

# Newsletter

## NEWSLETTER

Vol. 3 Pt. 7 Page 282

NOVEMBER 1987

### MEETINGS AND REUNIONS

<u>NEW SOUTH WALES</u>	REUNION FRIDAY 20TH NOVEMBER 1987 TIME: 6.00PM	15TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM, OTC HOUSE 231 ELIZABETH STREET, SYDNEY
<u>VICTORIA</u>	REUNION FRIDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 1987 TIME: 6.30PM	3RD FLOOR, BOARD ROOM OTC HOUSE, 382 LONSDALE STREET, MELBOURNE
<u>SOUTH AUSTRALIA</u>	THURSDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 1987 TIME: 2.30PM	HOME OF BRAX HORROCKS 7 MIEGUNYAH AVENUE UNLEY PARK, 5061
<u>WESTERN AUSTRALIA</u>	WEDNESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER 1987 TIME: 5.30PM	OTC OFFICE 22 ST. GEORGES TERRACE PERTH
<u>QUEENSLAND</u>	THURSDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 1987 TIME 12 NOON	VIB COSTAL 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.



FEATURE STORY OF THE MONTH

DOES THIS RING A BELL?

"Blue" Easterling writes:-

"I wonder if the name LLOYD JAMES is known to any of the old, old timers from the Cable Service? He was a PCB man stationed at Southport before WW 1.

His name figures largely in the book "Memories of a Signaller" written by Harold Hinckfuss and published in the University of Queensland Press in 1983. He was one of the author's best mates. They were together in the army for four years.

Mr Hinckfuss was a PMG mechanic/operator in Brisbane who joined the AIF in 1915 after two years in the militia. Posted to 26th Battalion Signals, he saw service in Gallipoli right up to the evacuation and then went to France for three years.

All his Army communications work was line and visual and he did not use radio. Mostly front line duty, the signals casualties were heavy, (He was wounded twice). We've all seen pictures of men going "over the top" for a full scale attack or a raiding party, never thinking that some poor hapless signallers had to go along too, hauling a drum of cable and field telephones, exposed to everything the enemy could throw at them.

While he writes simply, without heroics, the horror of trench warfare is evident. He mentions some interesting technicalities and some of the 1st AIF humour. He himself must have been one of the most skilled technical men in his unit, but in good old Army style, he was mustered as a cook..... for quite a while.

Lloyd James was a Welshman, well educated, a fluent linguist and very highly regarded. Anyone who knew him might be interested in what one of "theirs" went through. The library reference number is 940.481.94 HIN.

By the way, the copy of "THE SEAWATCHERS" which I had on order has arrived and I haven't been able to put it down. It is very good stuff indeed. Lawrie Durrant did us proud."

Thanks Blue

\* \* \* \* \*

CREDITS

I wish to thank the following for the articles in this edition of the NEWSLETTER.

JACK BURGESS  
BRAX HORROCKS  
BERT BURGESS (UK)  
A.W.A. STAFF MAGAZINE  
ELLIS SMELLIE  
TOWNSVILLE DAILY BULLETIN AND EDDIE CAHILL  
"SPARGO"  
CHARLES CARTHEW  
JIM BANKS  
BILL AND PATRICIA SANDERS  
FLEURETTE GRAY  
"BLUE" EASTERLING

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

FROM THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN O.T.V.A. FRONT

MAY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The meeting was held at Adelaide Radio, McLaren Vale where we had been invited for a tour of inspection.

Those present were KEN SPRINGBETT, KEITH PARKER, MAX LANG, GEOFF COX, KEITH COX, GEORGE ROWE, HUGH TAYLOR, KEN COLLETT, FRED REEVE and BERT DUDLEY.

Apologies were received from BRAX HORROCKS, CLIFF BIRKS and RON WARD.

We all felt disappointed that Brax was not well enough to make the journey, as like all of us, he was very much looking forward to what proved to be, as anticipated, a very pleasant and mind-boggling afternoon. Although having been previously informed by Fred of the various services provided by the Coastal Radio Service, I am certain that all present had no idea of the incredible advances in communications which have taken place since our active days in the cable and wireless services.

Our grateful thanks to Fred for a wonderful afternoon, both socially and educationally.

Brax Horrocks and Bert Dudley were re-elected President and Secretary respectively, for a further term of office. Our Christmas meeting is scheduled for 26th November, at the home of the President, Brax Horrocks.

Our oldest member, Cliff Birks, will be 97 on 6th July. He is unable to attend our meetings as his eyesight and hearing are failing, but physically he is a wonder, going for a walk every day and working out daily on his exercise bike in the gymnasium at the veterans' home where he resides.

Bert also tells us that Brax Horrocks is indisposed at the moment (i.e. as at 1st June) and confined to bed, so he has asked Bert to forward along a report of the meeting which was held on Thursday 28th May.

It was by courtesy of Fred Reeve that the meeting was held at Adelaide Radio and we thoroughly enjoyed seeing the new equipment and advanced technology now in vogue.

Thanks for the report Bert. We trust that you are still well and going strong over there.

Our best wishes to Brax.

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VALE - TONY HANSON

We regret to report the death of TONY HANSON (W.A.) who died on 24/4/87.

Tony served a short spell as a radio telegraphist at Esperance Radio and Broome Radio in 1946 and 1947. He left OTC but rejoined in 1951 as a Senior Technician at Bassendean. From 1959 to 1963 he returned to the CRS, firstly OIC at Esperance and then OIC at Thursday Island. In 1963 he rejoined the technical side and worked at Rockbank, Port Moresby, Bassendean, Gnangara, Bringelly and La Perouse, from whence he retired in August 1985 on the grounds of invalidity.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to his family.

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VALE - JOHN FRAZIER

John Frazier, another of our West Australian veterans died in April, 1987, two days prior to Anzac Day.

John went to sea as a radio officer in 1933. During the war he was inducted into the RNVR, serving on armed merchantmen and was at the D-Day landing in June 1944. After the war, John went back to the Cunard Line as Radio Officer on the Atlantic run in the "Queen Mary" but decided to swallow the anchor in 1948, when he emigrated to Australia and joined OTC.

After a short spell at Sydney Radio, he transferred to Darwin Radio and worked there until 1957, when he was transferred to Perth Radio.

From 1963 to 1966 he was OIC, Esperance Radio, but resigned to go into private enterprise. In 1969 he did a further short spell at Perth Radio but finally went back into private enterprise until his retirement in 1980.

Our sympathies are extended to his widow Jo and family.

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A TRIBUTE

On behalf of OTVA our deepest sympathy is expressed to the family of Mrs JEAN EDWARDS whose sad passing ends a long and loyal attachment to AWA as private secretary to the late Lionel Hooke, as well as a long and loyal attachment to the OTVA as a foundation member attending early meetings, helping out with arrangements for social occasions, home-made cakes being of special significance.

MORE MEMORIES BY BRAX HORROCKS

When Roy Edwards was in Adelaide recently we were reminiscing over early times together in the Company and thought it would be a good idea to record before it became too late some of the things we remembered.

Roy and I joined the E.E. Telegraph Company in Adelaide early in 1922 as probationer operators and underwent intensive training for eighteen months before passing examinations and becoming operators. Those who went through the school at about the same time were Ken McMillan, Charlie Smith, Moss Hart, Sammy MacDonald, Bruce Sutherland, Len James, Len Michell and Aubrey Barnes.

Our instructor was Bob Moore, relieved occasionally by Charlie Burnett. We were instructed in the use of the various instruments of those days, morse key and sounder, twin cable keys, typewriter, and hand perforator. We had, of course, to read siphon-recorder and land line ink-recorder signals and perforated tape.

Examinations to very exacting standards were held every six months, those who failed were not kept on, for instance, we remember Alf Baker who later became a C. of E. Padre. We also received instruction in the use of tools, fitting and turning and so on by Bill Lee and in submarine G.P. cable jointing by seaman Rodman who had served his time on the repair ship Recorder.

Becoming operators we commenced, what was to be for many, a lifetime of shift work, six hours a day, seven days a week, though we did have an occasional Sunday off and a fortnight's annual leave. We recalled, very vividly having to walk home after the midnight shift and on Sunday mornings when there was no public transport.

After two or three years most of us were transferred to Darwin for a two year term which meant we received a 12 Pounds Sterling a month foreign service allowance which was a great help except for those who lived in the Company's quarters when it was not paid.

The quarters were attached to the office and consisted of eight bedrooms, dining and billiard room and a small library. Also a bathroom - this is worth mentioning for it had no bath, dipper, or leyden jar, but merely a shower operated by a hand pump which extracted water from an underground tank. After pumping, soaping and washing for about ten minutes, one may have been cleaner, but he was just as hot as when he started!

The bedrooms were in pairs and had no windows, but they did have outside doors which could be closed in stormy weather. These opened on to a verandah with lattice-work sides. Our eight beds were in line on the northern verandah. In those days, there were of course, no insect repellants so each bed had a net and before going to bed it was wise to kill off any mosquitoes which had found their way inside.

At the north western end of this verandah was a pahit table and we recalled that when occasionally those sitting around it in the evening became over noisy, the poor fellows trying to sleep before night duty told them in no uncertain terms where to go!

Near the pahit table was a large icebox which was kept filled with ice daily. In it we kept our drinks and there were bottles of barley water which, from memory, was very good especially after one had been playing tennis, football, cricket and so on.

About twenty yards from the southern end of the quarters was our cement tennis court of which we made good use. In our time, we had some very good players such as Dicky Heaps, Bruce Sutherland, Jack Finlayson and Harry Naylor. But Roy Edwards was outstanding, he was in fact, the champion player of Darwin for several years and I know he has several cups to refresh his nostalgic memories of his successes.

Roy's parents resided in Darwin. His father was the well known and well respected 'Skipper Edwards' who owned a pearling fleet, so it was with some reluctance that Roy accepted a transfer to the Far East just after his father died in 1929. He served at Singapore, Batavia and Medan before returning to Darwin on leave. His next station was to be Wellington, but rather than go to such a distant place away from his Mother, he resigned and looked after the pearling fleet until 1935 when he formed a partnership with Oscar and Evan Herbert of Koolpinyah Station and with them established a cold store and meat marketing business in Darwin. This proved to be so successful that five years later, Roy purchased Newcastle Waters Station in the N.T.

