



Editor: Jim Anderson

Newsletter

Overseas Telecommunications Veterans Association (Australia)

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MEETINGS AND REUNIONS

NEW SOUTH WALES	Reunion Tuesday 30 November 1993 12:00 noon to 3:00pm	Telstra House 12th Floor Conference Centre 231 Elizabeth Street Sydney
VICTORIA	Reunion Wed, 24 November 1993 5:00pm to 8:00pm	City Conference Centre CAE Building/Level 2A 256 Flinders Street Cnr Degraes Street Melbourne (opposite station)
QUEENSLAND	Reunion Tuesday 16 November 1993 12:00 noon to 3:00pm	The Irish Club Tara House 175 Elizabeth Street Brisbane
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	Reunion Thurs 25 November 1993 12:00 noon to 3:00pm (Adelaide Time)	7th Floor Standard Chartered Building 26 Flinders Street Adelaide
WESTERN AUSTRALIA	Reunion Tuesday 30 November 1993 12:30pm (WA Time)	Perth ITC 620 Gnangara Road Landsdale

Veterans from interstate who would like to attend these functions are advised to contact the Secretary of the branch to get confirmation of the times and venues and indicate their intention to attend so that arrangements can be made for catering.

Oscar

Tango

Victor

Alpha



EDITORIAL

RETURN TO SENDER

Many copies of the NEWSLETTER are being returned to Head office marked RETURN TO SENDER because members have not notified us of their change of address.

REMEMBER.....THE ONUS IS ON YOU TO ADVISE US OF YOUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

If you are reading a friend's copy because you didn't receive one, send your new (current) address - with name, please - to Pam Helps, Telstra House, 231 Elizabeth Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION

I just cannot believe that you fellows have run dry of articles to be printed in the NEWSLETTER. Copies of this publication are sent to our Archives where they are recorded for posterity, thanks to KIMBERLY O'SULLIVAN and her helpers.

Like it or not, you blokes are the custodians of the days of "steam" telegraphy and once you shuffle off, any data you may have not recorded will be lost forever. Don't forget, a lot of the repeater stations on which you served have closed down and gone forever. If someone wanted to do a story, say, "Murder at Fanning Island", where would they get the background?

Come on... give us a hand.

GIVING CREDIT WHERE IT IS DUE

I wish to thank my contributors to this edition. They are

G T (Tommy) Hughes
Lois Carrington
Martin Cresswell
Tony Richardson

Gordon Cupit
Harry Stone
Vince Gibson

Pam Helps
Kevin Bobrige
Denis Chambers

TRIBUTE TO TED BISHTON (Continued)

There would have been about six people waiting to go into the fields and we lived in tents pitched along the beach. Most of the men were waiting on carriers or waiting on the arrival of the Burns Philp ship to get stores. We had two or three weeks to wait before the ship arrived. There was a chap named Harvey, who had been managing Singaua plantation a few miles from Lae. He was in partnership with a chap named Jock McLeod. Harvey was waiting for stores from Sydney. He had four kerosene tins full of eggs in isinglass which we soon found good use for. From the inside of Burleigh Gorman's store, a ladder extended up into the loft or sleeping compartment. Here we used to congregate daily, telling yarns and drinking. We used to get prospecting dishes, empty a couple of bottles of overproof rum into each, plus about a dozen tins of ideal milk, plus about a dozen of Harvey's eggs. We would sit around these dishes with enamel mugs, helping ourselves. The chaps were coming in and out all the time and it was surprising the number who fell down that ladder going down. I don't remember anyone falling going up.

I saw a few parties start off for the goldfields on Edie Creek, which was estimated at a distance of 80 to 100 miles via what they called the Gadagadu Road. After leaving Salamaua, the road ran for a few miles to the Frisco River, then the real climbing commenced. Some of these parties only got as far as the Frisco River, when most of their carriers would run away and return to Salamaua. Each boy was loaded with a pack of 50 pounds, later reduced to 40 pounds, which was quite a good load considering the nature of the track and the number of streams and rivers to be crossed and the huge mountains to ascend and descend. Some of the mountains were over 12,000 feet. I remember Jimmy Dowsett starting off. He started off by trying to impress his carriers by carrying a 60 pound pack himself. A few days later, most of his carriers were back in Salamaua and a miner, who just arrived from the goldfield, told me he saw Jimmy, who had lost most of his fingernails when he was washed down one of the rivers trying to clutch onto the rocks.

The S S Montoro eventually arrived from Sydney and on her were a lot of men keen to get to the goldfields to make their fortunes. None of them knew anything about mining or New Guinea. To make way for this new influx of men, lots of coconut trees were chopped down to make way for tents. The head of these coconut trees was very good for eating, we used to call it millionaire salad. I was walking along the beach one day and it was raining, just as it knows how to rain in Salamaua, when I came across one of the new arrivals named Otto Rossitter. He had about 10 coconut fronds (Bom Boms) leaning against a coconut tree and inside he had a small flame trying to cook this millionaire salad in a billycan. I told him it didn't need cooking and took him along to my tent for a feed and thus made a friend for life. Otto didn't do much good on the goldfield, where he arrived some months later, but became a well known character in later years, during the war and after.

After the Montoro arrived, I was very busy unpacking the wireless gear and repacking it into 40 or 50 pound loads for the trip into the field. The wireless set was a small lifeboat set and the engine and generator were the heaviest portions of the set. As far as I can remember, these portions were about 100 pounds and were carried on a pole by two carriers. The smaller parts of the set were made up into 40 or 50 pound packs and strapped onto a carrier's back. All packs were wrapped in good heavy canvas to protect them from the weather. My food bill with Burns Philp was over £80 (\$160) and this all had to be

packed as well. The wireless set needed 74 carriers alone, then carriers were needed to carry food for them. A couple of week's after the Montoro's arrival, I was ready for the trip into the goldfields. In the meantime district officer, Major Skeate, had arrived in Salamaua and was in charge of the district. He supplied me with four police boys and directed me to go in via the Buang track as dysentery had broken out on the Gadagadu track and the carriers were dying like flies. No one had ever been to the goldfields via the Buang track, so of course I had to find my own way. I was supplied with a map showing the track as far as the village of Mapos, it also showed Kwasang, which was further on, but no European had ever been that far in. Just when I was ready to leave, Archie Whitburn asked if I could take him in with me - I readily acceded to his request and we were ready to go.

