



Newsletter

Vol. 3 Pt. 7 Page 1

NOVEMBER 1986

MEETINGS AND REUNIONS

<u>NEW SOUTH WALES</u>	REUNION FRIDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 1986 TIME: 6PM	4TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM, OTC HOUSE, 32 MARTIN PLACE, SYDNEY
<u>VICTORIA</u>	REUNION FRIDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 1986 TIME: 6.30PM	3RD FLOOR, BOARD ROOM OTC HOUSE, 382 LONSDALE STREET, MELBOURNE
<u>SOUTH AUSTRALIA</u>	THURSDAY 20TH NOVEMBER 1986 TIME: 2.30PM	HOME OF BRAX HORROCKS 7 MIEGUNYAH AVENUE, UNLEY PARK, 5061
<u>WESTERN AUSTRALIA</u>	TUESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER 1986 TIME: 5PM	OTC OFFICE, 22 ST. GEORGES TERRACE, PERTH
<u>QUEENSLAND</u>	WEDNESDAY 5TH NOVEMBER 1986 TIME: 12 NOON	VIB COASTAL RADIO, CABOOLTURE (Transport leaves Brisbane Office at 11am)

INTERSTATE MEMBERS AND VISITORS WILL BE WELCOMED
AT THESE FUNCTIONS, BUT PRIOR ADVICE OF INTENTION
TO ATTEND WOULD BE APPRECIATED BY THE ORGANISERS,
NOT ONLY FOR CATERING PURPOSES, BUT TO GET
CONFIRMATION OF TIMES AND VENUES.

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SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH OF THE O.T.V.A

We held our winter meeting at the Royal Hotel, Kent Town on the afternoon of May 22nd.

Those present were Bert Dudley, Hugh Taylor, Keith Parker, Dennis Maher, Fred Reeve, Geoff Cox, Ken Springbett, Ken Collett & Brax Horrocks.

Dennis Maher, a new member, who has just retired from Coastal Radio, McLaren Vale was welcomed by President Brax Horrocks.

Apologies for absence were received from Eric Symes, Ron Ward, Claud Whitford, Max Lang and Cliff Birks. Cliff said he was well enough to attend but both his sight and hearing are now too poor.

As sadly previously advised, we lost two of our members, Charles Smith and Les Reynolds, since our last meeting. We shall miss them both.

Messages conveying fraternal greetings were received from George Maltby, Alan Arndt, Charles Carthew, Brian Morrell, Bruce Sutherland and Pat Sykes. We had hoped that George and Alan would be able to come to this meeting, but now hope they will be able to find time to come to our Christmas gathering.

Fred Reeve very kindly brought a video of the laying of the Anzcan cable which we found most interesting. Fred also carried his heavy TV set up the steep stairs to our meeting room. Good fellow, Fred!

Brax Horrocks and Bert Dudley were re-elected as President and Secretary respectively for the coming year.

Our Christmas meeting will be held on the afternoon on the THIRD Thursday in November, the 20th, at the home of Brax Horrocks at Unley Park, commencing at 2.30pm.

GUYE RUSSELL, Secretary of the O.T.V.A. Victorian Branch, advises of the passing of two of our members down south.

GEORGE MAGNUS died May 17th, 1986

He joined A.W.A. in 1932, and was with O.T.C.A. until his retirement due to ill health in 1976.

He saw service with the R.A.A.F. as a member of air crew and later Radio Intelligence. He was promoted to the rank of Pilot Officer in 1945 and eventually became a Flight Lieutenant, serving a period of 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ years in all.

JIM TAYLOR died January 11th, 1986

Jim joined the P.M.G. in 1917, transferring to the Beam Service in 1927. He was in O.T.C.A. in 1946 where he remained until he retired. He was 83 years of age.

GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

As usual I have been inundated with material for the NEWSLETTER which I greatly appreciate and wish to have still incoming. Because of the gigantic task it gives to those people of O.T.C.A. who are charged with its preparation for printing and publishing, I have been requested to have the copy in by the end of September.

For material which appears in this edition, I would like to thank:

Ellis Smellie
Brax Horrocks
Jim Banks
Alan Arndt
Guye Russell
Denis Chambers

Harold Le Quesne
Gordon Cupit
Charles Carthew
Michel Forand
Toni Condon
Wilf Atkin

And for material I have received but am forced to hold over until the next edition, I wish to thank:

Horrie Brown
Hugh Taylor
Phil Chapman

Brax Horrocks
Charles Carthew

In all fairness to the O.T.C.A., there is a limit to how much they can handle and still get the NEWSLETTER out in time for notification of the End-of-the-Year reunions.

Also (and this is not a complaint because I enjoy doing it), only days after I have put this baby to bed, I begin editing material for the next one.

Thank you for the contributions which help to maintain our NEWSLETTER at a pretty good standard.

VALE

Brax Horrocks, President of the South Australia branch of O.T.V.A., advises the loss of another of their members, C.F.J. Smith, who died in January.

CHARLIE SMITH joined the E.E. Telegraph Co. in Adelaide in 1920 as a probationer operator. At that time his father was Assistant Divisional Manager of the Company in Australia having transferred from the eastern Telegraph Co. in 1907.

On becoming an operator Charles served several years in Adelaide under Manager A.B. Scottowe, and Electrician J.E. Mercer, then was transferred to Darwin for a two year term. Towards the end of his time there, Professor Archie Watson, a friend of the family, offered him the management of his station property near Walwa on the Upper Murray, which he accepted.

After some years, Charles left the property in charge of a friend and joined his uncle, M.P. Durack at Argyle Station, W.A. Later he teamed up with Sir Walter Kidman and was put in charge of his Diamanta Lake Station. It was at the suggestion of Kidman that he went to Broken Hill where he established an engineering firm and a real-estate business which proved to be outstanding successes, so much so that some years later he was able to buy a large pastoral property at Terowie and another at Balhannah, where he eventually retired.

Charles enlisted in the A.I.F. in 1940 as a private and after service in the Middle East and North Africa, was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. In 1942 he was promoted to chief technical adviser to Sir Herbert Gepp in Canberra, then a year later was seconded to the R.A.A.F. as a Flight Lieutenant, serving with them at Lae, Madang, Aitabic and Biak.

He will be sadly missed.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Veterans are advised that LAURIE DURRANT's book "SEAWATCHERS" is now available. The cost is A\$17.50 (special discount 50% price) to members of O.T.V.A.

Orders may be sent with accompanying cheques to the Secretary, O.T.V.A., G.P.O. Box 7000, Sydney, 2001.

LOST OR STRAYED

Veterans who attended the Christmas Reunion in November last year 1985, are asked if they saw anything of a little red hard-covered book measuring about 4 inches by 3 1/2 titled "Army Book of Signals", 1880 edition.

The book is the property of ORME COOPER, who brought it in to show me and with the possibility of finding some interesting articles therein. I remember glancing through the book in Orme's presence but in my movements around the room it is possible that I may have put it down on one of the tables. I certainly have no recollection of taking it home.

If anyone may have seen it, or has any information about it, I would be glad to know.

JIM ANDERSON,
EDITOR

NEWS FROM BJELKELAND (QUEENSLAND TO OUR OVERSEAS READERS)

MINUTES of the 11th Annual General Meeting, held in the Brisbane Manager's Office at Noon on Thursday, 8th May, 1986.

PRESENT:- Jim and Beryl Banks, Eric Cramp, Laz Eliou, Sid Gill, Jack and Jean Kellie, Dean Laws, John Marshall, John and Mildred Norris, Bob Webster, Blue Easterling, Glen and Pat Searle, Alf and Heather Goebey, Dick Westwood, Wim Elbertse and (from NSW Veterans) Jim Simpson and Tom O'Sullivan.

In the absence overseas of President Alan Jones, Secretary Jim Banks welcomed those present and read apologies from George Maltby, Wilf Atkin, Charles Carthew, Gordon Collyer, Lou Heggie, Kevin Hiscock, Pat Gray, Rowley Lane, Alan Rees, Vince Sim and President Alan Jones.

Minutes of the 10th AGM were accepted as distributed. There was no correspondence other than apologies and in the absence of the Treasurer the Secretary then gave the financial report showing a current balance of \$133. The reduction from the previous annual balance of \$219 resulted from the 1985 11th Reunion being made a free function at Brisbane Radio. The report was adopted.

All offices were then declared vacant and the following re-elected:

President	Alan Jones
Secretary/Treasurer	Jim Banks (there being no other nominee for Treasurer)
Auditor	John Norris

It was agreed to hold the next reunion in November at Brisbane Radio with wives and friends again most welcome.

After thanking members who had responded to the plea for 'biographies' and pleading with the remainder to "VEBET", Secretary Jim closed the meeting. The usual excellent fellowship ensued.