Roy had always been interested in flying which proved to be especially useful when he commenced station life. He bought his first plane in 1936 and often stood in for Clyde Fenton, the Flying Doctor, when he was away. Roy also flew the ambulance aircraft when Dr Fenton left to join the air Force and Roy was seconded from the 7.MD to fly the aircraft in 1940 and 1941.

Just four years ago Roy sold Newcastle Waters, for how much I don't know, but I do know that he now owns a lovely home in Darwin and another in Adelaide and that he and his wife, Marjorie, now spend much of their time travelling the world.

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VALE - MRS DALE

Mrs Daisy Dale passed away peacefully at 11.35 AM on 16 th September, 1987 aged 88 years. Her husband, veteran Cedric Dale, retired from the OTC in 1964, after having served at various locations including Hobart, Perth, Thursday Island, King Island, Port Moresby, Darwin, Sydney (Pennant Hills) and was the Melbourne Office Manager when he retired. After 65 years of married life, Daisy will be sadly missed by Ced.

Our sympathies are also extended to Ced, and his family.

FROM OUR U.K. VETERANS

This letter was received by CHARLES CARTHEW from BERT BURGESS, a U.K. veteran and refers to an article which was published in our April 1979 NEWSLETTER. It reads:-

Dear Charles,

Back in 1979 I wrote to you enclosing a tatty XQ from Melbourne dated 1947 which said, "XQ VIZ - Mni tks for the fastest three hours we've had - McGinley and Tevlin tku", (See our OTVA NEWSLETTER April 1979 Vol. 2, Pt. 2).

You replied that the XQ was now with the OTVA archives in the Melbourne State Library, and since then - as an Honorary member of OTVA - I have regularly received your NEWSLETTERS. In one of them, the Editor invited members to "put pen to paper before it's too late", and at 84 years of age, I am doing just that - hence this letter.

As a messenger boy in the E.T.C. in 1916, I can remember delivering batches of TELEGRAMS (EFMs) to the ANZAC HQ. in Strutton Ground, Westminster, and I wonder if there are any veterans still around who were billeted there? I was too young in WW1 and too old in WW2 to do anything outstanding, although in WW2 I served in a special C/W office almost opposite No. 10 Downing Street, where we had a line to Electra House, Temple, and handled traffic to/from certain government offices including Churchill's special flat in King Charles Street. Talking of Churchill, my late wife's father was Winston's RSM in the Queens Own Fourth Hussars in India, and my wife was born in Bangalore. Her family included quite a few names outstanding in athletics etc. - her father, W. E. Hill in boxing and rifle shooting for his Regiment; her uncle Arthur Hill played water polo for England, and her eldest brother W. A. Hill, three A's champion sprinter who lost the title to Harold (Chariots of Fire) Abrahams.

Two of her other brothers won trophies at golf in Trinidad, British West Indies, and one of whose daughters, Susan Hill, won U.K. Girls' Open Golf Championship for the U.K. My wife's one notable feat was when as a schoolgirl, she was told by her mother to run with a telegram to her father in the Drill Hall, Bromley, stating that war had been declared (WW1). She arrived with the telegram in one hand and her knickers in the other.....

For my part, my 'young sister' and her husband, Mabel and George Widdicombe, have just returned to their flat at Picnic Point, Sydney, after a rather hectic five weeks holiday over here. Although they are both in their seventies and celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary last year, Mabel is a member of the local Astronautical Society complete with her own telescope, and George played saxophone and clarinet professionally in Sydney. Perhaps some of your OTVA colleagues may have heard him play there."

The rest of this letter is of a personal nature between Bert and Charles, but I cannot let it go unnoticed that Bert included a money order for Pounds Sterling 10, being a donation to our Association in appreciation for us sending him a copy of our NEWSLETTER, over the many years it has been in publication. Thanks Bert.

SICK PARADE

DES (JIM) WOODS and his good wife, IRENE, pop in to see me from time to time, (Gawd Luv Him). Recently it was Jim who popped and Irene who hobbled, having had a crash landing at the local Supermarket which damaged one of her oleos. We wish her a speedy recovery.

BRAX HORROCKS has also struck bad times healthwise but from his recent writings he has adopted the philosophical approach to life, which is about the only thing anyone can do under the circumstances. Nevertheless, Brax has been a valuable contributor to NEWSLETTER, as well as being a good bloke, and we all wish him well and a speedy recover.

My own wife, JOYCE, is also having a rough time at the moment, and is undergoind radiotherapy for a malignancy, and I wish to take the opportunity of thanking all those veterans who knew of her condition and who have sent along their best wishes to her and the many acts of kindness rendered her personally. She is undergoing treatment with all the strength and fortitude I only wish I had.

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OUT OF THE PAST

In rummaging through his hope chest, JACK BURGESS has forwarded a letter he received from Amalgamated Wireless (A'asia) Ltd, on 5th October 1945. It is the appreciation of services which caught my eye. I reproduce it here without comment:-

Dear Mr Burgess,

Thank you for the loyal service rendered during the difficult years of war, and on behalf of the Directors, I convey their appreciation for your untiring efforts.

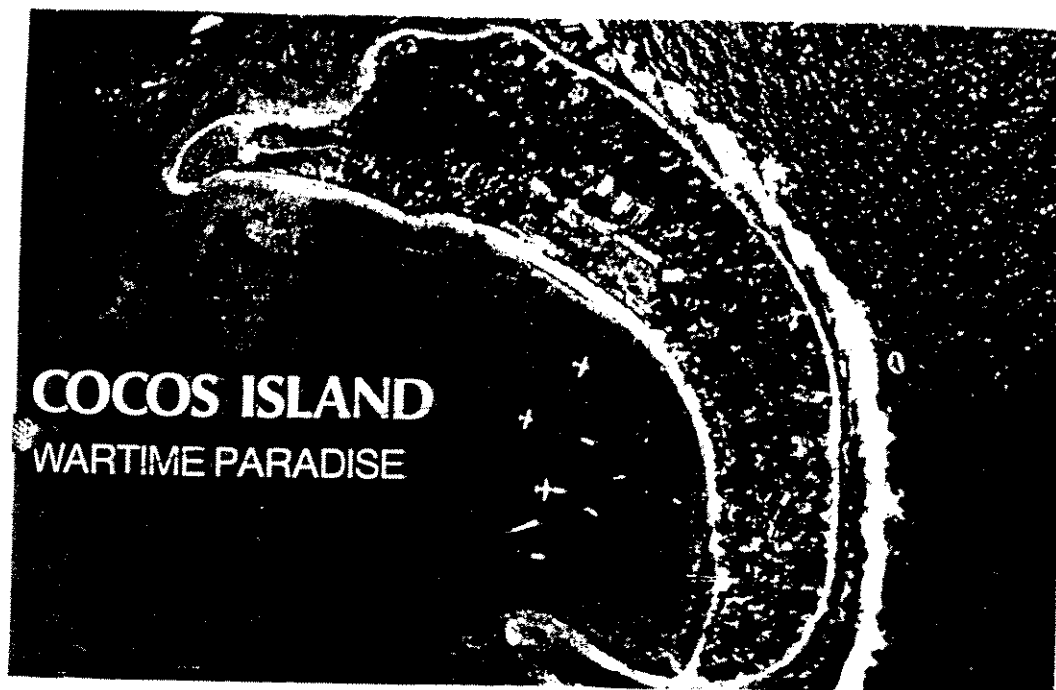
The Company and its staff contributed much towards Australia's war effort and all members are to be congratulated on the efficient manner in which they carried out their duties.

The Company is anxious to recognise the services of those who have served it continuously throughout the war, and has therefore, decided to grant such members of the staff one week's special leave. In order to allow some latitude, it is proposed that all who were in the Company's service on the first day of January, 1941, will be eligible, and service in the armed forces will be regarded as service with the Company.

I trust that the future holds happiness and peace for you and your family.

Yours sincerely,  
L. A. Hooke  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

COCOS ISLAND  
WARTIME PARADISE



Direction Island in the Cocos groups fragment of land 1000 yards long by 200 wide. White crosses are flying boats in the lagoon. The cricket pitch in front of the "Long" quarters can be seen clearly.

COCOS ISLAND'S RECENT EXPOSURE IN THE  
MAINLAND PRESS STIRRED VETERAN  
'BRAX HORROCKS' TO PUT PEN TO PAPER.  
THE RESULT IS THIS FASCINATING STORY.

It was a still and moonless night when the sloop H.M.I.S. Sonavati slipped out of a darkened Trincomalee harbour on April 4, 1943, en route to Cocos with supplies and some relief staff for the cable station.

Tufty Baker, Frank McCay and I were the only civilians on board.

Tufty had been stationed in Colombo but Frank and I had arrived there only that morning and the Sonavati had been impatiently awaiting our arrival from Australia.

Our trip by car from Colombo had been hair-raising to say the least obviously the native driver had been told to get us there quickly but the desirability or indeed the necessity of safety was obviously overlooked.

Cocos in 1943 was off the map.

After the fall of Singapore in 1942 the Japanese had advanced rapidly through Java, some 600 miles north-east of Cocos, and it was expected that they would invade the island and wreck the cable station, as the Germans had done during the previous war.

Sure enough a Japanese warship shelled the base on March 3, 1942, and did extensive damage to the buildings and cable equipment, but for some inexplicable reason did not make a landing - perhaps they thought the island would be considered untenable and therefore abandoned.

But they were mistaken - although one shell had passed through the office carrying with it some of the equipment, the Staff were soon able to restore communications for, miraculously, the only gear damaged was the Batavia circuit which had already been shut down.