Major Skeate supplied a schooner and we got all our gear and stores aboard and set sail for Busama which is somewhere about 10 miles from Salamaua between Salamaua and Lae. Of course Lae in those days was just bush, no Europeans there at all. When I left Busama I had 187 carriers and our first obstacle was a big river. It was so deep that the carriers had to put their packs on their heads. Fortunately the river was not a fast flowing one, but I remember standing on the river bank watching the carriers crossing. All the carriers were following each other and at approximately a yard apart, so the river would be approximately 200 yards wide as I had just on 200 carriers. This river was only a few miles after we left Busama and, on the present day map, could be the Bwussi river, but in those days I could not find out the names of the rivers and creeks. I know before we reached the goldfields we had crossed hundreds of them. The first village we stayed at was Lega. The going, as far as I remember was fairly good to Lega. The next village we stayed at was Bulantim. This part of the trip was very rough. I put in more time sliding on my backside than on my feet. The next village we struck was Mapos. The Luluai of this village was a character named Tom. They had very big gardens here and to conserve my rice, I bought as much native food along the route as I could. A "balun" (string bag net) which could hold about 50 lbs of taro (Kau Kau) or sweet potato cost me a box of matches or a 2 ounce tobacco tin of salt. We were getting into wild country now and the natives were salt hungry. Their substitute for salt was the ash out of their fires. By the time we got to Mapos my potatoes and onions were beginning to grow. The onions were no good, but I showed Tom how to grow the potatoes. Over 30 years after, in about 1956, I was staying with friends Ernie and Florence Britton in Lae and at dinner time I remarked at the nice new potatoes and Ernie informed me that they came from Mapos village and that they practically supplied Lae with potatoes. When we left Mapos, we were getting into real cannibal country. From now on, Archie Whitburn stayed in front of the line of carriers and I brought up the rear. Some of the mountains we crossed were up around the 10,000 ft mark and at that height it was bitterly cold. From the time we left Mapos, from morning to night, the sound of the Garamuts (native drums) never seemed to cease. We would hear them in the valleys and gullies and on the mountain tops.

After leaving Mapos village, we lost all contact with the natives. Every village we entered we found deserted and some of the villages contained anything up to 400 or 500 huts. Although we were not in contact with the natives, we were never without their company. As soon as we left a village, the garamuts would send out their message to be answered by garamuts from the village ahead. As we toiled from one village to another we were escorted by hundreds of natives who were on each side of our line of carriers. We could see them darting from tree to tree or fleeing through the kunai grass with their bows and arrows and spears held above their heads. The snake river was on our right, thousands of

feet below and there was a huge waterfall which we kept in sight for days. This waterfall was on the far side of the snake river and seemed to have a fall of two or three thousand feet. We generally travelled on the tops of these mountains and some of them were real razorbacks. I remember going along one of these razorbacks - it was so narrow - about 18 inches to two feet wide. The native carriers were so sure-footed they thought nothing of it, but I handed my rifle to my boy and got down on my hands and knees. I must have travelled for some hours like this, but I was not game to stand up, especially after seeing one of the carriers drop his pack, which careered thousands of feet down below. On another day we seemed to be for hours crawling around a cliff face which seemed to be only about two feet wide. One false step would have meant a fall of thousands of feet into the gully below. Some mornings we would start off from a mountain peak and fall or slide down for five or six thousand feet, then ascend the opposite mountain by climbing and pulling ourselves up on vines. By evening, when we would have reached the top, looking back to where we had started from in the morning seemed only a stone's throw, but that short distance had taken a lot of hard work and exertion. We eventually arrived at a very large village which we learned later was called Kwasang. There were several hundred houses in this village, but not a native to be seen although we knew they were in the vicinity and not too far away.

From the time I left Salamaua I had given strict instructions that my carriers should not invade any of the native gardens and I think this went a long way towards our peaceful trip so far. By this time a lot of the carriers had deserted and had tried to make their way back to the beach, but how many succeeded will never be known. In all the houses I inspected at Kwasang, they all seemed to be well made and as far as native huts were concerned, quite good. They each contained a large Purakin (wooden basin) which contained some sort of a seed from some tree. This seed was about the size of a walnut which was pierced by a stick about six inches long which the natives would twirl round in their hands and let it roll round in the wooden bowl, like a top spinning.

I was now getting short of carriers, so I decided to send the carriers on ahead with as many packs as they could carry, then return to Kwasang and pick up the remainder of the packs. This arrangement took 3 or 4 days before we finally left Kwasang. All the time we were there no native showed himself, but they were never far away. The trip from the coast to Kwasang was mostly through bush country, but after leaving Kwasang, the country opened out onto large Kunai grass plains. It was a delightful change to get out into the sun after being so many weeks under a canopy of trees. Most of the way we had to cut our way through the high Kunai grass. When the wind was propitious I would set fire to parts of this Kunai country, which at times made the going much easier. After some days we came upon a large native garden. We made camp here and constructed make-shift lean-to shelters. These lean-to shelters were made by forcing two poles into the ground about ten feet apart, then fastening a crossbar on top at a height of about 8 to 10 feet, then placing smaller poles from the crossbar slanting to the ground at a distance of about 12 inches apart, then criss-crossing these with more poles and covering the whole lot with Kunai grass. These lean-tos made very good shelter from the weather and kept our gear dry.

By this time we had about 10 or 12 sick, sore and lame boys, so we decided to remain here with these boys while the remainder of the carriers went back along the track to where we had hidden the rest of our gear, stores etc. I sent the four police boys back with the carriers, Archie and I staying with the sick, sore and lame. There was a big village perched high up on the cliffs above us and the first day we were awakened to the sight of

300 or 400 wild looking cannibals watching us from a knoll about 300 yards away. The name of this village I heard later was called Katamani. Each day while we were waiting for the line of carriers to return, these men of Katamani were getting closer to our camp, so Archie and I decided that we would move on as soon as the carriers returned. These men of Katamani were gradually closing in on us. We could see them brandishing their spears and bows and arrows and they were getting close to within range of us. After about 5 days the carriers arrived back so we decided to move off immediately the following morning. By this time we were running short of food as we had been over a month on the trip. Up to this time we had not touched the native gardens, but now we had no alternative but to load all available carriers with as much native food as we could carry. We placed a good quantity of salt, matches and other trade goods alongside the garden in payment for the native foods we had taken, in fact we paid more liberally for what we had taken.

The following morning all the wireless gear and all the foodstuffs were loaded on to the carriers and the remainder of our gear we had to leave behind. As we began to move out at daylight, the men of Katamani swooped down on our camp and within minutes all our lean-tos were ablaze. Our carriers were moving out very quickly while Archie and I and the police boys brought up the rear. Most of the Kanakas were busy looting our camp and those that followed us were soon turned back after they had showered us with a spray of spears and arrows. We fired a few rounds back at them which steadied them in their tracks. We travelled fast all that day and I think it was late that afternoon that we arrived at the Bulolo River. We looked round for a place to camp and more or less decided on a nice green grassy patch of land on the river bank. Just then I remembered reading about the Diamantina River in Queensland where so many people had been trapped. However we decided to camp on a small knoll just above the river. Although we had had no rain during the night, the following morning the Bulolo was a raging torrent and the spot where we had contemplated camping was ten to twelve feet under water. It had rained higher up the river during the night. Just below where we were camped we could see where the Watut River joined the Bulolo. On the way to the Bulolo River I could look down to the valleys below and the trees were dotted with white cockatoos. They must have been there in millions, as it looked like a cotton field. My cookboy shot some and made a curry out of them. It was the first time I had ever eaten cockatoo and the last. Whether they were too old I cannot say, but a rubber show would have been easier to get one's teeth into. We stayed here a couple of days to give the carriers a rest and, in the meantime, Archie and I did a bit of prospecting.