NOTES ON QUEENSLAND VETERANS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

ERIC CRAMP has recovered from recent leg troubles, so much so he is now riding around Bribie Island on a bicycle! Otherwise he spends his time gardening and 'beachcombing'.

DEAN LAWS is still pounding a morse key (from time to time), currently aboard the "TNT Capricornia". With the fall-off in the bauxite trade he's been plying to 'foreign ports' recently. When not aboard he roars around the Gold Coast on a Honda 650 and keeps in touch with old friends as VK4ALN.

JOCK KELLIE, no longer a master brewer is probably operating an illicit still when not fishing in the Pumicestone Channel from his 15' boat.

BOB WEBSTER keeps fit gardening and fishing when not throwing away his pension on 2-up at the new Gold Coast Casino. For some time, however, he's been looking after wife Betty who is still recovering from a badly broken leg.

SID GILL looks hale and hearty despite a number of small heart problems recently. He is still winning prizes for his orchids and breeding both dogs and birds.

ALF GOEBY looks after over an acre of fine lawn when not chasing JOCK KELLIE around Pumicestone in his own 15' - footer. He still keeps in touch 'in fine morse' per VK4AAG.

BLUE EASTERLING is another keep 'ham' (VK4BBL) on CW and Voice (he is probably the most active news-gatherer the Queensland Vets have!).

JOHN MARSHALL listens in to the 'hams' without transmitting these days, keeping his 'electronics' alive fixing TV sets for friends.

JOHN NORRIS is a wonderful advertisement for retirement. His healthy appearance speaks well for a life of fishing and golf with the occasional visit to the "gee-gee's".

PAY GRAY, from Rockie, reckons that retirement is the hardest job he's ever had! His motor car is not to be trusted to make the journey to Brisbane but still gets him to the RSL on pension day.

JIM BANKS could hardly wait to get the AGM over so he could leave the exciting but demanding modern-day OTC for a couple of weeks cruising around the Whitsundays.

JIM SIMPSON, a recent addition to the NSW Veterans ranks, was in Brisbane to relieve JIM BANKS for the holidays. On returning to Sydney he will take up a post in the new Maritime Division. He was seen 'pumping' all the old CRS men for knowledge.

VALE

We have been advised of the death of WILL JEFFERSON who served in the Eastern Extension Company at La Perouse and Cocos Island, and who later became a planter in the Far East. He wrote several papers on subjects and these have been given to the Mitchell Library. He is survived by his youngest sister, Miss Isobel Jefferson who resides at the C. of E. Retirement Village, Castle Hill. To her goes our deepest sympathy.

BITS AND PIECES

Just prior to the opening of the Beam Wireless Service in 1927, selected officers were sent to London for special training and during the voyage home on the "BAY" Liners it was arranged that they sign as wireless operators.

Perhaps never before, or since, has such a galaxy of Morse operating talent graced the "air". It was just sheer delight to listen in, but to be on the "other end" at the coastal radio station 'VIP was in itself a memorable occasion. From the best of memory (Charles Carthew's - not mine) the officers mentioned above were: GEORGE APPERLEY 901CO, DAVE QUIN, GEORGE MORRISON, DON McINTOSH, ROY MANCER, JIM LAMB, SYD COOPER, FRED DAVIS, HEC MOORE, JOE GILLIGAN, JOHN GUY, DOUG WOOD, HARRY deDASSEL, FRANK EXON, GEORGE COOKSON, GEORGE CHILTON, DICK SMITH, and CHARLES DRAFFIN.

Alas, many of our old friends have passed on and are affectionately remembered as "Silent Keys", a tribute introduced by our fellow morse code veterans in America.

As powerful and fascinating as modern technology is, can it surpass the tried and proven "dot - dash" technique, or am I becoming too parochial in my 86th year? asks Charles.

CORRECTION

The eagle eye of RON McDONALD detected a minor error which had escaped both the Secretary and myself. In the "Beam Wireless Story" which appeared on page 203 of our last NEWSLETTER the opening line should have read "Early in the 20th century" - not the 19th, as shown. To us it just seemed that wireless had been around that long, that's all.

We apologise on bended knee!

VALE

Our old mate, ARTHUR BLACK, who was living in a Retirement Village in Nedlands, W.A. died on 10th July, 1986. Arthur was pretty widely known around the traps, and it is a sad loss to all of us.

NEWS FROM OUR CANADIAN COLLEAGUES

HAROLD H. Le QUESNE writes:

"You may or may not know that I retired from the position of President of the Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe Canada (Western Chapter) last April 30th, 1986. I am now happy to inform you of the new President and his address:

Mr. John B. Murphy,
President, The QC Club of Teleglobe Canada Western Chapter,
3671 Somerset St.,
PORT COQUITLAM, BRITISH COLUMBIA.
CANADA. V3B 5M3.

Mr. K. Bruce Light,
Secretary-Treasurer,
11774 64B Avenue,
NORTH DELTA, BRITISH COLUMBIA.
CANADA. V4E 2L3.

My wife and I were in Sydney last November but were only there on a hurried visit to my brothers who had been in ill health. All being well, we plan to make at least one more visit to Sydney and Melbourne among other places in 1987 or 1988 when we will look forward to meeting some old associates. In the meantime, I wish to say "thanks" for your always most interesting NEWSLETTER which I and about half-a-dozen Australians enjoy.

With very best wishes to you and yours,

Fraternally yours,
Harold H. Le Quesne."

In another letter to Charles Carthew, Harold also mentioned items of interest to Veterans. Amongst other things, he says:

"I wish to join in giving my congratulations by being honoured by C&W, A.W.A., and O.T.V.A. for your long service as Secretary, and also for your years of service to many others, including our Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe Canada.

Let me bring you up to date: Teleglobe Canada has been put up for privatization by the Canadian Government and at this time we do not have any idea of the future of Teleglobe Canada or even of our Club.

Our next Annual Meeting and Dinner will be held on 26th April, 1986, at the Hotel Vancouver, Vancouver, B.C. After 13 years I will be retiring as President at that time. I was unable to visit the N.S.W. Branch of O.T.V.A. but I am glad to report that my two brothers who were ill at the time have now recovered.

Letter from MICHEL FORAND, 207-234 Charlotte St., Ottawa, Canada. K1N 8L2.

30th June 1986

Mr. Alan Arndt
Honorary Secretary
OTVA (NSW)
G P O, Box 7000,
Sydney, 2001.
AUSTRALIA.

Dear Alan

Many thanks for your recent letters and enclosures. The extracts from the OTVA Newsletters did contain information that I did not have, so I am grateful to you for sending them.

In the October 1975 Newsletter, there is a reference to an article written by Tom Condon on Fanning Island "a couple of years back". The only previous article by him that I have appeared in April 1975. If there is an earlier article by him on Fanning in 1972 or 1973, could you please send me a copy?

The article you sent me from the April 1980 Newsletter did serve to remind me that a Mr. Lester Gaynor, of Boston (USA) was apparently writing a book on Christmas and Fanning Islands at that time. Do you know what became of this project? Has the book ever been published? I am writing to Mr. Clifton Smith, whose address is mentioned in the article and who apparently knows Mr. Gaynor. However, I tried to obtain his phone number last night, and there was no listing for him at the address shown, so I may not be able to obtain any information through that channel.

The photocopies sent to you by Mr. Hugh Taylor and which you forwarded to me also contain interesting information, although some of it is incorrect. Are you familiar with the book from which these copies were made, entitled The Submarine Cable, or with the book from which the material quoted in The Submarine Cable is extracted, entitled Around the Map on a Cable-Ship (by P E Cheeseman)? I would be interested to know when and where they were published, and by whom, as well as the name of the author of The Submarine Cable. It seems unlikely that both books contain other passages about Fanning Island.

Apart from what you have sent me, I have so far received only three responses to my request for information in the Newsletter. Although the number of responses is somewhat disappointing, the information received is quite helpful.

Mr. Ken Springbett sent me a dozen colour slides, which I returned to him after having prints made from them. Mr. George Rowe, who almost went to Fanning but didn't make it, sent me an article on the island published in a 1949 brochure. And from the archivist of Cable & Wireless in London, I received about 90 photocopies of articles on Fanning published in The Zodiac over the years. I really appreciate the help these gentlemen have provided me, and I remain hopeful that I will hear from others who were on the island.

Work on the book proceeds, but it is difficult to get the information and so it's slow going. Some people don't answer letters, others don't have the information I am looking for, etc. It is clear now that the book will not be ready for publication this year, and I'm aiming for 1987, but even that may be optimistic. Ideally, I should go to London and Honolulu to research a number of archives in both cities, but of course such trips are costly, and there is no assurance that I would find what I am looking for.

Again, thanks for your letters."

