Pacific New Zealand section ) Cable ) Board Queensland/Norfolk ) Canada/ Island section ) Australia Norfolk Island/Suva ) cable section )
Colonia	Built in 1902 by Wigham Richardson for T.C.&M. 8,000 tons. 501'x56'. Twin screw, 14 knots. Sold 1928.	1902	Bamfield (Canada) - Fanning Island section of Pacific Cable Board cable.
		1906	St. Vincent/Fayal cable.
		1910	Buenos Aires/Ascension cable.
		1913	Aden/Colombo/Penang cable.



<u>Name of Ship</u>	<u>Details of Ship (As far as known)</u>	<u>Cables Laid</u>	
Colonia		1914	Singapore/Hong Kong cable.
		1919	Rio de Janeiro/Ascension cable.
		1922	Aden/Seychelles/Colombo cable.
Stephan	Built by Stettiner Vulkan in 1902 for German owners. 4,600 tons, 382'x48', 2,400 HP. Twin screw, 14 knots. Bought by T.C.&M. in 1919. Sold 1926.	1920	Laid Maranhao/Barbados cable.
		1923	Laid Suva/Auckland cable.

S T O P   P R E S S

- MORE NEWS OF MEMBERS

Bert Edwards

Sorry to hear Bert Edwards (Queensland) admitted to Southport Hospital in a serious condition. Our wishes for a rapid and complete recovery.

Jack Jordan

Retired last December after having served 19 years with AWA and 30 years with OTC. During this time Jack was attached to the Technical Section of the Melbourne Operating Room. He plans to settle down in Tasmania for his retirement.

Bert Hartley

Bert retired early in 1978 invalided from OTC through ill health. He served during the war with the Army Signal Corps from 1940 - 1946 and at the end of the war took up in the Accounts Section of OTC, Melbourne.

Viv Molineux

Congratulations to Viv Molineux (the trophy hunter!) on winning the John Dobbie Invitation Bowls Tournament held at Mount Waverley last December. Nice work Viv.

Harry Oates

Harry, now in his 82nd year, is in the nursing section of the Masonic Homes, 19 Ward Street, Sandgate, Queensland, 4017. Visits from his old colleagues would be welcome, or if unable to see him, why not drop him a note.

Frank Patrick

Frank and his good lady had the unhappy experience of being in Manila and staying at the Highrise Hotel which recently caught fire during a terrific cyclone with the resultant loss of 67 lives. Fortunately, they were only on the third floor and managed to escape but on so doing lost all their personal effects. They report that people trying to get out by the outside fire escape ladders were literally blown off the fire escape by the force of the winds which accounted for many of the casualties.

Joe Moloney

We are sorry to hear that Joe Moloney, now retired after many years in the Melbourne Operating Room, suffered a serious fall leaving him with fractured hips, totally incapacitated and confined to his home.

Joe was pleased to receive a letter and card from OTVA Victoria and a personal visit from an old colleague. Incidentally, Joe's address is 5 Railton Grove, Preston, Victoria, 3072.

Oscar Ash

Fred (affectionately known as Oscar) and Edna Ash enjoyed their nostalgic visit back to the "old country" and were especially delighted with Meadowbank Exiles Club and its environs.....

So too were Geoff and Mrs. Whitmore, Vin and Doreen Duigan, Cyril and Joan Martin.

John Norris

Ex Melbournian, Johnnie Norris (now Treasurer, OTVA Queensland) holds the distinguished record of having attended every Wagga Weekend since its inception.

George Scott

President of OTVA Queensland, George can look down on the bowling green directly below his elevated backdoor steps and, by merely walking to the end of his backyard and through a convenient opening in the fence, can nip on to the inviting green for a game to his heart's content. Solace for a chap in retirement and also jolly good planning.

Frank Handley

Frank has retired after 46 years in overseas telecommunications. He joined the Post Office in 1932 and a year later transferred to AWA with the subsequent transfer to OTC in 1947 on the takeover. Affectionately known as "Hank", our colleague spent most of his working life on operating duties in the Melbourne Operating Room but in later years changed over to the Investigation Section.

Norm Seabrook

Doug Crabtree and General Secretary, Charles Carthew, made their customary Christmas visit to the Kingston Centre and presented the second tier of Jean Edwards Reunion cake to Norm Seabrook. Norm, who has been retired for many years, wishes to be remembered to all his colleagues. Norm is well known as a master craftsman in the art of basketry, having won two very special first prizes and taken three champion ribbons, fifteen firsts, seven seconds and three thirds at the Royal Melbourne and other agricultural shows around Victoria. Norm has learnt this craft at the Centre following his incapacity.

Don Dunstall

Don, the son of retired Veteran Frank Dunstall, was trained in Melbourne and subsequently went across to Peru where he joined a cable company based in Lima. Don is now teaching English at a Lima university and his wife, a Doctor of Philosophy, is Principal of the high school.