I pegged out a lease on the Watut River, which I called the "thunderbolt". I had a miner's right which I had taken out in Salamaua before starting on this trip. Archie and I decided to do a bit of prospecting on the far side of the Watut River, but the trouble was to cross the river as it was running pretty fast. We could see a small beach about 50 yards down the river and we reckoned if we went a little higher up the river and dived in we should be able to make this little beach. So we went a little higher up the river and dived in. Archie made the beach, but I got carried on. I was making remarkable speed but could see no way of getting out of the river as the banks on both sides were too high. Eventually things looked desperate and I got scared when in the distance I could see where the Bulolo and Watut rivers met and I realised that if I did not get out of the river before that I would be lost, as the rocks and boulders and the seething mass of water was like the bottom of the Niagara Falls. I tried several times grabbing the side of the bank, but to no avail. At last in the distance I could see a small branch of a tree overhanging the river and I thought - This is my last chance. As I neared this branch I nerved myself and with a supreme effort

I reached up and grabbed the branch. The force of the water threw me up into the side of the river bank and I knew I was safe for the moment. The bank of the river was still very high and I wondered whether the branch was strong enough for me to pull myself out of the river. Fortunately the branch held and I got out of the river. I remember I was pretty shaken up by this ordeal, so much so that I didn't do any prospecting. In the meantime Archie had gone on to do a bit of prospecting and I decided to get back to camp. I still had to negotiate the river crossing, but this time I picked out a beach, then went a good way up river before diving in. This time I made the beach without any trouble.

I noticed on the first day we arrived at the camp that at about 5pm the sun was more or less blacked out by the swarms of flying foxes passing over. They must have been in their millions as it took at least half an hour for them to pass over. The following day I decided to go up onto a spur of a hill and have a shot at them. I thought they were flying a bit too high and out of range, which is why I went a bit higher onto the spur. They were flying over in a thick mass and I fired two barrels into them. I saw a number of them twist and turn and expected to see some of them fall, but I was mistaken. I had fired practically perpendicularly and the next thing I felt what I thought was the shot falling back on me, but I soon realised I was wrong and made a hasty retreat to the river and dived in, clothes and all.

We were now getting very close to our goal. We struck camp and proceeded up the Bulolo River. We did not know it was the Bulolo River until a couple of days later when we came upon old George Arnold's camp. When we left our camp at the junction of the two rivers (Bulolo and Watut) we set off up the Bulolo. We crossed and criss-crossed it several times and in places where it was too deep to cross and where it was a raging torrent, we had to cut down pine trees, which were felled across the river. The Bulolo was fringed on both banks with these beautiful Klinka pines. Some that we cut down must have been over 100 feet long. Sometimes when we had to cut a big pine, we were held up for 4 or 5 hours until the pine was cut through. When we arrived at George Arnold's camp, Archie Whitburn decided to push on alone, as we had already been on the track over 5 weeks since we had left the coast at Busama.

George Arnold was on good gold, but only a few ounces per day. The gold on the Bulolo was practically pure as the further gold travels along these rivers, the more silver is rubbed off and practically pure gold remains. The gold in the Bulolo was then worth about £4.15.0 (\$9.50) an ounce as compared with £2.7.0 (\$4.70) per ounce for Edie Creek gold. George was an old Papuan miner and after staying the night with him we pushed on. Next evening we reached Doris Booth's Cliffside mine. Her husband Charlie was away at the time, either recruiting or procuring stores. We stayed the night at Cliffside and Doris Booth entertained me with her stories and experiences. She told me that when digging holes for the posts for her house, she was getting good gold from the holes. Cliffside was very rich and the Booths made a fortune.

We left Cliffside the following morning on the last leg of our trip. We were at the foot of Kaindi mountain and it was steady climbing from daylight until we reached a height of eight thousand feet and arrived at Edie Creek. The higher we climbed Mt Kaindi, the thicker the moss grew on the trees and on the ground and after a certain height we were just pushing our way through moss about three feet deep. Naturally the higher we went, the colder it got, although we had passed over much higher mountains. It must have been that we were a bit footsore and weary as we arrived at Edie Creek just five weeks and six

days after leaving Salamaua. The few miners who were on the field were very pleased to see me. I think there were about 30 or 40 miners at Edie Creek at this time. They told me that the administration officials at Salamaua had reported me missing as no one had heard of me until Joe Bourke had come across two old fellows who were behind me making their way to Edie Creek. On one of the occasions when I had sent the carriers back to relay some of our gear, I received a note from Major Power saying that he and his mate by the name of Erskine had been stranded owing to their carriers having deserted them and asking my assistance to get them into the goldfields. Unfortunately I had not the time or the carriers available to help them and it was at this stage where the men of Katamani had jumped us. Joe Bourke was a police master patrolling the Buang track along which I had come and he made arrangements with the natives at Mapos to get Power and Erskine back to the beach. I believe Erskine died on arrival at Salamaua and Power was shipped to Rabaul, where he died. I understand they were both Englishmen and pretty old and New Guinea was not a place for old men.

Among the stores I had brought from the beach was a two gallon demijohn of whisky. To mark my arrival on the Field at Edie Creek, I invited some of the miners that I knew to come along and celebrate the occasion. We lined our enamel pannikins along the ground and I opened the demijohn, but to our dismay and astonishment, the contents were green, like Creme de Menthe. We tasted it and it tasted like whisky, but we were too far from medical aid to take any risks, so it was all poured back into the demijohn and I sent it back to Salamaua and asked Burns Philp to credit my account with same. A day or so later, Bill Royal (the discoverer of Edie Creek) invited me down to his hut for a drink. When I arrived there he produced a demijohn and out came the green fluid again. I asked if it was alright and he said he had been drinking it ever since he came to the fields and up to date it had had no ill effects. I had several drinks with Bill and cursed my luck in sending my demijohn back to Salamaua without first ascertaining whether it was good or bad.

On arriving at Edie Creek I pitched my tent on a small knoll overlooking Bill Royal's hut, which was on a flat at the junction of the Edie and Meri Creeks. Fortunately, all the wireless gear arrived in good order and within a week I was on the air. In the meantime, since I had left Salamaua, a wireless station had been erected there and I made contact with Betts, who was operating the station. I pegged out a claim adjoining Darby's Eldorado lease, which was right alongside the wireless station. To get water on to my claim I had to go about 100 yards up Edie Creek and dam a small creek, then cut a water race from there to my claim. Whilst cutting the water race, I cut through some very good gold. A few days later, a friend of mine, Hall Best arrived on the field. He had come in on the Buang track behind me and told me that the natives at Katamani had jumped him and he had to shoot his way out. He was looking for a bit of ground to work, so I put him onto the spot where my water race cut through. He did very well, but got onto something better later on.