FANNING ISLAND: A FOLLOW-UP

There has been an encouraging response to my letter seeking information about Fanning Island, which appeared in the last issue of the Newsletter. Several people have written to offer photographs or articles about Fanning Island, but only two of the respondents actually lived on the island.

Mr. Peter Travers-Laney, the Archivist of Cable and Wireless PLC (Mercury House, Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8RX, U.K.), has been most helpful, providing photocopies of articles in The Zodiac and old photos. The Cable and Wireless Archives are undoubtedly a useful source for those seeking information about cable operations in the Pacific.

To all those who have written so far, I am deeply grateful: their contributions are most appreciated. Are there any others who could provide information about life on Fanning Island, especially during the late 1930s and early 1940s? Some of the questions in my letter about that period remain unanswered.

In the April 1980 Newsletter, there was a reference to a Mr. Lester Gaynor (of Boston, USA), who had apparently undertaken to write a book about Fanning and Washington Islands. I have been unable to contact Mr. Gaynor or to find out any more about this project. Has anyone heard from him or about this book?

Any assistance that the members of the OTVA can provide will be most appreciated. And all costs (postage, photocopies, etc.) will be reimbursed.

Michel Forand, 207-234 Charlotte St., Ottawa, Canada K1N 8L2

HUGHIE GREIG

By T. B. (Tomi) Condon.

Tomi Condon, one of our men in Auckland N.Z., has sent along news concerning some of our Kiwi friends who are on the sick list, but has also paid a tribute to Hughie Greig, a man he admired very much, it would seem. He writes:-

"Now as for Hughie Greig. Hughie was a Maniheken by birth and came to Fanning Island as a handyman. He was a man of many parts, making his name firstly by re-joining the Suva/Fanning Island cable after it was cut by the German cruiser "NURNBERG", the crew of which had played havoc with the cable and the instruments located in the cable office. There was no wireless installed in those primitive days of the Island, and if communication was to be restored then someone had to rejoin the cable. This was a situation in which Hughie excelled. He and some helpers secured each end of the cable separately to

buoys, and then joined the two ends with a small stretch of copper wire. At least communication was restored with Suva and now the job was to get the cable ship hastily to effect a permanent link with Suva and even Bamfield on the other end of what was then the longest chain in the world. For this mighty, manful task, Hughie was presented with a cheque for the amount of fifty pounds sterling. No fuss from Hughie, but his exploits didn't end there.

He rescued two separate outriggers which had run foul of the passage at the English Harbour entrance to the lagoon which linked the lagoon with the Pacific Ocean. Both were Herculean tasks by any standard. At times he was working as an operator in the Fanning office and no matter whether it was night or day, he canoed himself backwards and forwards to his place of work. Tracing his way along the rat tail passage in either direction, he always made it on time.

He could turn his hand to anything - repairing office furniture or making a canoe - it was all in a day's work to Hugh. Not only myself, but my colleagues, felt secure when he was around. It is on record that he made a name for himself as a doctor by distributing pain killers when there was a need, and delivered a baby.

So it was a gruesome end at having to cut down Yamma Gooch who had committed hari-kiri by hanging himself to a coconut tree beside the lagoon."

FROM THE MAIL BOX

DENNIS CHAMBERS writes:

"Seeing the story about the bottles in the Sydney Operating Room's air-conditioning plant reminded me of an incident in the fifties in the Melbourne Operating Room, then situated in the old A.W.A. Building in Queen Street.

At that particular time, the Traffic Superintendent was a loveable character by the name of ROY MANCER, known to one and all as "Dogger" (but not to his face by we younger members). He had his own unique way of dealing with any problems that arose.

It was in the days of 6 o'clock closing time in Melbourne, and the staff, being a somewhat thirsty lot, made sure that they had a good supply of bottles to keep themselves going, but of course no one was interested in the "empties". I decided to clear them once a week, and my two small sons in turn sold them to the local "bottle-o" for pocket money, which was quite a tidy sum considering I averaged 20-30 dozen per week.

One week, after a very hot spell, (no air-conditioning in Melbourne in those days), I failed to clear the excess, and a very grumpy cleaner, a character by the name of Jack Elder, complained to Dogger about the bottles. Dogger sent for me, and the following conversation ensued:

Dogger.. "Dennis, do you clear away the empty bottles?"

Me..... "Yes, Mr. Mancer."

Dogger.. "How often do you do it?"

Me..... "Once a week, Mr. Mancer."

Dogger.. "Can you please make it twice a week? I'm getting complaints."

SICK PARADE

From New Zealand we have received news that BILL CRAIG has been confined to a rest home suffering from a mild stroke. HUIA JACOBS and TOMMY ATKINS have suffered from a slight case of the same, or a "spasm" as modern medical science now calls it.

From the Garden State, Victoria, comes the news that two of their veterans are not the best healthwise. FRANK PATRICK suffered a stroke and is now in the Extended Care Hospital, 1231 Plenty Road, Bundoora 3083.

TED TURNER, another Victorian veteran, has rheumatoid arthritis and is under treatment at home which is situated at 10 Wilson St., Murrembeena 3163.

REMEMBER THAT THIS INFORMATION WAS GIVEN ME IN SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR, SO INTENDING VISITORS TO OUR SICK ASSOCIATES SHOULD CHECK BEFORE GOING OUT TO SEE THEM.

VALE

Our deepest sympathy goes to the relatives and friends of CONCLIFF KEVIN O'DONNELL who died in hospital on August 15th this year, aged 86 years. He was a bandmaster with 17/18th Battalion and the Parramatta Lancers. I would be grateful if someone can supply details of his service.

TASMAN CABLE AND LA PEROUSE CABLE STATION

Members may remember the article in the Jan/Feb 1985 issue of "Transit" on the subject of the old Cable Station at La Perouse, which is now a Women's Refuge operated by the Salvation Army. The property is owned by the Federal Government and serviced by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Further research into the station has revealed that it was originally built in 1876 by the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, as the shore-end of a cable running from Sydney to Nelson in the South Island, New Zealand. Two stories have reported that the Nelson end landed at Blind Bay 10 kilometres south east of Nelson, and other reports show it landing at Cable Bay 21 kilometres south east of Nelson.

A pamphlet issued by the Department of Lands and Survey, Nelson advises as follows: "Cable Bay was edged by the ancient Maori campsite Rotokura and had been known as Schroders Mistake ever since W.G. Schroder of Nelson had missed an inlet for which he was heading and put his boat on the rocks there in error. The bay got its present-day name from being the site of New Zealand's first overseas telegraphic cable link which came ashore on 5th.

February 1876. Two cable-laying ships "Hibernia" and "Edinburgh" set out from Botany Bay to Wakapuaka (Cable Bay). Due to exceptionally calm weather in the Tasman Sea, this operation took only 11 days. The new service came into operation on 21st February 1876 and caused great excitement as it meant that colonists could communicate with friends and relatives in England by telegram, taking only 4 days instead of by letter which took up to 6 months by sailing ship." It is to be noted that the two ships involved were those who laid the original cable into Darwin.

In order to counter the proposal to lay a Pacific Ocean Cable between Australia and Canada, and its apparent resultant competition, the Eastern Company decided to duplicate their cable, and this was completed in August 1890. Due to the reliability of the original cable, a cable of the same specifications was manufactured for this duplicate cable. The cable was approx. 1283 nautical miles, with a cost of £188,060. The original cable cost £261,844.

A disastrous fire in 1914 hastened the end of the Cable Bay Station, and in May 1917, an extra 128 kilometres was spliced on to the cable and it was moved to Titahi Bay, which is located on North Island, between Palmerston and Wellington.

These cables were the only means of communication with New Zealand until the opening of the Pacific Cable Board service in 1902 with cables from Auckland and Norfolk Island landing at Southport on Queensland's Gold Coast. Later in 1912, the Pacific Company put down a cable from Auckland to Sydney, landing at the present cable site on Bondi Beach.

A.D. Gregory in his story (Newsletter April 1982) states that the original cable station at Laperouse was adjacent to a small block of land (about 30 feet square) which contains a memorial column to Laperouse, the French explorer who landed there. Greg was posted to Laperouse on 1st May 1906, and said that this was a few years after the cable terminal had been removed to Yarra Bay headland where a new two storey building had been erected to accommodate large operating rooms, post office and close by a generator and battery room. Upstairs were the Superintendents' spacious quarters with a fine view of Botany Bay. The staff quarters were adjacent to Bare Island Fort.

The Laperouse station was operational until the shore end of the cable was transferred from Laperouse to Bondi supposedly in 1917. The latest record we have of the station is a photograph of the staff taken in 1915. For a period between operation by the Eastern Company, and use by the Salvation Army, the building was used as quarters for the nurses of the Coast Hospital.

Alan Arndt would appreciate confirmation of any of the above details, or any other information on the Laperouse Cable Station or the Eastern Extension Tasman Cable.