The company realized that no air or sea protection could be given so, with the consent of the Admiralty, they sent a radio message to Batavia in plain English (feeling certain that it would be intercepted) to the effect that the instruments were to be destroyed as Cocos had been put out of action. Almost incredibly this stratagem was a success for, although the island was later bombed on many occasions, there was no more shelling, nor was a landing made.

Thus, when we volunteered for service at Cocos early in 1943, everything was hush-hush about the station. The name Cocos was forgotten and was not mentioned again until hostilities ended.

Cocos Island - in the cable offices on the mainlands it was alluded to as Brown or Jones or Robinson and such names were changed frequently and irregularly. Understandably this anonymity did nothing whatsoever to augment a feeling of security!

The trip down from Trinco proved to be uneventful much to the amazement of the skipper who took a more than somewhat dismal view of the whole operation. He felt that it was tempting providence beyond all reason to take his tiny vessel so deep into enemy waters.

The staff were glad to see us, particularly the three who were leaving, but also because we brought badly needed supplies including liquid comforts and, of course, mail.

It was everybody's thought to get rid of the ship as quickly as possible which, perhaps, seemed ungrateful but was prompted by the thought of what a pretty kettle of fish there would be if the Japanese came over and found the Sonavati in the lagoon. However, the unloading was quickly completed and she slipped away at dusk to our great relief, even though we were left with a feeling of some isolation which, in the circumstances, was understandable.

In spite of our anxieties we soon settled down to normal routines and time slipped by pleasantly and easily enough as it does in these quiet places where every day is the same as many before and after it.

Our staff numbered seven. Tufty was "Tuan Besar" and manager, Frank was his number two and there were four watch engineers; Bruce Sutherland (now

living in Nelson, New Zealand), Pat Sykes (of Dalkeith, Western Australia), Peter Wolfe (ex UK, present whereabouts unknown) and myself. We had a maintenance engineer, "Chum" Chumley, of unknown but unquestioned origin.

The cables were never idle so the four watch engineers worked seven days a week and therefore 365 days a year.

Of necessity we "filled-in" with other chores - for instance Pat was also the accountant, Bruce was in charge of the vegetable garden (from time to time he produced some quite remarkable tomatoes from a plot which was little more than coral sand), while I played around with the batteries and looked after the pigs.

Tufty and Frank had more than enough on their plates with the many duties connected with running the station and maintaining the equipment, also Tufty had been appointed by the British Admiralty as chief naval officer and in his charge were the Admiralty code books which he used on many occasions.

The cable relay gear (regenerator in those days) was of course automatic. Nevertheless, it required constant attention. Even caring for the 300 or so secondary cells took time, especially as some of them were getting old.

It was somewhat eerie on duty alone at night. We all noticed the strain of trying to detect any strange sound above the drone of distant surf and the clatter of the instruments. Sometimes a Catalina flying between Colombo and Perth would pass overhead and for the first few anxious moments one could not be certain whether it was friendly or not.

Probably to assure themselves that the place had really been evacuated, the Japanese sent reconnaissance planes which circled the atoll once or twice a week, sometimes coming so low that we, hidden under coconut fronds in slit trenches, could recognise the oriental features of the pilots.

From time to time a few bombs were dropped. On a few occasions I was out fishing in the lagoon when the Japanese passed overhead but apparently I was not recognised as a European - certainly most of us were at that time the same colour as the locals.

There were other alarms too. Occasionally a sentry would report of having seen a ship, where no ship should have been - at least not the sort of ship which would do us any good - but it would pass by to our immense relief.

The engine which charged the batteries would be started again, the piece of tape saying "all clear" would be fed in to the Fremantle and the Durban transmitters and those off duty would resume their discussion of the cricket match which had been played that afternoon or the plans for fishing on the following day.

Often on Saturday we played cricket.

On Direction Island, where the cable station was, and on Horsburgh Island some four miles to the north west, there were small garrisons of troops of the Indian army with English officers and their team played

against a team selected from the cable staff, some Royal Navy lads who operated the DF station, and two met. officers of the RAAF. And what wonderful cricket it was. No test match was ever played with greater zest. Perhaps the cricket itself was not of international standard, but we made up for that in keenness, and we sang "Waltzing Matilda" and bawdy Naval songs as we sailed home from Horsburgh as the sun went down.

After cricket, perhaps our main recreation was fishing and there can be few places in the world where such a wonderful variety can be caught as were at our "front door".

The competition was keen too and many a bottle of beer and tin of "Peacock" cigarettes changed hands because of the "one that got away". Some of the fish we brought back to be weighed and admired were bigger than ourselves - a tremendous sport, worth recounting to one's grandchildren.

About four miles south of Direction Island is Pula Selma, or Home Island.

Here at the turn of the 19th century, a Scot, John Clunies-Ross, in search of virgin territory on which to rear his young family, formed a settlement of his wife, mother-in-law, six children and about 10 natives from Java.

With new arrivals from Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Timor and even more distant places, the population had, over a period of little more than five years, grown to over 150.

So John Clunies-Ross became the first "King of the Cocos", establishing a unique kingdom and assuming absolute responsibility for the care, welfare, and employment of all on the island. He made a proud boast that no-one ever wanted for food, shelter or work.

Sickness and crime were unknown and there was no need for court or police - the only misdemeanours being breaches of local rules such as sailing at night without permission.

John the First died in 1854 at the age of 68. After his death he was succeeded by his son John who married a Malay princess S'pia Dupong, a truly remarkable young woman - to become the mother of remarkable children. A strong, sweet and noble character, she became the chief moral guide on the atoll and her influence survives to this day.

It was during the reign of John the Second that the islands were formally annexed by Great Britain and Clunies-Ross was appointed Governor at Her Majesty's pleasure.

He died in 1872 and was succeeded by his son George who, followed in his father's and his grandfather's footsteps and did all within his power to better the conditions and domestic amenities of the island's people.

George died in England in 1910 and was succeeded by John Sydney Clunies-Ross who ruled through the difficult years after World War 1 when the islands shared the world-wide depression from general loss of trade.

He died in 1944 and left his son John as governor of the then, 1,800 dependents. It is he who governs the islands today.

In 1951, the British government handed over to Australia the administration of the Cocos-Keeling islands. The only "strings" attached to the transfer were those obvious ones essential to guard the interests of all concerned - that the native population should have the opportunity of becoming Australian citizens and that the Clunies-Ross family should retain the ownership of their property.

The transfer gave Australia the responsibility of administering an island paradise. Placed in our charge is perhaps the world's happiest and healthiest native population, industrious, intelligent, self-disciplined and contented.

Historians will record whether we have the wisdom to leave them undisturbed or at least to make their future worthwhile.

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#### A TRIBUTE TO HAROLD WHITE

By Charles Carthew

The recent sad passing of HAROLD WHITE brought back memories of a highly esteemed, kind, understanding gentleman who, from the outset, took a keen interest in veteran activities and attended early meetings at regular intervals.

On one occasion, he asked if help could be given anyway at all. It was then suggested that the Commission might assist in starting a NEWSLETTER. Before long this came about and we soon had a world-wide circulation including all five Australian State Branches of OTVA (A).

Actually, we were indeed fortunate starting with the late Trevor Housley and subsequently General Managers and the veterans association grew from strength to strength with wireless operators fraternising with their cable mates to form one big family with a form of international fraternalism unequalled in the world, with the possible exception of the armed Forces.

Today the Managing Director, George Maltby, has continued in the footsteps of his predecessors, which keeps in touch with the USA, Canadian, UK and NZ veterans whose archives are, no doubt, similar to ours, and a benefit to posterity.

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FROM THE CANADIAN SCENE

QUARTER CENTURY CLUB CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

Bell has its pioneers, Marconi has its veterans, and Teleglobe has its quarter centurians.

Teleglobe's Quarter Century Club is 20 years old this year and it's still one of the best ways for old-timers to keep in touch. The Club was started in 1967 on the initiative of Cyprian Ferland. "Cyp" Ferland has since passed away, but the club lives on and is still growing.

Paul Di Fruscia, who was president of the OCC for five years, says that Cyprian Ferland was always interested in clubs. "He had a lot of relations with foreign veterans", he recalls, "and he decided to start something at Teleglobe".

After approaching the President, Douglas F. Bowie about the idea and getting his agreement, "we recruited a bunch of fellas. There was a \$5.00 initiation fee and in those days we used to have our meetings at the Montreal West Curling Club. It was strictly stag at that time and we had to pay our own way".

That changed in 1975, however. With Teleglobe celebrating its 25th Anniversary, President Jean-Claude Delorme offered the Corporation's help in defraying the running costs of the club and subsidising the annual banquet. The eligibility rules changed at that time as well. From 1975 onwards, new members would have to have worked at Teleglobe for 25 years. Previously, eligibility was based on 25 years in telecommunications with the predecessor companies, such as Cable & Wireless Ltd, and its subsidiaries (The Pacific Cable Board and The Eastern Telegraph Company), Canadian Marconi Company and CN/CP Telecommunications and with at least five years at Teleglobe.

The above information was gleaned from 'SPARGO', Teleglobe's publication for which we are grateful.

We wish our Canadian colleagues a "Happy 25th Anniversary", and many more of them.

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VALE - TOM WEAVER

We are sorry to hear that Mr T. C. (Tom) Weaver passed away at 3.00 AM on Saturday, 10th October, 1987 at his home in Perth, Western Australia. The cause of death was emphysemia.

Tom was 67 years of age and is survived by his wife Maureen and their two children (Tracy 17 and Scott 15) and his son Michael and a daughter.

Tom was Chief Accountant in OTC for several years until he took up an ITU Expert post in suva, fiji in 1976 on secondment from OTC. Tom formally retired from OTC in 1980 at age 60.

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA?....NO....SANDERS OF BAHRAIN!

One of the items in our Museum which raised some eyebrows and caused quite a bit of discussion was a set of Sheik's ceremonial robes. They were presented to us by their owner, Bill Sanders, who developed a close, friendly relationship with the then Ruler, now Imam Sheikh Isabin Salman Alkhalifah. We are indebted to Bill's good wife, Patricia, who has forwarded the material which deals with Bill's career and which shows him to be a man of many parts. Bill was suffering ill health at the time but Patricia has filled the bill very nicely, thank you.