There were new arrivals practically every day, but many of them were sadly disillusioned. The trouble was that Edie Creek and Meri Creek were only about 50 feet wide, some parts a little wider and some a little narrower. The big six, who included Bill Royal, Albert Royal, Dick Glasson, Joe Sloane, Bill Money and Chisholm, had each pegged 240 acres, which was permissible those days under the mining ordinance. But 240 acres, only 50 feet wide, covers a lot of country. The result was that the big six leases covered miles of creeks and when the new arrivals came in there was very little ground for them to peg. Most of the new arrivals had to side peg the terrace along the leases already pegged. The

lease belonging to the big six were fabulously rich. It was possible to wash an ounce to the dish in any of their leases. Joe Sloane was getting as much as 280 ounces a day from one box. We used to get our flour in 25lb tins and I've seen 8 and 9 of these tins full of gold in Bill Royals' hut.

Of course the miners resented the big six having all the ground to themselves and the old miners reckoned that the finders of the field, Bill Royal and Dick Glasson should have received reward claims and the rest of the field should have been cut up into 200 x 100 feet claims. Had that been done the field would have probably accommodated 1,000 miners. However a number of miners outside the big six were getting good gold, quite a few getting over 100 ounces per day. To stay in the field, the miners reckoned they had to get at least 20 ounces per day. There were no permanent government officials on the field when I arrived. Bill Grose was there for a short time, then went. Some time later Ward Oakley came and stayed a short time, then a gold mining warden was appointed from Queensland. His name was Maclean and his assistant was John Meehan.

There was a lot of unrest on the field as everyone objected to six men having so much ground. The miners formed an association and eventually got the Commonwealth Government to hold a Royal Commission. Old Ned Coakley, a rough old Irishman, told the Commission he thanked God for moonlight nights and hurricane lamps. Old Ned had a claim on the Miadas Creek adjoining one of the big six leases and, as fast as he would work his claim towards their boundary, he would move his pegs along.

To appease the miners, about the time of the Royal Commission, the Administration decided to excise six claims of 100 x 200 feet from each of the big six leases and dated retrospectively back about a month. They sent a radiogram to the mining warden to this effect. I received the radiogram, which was in plain language and I took it to the mining warden, for we both saw the seriousness of it if the information leaked out. Next day, to my great surprise, a miner came to me with a radio to the Administrator, Rabaul, saying he had pegged one of these excised claims, but the warden refused to register it. I asked him where he got his information about the claims, but he would not tell me. I tried to bluff him out of sending the radio by telling him the miners would tar and feather him. Then I quoted regulations to him where if he made use of information illegally, he could be fined £100, six months imprisonment, or both. After a lot of arguments and persuasion, I prevailed upon him to tell me how he got the information and not send the radio. He could have demanded that I send the radio, but my bluff worked. It appeared that he went into the warden's tent for some information and saw the radio lying on the table and read it. He straight away went and pegged the claim and came back and asked the warden to register it. I went to the warden and said - I believe you had an application for one of those claims and he said, yes. I asked who he thought had told the miner and he replied that he hadn't, so it must have been me. I then told him how it all happened and we decided that something had to be done quickly before our friend spread the news. Warden Maclean had not been long on the field and asked me what I thought.

At that time the miners' association was functioning under the presidency of Tex Thomas, one time amateur heavyweight champion boxer from Western Australia. I suggested that I get Tex Thomas and bring him along to the warden's tent. This was done and it was decided that Tex Thomas would select six miners whom he could trust and that they should proceed at midnight (the decision was made on a Sunday and no claim can be pegged on a Sunday) to peg the six excised claims and hold them in trust for the miners'

association who would conduct a ballot for them. The ballot was held on Chisholm's flat at the junction of the Miri and Edie Creeks and there was great excitement. All the miners on the field, including myself were in the ballot, also all those known to be on the way in or out and those at Salamaua. I forget who the lucky ones were now, but I know they all did well. Charlie Gough was one of them and I know he got over £7,000 in a couple of weeks from his claim. Charlie was later killed while recruiting in the Aitape district.

There was an old character on the field at that time named Wallace Anderson. After this pegging incident, he came to me and said - I thought I was a friend of yours Bish. I asked what he meant and he said - you knew those claims were to be excised and I thought you would let me in on it. I told him if I was a man like that I could have pegged one out for myself. I don't know exactly what Wallace was doing on the field, I understood he was a writer, for he certainly didn't do any mining. At the time he spoke to me about the excised claims he was living in a very rough dilapidated old hut with an earthen floor which had turned to mud, in which Wallace seemed happy to paddle although it was nearly up to his knees. Ernie Banks, who was later mine host of the Cosmopolitan Hotel, Rabaul, and still later captured by the Japanese and never heard of again, had a very good claim on Edie Creek. There were about half a dozen old miners who had died and were buried on Ernie's claim. There was one Chinese carpenter on the field who used to make a rough coffin for the deceased and other times he was kept busy making sluice boxes for the miners. Ernie Banks was getting very good gold, very often over 100 ounces per day. I used to pass Ernie's claim quite often and it was a common sight to see two or three coffins perched up on piles and the boys working assiduously under the coffins shovelling the wash into the sluice box. As the ground was worked out, the coffins were covered with the tailings from these workings. Among the numerous miners who died on Edie Creek was a Captain Ewing. He was buried on Harry Darby's Eldorado lease. There was quite a crowd of us standing round as the coffin was lowered into the grave, when Darby started singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow". Someone said - Oh cut it out Darb, but Darby said that the old skipper would rather have had us singing than mourning, so we all joined in and sang "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow". There were times on the field when food was very short. I remember Christmas Day 1926. All I had was rice and Cerebos salt. I decided to pay my friend Hall Best a visit, but he was no better off for food than I was. However he had a line of boys who had been on the road for six weeks and he had been expecting them in any day for the past week or so. Hall kept telling me how he would deal with these boys when they did arrive. During one of these tirades there was a roar from the boys as they saw the line coming up the creek. Hall forgot about punishing the boys, he was so pleased to see them and get the stores. Burleigh Gorman who used to do the packing on the beach generally put a bottle of whisky in each pack of rice. That Christmas we had tinned chicken and plum pudding with copious quantities of whisky to wash it down. Our Christmas Day started off badly but finished up as a most wonderful day.

George Naess, later shot by the Japanese at Gasmatta in New Britain, had a claim on Chisholm's Flat. One day his boys dug up a stone pot, very much resembling a chemist's mortar pot. I don't know what happened to that pot, but George intended sending it to the Sydney museum. It was found under about nine feet of overburden and there was lots of conjecture as to its origin. It more or less proved conclusively that there had been someone on Edie Creek hundreds of years before Bill Royal discovered it. I was talking to George on another occasion when he had washed up his box. There was about six or seven ounces of gold in the dish, which he put on the ground while we were talking. The Chinese carpenter's puppy came along and lapped up the gold and we turned round just to

see him lapping the last of it. I had a boy with me and I told him to grab the pup as my intention was to build a banis (yard) and doctor the pup and try to retrieve the gold. The boys built the banis and I gave the pup a half beer bottle full of castor oil. The oil had the desired effect and the next morning one of my boys swept up the droppings and washed them in the creek and got between 2 and 3 ounces of gold.