VALE - RICHARD OLIVER BETTISON

The death of Dick Bettison occurred on 16th June, 1985 when he was 89 years old. Not much was known about him from our records but we have been fortunate in receiving the following information from Dick's nephew, Ted Bettison, who lives at 3/17 Kingsley Crescent, Surrey Hills, Vic., 3127. He is survived by his wife Elsie, and four children.

Dick entered the Radio Service on 3/9/1917, and is one of the Marconi Veterans. He was retired from the service due to ill health, suffering from Parkinsons Disease. During his service he spent a long term in the tropics.

After retirement he moved to Woy Woy NSW, and took up the sport of Bowls, the Bowls Club being just across the road from his residence. He became the Hon. Secretary of the Woy Woy Bowls Club, a position he held for 5 years. He was a keen and competent bowler, competing in the Woy Woy/Gosford area. He went along pretty well until 1984, when his health deteriorated, with increasing need for hospitalisation.

To his wife, Elsie, and his surviving sons, goes our deepest sympathy.

One of Dick's sons, Ronald, retired from A.W.A. in July, 1985, after serving 44¹/₂ years with the company in the advertising and broadcasting department in Sydney.

Should anyone have a need to contact the Bettison family for any information or for any other matter, the addresses of his wife, Elsie, his son, Ronald, and his nephew, Ted, are on file with our worth Secretary, Alan Arndt.

REFLECTIONS

On the formation of O.T.V.A., contact with kindred societies in the U.S.A., U.K., N.Z., and Canada resulted in an immediate and friendly response. There is no doubt that this response was engendered and influenced by morse code operating. Modern technology has not altered matters so far as good fellowship is concerned, although the "generation gap" could be quite another problem adjustable only with the passage of time.

It is interesting to note the differing approaches we have to sections of the communication "game". Our colleagues in America concentrate on Merchant Marine history, quite in contrast with the U.K., who tend to feature modern staff movements.

Veteran BILL CRAIG in Auckland keeps in touch with retired Cable men on a "family" relationship basis, kept that way mainly by his own personality and deciated enthusiasm where isolation restricts membership but not good fellowship.

I like to think that International Co-ordination will ultimately bring about changes for better understanding and "good will".

Charles Carthew

30TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING O.T.V.A.NSW BRANCH 9TH MAY 1986MINUTESPresent:

A. Arndt, L. Ayres, A. Barrie, R. Beecham, M. Blaha, D. Bourne, H. Branson, H. Brown, M. Brown, O. Cooper, G. Cupit, B. Curran, B. Darragh, J. Davis, P. Dean, A. Ebert, J. Edwards, R. Fisher, E. Gunning, E. Haran, B. Henson, J. Hodgson, F. Kannard, F. Keen, J. Lee, W. Luke, G. MacDonald, G. Madren, C. Maiden, G. Maltby, H. McInnes, P. Meulman, D. Montgomery, K. Morgan, J. Orton, R. Peacock, J. Pow, C. Raecke, J. Sheath, A. Taylor, K. Theaker, R. Turnbull, C. Vahtrick, R. Waugh, C. Watson, B. Waugh, P. Whisson, M. Wilden, M. Wood, D. Woods, V. Yen.

Apologies:

A. Aguis, J. Anderson, E. Anthoney, E. Bastow, R. Baty, K. Burbury, J. Burgess, M. Casey, W. Chant (Jnr.), W. Chant (Snr.), R. Collins, J. Collister, M. Condon, R. Connolly, J. Cowie, J. Creswick, W. Creswick, S. Dale, C. Dalley, J. Davis, G. Day, P. Day, M. Dobson, N. Donohue, R. Doohan, M. Dwyer, R. Godfrey, T. Harricks, P. Harris, N. Harris, T. Hedley, A. Hennessy, J. Howe, R. Imrie, C. Israel, A. Lane, M. Matthys, J. Mattes, R. McDonald, A. McEntyre, S. Meynert, R. Moyes, J. Newlyn, E. Norris, M. O'Hanlon, W. O. Donnell, A. Oakford, R. Osborne, P. Patiniott, J. Peridis, T. Perrott, J. Phillips, C. Pickford, A. Purtil, D. Richardson, A. Ricketts, E. Ritchie, S. Sandilands, M. Sayer, H. Sheppard, P. Skinner, R. Smith, R. Sommerville, R. Stewart, C. Swinney, S. Taylor, G. Thompson, E. Thornley, J. Toland, R. Towner, C. Tressider, R. Tully, K. Vincent, G. Warner, R. Welbourne, H. White, J. Whittaker.

In the absence of the President, Ron MacDonald, who is confined to bed with a bad back, the Secretary opened this meeting and welcomed our official guest, Darryl Savage, Manager (Customer Services - Operations), and all members present. A special welcome was extended to the following new members attending their first meeting:

Fred Kennard
Mike Blaha
Ken Theaker

Fraternal greetings were read as received from the Quarter Century Club of Teleglobe Canada, and the Presidents and members of our Victorian, Queensland, South Australian and Western Australian Branches, on the occasion of our A.G.M. Chas. Carthew, our National Secretary also sent us his good wishes, and advises he is enjoying very good health now. A cordial invitation has been issued from our Branches, to any of us who are interested in attending their next meetings, which are listed in the April Newsletter.

One minute's silence was observed to mark the passing of the following members during the past six months:

Norm Mackay
Bill Hyde
Rocky Gordon
Les Reynolds
Bob Wright
Len Vella
Douglas Passmore

Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of our previous meeting were distributed to members in our October 1985 Newsletter (copies were also available at this meeting) and were declared open for discussion. There being no discussion it was moved by Chas Watson and seconded by Jack Edwards that the minutes of the 29th Annual General Meeting be confirmed.

Carried unanimously.

Balance Sheet and Annual Accounts

The Balance Sheet was presented to all members present and opened for discussion. Peter Whisson asked Treasurer Mick Wilden to explain the reasons for an apparent falling off in subscriptions collected this year as compared with past years. Mick Wilden explained that although new members are recruited regularly by our Secretary, some of these new recruits are under the impression that they need not pay subscriptions if they do not attend meetings. He assured the meeting that this matter will be taken up at Committee level in an attempt to get all working members to pay their subscription regularly. There being no further discussion, it was moved by Gray MacDonald and seconded by Des Woods, that the Balance Sheet and Auditors report be accepted.

Carried unanimously.

Election of Officers

The Secretary, as acting President, declared all offices vacant, and called for nominations for a Returning Officer to conduct the annual elections.

Mr Peter Meulman was nominated by Alan Arndt and seconded by Orm Cooper, there being no further nominations, Mr Peter Meulman was duly elected as Returning Officer.

The Returning Officer called for nominations for the office of President. Mr G Cupit was nominated by Mick Wood and seconded by Jack Davis. There being no further nominations, Mr Gordon Cupit was declared President.

Mr A Arndt was nominated as Honorary Secretary by Bob Fisher and seconded by Chas Watson, there being no further nominations, Mr Alan Arndt was declared Honorary Secretary.

Mr M Wilden was nominated as Treasurer by Peter Whisson and seconded by Horrie McInnes, there being no further nominations, Mr Mick Wilden was declared Treasurer.

Mr R Connolly and Mr R Peacock were nominated as Auditors by Des Woods and seconded by Jack Sheath, there being no further nominations, Messrs Ron Connolly and Ray Peacock were declared Auditors.

The following members indicated their willingness to accept a twelve month term of office on the Committee. Gray MacDonald nominated the new Committee in toto, seconded by Orm Cooper and were:

Messrs J Anderson, D Bourne, R Connolly, C Maiden, A Ricketts, P Skinner, T Thatcher, G Thompson and J Whittacker

were duly elected as Committee.

A vote of thanks to our outgoing President Ron McDonald, and retiring committee members Ray Baty and Bruce Collett, was moved by President Gordon Cupit, which was acknowledged most enthusiastically by all present.

30th Annual Reunion

In accordance with feelings expressed at previous meetings, the Secretary recommended we endeavour to secure the OTC House Conference Centre of Friday 28th November, 1986 as the venue for our next reunion. Moved by Mick Wilden, with a suggestion the Committee endeavour to keep the food quantity and quality up to past standards, but cut overheads by reducing the number of waitresses in attendance to keep costs at a minimum. This motion was seconded by Alan Arndt and was carried unanimously.

Sick List

The Secretary regretfully reported one member, Bill Chant (Snr.) has a leg problem which is presently keeping him confined to home - but he hopes to be well enough to attend our next reunion meeting.

Business Arising from Minutes of Previous Meeting

As suggested at our last meeting, President Ron McDonald, accompanied by Committee members Alan Arndt, Dave Bourne and Gareth Thompson, visited our archives store at OTC's Broadway Building to inspect material and equipment held there.