Her letter and the articles concerning Bill's career are included here:-

Dear Mr Phillips,

I have today received your letter of 5th February with note from your Secretary, Monica Crastan, of 23rd March. Thank you for the interest in the Sheik's robes: Alan Arndt had acknowledged receipt of the parcel which he indicated would await your Museum. I take it that the Museum is now completed and I should be happy to have some details regarding it.

The robes about which you ask were handed to Sandy by the Ruler of Bahrain which showed that Sandy (albiet Cable and Wireless) was indeed a 'brother' Arab of high esteem. Although it was possible to buy arab robes in the Souk, it was not common practice to be given the garments by a high-ranking Arab so Sandy felt very honoured at the time of the gift. (The late Henry Eggers, then Managing Director of C. & W. also at the same audience was given robes). Sandy was also given a pearl necklace for me.

The Ruler is still Sheikh Isabin Salman Alkhalifah but he is now termed IMAM.

In case you are interested further, I enclose a few copies regarding Sandy's work in Bahrain, as well as a note regarding his presence at the Anzcan opening on Norfolk Island. This perhaps, should go to Mr Arndt, but I leave it to you to pass them on if necessary.

Sandy, alas, is very frail and suffering from osteoporosis of the spine, hence my writing for him. We were stationed in Bahrain nearly six years and Sandy negotiated for the land for the first earth station there; the Alkhalifa family held him in very high esteem throughout.

Bahrain, from all reports, has progressed like the rest of the world. Europeans we knew remembered when the sheiks lived in tents and sat on the floor to entertain and eat; now there are first-class hotels among the up-to-date palaces and mansions, and the women are allowed to be unveiled and even have jobs in Cable and Wireless offices.

With Best Wishes for the archives and museum which, perhaps, I may see one day.

Kind regards,  
P. Sanders  
(Mrs Patricia Sanders)

Dear Alan,

Many thanks for the Newsletter of 19th November, 1984, and I feel that I may be able to add something about the concrete slabs at the old Southport Cable Station (page 72).

Firstly, there used to be four long wooden legs sunk into the earth below the floor of the instrument room and were flush with the wooden flooring; on this was mounted the Cox Magnifier for use on the Southport/Norfolk Island cable. This magnifier and Cox relay system were later replaced by the fork relay system.

Now regarding the concrete slabs or plinths: well, firstly, I installed these for the installation of equipment associated with the method of working known as the regenerator system which was used by the Eastern Telegraph Company and which replaced the old Cox relay system, the year being 1930. The equipment consisted of 1 Synchronome Clock, 2 Clock-controlled Units and 2 Synterpolators, the last having its own built-in synchronising unit.

The above was only installed at Southport for use on the PC/NI circuit.

The PC/SY section was worked plain relay (fork) with associated equipment.

Southport was the first PCB station to be supplied with this equipment so we had not had experience with this gear; hence I was sent to Adelaide Station for a month to gain some knowledge of the Regenerator system, which time was sufficient to acquaint myself with the old equipment and to understand the synterpolators, synchronome clock and the clock-controlled units.

The above refers to Southport at the time, but further installations at other stations did occur and some already did have anti-vibration methods fitted. This definition refers to the concrete slabs at Southport.

Perhaps the Southport School may be interested to know what purpose the concrete pliths served.

As a small personal note - during my stay in 1930/34 I played tennis at the same Southport Club as two of the Southport school teachers, Jack Ratcliffe and Matt Walker.

Finally, I would like to say things have changed somewhat; I was a probationer at Southport 1921/1922 (Charlie Swinney and I travelled together Syd/Brb. in the old Katoomba) and Deputy Engineer 1930/1934.

Best regards,  
BILL SANDERS

NEW APPOINTMENT FOR  
MR W. H. SANDERS

Mr Sanders is shown here in the Palace of the Ruler of Bahrain, H. H. Shaikh Isa bin Salman Alkhalifah who is speaking to King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. The occasion - the opening of the VHF radio telephone link between their two countries in November 1964.

Mr W. H. Sanders  
- manager in  
Bahrain since  
1962 - has been  
appointed  
Special  
Representative  
Middle East.  
He will continue  
to reside in  
Bahrain and will  
deal with the  
Company's policy  
matters in an  
area of Asia  
bounded by  
Lebanon in the  
west and Muscat  
in the east but  
excluding Aden.



Mr Sanders was first posted to Bahrain in 1960 as O & M officer, returning to the branch in 1962 as Divisional Manager. A year ago this post was re-named General Manager.

Mr L. C. Hill, Area Telephone Manager, Bahrain, has succeeded Mr Sanders as General Manager.

CABLE STATION OLD-TIMER  
BACK FOR SPECIAL CALL

A COMMUNICATIONS VETERAN WHO CAME TO NORFOLK  
60 YEARS AGO AS AN OPERATOR OF THE FIRST  
CABLE STATION WAS AMONG THE VIPS AT TODAY'S  
OPENING AT THE ANZCAN CABLE STATION

An employee of the the then British-based Pacific Cable Board, "Sandy" Sanders recalls that his arrival caused some interest.

"People used to meet all the boats in those days and I was asked whether I was the 'new man in charge'. I was 17", he laughs.

Outsiders, or "main-called then, numbered

After two years on transferred to Auckland engineer at the technical

A posting to Southport returned to Norfolk for

The next overseas posting a nine mile by five coral

"In those days the cable Fanning and was known as followed the old British



Mr Sanders

landers", as they were no more than about 20.

Norfolk "Sandy" was where he trained as an institute.

followed and in 1926 he another two-year term.

saw him on Fanning Island, atoll near Honolulu.

ran from Vancouver to the all red route as it map".

With the merger of international cable interests in 1929, the Pacific Cable Board became Cable and Wireless, which "Sandy" continued to work for.

The war years saw "Sandy" back on Fanning Island helping to keep communications open. The biggest task was yet to come - the detection of wartime damage to cables which took him through the Indian Ocean and Malacca Straits on board the cable ships "Enterprise" and "Pacific".

He then attended to the installation work back on shore in Singapore and Djakarta, then Borneo and Manila. A rapid series of promotions followed, to Hong Kong, back to Singapore where he married his wife Patricia, through to Aden, Malta, Nairobi, Mombassa, Dar Es Salaam, Zanzibar, Penang ....

In 1961 "Sandy" was stationed in Bahrain and placed in charge of all communications for the Middle East, a post which brought him into close contact with heads of state. Seven years later he retired after 47 years' service, his contribution to communications recognised with an OBE.

Early in his travels "Sandy" met a fellow employee of the Pacific Cable board Les "Davi" Davidson, who also worked at Norfolk's first cable station, on Fanning Island and elsewhere in the Pacific.

As a highlight of today's Anzcan Station ceremony, "Sandy" was to phone "Davi" in Auckland from the cable station to mark the first public telephone conversation on the newly-opened cable.

VICTORIAN VETS 30TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

"The Victorian Vets celebrated their 30th Annual General Meeting which was held in the Melbourne Manager's Suite on Friday 15 May 1987.

There were in attendance 34 members with 19 apologies tabled.

The Meeting was called to order by President Arthur Green at 12.20 pm. When he asked for one minute's silence for those Vets who have gone to that Operating Room above. They were George Magnus, Norm Seabrook, and Arthur Ross.

After dealing with the normal formalities associated with our A. G. M. Arthur thanked Melbourne Manager Jim Robinson for his assistance during the past twelve months and mentioned particularly the trip to Healesville Earth Station which was followed by a barbecue at Queens Park. This function was an outstanding success both technically and socially.

In handing over the reins of the Association to Jim Robinson for the ensuing year, President Arthur wished him well for his term of office. In reply Jim said it was the pleasure of the Commission and himself to assist the Vets wherever possible.

The Meeting then closed with the President inviting all present to partake of the hospitality of the Melbourne Vets. "

\* \* \* \* \*

VALE - JOE HOLMES

A. J. (Joe) Holmes was an ex-rigger at Rockbank in victoria and recently at Doonside N.S.W. We are sorry to advise his old friends and colleagues that he died on 10th May 1987. I would appreciate more details on his life and service with OTC should they be available.

To his family go our deepest and sincerest sympathy.

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE ELLIS SMELLIE STORY - CONCLUSION

Guglielmo Marconi made some interesting experiments with wireless apparatus on his father's estate in Bologna. Marconi did not invent, but used the apparatus previously used by other people. The Italian Government would not sponsor his work. His mother, Annie Jamieson of the Irish Whisky family, sent her son off to England. Marconi, a handsome young man and fluently bilingual in Italian and English was introduced to the Chief Engineer of the British Post office. He arranged a series of wireless demonstrations which rocketed Marconi to public notice and led to the formation of a company. In 1901, Australia's Federation Year, the Duke and Duchess of York visited Melbourne to open the first Commonwealth Parliament. There was general astonishment when a Victorian Telegraph official, Walter Jenby, was able to communicate with one of the wireless equipped cruisers from the Royal Navy. Jenby had built his own wireless equipment from articles and diagrams in English publications. This pioneer's son became Chief Engineer of Overseas Telecommunications. If the early Federal Governments did nothing about adopting this exciting new means of communication, Australia's disinterest in wireless was not simply confined to the Marconi system, but extended to all other systems. These include Telefunken, which was Germany's challenge to Marconi, Lodge-Muirhead, De Forest and Shoemaker. In 1905, taking its cue from Britain, the Australian Government passed the Wireless Telegraphy Act, giving the Post Master General the exclusive right to transmit and receive wireless messages.

The Marconi company were given a licence to erect spark stations at Queenscliffe, Victoria and Devonport, Tasmania. Two Marconi engineers, Darcett and Densham, operated these stations and on the 12 July 1906, with great eclat, crowds of VIPs witnessed the first exchange of wireless messages between Australian states. The 1906 demonstration had one notable result. It stimulated the government to place the sum of 10,000 Pounds on the estimates earmarked for wireless telegraphy.