One day Normie Neal came to me and showed me a lump of quartz about the size of a football. It was impregnated with gold and he told me where he had found it. It looked as though it had just broken off a very rich reef as it was not water worn and had not travelled any distance. We decided to peg the surrounding area. As I already had a lease on the lower Watut, I was not eligible to peg another lease, but I had a power of attorney from George Clarke in Sydney, so I pegged one lease in his name and we agreed to go 50/50. Normie Neal pegged another lease, also Ernie French, Walter Digby & Sap Underwood. I know there were six leases pegged, but can't remember the sixth party. After we had pegged the six leases we went prospecting to try to locate the lode. We were working up the side of the mountain when my stick struck something hard. I thought it was the root of a tree, but looking round, I could see no tree near enough, so I raked away the moss, which was about 3 feet deep and there was the lode. My stick had struck the outcrop of the reef. I called the others, at the time they included Walter Digby, Normie Neal and Ernie French and we broke off a lump of the reef and got old Jimmy Jones to assay it for us. He said it was a rough assay but he worked it out at 365 ounces to the ton, an ounce for every day of the year. We tried to keep it quiet, but Warden Maclean came to me and said he believed I was on to something good and he would like to see it. I told the others of the syndicate and of course we had to let him see it. When I took him up he told me to wash a dish of the rubble on the surface. I took a dish full down to the creek. There were lots of small pieces of quartz which were showing gold, but these I just threw out and at the end of the wash up there was 19 ounces of gold in the dish. We called it the Day Dawn syndicate...and everyone on the field came to have a look at it. Cecil John Levien asked us what we wanted for it and we said a quarter of a million and he fell backwards off his stool. The Ellyou Company took a six months option on it for £20,000. They spent £40,000 on it and wanted to give us 100,000 shares in a company to be formed. We asked for 120,000 but they would not budge. Another company in Australia gave us £15,000 for a 6 months' option for half the mine. They exercised their option. They owned half the mine and we, as the syndicate, owned the other half. They formed themselves into the Day Dawn (New Guinea) Ltd. They worked the mine and we got half the profits. Their shares were on the market and at one time reached £5, but our syndicate owned half the mine, but had no shares to sell. After some consultation, the Company agreed to give 16,000 shares to each of the 6 lease holders. George Clarke and I received 8,000 shares each and the others in the syndicate got 16,000 each. That was in 1934. We did very well out of it, but we of the syndicate had too much faith in the mine to sell our shares and, when the mine petered out, most of us still had our shares. Walter Digby sold his shares and went into the racing game. He owned L'Aglon, which won a Sydney Cup and he had another smart galloper called Gay Knight.

Getting back to Edie Creek - there were lots of fellows coming and going and it was very hard to keep up the supply of food. Lots of the miners who had no ground to work would hang on till they only had enough food to see them out and they would sell the remainder of their gear such as picks, shovels etc. I went to one of these sales one day and bid £16 for a bottle of whisky, but I did not get it - it went higher than that.

Early in 1927 there were quite a number of boys disappearing on the way to and from Salamaua. All carriers were using the Gadagado track and some of them were raiding the natives' gardens, so the natives were waylaying the carriers and killing them and eating them. It got so bad that the carriers were refusing to go on the track and we on the field were finding it hard to live. It was impossible to grow anything on Edie Creek as it was 7,500 feet above sea level and very cold. The mining warden had conclusive evidence that the natives of Kaisenik were the main culprits doing the murdering of the carriers so he called on the miners to form an expedition to restore order. Most of the miners sent one or two boys and some of the miners went themselves. I sent one of my boys Boha, who was very keen to go. He told me on his return that he had shot three of the natives. I believe there were about 120 natives killed. Of course there was a lot of trouble over the killing of the natives, but it had the desired effect and the carriers were not molested afterwards.

(To be continued.)

OUR MAN IN TUMBULGUM

Who is our man in Tumbulgum:

Well you might ask. It is none other than our old mate, MARTIN CRESSWELL, once affectionately known as "The Mayor of Manly".

Anyway, here is what he has to say:

"Thanks a lot for all your work in producing the NEWSLETTER which I received the other day and enjoyed very much. Twenty-six years I worked for that organisation and it's a big chunk out of anyone's life, isn't it? It's good to hear how some of the old boys are going, and that's bloody good to know.

I am hoping to be at the Sydney meeting. Can't make the Brisbane meeting as I will be driving myself and June up to my daughter's place up the Sunshine Coast to Noosa to see my two grandsons. However, my youngest son is having his 21st birthday at Manly in June, so I'll come to the Sydney one.

Phoned ROGER ALLEN this morning who has a cyst on his root canal and is not looking forward to facing the dental surgeon in a couple of days. He spends most of his time working with his computers. He has obtained his 'ham' licence and keeps in touch with a lot of the boys. He told me that CHARLIE MAIDEN is staying in Ballina for a week so I asked him to extend an invitation for Charlie to visit me at the 'Tumbulgum Junk Shop', of which I am the proprietor, and will be only too glad to give an old mate like Charlie a discount any time he comes by. Ballina is about one and a half hour's drive south of here. We are about 30 minutes drive from the centre of Surfers, and about ten minutes drive from the Queensland border/Coolangatta.

RAY HOREAU lives in Robina and comes in to see us once in a while. He has a building and home unit maintenance business and seems to be doing all right.

JACK BOWES is at Ocean Shores, about 40 minutes south, plays golf every day and looks very fit. I have seen HARRY BLOUNT and VINCE GRIFFIN a couple of times, but not recently.

Met JOHN BARRY and NEVILLE REDDAN who live up the road a bit. I am glad to say that they both look fit and well.

June and I live in a village in a house overlooking the Tweed River. Very nice, lovely spot, lovely people. Even in a small village centre like this, which contains about five streets, about half of them appear migrants, mainly old ones, like us.

We liked the house when we saw it, but had to buy an old shop next door as part of the deal. After a while we opened it as a second-hand shop and it keeps me busy. I'm either selling or doing something that needs fixing, but life's not all work. Keeps me out of the pub which is next door but one in the other direction, but not always. Nice old pub - looks over the river. If you come through I will buy you a beer there. All the best to the boys down there. Hope to see you at the next meeting and looking forward to that.

Went into long pants yesterday." (*Weather must have got a bit cooler. Ed.*)

Ed.: Thanks for that little snippet, Martin. You have mentioned a few of the folk I haven't seen for a while and I am glad about that.

Fondest regards to you and June.

FROM OUR SOUTH AUSTRALIAN VETERANS

HARRY STONE, Secretary/Treasurer of our South Australian veterans writes:

The following is a report of the South Australian Branch of OTVA held in the Telecom Conference Room, 7th Floor, 26 Flinders Street, Adelaide on 27 May, 1993, a Thursday.

This venue was made available by Gary Kelly, State Manager South Australia Telstra (ex-OTC) who also provided refreshments and victuals. Unfortunately Gary was on sick leave at the time, but his able Secretary, Linda, was on hand to ensure that our hunger and thirst were more than adequately taken care of. A vote of thanks and appreciation was passed by those attending the meeting and passed on to Gary and Linda.