Alan Arndt reported to this meeting that President Ron was very impressed by what he saw on this visit, especially the wonderful work of restoration that has been done by some of the OTC staff members.

Charlie Maiden asked if OTC has given us a museum area in the new building now being erected. Alan Arndt advised that OTC's M.D., Mr George Maltby, has not only assured us of space for our equipment to be displayed (on a rotational basis), but he has also commissioned a Ms Barbara Reed to assist OTC's newly appointed archivist John Phillips, to organise our Archives library material.

General Business

- (a) Following several requests to the Secretary, Alan Arndt put forward a proposal for discussion that future AGM's be held during daytime, to allow members who are unable to travel at night, to attend these meetings. After some discussion, it was agreed unanimously to hold our next AGM between 12 noon and 3 pm as a once only trial, when we could further discuss advantages/disadvantages etc., with a view to voting on this change if required by the members.
- (b) At their last AGM in May 1985, our Association's Victorian Branch passed a motion to reduce full membership service qualifications to OTVA (Vic) to 20 year service, and associate membership to 15 years service. Although contrary to our association's constitution, the Victorian Branch were forced to make this move in an endeavour to boost their steadily reducing numbers.

In light of this change made by OTVA (Vic), a motion was moved by Alan Arndt to reduce to OTVA (NSW) Branch qualifying years of service from 25 to 20 years for males, and leave female service qualifications at 20 years. Although seconded by Mick Wilden, who pointed out we could have

sexual discrimination complaints to follow, the motion was opened for general discussion. During the ensuing discussion it was also revealed by the Secretary, that several requests have been received for this meeting to also consider an amendment to our constitution to allow those persons who have not served the required service time, but who by the passing of time are compelled by law to retire, be admitted to the Association.

After considerable discussion, which pointed mainly towards the sense of pride in our members by being admitted to our Association, only after serving the present required number of years, the motion was put to the vote, and was quite clearly rejected on all counts.

- (c) The President thanked OTC on behalf of all members, for the continued support given to our Association.

There being no further business, the President declared the meeting closed, and invited all present to join him for some refreshments and fellowship in the adjoining lounge area.

A.J. ARNDT
Honorary Secretary

IT IS WITH A HEAVY HEART that I report the death of one of the all time great "characters" of the old Sydney Operating Room, JACK SHEATH.

Jack was one of the original 24 operators chosen by the Services Rehabilitation Board to undergo a high-speed Beam Wireless Course in 1946. I was also one of them. Like all the others on the course, Jack was already accomplished to the send/receive level of 25 words per minute and were now being trained to handle commercial traffic. He finally achieved the standards required by the Beam Wireless Service and, like the rest of us, was rostered for duty in the old S.O.R. at 47 York Street, Sydney.

He made an immediate impact on everyone. I have yet to find a man who didn't like him. True, he had one of the strongest Aussie accents outside of Chips Rafferty, his pet expressions were unprintable but hilarious, a heavy consumer of the "suds", as he called it, and a dedicated punter.

His interest in the neddies was shared by a lovely lady, Hilda Parker, who was employed as a cleaner/tea lady. Jack and Hilda became as thick as thieves, and one of my fondest memories was one Saturday morning in the Sydney Operating Room in the old A.W.A. building. Saturday morning was the time that Jack and Hilda consulted the oracle, in the guise of the racing form page of the Daily Telegraph, and quite a great deal of heat was generated in their deliberations as to the prowess of the various starters on the day's card before a joint plan of attack on the bookies was eventually agreed upon.

On this particular day, Jack was on the Montreal circuit running a wheatstone tape of Canadian traffic whilst he and Hilda poured over the racing form. Suddenly, from the speaker crackled a ZBY request from Montreal. Without raising his eyes from the form guide, Jack said "Back a yard, Parkie." Without even a query, Hilda moved down the table to where the tape was running through the Creed transmitter, lifted the foot, pulled the tape back a yard, re-inserted the tape and went back to her deliberations with Jack. Hilda's knowledge of Morse was limited but she was pretty good with her knowledge of operations.

Jack was a wireless air-gunner in the R.A.A.F. having done his training in Canada under the Empire Training Scheme. His funeral was well-attended, not only by those of use who knew him in the old days, but by people he had helped over his latter years. He was a member of A.A. and a tireless worker for the St. Vincents de Paul. In his younger and wilder days he played cricket with Sydney against our old rivals, the Melbourne Operating Room in Wagga. At the fortieth reunion of the Cricket Club, Jack was made a life member, but died only a matter of days later.

On reading all this back, I retract the "heavy heart" bit. I have just realised how much better I am for having known him, and how much heavier my heart would be if I hadn't.

See you later, Jack.

EXTRACT FROM "THE ARGUS" FRIDAY, JULY 13TH, 1906

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY ACROSS BASS STRAIT: HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL TRIAL

Wireless telegraphy is now an accomplished fact in Australia. The Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company under license from the Commonwealth Government, has within the past few months erected receiving transmitting installations at the Springs, near Queenscliff, and at Devonport, on the north coast of Tasmania. The license was for the purpose of experiment only, for the Commonwealth has not yet determined which system of wireless telegraphy it will officially adopt. The Marconi Company, however, are the only pioneers who have worked in the Australian field. Actually, they bridged the 215 miles between Queenscliff and Devonport nearly two months ago, for it was about the middle of May when the operators at each station first gained communication with each other.

Since then the apparatus at each of the two stations has been tested and perfected, and yesterday was selected as the occasion of an official demonstration by the company of the success of its experiments. Over 200 guests attended. They included His Excellency the Governor-General (Lord Northcote) and His Excellency the Governor (Sir Reginald Talbot), with their staffs; the Prime Minister (Mr Deakin) and all the members of the Commonwealth Ministry, except William Lyne and Mr Isaacs, who were unable to be present; the Attorney-General of Victoria (Mr Davies), who represented the state Ministry, in the unavoidable absence of the Premier; a great majority of the members of both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament: the leading officers of the military and naval forces of the Commonwealth; and representatives of the shipping firms, and of Victorian and Australian commerce. Among the guests was also Mr J James, who on October 3, 1854, was the operator who sent the first telegraphic message ever sent in Victoria. It was sent from Melbourne to Williamstown. The guests travelled to Queenscliff by special train, provided by the company, and they were accompanied by Captain Walker, representative of the Marconi Company in Australasia, by whom the invitation was given.

Close to the sea-shore, about two miles from the Queenscliff railway station, on the summit of a hill, are erected two poles, each 162ft. high, and about that distance apart, having suspended between them a network of conducting wires, which serve to receive and collect the impact of the electric waves travelling through the ether. The network of wire (called the "aerial"),

is also the means by which the waves are propelled into the ether. The wave has its origin in an electric spark. The whole of the machinery necessary for the telegraphy at Queenscliff is a $4\frac{1}{2}$ -horse-power dynamo, some powerful electrical appliances, and the delicate instruments which serve to detect the wave, and record its effects at the receiving station.

The Queenscliff station has been erected under the supervision of Captain Walker, the engineer in charge Mr H M Dowsett. The Devonport station is under the superintendence of Mr J Henry, agent for the company in Tasmania.

The visitors, on arriving at Queenscliff, were driven in carriages, coaches and cabs to the Springs, where luncheon was served in a marquee. On a table in the centre of the marquee was a transmitting and receiving instrument, connected with the sparking apparatus and the aerial. The guests at once sat down to lunch (Captain Walker presiding), and Mr H M Dowsett took charge of the instrument. When the cigars had arrived, the sending of the messages began.

Lord Northcote sent the first message. It ran:-

"To the Governor of Tasmania, from the Governor-General. The Commonwealth greets Tasmania, and rejoices at the establishment of new means for uniting the people of Australia more closely together. - NORTHCOTE. By Marconi wireless telegraph, from Queenscliff, Victoria, July 12, 1906."

The operator tapped off the message in the Morse alphabet, each tap being followed by the fierce cracking of the electric sparks in the little power-house. He operated slowly - at about 15 words a minute. "We have done 30 and over from here," he remarked. He ended, and there came back on the tape the dots and dashes of the letters Rd. ("Received"). The reply of Sir Gerald Strickland (Governor of Tasmania) could not be immediately received. Sir Gerald Strickland was not at Devonport, but at Hobart. On the other side of Bass Straits an operator received Lord Northcote's message. He wrote it out, and gave it to a boy on a bicycle. The boy scurried to a ferry, and gave it to a boatman. The boatman rowed across the stream, and handed it in at a telegraph office. Thence it was sent by telegraph to Hobart. Sir Gerald Strickland's answer came by the same route. It read:-

"To His Excellency Lord Northcote, Governor-General, July 12, 1906 - I tender thanks to Your Excellency for the first message transmitted to this state by wireless telegraphy, and beg have to offer congratulations to the Government of the Commonwealth on having encouraged an experiment, which may accelerate the date on which this state's contribution towards cable subsidies can be diminished, I venture to submit the exceptionally inviting opportunity for further practical tests of wireless telegraphy in everyday work offered by King Island, where a progressive community of Tasmanians and Victorians call attention to its need of communication by the rapidity of its development. - GERALD STRICKLAND, Governor."