Towards the end of 1909, the Australian Government found itself being manoeuvred into building its first wireless station.

The disappearance of the steamer Waratah, en route from Australia to England, excited public opinion in favour of wireless telegraphy and land stations in Australia. The Government decided on the erection of two land stations, one at Sydney to cover the Pacific Ocean and the other at Perth to cover the Indian Ocean respectively. It so happened that Australia's first wireless firm was then being formed in Sydney called Australasian Wireless Limited. The entrepreneur was Walter Steraker (?), a German electrician trading in Sydney.

This company acquired the Telefunken rights for Australia and New Zealand. Meanwhile the Australian government was preparing to call tenders for its first two wireless stations. Before the technical specifications were published they were referred to the British government. Someone in London, it was never determined who, added another sentence; words that were thrown back in the face of the Australian Government long afterwards. "Preference will be given to a system emitting a definite musical note". This stipulation weighed the

scales in favour of the German Telefunken system, with its well advertised "singing spark". When the specification with this addition was published, it created a witch-hunt in Australia. It was later blamed on a pro-German group in the British government; the same group that was accused of sinister motives in advancing the career of Prince Louis of Battenberg in the Royal Navy. Five tenders were received for the two stations near Sydney and Fremantle, the highest being from the Marconi Company, 19,020 pounds sterling per station, and the lowest price of the newly formed Australasian Wireless Limited, a mere 4,159 pounds sterling each, subsidised by the German Government.

At the outset, the Pennant Hills station used the call letters POS, later VIS, while Applecross was originally POP later VIP. Completion of both installations was plagued by long delays straining relations between the contractors and the Government.

After Labor Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, took office in 1910, he decided to appoint a wireless expert as his technical advisor. Being a Queenslander, he appointed another Queenslander, John Graeme Valsillie, who had practical experience building wireless stations in remote parts of the globe, but the other side of the picture was that Valsillie had been technical manager of a British firm, which had been found guilty of infringing Marconi's patents.

Valsillie arrived in Australia in September 1911. His priority tasks were to hasten work on the Telefunken stations at Pennant Hills and at Applecross as well as preparing detailed plans for smaller supporting stations in the coastal radio network. The year before, a Catholic Priest, Father Archibald Shaw, had been granted an experimental licence for a station at Randwick, NSW. Father Shaw was a former post office telegraphist, who had entered the Catholic Priesthood. Using funds which he diverted without permission from Church missionary projects, Shaw expanded his experimental station into a manufacturing organisation, the Maritime Wireless Company. Meanwhile, Valsillie had designed a range of wireless equipment for the smaller coastal station he was planning to build.

But when it was announced that Australia's future coastal stations would use Valsillie's own system and that the equipment would be built by Father Shaw's Maritime Wireless Company, there was an outraged cry from the big international firms, Marconi and Telefunken. For years the Marconi Company had maintained that it was virtually impossible to build advanced wireless equipment without infringing Marconi's patents. Now, here was Valsillie, with Government backing, practically thumbing his nose at the great wireless firms in the world. Resulting legal contortions would fill a book. They began with the Marconi company issuing a patent infringement writ against the Australian Government. To further complicate the scenario, Australasian Wireless, the Telefunken subsidiary, also issued writs against Father Shaw's company, and the Adelaide Steamship Company, which had adopted the Marconi system.

It was a bleak prospect for the international firms. Australia's Labor Government was undertaking to fight all patent actions in the courts regardless of expense. By September 1912, the first two coastal stations at Pennant Hills and Applecross were completed and working.

Prior to this the Valsillie system was used in the coastal radio station in The Domain in Melbourne, not far from Government House. Ellis was there. He was with about 200 people standing outside the station on opening day. The VIP's were inside. A long message to a warship was sent as the opening message. The morse code could be easily read by the noise of the spark gap for a few hundred yards distance. In a loud voice, Ellis told those around him what was being sent, to their amazement. Then a reply was received from the warship. Later, Ellis was told the warship did not receive the message and a dummy reply was used. Ellis could read it alright - he could have also read it when he was 13 years old.

After both companies accusing each of patent infringement for years, and dragging their rivals through the courts, Marconi and Telefunken decided to sink their differences - at least then Australia and New Zealand, by uniting in the local enterprise.

The merger company was Amalgamated Wireless Australasia Limited, which began in 1913. The First World War, provided Australia with a wireless scandal that is now scarcely remembered. In 1916, with the idea of giving Australia's Navy its own wireless factory, the Commonwealth purchased Father Shaw's business for 55,000 pounds sterling. Shortly after the money was paid over, Father Shaw died suddenly in curious circumstances, and substantial cash sums were never traced. A subsequent Royal Commission was highly critical of the whole transaction and its report led to the dismissal of a former Navy Minister and the resignation of a Senator who admitted receiving money from Father Shaw. Anyone who was involved in those events, will never forget the traumatic birth pains of Australian Wireless.

Years later, Ellis was talking to a friend, Henderson of the Coastal Radio, a Morse man who was also an Engineer, and was told by Henderson that he was the first man to value the Father Shaw works. He valued unsaleable apparatus as worthless, also the machinery for the manufacture of out of date apparatus, including generators, alternators and rotary convertors. From memory, his valuation was about 4,000 pounds sterling. He also said another valuer, valued these articles at cost price and even then the total was about 30,000 pounds sterling. Both Henderson and Ellis wondered who made the 55,000 pounds sterling valuation.

A humorous incident occurred at the Adelaide Town Hall over the Father Shaw scandal. Billy Hughes - then Prime Minister - was giving a speech supporting a conscription referendum. There were two both lost. A colleague of Ellis' at Adelaide Radio, named Lennon, a radical, and his friends, put up a no-hoper to ask a question of Billy Hughes. The question was, what became of the amount of money missing over the Father Shaw uproar, naming the amount. Billy Hughes, a partly deaf man, asked him to repeat the question. Then Billy beckoned the man up to the stage. The man went forward in a very aggressive manner, muttering to himself. With Billy right at the edge of the stage, looking down at the man, he heard him repeat the question, which he was now reading from a piece of paper, in a loud voice. After a second repetition and now that the whole of the audience was laughing, Billy threw his arms back and called out - "Well I haven't got it". This caused the loudest laugh Ellis had ever heard from such a meeting. When Ellis asked Lennon, the next day, what he thought of it - Lennon shrugged and said, "The working class can never win. It's always rigged against them".

Dictated by Ellis Henry Smellie - Receivers Coastal Radio Service

The very best receiver of radio signals, by a large margin, was the British Navy Model L. Ray Anderson, ex navy, taught me how to use one at Perth Radio, (Applecross). It has primary and secondary tuning, inductively coupled and tuned with condensers. The grid leak, the A current on the valve, the B battery on the plate C could be varied. This was the only receiver known to me that also had the voice frequency tuned. The audio circuit had an induction coil with a hole through its centre. A soft iron rod could be moved in and out of this hole. By bringing this induction into exact resonance with the audio tone of the incoming signals, the wanted tone was isolated.

The tuning between the aeralis, or primary coils, and the secondary coil had to be carefully done with a weak signal from a faraway ship. Each alteration caused the signal to be lost until new settings were found for it.

But for those who took the trouble to do this could isolate the radio side till only that ship was heard. But few took the trouble to do this.

Ray Anderson and a few of us did it so often, that it became easy and natural. The inductances, primary and secondary, would be at a minimum, almost right angles. With the audio sides in resonance with the pitch of the incoming signals, it allowed me to tell a ship, over three thousand miles away, towards Suez of Cape Town, "K the lost one fast sending". This would be at 3 o'clock in the morning.

Few enthusiasts among the ships' operators used to take a keen interest in the day by day, and hour by hour variations in atmospheric, static and quiet periods when few ships and coast stations were heard.

Some visited Perth Radio, and took great interest in long distance contacts. It was their pleasure to oblige us by relaying messages to less competent operators, or to ships with only one operator. These went off duty at midnight. The passenger liners had three operators, and were always on watch.

Properly tuned, the Model L, with one valve, was far better than any multi-valve receiver. The Model L reduced static, and other unwanted signals to a whisper, before the grid of the first valve. This was much better than amplifying both wanted and unwanted signals to a louder volume.

In 1912, the Valsillie receiver had primary and secondary tuning and a crystal detector. Three crystals using the same cat-whisker, and the switch was used to give you the crystal of your choice. My preference was one Galena and one Perikon. The Galina was reliable, it rarely lost its "point", but not very sensitive. The Perikan was extremely sensitive, but very temperamental. Static, loud signals or vibration, and the "point" was gone. The thing to do was on words you would know, like the ship's name, or address, to slip the switch over from one crystal to the other, and find a point.

Each operator often had their own pet crystal, which they swore by. The first valves were of course, far more reliable, but gave very little, if any greater distances, than the very best crystals.

A REPORT ON THE QUEENSLAND VETERANS' A.G.M.

MINUTES OF THE 12TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD IN THE OTC STATE MANAGER'S OFFICE  
ON TUESDAY, 19TH MAY 1987, COMMENCING AT NOON

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PRESENT WERE:

President Alan Jones and Colleen	Jim and Beryl Banks
Blue Easterling	Laz Eliou
Sid Gill	Bob Hooper
Dean Laws	John Marshall
John and Mildred Norris	Clen and Pat Searle
Vince Sim	Bob and Betty Webster
Mike Guyler	Dick Westwood

APOLOGIES WERE RECEIVED FROM: George Maltby, Charles Carthew, Wilf Atkin, Frank Bond, Eric Cramp, Wim Elbertse, Alf Gooby, Pat Gray, Lou Heggie, Kev Hiscock, Jock Kellie, Rowley Lane, Alan Rees, Jack Silcock and Keith Vincent.

MINUTES OF THE 11TH AGM WERE READ AND RECEIVED. The only correspondence was the notice of the meeting and apologies. The Secretary/Treasurer read the financial statement which showed that subscriptions, badges and bank interest provided \$50.69, the 11th AGM a net cost of \$13 and the 12th Reunion a surplus of \$30 leaving net funds of \$200.60. This was adopted.