A welcome was first extended by President Geoff Cox to members. The roll call showed the presence of MAX LANG, HARRY STONE, GEOFF COS, FRED REEVE, BOB IMRIE, JOHN MCGREGOR, DENNIS MAHER, KEN SPRINGBETT, DAVE HERBERT and GEORGE ROWE. Apologies were received from GARY KELLY, DUDLEY TRELIVING, and KEITH PARKER. Since this meeting took place I am sad to inform other members of the passing of Dudley Treliving after a long illness following a stroke.

The existing committee of President GEOFF COX and HARRY STONE stood down pending election of the committee for 1993/94. Geoff unfortunately indicated his non-availability for nomination as President but FRED REEVE (ex-Manager VIA) was nominated and voted in unanimously. Fred took the chair and expressed deep appreciation to Geoff Cox for his past efforts and never-failing courtesy whilst guiding the ship. No other nominations for Secretary/Treasurer so Harry Stone was re-elected, albeit reluctantly.

Minutes of the previous meeting (Christmas reunion) were included in the last issue of the Vets NEWSLETTER and were taken as read and accepted by a show of hands from those present.

The Treasurer's Report for 1992/93 was presented and accepted by members present. We are still in the black with a balance of \$87.81, mainly due to the efforts of FRED REEVE and GARY KELLY. Appreciation of this goes without saying, but of course there is a big question mark looming in the future regarding venues and catering costs. To use an old Aussie phrase, "We'll see how we go with it, Mate".

Correspondence for the intervening period was nil, no doubt due to the loss of lines of communications with former OTVA contacts within the now restructured AOTC/TELECOM becoming TELSTRA Australia.

During General Business the date of our annual Christmas reunion was set as the fourth Thursday in November, 1993, which is the 25th. The only setback is a suitable venue (and catering costs), but hope springs eternal in the human breast. Any further information concerning this event will certainly be onpassed to members as it comes to hand.

One item of good news is the award of the Order of Australia to KEN and MRS SPRINGBETT in the last Queen's Birthday list for their 37 years involvement with "Meals on Wheels". Congratulations, Ken.

Fraternally yours
HARRY STONE

Ed.: Thank you and Kath for your best wishes regarding my recent bout of illness. I can assure you both that the trauma has passed and I am as fit as a fiddle again.

COMMUNICATIONS IN ANTARCTICA (Continuing his experiences in Antarctica)

By Vince Gibson

It is now early September and I am revelling in the luxury of living in a base camp once again after a month inland with all the pressures and tensions of living and working in continual cold with temperatures between -35°C and -45°C .

The buildings at the base were heated by an ingenious method of utilising the hot water from the diesel engines that produced the electricity. The water was pumped down the entire length of the building through an insulated pipe and tapped off at each separate building where the head could be controlled, in fact it was an elaborate radiator for the diesel engine. During the winter it needed boosting with a couple of oil burners heating the water further before it was circulated down the building.

We each had our own sleeping quarters, a small room perhaps seven feet six high wide and long. Very compact, with a bunk up towards the ceiling where it was warmer, a desk underneath with a small wardrobe at one end of the desk. It was comfortable enough and private, slightly heated. A can of drink would freeze solid if left on the floor but up where our bunk was, say six feet about the floor, it was warmer. I was never cold at night whilst sleeping. We were not allowed electric blankets because of the fire hazard. On my desk I had a small garden of lichen of various colours, lichen being the only living plants on the continent.

By mid September the inland party had left. They would be away until just before Christmas. At their furthestmost point they would be five hundred miles away from the base. It increased our work load in the radio room as each night we had a sked with them, passing traffic both ways mostly by voice, and if conditions were too poor we used morse. We had a continuous listening watch on their frequency in case of emergencies arising, especially medical or mechanical problems. Some of them had been trained by the doctor for some procedures, mainly broken limbs because out where they were going they were completely on their own.

Talking of medical problems, before leaving Melbourne and during our training period some were chosen to be surgeons' assistants and anaesthetist. One year I was chosen to be surgeon's assistant. We spent each day for a couple of weeks at the Royal Melbourne Hospital intensely learning all the instruments and antiseptic procedures used during operations. The last week was spent entirely in the operating theatres observing and learning and seeing all manner of operations being performed. Towards the end of the last week we had to actually assist the surgeon in an operation. During the periods I was in the Antarctic I was never called upon to help in any major surgery, only a few minor ones.

The blizzards continued with the ferocious winds. The days by now were rapidly becoming much longer. We seemed to have been away from home for ages and occasionally we tentatively thought of our return, but it was still another six months away. The more difficult time of our stay in Antarctica was ahead, mentally and psychologically testing, affecting our social behaviour in relation to the group. Fortunately due to the

rigorous psychological testing of the group before acceptance most men behaved in an exemplary manner, but in all the years I spent in the south there was always a small percentage of men who were just on the border line and they did not make the test during this latter part of our stay. They caused some disruption but the rest of the men coped and handled the situation very well.

With the increasing hours of daylight any spare time away from work was spent out walking. During the longer days we could venture much further away from base. I remember one day going to an island about two miles from base, looking for rocks which were embedded with garnets. I was so absorbed in my search that I did not observe the weather often, for when I looked up towards the east a white curtain of drift filled the sky. It was a blizzard bearing down upon the base. I immediately went as fast as I could towards base. There had recently been a fall of snow and it was hard work walking at speed through snow thigh deep. The blizzard hit me about half way home, maybe a wind of thirty knots which was not too bad, but heading into it made walking more difficult. I was on the sea ice, which generally broke up with a blizzard, so it was all the more important to get to land as soon as possible or I would have been left floating on an ice floe somewhere out to sea. I eventually arrived back at base safely with my legs ready to drop off and my lungs on fire.

Talking of rocks, I made a collection for the Senior High School at Albany in Western Australia. According to the latest theory on continental movement, that part of West Australia was joined to the Antarctic coast where we were situated. It was quite a few years later when in Perth that I visited the geological museum and noted the great similarity of the rocks of the region near Albany to the rock around the base in Antarctica.

October came with almost no darkness at night, any auroras were now not visible. The next big event to look forward to was the return of the penguins, this always occurred on 22 October. On this day far out on the sea ice long thread like lines of black could be seen as the penguins returned to their nesting places on the islands scattered off the coast, returning from the edge of the pack ice, which during the winter could be four or five hundred miles from the coast, but at this time of the year may be only a hundred miles. The nearest penguin colony was just over a mile from base, and we spent much time observing the penguins. There was great fighting and commotion over territorial rights to their nests, which were just a few stones laid in a circle on the bare snow or ice. They laid two eggs but a pair of penguins could only rear one chick, so the few skua gulls living on the island had a ready source of food. They worked in pairs to obtain their food, one gull would entice the penguin partly off the nest and the other one would dart in and obtain the egg or the chick. There was no apparent distinction in appearance between the male and female penguins unless of course a close inspection was made, but by observation and deduction we assumed those penguins with dirty fronts were female and the clean ones were male. They took turns sitting on the eggs and looking after the chicks, the other one spent the time out at sea collecting food. They were wonderful swimmers, it was amazing seeing them pop up out of the sea onto the ice, like corks popping out of a bottle. The young penguins had to grow fast. By next March they had to be fully grown so they could travel to the edge of the pack ice as it reformed for the winter.