The message sent by Sir Reginald Talbot was -

"From the Governor of Victoria to the Governor of Tasmania - Victoria salutes her sister state, Tasmania. - TALBOT."

The reply from Sir Gerald Strickland was:-

"This small and beautiful sister, by whom Victoria was founded, reciprocates your Excellency's greeting, and rejoices in Victoria's greetings."

From the Prime Minister (Mr Deakin) the message was -

"To the Premier and People of Tasmania - Australia, tirelessly subduing her great distances by railway and wire, today enlists the waves of the ether in perfecting the union between her people in Tasmania and upon the mainland."

Sir Gerald Strickland replied:-

"The bond of ether unites new friendships and awakens the old. Could it but speak with the charm of the never-to-be-forgotten voice of the representative of Australia at the conference of 1887, and Australia's Prime Minister to-day."

The Postmaster-General (Mr Chapman) sent a message, to be forwarded free of cost to every newspaper in Tasmania. Messages were despatched from the United Press of Australia to that of Tasmania, and from Senator Keating. Mr Cameron, M.H.R., Mr Crouch, M.H.R., Mr Storrer, M.H.R., and Mr O'Malley, M.H.R. The mayor of Queenscliff sent a message to the municipality of Devonport, receiving this message in reply:-

"Devonport sends felicitations to Queenscliff. We rejoice that we can by this wonderful wireless telegraphy tender friendly greetings to you, our neighbours across the Straits. - JOHN LUCK, Chairman Town Board, Devonport."

At the conclusion of the luncheon a number of toasts were proposed.

Lord Northcote, in replying to the toast of his health, said that he was pleased to see so many legislators, for he had feared that their high standard of political virtue might cause them to remain elsewhere, discussing the precise moment at which they would ask him to release them from their labours. (Laughter and cheers). Wireless telegraphy was something that even Tennyson had not imagined, when in "Locksleyhall" he dipped

"into the future, far as human eye can see. Saw the vision of the world and all wonders that shall be."

The recent incident, when the wrecked ship Montagu was able to communicate with "wireless" stations, showed how the system might decrease the perils of navigation, including those round the Australian coast. (Cheers). Only one person in Australia might suffer from these installations. He himself was about to travel in districts where he had expected to be less under the control of the gentleman on his right (Mr Deakin). But he had learned that a wireless message could only be received by an instrument properly "attuned" to the transmitter. He would order all his staff to be attuned to no message, except the strains of "God Save the King," that would greet him wherever he went. (Laughter). He would ask Captain Walker, in his cable to Mr Marconi, to congratulate that illustrious scientist on his recovery from a recent illness. (Cheers).

Sir Reginald Talbot (replying to the toast of his health) said that he had had his first experience of wireless telegraphy when on board a warship between Egypt and Cyprus. Somebody came on deck, and handed him a telegram (wireless) from the Governor of Cyprus. It said, "To the general commanding - where are you? When may we expect you?" (Laughter). His reply was the only one possible, "I don't know; I will ask the captain." (Laughter). However, he arrived at Cyprus.

Mr Deakin (who proposed the toast of the Marconi Company) said that if the poet quoted by Lord Northcote had failed to foresee these marvels, an Australian poet in Brunton Stephens had come very near to it when he said:

"He whose ear
Thrills to that finer atmosphere."

(Cheers). Wireless telegraphy seemed likely to transform future economic, political and warlike proceedings all over the globe (Cheers).

Mr Davies (Attorney-General), who supported the same toast, said that he had intended to suggest the possibility of a message to the planet Mars, but had been told that Mr Marconi did not yet claim that feat.

Mr Deakin - Try Venus instead. (Laughter).

Mr Davies thought that if it were possible for every member of Parliament to have a Marconi installation on his person it would be a great comfort to his wife, to whom he could send messages assuring her that he was in the House. (Laughter). Imagine too the result if the receiver got from a transmitter an actual photograph of the position! (Loud laughter).

Captain Walker, replying for the company, pointed out the advantages for defence, for the safety of navigation, and for commerce to be gained from wireless telegraphy.

Mr Chapman (Postmaster-General), in proposing Captain Walker's health, said that the usual question asked of any new venture was, "Will this pay?" With wireless telegraphy we must also ask. How will it affect those who travel to and from Australia by sea? He hoped that in time every passenger ship - including the ships which would perform the Australian mail contract - would have a wireless installation (Cheers). The P and O and Orient companies would, he believed, be willing to make installations when they knew which the Commonwealth intended to adopt. The Commonwealth had not yet adopted one, but in his opinion the best system would be an empire system, so that the whole empire would be linked by the same means of communication (Cheers).

There was time only for a hurried inspection of the plant, the working of which was explained by Captain Walker and Mr Dowsett.

The visitors were driven back to the railway station, and arrived back in Melbourne at about 6 o'clock.

At the Queenscliff railway station, on the arrival of the special train, addresses of welcome were presented to the Governor General (Lord Northcote) and the Governor (Sir Reginald Talbot) by the mayor of Queenscliff (Councillor Tobias). A band received the Governors, and a party of 200 school children sang the National Anthem, afterwards being granted a half-holiday. The town was decorated with flags and arches.

REPORT A.G.M. MELBOURNE VETS FRIDAY MAY 9TH

The 29th Annual General Meeting of O.T.V.A. (Vic) was held at noon on Friday May 9th, 1986 at O.T.C. House, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne. Forty-four members signed the Attendance Book whilst thirteen apologies were tabled.

The Minutes of the previous A.G.M. were read and confirmed, and President Douglas Crabtree called for one minute's silence in respect of past members.

Prior to vacating the Chair in favour of President-Elect Arthur Green, Doug speaking of his term as President said it had been a most enjoyable year and paid special tribute to the ladies for their assistance in catering at the A.G.M. and Re-union.

In handing over the reins to Arthur, he wished him well and hoped he would enjoy his term of office as had all our Past Presidents. Doug also made mention that along with George Magnus and Les Brown, Arthur had joined A.W.A. on the same day in 1932.

The President then advised those present that as all officers had indicated their willingness to continue in office it gave him pleasure to announce they were duly elected for the ensuing 12 months.

President Arthur then closed the meeting and invited all present to partake of the hospitality of the Melbourne Vets.

Due to illness a number of the regulars were missing - they included Ted Turner, Cliff Allison, Jean Edwards (Constable), Arthur Ross, Frank Patrick and Clive Purvis.

Our yarn spinners are still in good form - blokes like Eddie Tresize, Allan Vagg and Mark Wilton can still pull the rabbit out of his hat, and with a twinkle in the eye say "have you heard this one before?"

The afternoon closed with the President thanking the ladies for their assistance.

Footnote: President Arthur would like to remind all that the Annual Reunion will be held in the Board Room, O.T.C. House, Melbourne on Friday, November 14th.

As this is the 30th anniversary of the Melbourne Vets, a cordial invitation is extended to the ladies to join in this special celebration.

Guye Russell
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Telephone: (03) 380 5259

A TRIBUTE

by Toni Condon

From a humble youth he turned out to be a man of many parts. He commenced his career as a junior cableman with the Pacific Cable Board in Sydney. He had his ups and downs as befits such a calling. Cable signals in those primitive days were difficult. With no amplifiers and sophisticated relays, it was all craft with the senior men such as Tommy Chapman, Mullard and all the others who were experienced and always ready to help out.

He had one very tangible asset in that he possessed a dry humour aided by the ability to listen to senior men. He showed marked stability when, having gone fishing with two other colleagues and misjudging the dusk, got into the broiling swirl of the Passage. But for the alertness of the Japanese fisherman, Harada who, using his Island plantation's launch haven a serious situation may have become a disaster. Hughie did the rest but by the time he got to them they were well on their way to Manzanillo. Quite a man, was Hughie, and perhaps more of his exploits can be mentioned at another time.

Well, time marched on, bringing our man to Canadian shores, and whilst on his stay in the land of the Maple Leaf, he recommenced studying for his Doctorate of Medicine, gained it with honours and took off for home without realising that having such an honour does not necessarily apply to local rules.

So he rolled up his sleeves, kept the study up, and worked at many mundane tasks to supplement his meagre income. He finally made it, hung out his shingle as a G.P. and with the passage of time moved to the renowned Macquarie Street, where, not long after, his footsteps were followed by our renowned Dr O'Keefe.