ALL OFFICES WERE DECLARED VACANT and in the absence of other nominations Alan Jones was elected President, Jim Banks Secretary-Treasurer and John Norris Auditor. The President urged other members to consider standing for office at the next AGM.

IT WAS AGREED TO HOLD THE NEXT REUNION at Brisbane Radio - VIB - on Thursday 26 November 1987. The meeting then closed and was followed by the usual excellent fellowship.

\* \* \* \* \*

QUEENSLAND VETERANS' ASSOCIATION REPORT - BY JIM BANKS

A special welcome-back was given to Bob Hooper who is currently working harder than ever getting his new Bribie Island home to his liking. Although he has lost quite a few pounds since last we saw him, he still has his good sense of humour and a nose for a good scotch.

Our Gold Coast residents - Dean Laws, Blue Easterling, John Norris, Vince Sim and Bob Webster - did not seem to allow the ending of the severe Gold Coast drought to have affected their personal liquid intake. Looking at the physical conditions of them all, it must be a pretty healthy place to live! John Norris has joined the ranks of boat owners, but only to catch his daily quota of whiting in the Broadwater. Dean Laws and Blue Easterling continue to "clutter-up" the amateur frequencies and were overheard convincing soon-to-retire Jim Banks that he should polish up his morse and join the ranks when he returns from his sojourn in Europe.

Sid Gill continues to have a few medical problems but is enjoying his move to Bribie Island where he has joined Eric Cramp, Bob Hooper, Jock Kellie and Kev Hiscock as a resident.

Clen Searle is another who is having health problems but not allowing them to interfere too much with his lifestyle at Nambour. His wife Pat is as active as ever and learning to master her computer.

Alan Jones, who joined with John Norris recently is representing Brisbane Office at the Cabolture Golf Club in the annual 'G. F. Maltby Trophy' competition was heard complaining that Laz Eliou - who represented Brisbane Radio - was unfair in choosing maximum handicap golfer from VIB to play with him, thus ensuring that the trophy remains at VIB for another year.

From the apologies, Wilf Atkin claims he's a bit too old to travel now (not that we believe him!); Frank Bond and Pay Gray are promising to come down to enliven the Reunion in November; and both Lou Heggie and Jack Silcock were travelling.

Alf Goeby was attending Heather in hospital - we hope she's well again soon, Alf. Eric Cramp had a specialist's appointment.

We also hear that Les Doubleday is far from well up in Rockie; we all send our best wishes. Our sympathy goes to Pat Gray, who lost his brother Stan, another veteran a few weeks ago.

\* \* \* \* \*

A TRIBUTE

On behalf of OTVA, our deepest sympathy is expressed to the family of MRS JEAN EDWARDS whose sad passing ends a long and loyal attachment to AWA as private secretary to the late Lionel Hooke, as well as a long and loyal attachment to the OTVA as a foundation member attending early meeting, helping out with arrangements for social occasions, home made cakes being of special significance.

THE OLD MORSE DAYS - BY EDDIE CAHILL

(TOWNSVILLE DAILY BULLETIN)

I am moved to write of the old Morse men, because they are fast becoming extinct. Sophisticated apparatus and methods have made them unnecessary, but the old Morse men played no mean part in the development of Australia, and in fact the world.

They and the old Morse days should not be allowed to sink into oblivion. I shall endeavour to revive some of the atmosphere of those pioneering times especially for those who took part and are still alive and able to look back and recall the incidents of those interesting years.

Special mention must also be made of the men who erected the telegraph lines and the line repairers as well as the technicians.

The men who erected the lines did a wonderful job, as they had to take the lines over wide rivers, high rugged mountains and dense forest country to link up the far-flung towns, including some where no railway existed.

The very vast country with its rapidly growing trees sometimes caused trouble when the trees came into contact with the lines. As well when the poles became saturated and the webs around the attachments got wet, leakages were caused which in turn caused weak signals and these the telegraphist had to decipher. It took years of experience for a telegraphist to be competent enough to do just that.

I commenced as a learner telegraphist in the Townsville Railway Telegraph Office as a lad of 15 years, when capable of only 20 words per minute.

After a couple of years, I transferred to the Townsville Postal Telegraph Office, where I stepped right in amongst the dyed in the wool telegraph men comprising a staff of probably 60.

Townsville was then the repeating office to Brisbane for almost all of the northern cities and towns, including Cairns. In that office I was a little fish in a big pond, and I soon became aware of my limitations. The working pace necessary to keep up with the business was most important, especially the large volume of telegrams in the Postal Department. If the transmitting telegraphist had a pile of telegrams he made his own pace, and if he was a fast sender, the receiving man was expected to keep up with him irrespective. Some telegraphists could maintain a pace of anything from 30 to 34 words per minute for a fairly lengthy period. This was not too fast when using a typewriter but it was not easy work when using a pen and was too fast for a bad writer.

There are many men who stand out in my memory for their extraordinary talent in the game.

Not being a good pen-man myself, I was amazed at the penmanship of some of those telegraphists, especially a number of the older men in the Postal Department, as I watched them writing at a very fast pace and finding ample time to dip their pens in the inkwell.

I marvelled at the prowess of one old telegraphist, Joe Hunt, as he wrote, unlined foolscap after foolscap of press news for the Townsville Bulletin. The space between the lines of writing was the same all the way down i.e. pages and the written words were so neat and uniform that the whole job looked almost as good as if done with a typewriter. It was a real work of art.

Another elderly man who stands out in my memory for penmanship is Mick Burnett. He would sit back looking relaxed and comfortable while writing beautifully as the young 'uns pasted him with the fastest of Morse.

There were other talented men in the Postal Department, too many to mention.

The aim of a telegraphist was to read and receive Morse as long as possible without stopping the sender for any reason.

This brings to mind, in particular, one man in Brisbane who, when receiving hardly ever broke in. So, to trick him up one day, a Townsville man when sending him a telegram, left out the address on purpose. But no break came from the receiver, and after sending another telegram or two, the Townsville sender got worried and admitted that he had left out the address of a telegram, but the chap in Brisbane said "Don't worry, I filled it in" So the joke was turned back on to the sender.

Most press news was received at night and into the morning hours until about 3 am. In those years, the late Mr Jim Gibbard was a young reporter. He subsequently became editor of the Townsville Bulletin. Jim was a regular visitor to the Telegraph office, as a reporter to collect the press news for the Bulletin and his genial nature made him a favourite with the telegraphists.

The postal telegraphists were the link between the business people as many of their transactions and much of their ordering were done by telegrams which were not nearly as expensive as they are today. A local telegram could be sent for ninepence, intrastate one shilling and fourpence, 16 words being the maximum for those amounts, and each extra word cost one penny.

In many cases the general public laid bare their thoughts and actions. Telegrams of all kinds were dealt with.

It was confusing at Melbourne Cup time, with all the tips being telegraphed about many different horses.

There were telegrams that made you laugh and others that made you sad. There was the Chinaman who sent his telegram saying "Send no bananas quick".

Then there was the one from a chap which said "Cannot send money, am broke and living on the echo of the dinner bell".

There were telegrams advising of babies being born, others conveying congratulations to couples getting married, and others telling of a death.

All radiograms were first received at the Townsville Radio Station and then sent by land line to the Townsville Postal Telegraph Office to be repeated to their destinations by land line.

Which reminds me of a love-sick young man up in New Guinea. It must have cost him a considerable sum of money to send three or four radiograms a week to his girlfriend telling her how much he loved her and how lonely he was. He really made you feel sad. I wonder how it all panned out.

At Christmas time the gaily adorned telegrams came in thousands. I started work one Christmas Eve at 2 pm and finished 6 am next day, all of us being rather tired of someone wishing a merry Christmas - and believe it or not the man working next to me all night was named Christmas.

There were too many to mention all of those who were telegraphists in 1919 and 1920, but I would like to say that Jack McCaul and George Sinden were the supervisors and Mr Franklin (I forget his Christian name) who we called Lord Kitchener because of his striking resemblance of that famous man used to relieve the supervisor during lunch hour. We were not allowed to smoke until 6 pm that was the regulation.

After about 18 months I returned to the Railway Department and stayed there until retirement.

It would not be fair to play down the ability of the Railway telegraphists because there were many excellent transmitters and sound reading men in that department. To hear first class sending is like listening to good music.

As in the case of the Postal Department, there were too many railway men to mention all of them.

Even though many come to mind as being outstanding telegraphists, I will write of one who in my opinion was the greatest of them all. I pay my tribute to the late Jim Dwyer. Even though he lacked the all-round experience of the postal men, this railway telegraphist put more effort into his work than anyone I've known. He was a brilliant key sender besides being a champion receiver specialising in getting the sender to abbreviate the words. He was a good penman, but usually received on a typewriter.

Jim spent most of his service in the Brisbane office and when he was on the other end of the line he was so good and made the job so easy that you got a false impression of your own ability.

His only thought was to clear the business quickly yet he would never sacrifice efficiency.

As well, he practised psychology on the other man by praising him and boosting his ego thereby getting the best out of him.

Yes, I think the late Jim Dwyer would be the greatest telegraphist I knew in either the Postal Office or the Railway Department.

31ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING O.T.V.A.  
NSW BRANCH 1ST MAY 1987  
MINUTES

Present:

A. Arndt, W. Anthoney, J. Anderson, J. Bevan, D. Bourne, J. Burgess, K. Bobridge, A. Barrie, M. Blaha, E. Bastow, A. Bradney, R. Branson, R. Beecham, G. Cupit, R. Connolly, B. Collett, B. Callaghan, W. Chant, B. Curran, M. Dobson, G. Day, L. Durrant, P. Day, C. Dalley, N. Donahue, A. Ebert, R. Fisher, P. Frost, V. Gibson, L. Gowanlock, E. Gunning, B. Hoske, J. Hodgson, P. Harris, N. Huntington, E. Harcourt, N. Harris, J. Hinwood, B. Henson, T. Hughes, J. Howe, R. Hookway, F. Hickling, C. Hurndell, F. Keen, F. Kannard, W. Luke, J. Lee, S. Luxton, K. Morgan, M. McInnes, G. Madren, R. McDonald, N. Martin, T. Molloy, C. Maiden, K. McCredden, J. Neylon, R. Peacock, J. Pow, A. Purtil, D. Rogers, D. Richardson, P. Roberts, P. Skinner, R. Smith, R. Stewart, C. Swinney, D. Savage, R. Turnbull, T. Thatcher, G. Thompson, R. Welbourn, M. Wood, D. Woods, A. White, C. Watson, P. Whisson, M. Wilden.