The sea ice stayed with us until early November. We awoke one morning to see blue sparkling water in the bay, the ice had broken up and moved out during the night. It was with some regret that we viewed the loss of the sea ice, it restricted our walking

excursions. What would be a trip of a mile or two would become five or six miles around the land. However, with the long hours of sunlight, the surface was becoming less favourable for walking and as the year progressed further areas of water appeared from the melting snows and ice.

Christmas would soon be with us. Just a few weeks before that date the inland party returned, very pleased to be back once more in the comforts of base camp. Christmas came and went without much celebration, our thoughts being centred on the relief ship which was expected to leave Melbourne about 6 January. In the long evenings of summer we would often walk along the ice cliff tops away from the base sitting and looking out to sea at all the ice floes, the icebergs in the distance, absorbing the beauty and stillness of the scenery feeling somewhat nostalgic about the fact that in maybe a month or six weeks this would all be in the past.

When the ship finally departed from Melbourne we posted a daily position chart in the mess, I must say this chart was eagerly looked at and any slow progress due to storms etc was viewed unfavourably. The time came however when one evening the position of the ship was sixty miles from our base. There was great expectation and a sweep was held as to the exact time anchor would be dropped in the bay. The most popular time was eleven the next morning.

That evening the men were in high spirits. There was a spring in their step as they went down the corridor, a lilt in their voice and much whistling and singing around the base. It was a happy, noisy gathering when we had dinner that evening.

The next morning in the radio room there were early enquiries as to the whereabouts of this ship. It was still sixty miles away, making no progress in heavy pack ice, but that did not deter them too much, thinking they would soon break out of the pack and travel the remaining sixty miles in short time. That evening the news had not changed, and there was not quite the spring in their step nor the lilt in their voices. In fact, as the days continued on, their feet began to drag and there was much more silence around the place. After five or six days a helicopter from the ship flew in bringing mail, parcels from home and some fresh fruit. That cheered us up somewhat, however it was still another five days after that before the ship anchored in the bay, which it unobtrusively did one morning at 5am.

I will finish this episode as usual with an extract from my diary. "Thursday 31 January: Coming down the passage for lunch today there was the delicious aroma of salad vegetables, cucumber, tomatoes, radish, lettuce and fresh onions, smelling like something out of this world, even though the tomatoes were partly spoiled by the long delay in the ice. This evening we had fresh eggs and steak, I never knew eggs could taste so nice. To finish up there were fresh oranges, apples and bananas, so we really have had a feast today."

A COMMUNICATOR OF RENOWN

Laurie Durrant, author of 'The Seawatchers' and author of the many volumes of the OTC publication 'Contact' was approached some time ago by a Dr John Ritchie, of the Australian National University who advised that he was preparing an **Australian Dictionary of Biography**. Dr Ritchie requested the name of a member of the Coastal Radio Service that could be recommended for inclusion in the Dictionary. There were some conditions in that the person had to serve in a particular period, and have died in another set period. Laurie contacted the Veterans and after careful consideration, it was decided to nominate Ken Frank.

Subsequently, Dr Ritchie requested information on Ken, and after considerable research and discussions with the Veterans, Laurie prepared and forwarded the following:

Article for the AUSTRALIAN DICTIONARY OF BIOGRAPHY

Kendall Thomas Frank (1904-1951) - outstanding wireless operator and engineer. Born Mornington Mills, WA, 21 November 1904, to Alice Frank, nee Templar, and Henry Joseph Frank, an inspector. Little is known of his childhood and education except that he studied physics at the Kalgoorlie School of Mines in 1920.

In December 1927, aged 23, he joined Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited as a ship's radio operator, serving on the MV Kangaroo. The following April, he transferred to the Coastal Radio Service, where he would gain the reputation of being 'a genius', 'a brilliant larrikin' and 'the fastest operator of all time'. He developed a unique ability to read Morse at the extraordinary speed of 70 words per minute.

From December 1928, when he was first posted to the AWA radio station at Port Moresby, the Papuan capital became his home. He assisted the AWA engineer responsible for construction of a new HF-equipped communication with Sydney. In 1934, he returned to Sydney for special service with AWA's engineering department, working on early developments in radio for aviation. As officer-in-charge of Port Moresby Radio from December 1935, he set up broadcasting station 4PM, making many of the components himself.

Under his leadership, Port Moresby Radio played a crucial role in military communications in the South-West Pacific during the Second World War. Apart from operating special communication channels for the Army and Navy, the AWA staff, under instructions from the RAN, organised hundreds of outpost teleradio stations throughout the territories into an intelligence network. The Coast Watcher network would provide information from behind enemy lines on movements of Japanese troops, ships and aircraft, the operators reporting through Port Moresby Radio on a secret frequency. This system proved instrumental in enabling Allied forces to turn the tide of war in the Pacific.

In 1942, to escape bombing raids, the station was moved to Wonga, 7km outside the town, and an emergency back-up station installed at Eilogo, 48km away. Frank also built a station for the Army at Rouna, providing direct communication with Army HQ,

Melbourne. The following year, he installed another such station at Bisiatabu, close to the Kokoda front.

As Allied forces won back the islands, he built a series of radio stations for General MacArthur's various forward HQs. After hostilities ended, he was responsible for rebuilding several war-damaged coastal radio stations in New Guinea. In 1947, soon after the Overseas Telecommunications Commission (Australia) took control of Australia's external radio communication services, he was appointed officer-in-charge, Papua and New Guinea.

K T Frank died in a car accident at Woodstock, near Townsville, Queensland, on 21 August 1951, aged 46. Bound for Sydney on leave, he had hired a car in Townsville in order to visit a daughter, then at school in Charters Towers. He was buried in Townsville cemetery.

REMINISCING by Denis Chambers

Got a letter from DENIS CHAMBERS which will jog the memory banks of the older Wagga blokes. He writes:

"Having just completed my year of being President of the Melbourne Vets I am happy to report that we have finally a suitable place. Last Wednesday (26 May 1993) we had our Annual General Meeting. JACK WHITE is our new President and there were about 40 Vets in attendance, and a good time was had by all.

First, let me say there was a strong complaint that apparently all the NEWSLETTERS sent into Victoria had only been printed on one side, the reverse sides being blank and they only got half stories. Many of them have enquired if they could get a full copy. It's surprising how much interest they have in the letter.

(Breaking in here, the same thing happened to some of our readers here. My advice to those who want full copies is to get onto our new Secretary, PAM HELPS, of the Sydney office who is now our new Secretary. However, instead of requests coming in dribs and drabs it would be better if those who want complete copies were to make the request through the Secretary of the Victorian Branch of the Vets which will give us a chance to send them out in bulk instead of one at a time, and will also let us know how many are required).

It reminded me of the time in the sixties when every Monday morning Sydney would test all the circuits. It never went right and I think it was Ken Banks or Jack Sallaway, or it might have been yourself who created a new code word UMMFU (Usual Monday Morning Foul Up).