Another story of a student of chess, world affairs, anti-smoking, tennis player of some ability, and at the age of 70 was still taking his daily walk and working out chess problems of some complexity.

Our hero had, however, had his fill of high-rise apartments and sought out his first love, the breeding of cattle and blood stock lines, particularly those applicable to those bred in France. As Ellerslie was my birthplace I avidly sought his stock of knowledge in this field. I corresponded with him in great depth, so much so that any doyen of line breeding would have been proud of our prognosis. I believe that he had 40 brood mares on his property at MURGA now being run by the family. Bruce Low was our god and we revered his judgements.

Yes, a man of many parts, and a man of great courage. He was a G.P., and a good 'un, too. He was ex-P.C.B. and died on 5th February, 1986, aged 81 years. A memory to a very fine colleague, DOUGLAS PASSMORE. Remember him?

The photo of the Victoria Branch Presidents Board was sent to us by Charles Carthew. The names featured thereon could be of interest to Veterans.

OVERSEAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
(VICTORIA)

- PRESIDENTS -

1957-8	R P FREEMAN	1965-6	R L HAYES	1973-4	J H HEATHERSHAW
1958-9	H E ROWE	1966-7	C W F CARTHEW	1974-5	G E McDONALD
1959-0	M C TREGENZA	1967-8	F C DAVIS	1975-6	J R HUNTER
1960-1	J R GILLIGAN	1968-9	E TURNER	1976-7	A U STEWART
1961-2	C B CUTLER	1969-0	F C McCORMACK	1977-8	M WILTON
1962-3	F P FITZGERALD	1970-1	N H LAWS	1978-9	W C BENILEY
1963-4	G H COX	1971-2	C W PURVIS	1979-0	W J UWINS
1964-5	T M CONNOLLY	1972-3	E M DENNIS	1980-1	A G VAGG
1981-2	W H SHEA				
1982-3	V MOLINEUX				
1983-4	J McGRORY				
1984-5	G MAGNUS				
1985-6	D CRABTREE				

EXTRACT FROM THE "THE ARGUS" FRIDAY JULY 13TH, 1906

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY

ADVANTAGES EXPLAINED

In the course of his speech at the demonstration of wireless telegraphy, made on Thursday between Queenscliff (Vic.) and Devonport (Tas.) by the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company, Captain Walker, representative of the company in Australasia, made reference to the various benefits that were conferred by the use of wireless telegraphy.

Captain Walker pointed out that for defence purposes the installation of wireless stations on coastal points and on vessels at sea would secure a means of information far in advance of anything existing. If it should happen that Great Britain became involved in war, then one of the possibilities would be an attack upon Australia from the sea. With facilities for "wireless" installations, coastal stations could be erected at convenient places, and the apparatus could also be placed on swift vessels of the mercantile marine. These vessels, acting as scouts around the Australian coast, could communicate with one another, and with the coastal stations, and thus give to Australian ships and armies information of the movements of the enemy, such as would be possible by no other system of communication. The advantages that this would offer for the mobilisation, either of ships at sea or of men upon land, were so plain that they hardly needed to be pointed out.

The safety of passengers on board oceangoing vessels was another consideration pointed out by Captain Walker. If a vessel without a wireless installation became disabled she was helpless, and only when she became overdue did other vessels go in search of her, not knowing where she was to be found. With a Marconi installation a vessel overtaken by any mishap could at once send out messages for assistance. If she was near enough to shore, and could be sent from there; if not, her message would be received by some sister vessel, which could at once come to her assistance.

In modern commerce, Captain Walker pointed out, wireless telegraphy had become a means to remove that blank in business activity that a sea voyage has hitherto created. A commercial man going on a voyage had hitherto been forced to let go the reins of his business while going across the ocean. It was possible that even a business man, just after leaving a country, found often that there was something which he had forgotten to arrange. Under older conditions he was forced to wait until the vessel arrived at a landing-place by which time, perhaps, it would be too late for the action which he had contemplated. With a "Marconi" apparatus on board such a man could at his convenience send back messages to the country which he had left. With the constant chain of vessels now crossing the ocean, and with the establishment of stations at convenient places along the main routes of commerce, it was becoming possible for a man to make long journeys by sea without ever losing communication with the world.

Some advantages of a less obvious kind were indicated by Captain Walker. It was possible, he said, to run short of money, even at sea; either through the attractions of bridge or poker, or from other causes. With a Marconi installation on board a passenger would at once be able to communicate with friends or bankers, and thus replenish his purse. In fact, Captain Walker quoted an authentic instance of a passenger on board an Atlantic liner, who came to his last sovereign. But his bankers were communicated with and on their "Marconigrams" of credit he was able to fill his purse again.

The extent to which the Marconi system has been adopted by British people and companies was also indicated by Captain Walker. The Marconi installations were to be found crossing the Atlantic Ocean on over 70 liners. Coastal stations have been established by the company as far east as Suez, so that passengers from England were still in touch with the world up to 500 miles this side of Suez at any rate. The company intended to establish further stations at Aden and Colombo. From that point onwards to Australia there were as yet no stations selected, but the Cocos Islands and Cape Leeuwin had been suggested as excellent sites. If that chain of stations were completed there would be constant communication along the whole route. The final system aimed at was that in which the whole British Empire from end to end, would be linked together by means of Marconi wireless installations.

Editorial Note: We are indebted PETER WHISSON for the two articles which appear in this edition of NEWSLETTER, "ACROSS BASS STRAIT AND WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY, ADVANTAGES EXPLAINED", who found them among some of Phil Geeves' memorabilia, and copies of which have been archived at Broadway N.S.W. They will be of particular interest to you old wireless buffs.

CONTINUING THE STORY OF ELLIS SMELLIE

In case the cables were cut, huge 800 volt direct current generators were installed at Applecross (Perth) for a proposed powerful arc transmitter to work South Africa or Singapore and Ellis was one expert telegraphist transferred there to handle the traffic. But the arc set was never installed. This was the Telefunken station built by the Germans and had a 400 foot mast. The Germans had installed a 45 hp Gardiner engine belt driving a 35 kilowatt alternative for long waves. For working long distance Lance Allinson and Ellis, at 3 o'clock in the morning used to start this engine and put double and treble the power into the 600 meter wave in normal use, thus reaching to some ships as far away as the Suez Canal. Friends were made with many of the ship's operators and special times would be made for them to work Perth long distance and they would relay traffic for us to ships still further out. Other ships, one the Themostocles on the Durban/Cape Town route did the same. Sometimes we met those ships at Fremantle or the ships's operators came up to visit us. In the early days the post office paid their staff in Western Australia, 5% extra because of the bad name Western Australia had. About 1920, Atteley Hunt was sent over to see if this should be continued. There was perfect weather during his stay there and we lost that allowance. Ellis had met Atteley Hunt before. A New Guinea patrol officer named Chinnery and Ellis were firm friends in Port Moresby. Meeting in Melbourne, Chinnery took Ellis to the Athenaeum Club for a drink and dinner. A messenger from the Dept. of External Affairs came to tell Chinnery that Atteley Hunt wanted to see him. When the messenger told Chinnery it was to ask him about concessions to the rubber planters in New Guinea regarding acreage and conditions, Chinnery sent the messenger back to Atteley Hunt suggesting that Ellis come with him as he knew them all and had been on their rubber plantations. This was arranged and Atteley Hunt, Chinnery and Ellis sat around a table for a while. It ended by Ellis writing out the suggestion to be put to the Minister. Next day's paper printed unaltered these suggestions as having been adopted. Both Chinnery and Ellis regarded Atteley Hunt as a brainless stooge. Later when Atteley Hunt became an arbitrator and had our case before him, he fixed our salary at 20 pounds per annum above that of a landline telegraphist because it was harder to adjust a radio receiver than the landline relay and sounder. When Atteley Hunt visited Applecross Ellis thanked God he was acting in charge - here was his chance. He first took Atteley Hunt to the 20,000 volt transmission lines along the road where switches on the top of the poles could be opened. Taking a long pole, Ellis pulled one of the switches down. He overdid it and pulled the switch clean off its anchorage. But his luck was in - men were working on that transmission line close by and they soon have it up again. He then took Atteley Hunt into the old stables where there were transformers, 80 kw which reduced the voltage to 440 and 240. They then walked up over the underground channels, taking the current to the top of the hill where a switchboard about 12 feet long was inspected. A Father Shaw engine battery charging generators the 800 volt direct current generators, a large bank of accumulators, were shown to Atteley Hunt. Ellis then stood him alongside the belt from the Gardiner engine to the alternator and the Gardiner engine was started up. Atteley Hunt had been told that when Ellis sat on the belt and the top belt met the bottom belt that was the best adjustment. But when the belt on speeding up swung about and swayed and looked as though it would come off, Atteley Hunt backed out of the door. He was then shown the mast, 400 feet high, which sat on three glass insulators. He was shown when the insulators cracked and had to be renewed, jacks were borrowed from the Navy to lift the mast and the new insulators inserted. He was next taken to the living quarters and shown the single men's residence, the house for the officer in charge and one house for one operator. Ellis then asked Atteley Hunt why he