Apologies:

K. Adams, A. Agius, T. Barker, H. Brown, C. Brophy, A. Brown, K. Bondfield, W. Brown, M. Condon, O. Cooper, A. Culloden, W. Chant (Snr.), J. Curtis, J. Cowie, G. Donald, M. Dwyer, P. Dean, J. Davis, K. Erikson, R. Flood, G. Gosewinkel, E. Haran, A. Hennessy, C. Israel, F. James, G. Johnson, A. Lane, M. Matthysz, J. Mattes, K. Minogue, P. Muelman, G. McDonald, E. Norris, M. O'Hanlon, J. Orton, A. Oliver, W. O'Donnell, R. Osborne, C. Pickford, T. Perrott, C. Raecke, M. Reed, J. Salloway, R. Somervaille, K. Stone, A. Taylor, J. Toland, S. Taylor, C. Vahtrick, K. Vincent, F. White, A. Waugh.

The President, Gordon Cupit opened this meeting and welcomed our official guests, Laurie Durrant, Darrel Savage and Bill James, the OTC Archivist, and all members present. A special welcome was extended to the following new members attending their first meeting:

Tony Bradney  
Brian Hoske  
Tony White

Apologies were received from Bob Somervaille, Chairman of OTC, Commissioner Jack Curtis, Maurie Matthysz Manager Guam, Keith Vincent Manager Cairns, Tom Barker and Gary Donald. All others are recorded in the attendance book.

Fraternal greetings were read as received from the Quarter Century Club of Canada and the Vetaran Cableman's Association of N.Z., Presidents and members of our Victorian, Queensland, South Australian and Western Australian branches on this the occasion of our 31st Annual General Meeting. Chas Carthew, our National Secretary also sent us his very best wishes and assures us he is still keeping very good health. A cordial invitation has been extended from our branches, to any of us who are interested in attending their next meetings, which are listed in the April Newsletter.

One minutes silence was observed to mark the passing of the following members during the past twelve months:

Dick Bettinson  
George Magnus  
Charles Smith  
Jim Taylor  
Will Jefferson  
Arthur Black  
Concliff O'Donnell  
Jack Sheath  
Keith Wilmot

Alex McEntyre  
Murray Johnson  
Keith Burbury  
Jack Doggett  
Peg Pegler  
Stan Gray  
John Frazier  
Tony Hanson  
Jack Davis

#### Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of our previous meeting were distributed to members in our October 1986 Newsletter (copies were also available at this meeting) and were declared open for discussion. There being no discussion it was moved by Jim Anderson and seconded by Ron McDonald that the minutes of the 30th Annual General Meeting be confirmed.

Carried unanimously.

#### Balance Sheet and Annual Discounts

The Balance Sheet was presented to all members present and opened for discussion. there being no discussion, it was moved by Horrie McInnes and seconded by Lyal Gowanlock, that the Balance Sheet and Auditors report be accepted.

Carried unanimously.

#### Election of Officers

The President delared all offices vacant, and called for nominations for a Returning Officer to conduct the annual elections.

Mr. Geoff Day was nominated by Alan Arndt and seconded by Chas Watson, there being no further nominations, Mr. Geoff Day was duly elected as Returning Officer.

The Returning Officer called for nominations for the office of President. Mr. G. Cupit was nominated by Horrie McInnes and seconded by Des Woods. There being no further nominations, Mr. Gordon Cupit was declared President.

Mr. A. Arndt was nominated as Honorary Secretary by Charlie Maiden and seconded by Des Woods, there being not further nominations, Mr. Alan Arndt was declared Honorary Secretary.

Mr. M. Wilden was nominated as Treasurer by Bruce Collett and seconded by Kathy Morgan, there being no further nominations, Mr. Mick Wilden was declared Treasurer.

Mr. R. Connolly and Mr. R. Peacock were nominated as Auditors by Alan Arndt and seconded by Mick Woods, 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. Bruce Collett nominated the new Committee in toto, seconded by Des Woods and were:

Jim Anderson, Peter Skinner, Charlie Maiden, Ron Connolly, Alf Ricketts, Keith McCredden and Ted Bastow were duly elected as committee.

A vote of thanks to retiring committee members Gareth Thompson, Trevor Thatcher and David Bourne for their valued assistance during their terms of office was moved by President Gordon Cupit, and was most enthusiastically acknowledged by all present.

#### 31st Annual Reunion

The Secretary recommended we endeavour to secure the OTC Conference Centre located in their new Head Office at 231 Elizabeth Street Sydney, for Friday 4th December 1987 as the venue for our next reunion. This recommendation was supported unanimously, with a suggestion that final arrangements be left in the hands of our Committee.

#### Sick List

The Secretary regretfully reported one member, Carl Raecke has a back problem which is confining him to the house. John Lee commented that at the ripe old age of 87, it is good to see he can still manage to get a "bad back"!

#### Business Arising From Minutes of Previous Meeting

This daylight meeting was held to gauge feelings for holding all future AGM's during daylight hours. The turn out of 79 members (up 60% on past numbers) today speaks for itself. It was moved by Alan Arndt, and seconded by Nell Donahue, that all future AGM's be held at 12 noon. Carried unanimously.

#### General Business

- (a) President Gordon brought to our attention that this year marks the 60th Anniversary of the Beam Service commencing in Australia in 1927. He read the following letter from Mrs. Marjorie Reed;

"Dear Mr. Arndt,

Thank you for the newsletter and notice of the Annual General Meeting of the O.T.V.A. on 1st May.

"I'm sorry I can't attend as I will be away for a few days with a group of residents from the village. It's a good idea to have the meeting in the day time as we oldies do not go out much at night.

Best wishes for the Beam Service 60th Anniversary. I remember it starting when I was working at Melbourne office in 1927.

Kind regards to Mr. Cupit and those I know.

Marjorie Reed".

- (b) The President expressed our appreciation and thanks to OTC for its continuing generous support of our Association.
- (c) There being no further business for discussion, the President closed the meeting after inviting all present to adjourn to the lounge area for some light refreshments, and fraternisation with old friends, especially those attending for the first time in several years, due to this being our first, very successful, daylight meeting.

Alan Arndt  
(Honorary Secretary)

THE LATE MURRAY JOHNSON - BY JACK BURGESS

Murray Johnson was well known to me in the late 1920's - early 1930's. I was also very friendly with his niece who were our neighbours in Queen Street, Concord West. Unfortunately, the romance didn't last very long, mainly because the AWA Marine Superintendent, Hugo Phillips, signed me on the steamship MARANOA as Radio Officer on a four months trip with a cargo of railway sleepers for Shanghai and Vladivostok and thence to Miike, Japan for coal bunkers, thence to Nauru and Ocean Island, picking up passengers and a cargo of superphosphate. When I arrived back my friend had flown.

In 1930 Murray signed on the Melbourne steamship WOOLGAR as radio operator. The ship had been sold to European buyers and left with a cargo of wheat. The idea was for Murray to carry out HF transmission and reception on the way over, to visit the Marconi Radio facilities at Poldhu in Cornwall, to meet Marconi engineers and to study the functions of Marconi picturegram equipment and its possibilities with the wireless.

The other item of interest was the conversion of the Bita Paka German Telefunken high power quenched spark transmitters which was under construction when captured from the Germans during the first world war. Very low frequency was used by the radio engineers during the first world war as short wave transmission and reception was to wait a long time before valves came into operation.

At the same time that Murray came on the scene the station was working into Townsville on a low frequency of about 2000 metres. Atmospheric conditions were bad on this frequency, and when the gold fields at Wau, Bulolo and Edie Creek and others opened up, static made the reception of long ten letter code words quite a big job.

Murray arrived at Bita Paka with valve equipment to rebuild a new station, with the big German engines being replaced by a small Diesel engine. Eventually three HF transmitters were functioning and the Townsville Radio was bypassed by Rabaul going straight to Sydney. The second transmitter was used for contact with the gold fields and outstations, and the third was for ship/shore communications on 600 and 2400 metres.

The last time I saw Murray was at a Veterans' Christmas get-together about four years ago. At that function our then President, Phil Geeves, mentioned the fact that Murray arranged with Marconi who was in his yacht in the Mediterranean area to switch on a set of lights at the Sydney Town Hall.

We are indebted to AWA magazine staff for providing a better and larger version of Murray's career in AWA.

VALE - MURRAY JOHNSON

It is with regret that we mark the passing of Murray Johnson on 27/November last year at the grand age of 97. Murray's life story is synonymous with the history of AWA.

Late on a hot sticky Darwin night way back on 11 November 1918, people were startled out of their slumber by a cowbell being rung from the back of a Model-T Ford. The cowbell, being swung by Murray Johnson, signalled the end of the Great War. Murray was in charge of the Darwin Coastal Wireless Station at the time and had received the message earlier in the night.

In 1922, as an installation and design engineer for AWA, Murray was involved in the installation of AWA manufactured transmitters and receivers for the then new short wave service, and assisted in the design of a lattice tower for one of the first broadcast stations, 2FC.

By 1925, Murray was sent to install two outback radio stations which were the forerunners of the communications network for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

While in the bush, he was sent to Brunette Downs to repair a transmitter which had not worked for two years. He quickly discovered a burnt-out condenser but did not have a replacement part. In a magnificent piece of improvisation, he fashioned a condenser from a piece of glass and metal from a kerosene tin. That night, he was in communication with Sydney.

In 1928 Murray worked closely with Kingsford Smith and Ulm to provide a suitable radio transmitting and receiving set for a planned air trip to England.

It was around this time that AWA became involved with the Royal Flying Doctor Service which began with a radio station operating from Cloncurry. Later, the School of the Air was established on the radio network using AWA designed and built equipment in which Murray played a large part.

In 1930, Murray was responsible for an event of significant historical importance. In order to demonstrate the value of long distance communication, Italian radio pioneer Marconi arranged to send a signal from his yacht "Elettra" in the Mediterranean which was picked up in Sydney at AWA's receiving station in La Perouse. From there it was landlined to the Town Hall where it activated a relay which switched on hundreds of coloured lights on the building.

In 1934 when AWA decided to begin a picturegram service between London and Melbourne with equipment just developed by the Marconi company, Murray was sent to London to be trained and, on his return, installed the first unit at AWA's office in Queen Street, Melbourne.

In 1936 AWA was awarded a contract to install equipment at aerodromes for the Department of Civil Aviation which involved transmitting equipment on the established bands and also on direction-finding apparatus. This responsibility was placed on the shoulders of Murray Johnson who headed a large team of technicians.

In January 1962 Murray Johnson, radio engineer and pioneer of communication in Australia, retired after a long and illustrious career which spanned four scientific ages - the mechanical era, the electrical era, the radio era and the electronic era.

As for the old cowbell that tolled our peals of joy, Murray came across it when rummaging through his toolbox a few years ago. It now resides in the War Memorial Museum in Canberra to keep alive the story of how peace was announced to the people of Darwin on that hot night in November so many years ago.

Vale, Murray Johnson, you did us proud.

\* \* \* \* \*

SYDNEY RADIO 1935 - BY JACK BURGESS

I was attached to the La Perouse section of Sydney Radio from 1 January 1935 to the middle of July 1936.

At the time I was there Sydney Radio was split into two halves. The first section covered the high frequency schedules, high frequency intercepts covering overseas Radio broadcasts, and a daily schedule with San Francisco (Call sign KPH), the object of which was to assist one another with public traffic to liners running between Sydney - San/Francisco - Vancouver. Monitoring the Island Radio circuits was carried out by La Perouse.

The second section was carried out from the Sydney Beam Operating Room under the supervision of the Beam Service Supervisor, and covered the low frequency transmission and reception of ship to shore messages on 600 and 705 metres from the ships, and 600 and 700 metres to the ships, the reception and transmission being made by remote control to La Perouse for reception and Pennant Hills for transmission.

Staffing at the La Perouse section of Sydney Radio consisted of:-

Station Manager	Mr Percy Brown
Technicians	Messrs. Jack Heavey, John Peel, Frank Marsden and Ray Bailey
Telegraphists	Messrs. Jack Kennedy, Jack Elmore, Stanfield, Frank/Gowlett, Les Coley and myself.
Cleaner	An aborigine, commonly known as "Old Joe", surname unknown.

The Technicians' duties covered overseas broadcasts intercepts covering the New Guinea Island Radio station of Rabaul, Suva, Lord Howe, Port/Moresby and the Antarctic stations at Heard Island and the French station at Adelie Land. All these intercepts included beach flights by Radiophone broadcasts by airplane sponsored by radio station 2SM. This plane patrolled the beaches during the summer months and reported back to 2SM any presence of sharks in the area. Intercepts of broadcasts made by European Radio, such as the BBC were picked up and re-broadcast locally by the Sydney broadcasting stations, such as 2UW, mostly in the early mornings.

Telegraphists duties included copying the press bulletin of the British Official Press which took up to two hours at an auto speed of 25 wpm. This press bulletin was also forked through to the SOR and copied there and at Perth Radio. Copies of this press was sold to the various newspapers throughout Australia and provided good revenue for AWA. The three stations co-operated with one another, providing each other with any items which may have been missed within one area but which was received in the others. Other duties covered the high frequencies of 36 and 24 metres allotted to the merchant ships throughout the world, and licenced to transmit and receive public messages. One of my biggest thrills was to receive a public message from the Atlantic liner "Olympic", about 50,000 tons, trading between Southampton and New York. Monitoring aircraft was also beginning to become part of the scheme.

I remember that the late Charlie Wallace had the honour of doing a fine job with the signals emitted from Kingsford-Smiths old bus "Southern Cross" during the first plane crossing of the Pacific Ocean.

I was also involved with the Southern Cross when it blew one of its engines on its first airmail delivery flight from New Zealand in 1935 and had to return to Sydney. That item was covered in "Transit" some years ago. Another job was collecting the bulletin of "Ships in Range" (of our radio stations) which was published daily in the local papers so that the public and post offices knew which Coastal Radio station to direct any messages for the various ships at sea.

I was attached to the Sydney Operating Room of Sydney Radio from November 1937 until 28 July 1940, when I was transferred to the Beam Wireless Service. The only item of interest to happen to me during my stay at Sydney Radio in the SOR was a TTT call (not an SIS), but an emergency call from an American battle cruiser (name unknown), which was leaving Sydney and was proceeding down the Harbour, followed by a large flotilla of pleasure craft who were seeing her off after a visit to Sydney. The emergency call requested police assistance urgently as the pleasure ferry "Rodney" had capsized and the entire complement of passengers and crew had been pitched into the harbour, many of them drowning. The late George Brown was acting Supervisor at the time and was called on to do the necessities, as I was doing the 600 metre watch and had to stay put. Fortunately for all concerned, the police radio advised that their craft were already on the scene and carrying out rescue work.

The second item to affect me at SOR was the actual operation of the GBMS, short for Great Britain Merchant Ships. After years participating in tests with these messages, operated by the British Navy and employed to warn British ships of any emergencies, war, etc. I don't know who sent the first GBMS message warning of war from the SOR, but I remember that I had occasion to send one.

Other jobs in the SOR were of a routine nature, copying the British Official Press, New Delhi Press, and Island schedules.

I left this quiet job in 1940, but I certainly had to work to earn the extra 12 pounds Aussie which the Beam boys were getting above the CRS boys.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### APPROPO THE ABOVE

Re the "Rodney" incident. This occurred just after the finish of the Australian sesqui-centenary (150 years) in Sydney in 1938. During the celebrations, Sydney Harbour was visited by units from the Dutch, French, Italian, German, Japanese and American fleets, as well as units of the Royal Australian Navy. The British sent along a flight of Short Sunderlands.

As the American fleet units were leaving, a swarm of pleasure craft went out to meet them and follow them out. The Yanks had had a wonderful

A TRIBUTE TO STANLEY CHARLES GRAY 16-12-11 TO 22-4-87

PROVIDED BY HIS WIFE, FLEURETTE

Stan was born in London, England in 1911. We were married in Cairo, Egypt, in 1943 and arrived in Sydney, Australia in 1958.

Fifty of his years of life was spent in communications. He served from 1927 to 1936 in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm. From 1936 to 1958 he served with BOAC, from 1958 to 1971 with OTC Coastal Radio Service, and from 1971 to 1977 with the OTC Customer Relations Section.

Stan had seen a lot of progress in his time from the birth of the motor-car to the jet age and satellite communications. He kept abreast of developments at work. He was respected by his colleagues for his competence and his willingness to pull his weight and to cope with pressure. He was easy to get along with, and good company.

Communications and keeping in touch were the keynotes of his life.

He was a deeply religious man with a God-given, caring nature, and showed a great deal of compassion, particularly children and the frail aged. A self-taught man, he had achieved a high standard of education and delighted in helping with the education of his children and grand-children.

Though he claimed that he was not a religious man, his actions in giving care and aid to the less fortunate belied the claim.

My family and I will miss him very much, but we are proud to have known him, and that he is in God's care.

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Jack Blackley (ex PCB) was not a member of our Veterans' organisation but was well known throughout the service. It is with regret that we advise his many friends that Jack passed away on 3 May this year. Our sincerest sympathy goes to his friends and family.

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Geoff and Rita Day, two of our Sydney identities, are doing a bit of caravanning around Australia. Got a card postmarked Denham WA dated 28/August, depicting Shark Bay. The caravan park was not pictured but there is an excellent shot of the jetty which is about 40 metres from the channel, which is one good reason why no one uses the jetty. Geoff and Rita had also visited Carnarvon. Geoff reports that the OTCA station is up for sale. I say they should give it away. The mud on top and presumably the water underneath.

Have a good trip, both of you.

time in Sydney and were popular with everyone and as the American seamen lined the length of the ships ferry hooters were blaring and people waving and cheering them off. The "Rodney" was one of them, and overloaded for her size. As she turned side-on so her passengers could get a better view of the USS "Chicago", just passing by, the bulk of the passengers raced to one side and over she went. Without waiting for orders, the US sailors lining the deck began leaping into the harbour and swimming toward the struggling mass in the water. The "Chicago" detached herself from the rest of the fleet and stood by to render all aid. Their action saved the incident from becoming a major disaster.

I also remember that in appreciation from a grateful Sydney, the Mayor presented the entire complement, including the ship, with the key to the city.

The "Chicago" figured in another incident in Sydney harbour during the war. She and one of our vessels, HMAS Australia were two of the targets selected and fired upon by the Japanese midget submarines which invaded the harbour. Fortunately for both ships, the running depth of the torpedoes were set too deep, passing under the vessels and striking the RAN Training Ship "Kuttabul" which was tied up near the harbour wall, and killing several Aussie Navy trainees. The three Japanese mini-sub were sunk, and the rest is history. One of the mini-sub can be viewed at the Australian War Museum in Canberra. (That information for the non-Aussie Vets).

#### AFTERTHOUGHT

With the number of differing nationalities represented by naval vessels and considering that some of these were from Axis powers, the authorities, particularly the police, were on tenterhooks, expecting trouble - because we all know what sailors are. The funny thing was that there was only one blue of any size and that concerned sailors from the German and Italian units. A brawl broke out between these two allies in which a lot of punches were thrown and some heads broken. The Germans tried to board the Italian vessel, newspaper reports said, but gave the idea away when the Italians trotted out the steam hoses.

Spoilsports ....