had been given 20 pounds per year over a landline operator. Only an electronical engineer would have charge of 20,000 volt lines and apparatus. A mechanical engineer would be in charge of the engines, a estate agent looking after the cottages, a road foreman for the road, an engineer in charge of the mast and aerals, a manager for the acres of land and the fences, a radio engineer for the radio apparatus including a 5 kw arc set, a professional for the watchkeeping over the largest coverage of any radio station in the world, watchkeeping over the millions of pounds, pounds worth of ships, cargo and passengers. Ellis then told Atteley Hunt of a morning when three ships were on fire at the one time during his watchkeeping. It was at the time of the coal strikes at Newcastle and coal was being brought in from England - it was the coal that was burning. Then came the question, "do you consider it enough when you have given me 20 pounds per annum above the salary of a landline operator?" Atteley Hunt stood silent for a long time. then he said "this case must be reopened, come over tomorrow, I will see Mr. Sykes (the post office advocate at the Arbitration hearing), who is in Perth and will have the case reopened." Highly elated, Ellis took the ferry across the Swan River to the address he was given and knocked on the huge doors of a large building. No-one came, he kicked the door, then use a brick. A messenger poked his nose out and yelled at him to stop. When told about Atteley Hunt, he said "he's not here" and shut the door. The brick made him open it again and Ellis put his foot in the door. When told to take it out, Ellis told the messenger to give it a kick and see what happened. Then the messenger said, "what is this all about?" and was told all about it. He then said "I'll see what I can do". After a long while, he returned and said "come in". Ellis was taken inside to a chair in a large empty room. All this is being set down exactly as it was told about 1943 to Lionel Hook, George Applely and John Mulholland in Melbourne when Ellis was one man delegation for a rise in wages for the coastal radio service. Ellis sat on the chair a long time and began to wonder if it was all for real, could this be really happening. At long last a door opened across the room, Atteley Hunt came out at a trot, saying "I am sorry this happened. Mr. Sykes says it would be quite wrong to reopen the case. "Goodbye," and shoved out two fingers. In a daze, Ellis shook the two fingers and Atteley Hunt turned and ran through the door. At this point Lionel Hook roared with laughter. Ellis wrote to Captain Toombs, the Union Secretary, who replied telling him to keep calm. He wrote to the speaker of the House of Representatives and received a three page letter from the post office, as stupid as if it has been written by a child. Ellis had also told Atteley Hunt that the post office had submitted to the arbitrator, an out of date salary scale. It had been compiled before the Navy give their last rise and wages sheets were shown to Hunt, showing that Ellis had his salary reduced. When talking to Mr. Hook, Ellis has added that the only witness called by Toombs before the arbitrator was a lad named Cusack who had joined the coastal radio service on a salary of 140 pounds per year, the only person Ellis ever knew to be paid less than he had been paid in 1912, namely 184 pounds per year. He also told Mr. Hook that he was the first person ever to be told of this fiasco with Atteley Hunt. He had never mentioned it to anyone before. What was the use?

Ellis' concluding submission to Mr. Hook was "Surely there should be some responsibility on the employers to see that a loyal, competent body of men, dedicated to their job, should not lose by never having caused trouble or gone on strike". When Ellis was 19, as engineer operator he got more salary than a bank manager or a school teacher. The same operators nearly 30 years later were on 3 pounds a week less than a bank clerk or an insurance clerk.

About 1922 Nauen in Germany started sending press at 3.00 a.m. Perth time on very long waves. Applecross was asked to receive this press and pass it on the landline to Melbourne. The first four mornings, four different operators, got only bits and pieces. Then Ellis took it down word perfect and got the job. For a few months his day's work was to take down that press and send it on the landline, about 2 hours work. At first the other operators also copied it as best they could but soon give it up as a bad job. As told about earlier, this was because Ellis had put in 2 years solid work training himself to follow a weak signal through many longer signals static, and radio inductive interference.

FROM THE MAILBOX

We have received a letter from one of our most well-known ex-Beam veterans, WILF ATKIN who is still kicking along nicely being now 83 years young. Wilf, as most of the Beam veterans know, is a man of considerable humour, a commodity greatly needed in the operating game, especially in its formative years. In cleaning out a pile of old papers and books, Wilf came across some of his old scripts which he used to appear in various roles and which in Sydney were staged mainly at the North Sydney Council Chambers. Though it was not planned that way, it always seemed to be held on the same night as the Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. But I disagree.

Wilf writes,

"In the April edition of the 1982 NEWSLETTER I again read the very interesting article by my old friend, JIM JACOBS. We were on the R.M.S. Tahiti together in 1927 and became close friends.

When we were advised that the Union Company was going to take us over from A.W.A. on a certain date Jim applied for, and got, a job in the Melbourne Beam. I managed, (wrangled would be better word), to get transferred to an old English tramp and didn't return to Sydney for seven months.

After my accumulated leave I was transferred to the ORMISTON and then to the Iron Master, and it was due to the efforts of Jim Jacobs that I was brought ashore to join the Melbourne Beam staff.

Jim knew I had done a stint in the N.Z. Post Office and could read the sounder and brought this fact to the attention of George Apperley who was then the Melbourne manager.

Jim also took me into his home and his mother, a widow, treated me as another son, and - Oh Boy - couldn't she cook!

A word about Jim. He was smart, thorough in all he tackled and a born leader; moreover, he had a great sense of humour - similar to your own - and a great organiser.

Reading his article through again, which is in a low key, one realised he must have been a brilliant soldier, and I am happy and proud to think we were close friends in our early twenties. He was one year older than me and if he is still around baby-sitting for his great grandchildren he will be 85 on March 11th, 1987.

Kind regards, Jim, and to all my old colleagues with whom I shrieked (he crossed that out and then added) worked in the old S.O.R."

Wilf was in Sydney recently to attend the 40th anniversary of the Cricket Club (Sydney that is) on the same night that Jack Sheath was made a Life Member. My spies informed me that he was in good form and had the younger members of the Cricket Club in stitches with his revelations of the "olden days", as our younger members call them.

It is good to hear from you Wilf, but for the sake of posterity, I wish you would commit some of your memoirs to paper for me before they are lost forever.

VALE

We report the loss of our old mate and veteran, KEITH WILMOT. I have'nt much information on Keith, except that he was draughtsman with O.T.C.A. A few years back he suffered a horrifying accident when he fell under a train and lost part of his foot and a few fingers.

He passed away on Sunday, 30th March, 1986.

Our sincere sympathy goes to his family and friends.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

W.A. (Bill) BROWN and wife, MONA, accompanied by BERNIE & BETTY HARRISON called in at the Ceduna Satellite Earth Station on their way around Australia in their camping wagons. Bill has only recently retired but I understand Bernie retired some years ago. Both are ex Sydney and Melbourne. They all look remarkably fit. They were enjoying their trip and also the visit to our station, being shown around by a friend of Bill's, ED. WILLINGHAM. I understand that they also had a good night with Ed, recalling old times. Their next stop, I believe, is to be Esperance.

OLD MORSEMEN PLEASE NOTE

Chas. Carthew enjoys reading his NEWSLETTER but he has one beef - and that is that though there is a good response from the old Cablemen who submit some excellent articles, there is a lot of room for improvement for the old Morsemen of the Beam and Coastal and Island Radio services. There must still be a lot of you out there, he says, so what about more articles from this area.

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER

Those who have perused the A.G.M. Minutes of the N.S.W. Branch of O.T.V.A. will note that RON MACDONALD has relinquished the position of N.S.W. President and GORDON CUPIT was nominated and has been elected in his place. Firstly, our thanks go to Ron, with the hope that his back trouble will be resolved, for his work in the position of President of the N.S.W. Branch and our best wishes go to Gordon who has been involved with the Veterans over many years, and who, in my opinion, a very worthy successor to Ron as the President of our Branch.

Gordon is not only interested in Veteran matters, he is also involved in the archiving of historical material and has a strong proponent for the creation of a museum of telegraphic equipment and which is now coming closer to fruition.

Congratulation to you both, fellers, to you Ron for the service you have given, and to you, Gordon, for the service we know you will give.

VALE

We regret to advise of the passing of one of the old A.W.A. men A. McEntyre, aged 76 years, and who died on 19th June, 1986, after suffering a massive heart attack. Our condolences to his widow Gladys and friends. We have no record of this Veteran other than what appears above, but I would be grateful of anyone having more information in passing it on to me.

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