I was interested in Brownie's letter re Wagga, and as one Melbourne Person who went to his first Wagga in 1950 and his last in 1987, and had a very active hand in organising it in the 50s and 60s, I thought I would pen a few thoughts on what I consider did more for staff morale than any of these fancy positions of human resources, equal opportunities, (you name it we will have a committee on it) all on high wages..

I MEAN, OF COURSE, THE WAGGA WEEK-END.

In the 50s we made our own entertainment, and who could forget those fabulous Smoke Nights, with the brilliance of Gilchrist and yourself in the scripts, Charlie Maiden in his happy 18 stone days tripping across the stage dressed as a fairy, with Horrie McInnes, your Father Christmas performance, Mickey Wood and Eddie Tresize in that Hamlet and the Royal Tassel skit. I don't think we shall ever see anything as funny anywhere again.

Or the year we took the piano out of the Postal Institute on a truck to Garney Hales' farm on the Sunday night, with Tresize and Johnny Smith doing the Sharman Boxing Troupe act and Les Doubleday on the truck playing the piano all night, on one of the few occasions he ever came to Wagga. Every year those Smoke nights were fantastic, and of course, the cricket in the early days was of a very high standard.

The dogmatic Harry Stone opening at one end; the sheer brilliance of Horrie McInnes behind the stumps, as well as Doug Batten, who kept wicket for Melbourne for many years. Bob Studd's grim determination - the speed of Les Hunt and Jack Sheath, and the craft and guile of Jack Norris and Les Brown - all those in the early days, along with Derek Jolly and his friendly advice for the umpires (who Derek never quite got the best of, especially Ken Chambers). Remember that quaint "family room" at the Australia Hotel. Later on people like Mick Wilden, and the all-round performances of Dave Cowie who opened the batting one year, the bowling the following year, kept wickets one year and won the best fielding award on another. And didn't he love a bet on the result?

When we progressed into the mid-sixties and seventies after the Clubs came into being we were accompanied by our wives (and some of us weren't sorry as we were slowing up, anyway). The weekend then took in more activities like tennis, golf, snooker, bowls and finally in the early eighties the ladies netball.

I honestly don't know of any organisation that has a weekend like our Wagga weekend which has been going for so long and maintains such a good standard.

They were happy days but I still think the fifties were the best times for those weekends.

When I started to be sent to Sydney in my last eight years as training instructor Melbourne, the young guy who had the job of showing me around on my first trip refused to believe that I had never been to Sydney before as everywhere we went we met someone who knew me. Of course, they had all met me at Wagga.

Hope all is well with you Jim. Remember me to anyone of the old OTC boys, especially those who went to Wagga.

Bob Hall is still the Secretary of the Victorian branch.

I would be obliged if you can alter my address to the one shown at the top of this letter.

Ed.: Denis' address is now PO Box 81, Blairgowrie, Victoria 3942. I'm sure he would like to hear from you and have a yarn about old times.

He certainly took me back over the years with his letter.

Thanks, Denis

DON'T YOU LIKE IT WHEN IT ALL COMES TOGETHER? DEPARTMENT

Our regular readers will remember that LOIS CARRINGTON, who was compiling info for a book she is producing had contacted us for any assistance we could give her. In my true "get-out-from-under" manner I onpassed her to Pamela Helps, a charming woman, and, incidentally, one of my most ardent fans. To show that I had done the right thing can be seen from the letter she sent to Pam. It says:

"Dear Pamela Helps

I was delighted, and most touched, to receive your gracious gift. We have eagerly read all five of the books, and I compliment the editors, not only on an interesting summary of enterprise and activities, but also on a most attractive and apposite presentation. The old photographs are wonderful! I must contribute some inherited from my father and uncles, which might be of interest.

I telephone my mother in Queensland - still, at almost 90, an enthusiastic supporter of the Veterans - and indeed she was as pleased and excited as I to hear of the arrival of the five books. I am about to travel up to see her and of course one of my recurring duties will be to read her the most recent Veterans newsletter, and the Beamers book, plus extracts from Transit - she still displays a keen interest in the world's advances in communications.

Alas, I have done little work on the forthcoming Wireless Operators (shipboard) project of recent weeks, being involved in two publications at ANU which are taking all my time.

But soon I hope to complete the listing, of which I will surely send you a copy.

Thank you again!

Sincerely

LOIS CARRINGTON

AVE ET VALE

Unhappily, so far as the Veterans go, there is more Farewell than Hail.

Since our last NEWSLETTER we have received at least ten notices of our members who are gone but not forgotten.

REES TREVOR HUGHES was one of our veterans and died in September, 1992. Likewise J ZETLITZ LARSSON died in 1993.

Nothing is known about either of them and I would appreciate any information re their service in communications that I can get.

We have been advised of the death of FRANK TURVILLE but do not have any precise date as to his passing.

We do know that he was in the CRS (Coastal Radio Service) and was at La Perouse in 1949 and Thursday Island in 1951. He retired in Tasmania and started a small apricot orchard. As a hobby he did a bit of bird breeding. He was the Vice President of his local RSL and was a Church Warden. He sold his orchard in 1979 and went to live in the Freemason's Home at Lindisfarne, in Tasmania, and we believe he remained there until the time of his death.

BILL DAY

Not much known of his early history. He was on the International Technical staff at La Perouse in 1949 where he stayed until those services were transferred to Bringelly, and he remained at Bringelly until his retirement.

He was a very popular member of the staff and an active amateur "Ham", call sign VK2BDQ.

On retirement he and his wife, Phemy, spent three years travelling around Australia in their caravan which he had named "DUNWORKIN". He kept in touch through the "ham" network with his old work buddies whilst he was away. He finally settled down at the War Veterans' Home at Narrabeen. Phemy predeceased him by only a few months, and Bill died on 25 March 1993.

BRUCE SUTHERLAND

Bruce died in November 1992. Fortunately he had filled in a Particulars of Service form which gives a good grounding on his existence. These forms are available from our Secretary and are an excellent way to record a veterans' history of service. The particulars

given are kept against the day when we shuffle off, and are strictly confidential until that time:

HENRY BRUCE SUTHERLAND

I was born at Canterbury, Victoria, January 23rd 1905. My father came to Australia about 1890 from the Isle of Wight. I had a sister and two brothers, the younger brother also joining the Cable Service.

My uncle, Henry Malesky, was Superintendent of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company at the time I left school and at his suggestion I joined the Company as a probationer operator at Adelaide in 1921, and was then stationed there for three years before being transferred to Melbourne for a few months and then on to Darwin for almost three years. With me in Darwin was Ted Jacobs. At the conclusion of our term he and I rode our Indian Scout motor bikes south through the Territory and Queensland to Sydney. Leaving Ted there I rode on alone on the Princes Highway (a gravel road in those days) to Adelaide, the details of which I recorded in the August 1976 Transit.

After furlough I worked in Adelaide for a few months before being transferred to Cottesloe where I remained for almost eight years. During that time I attended the Adelaide Branch electrical training school for six months, then later, having passed final examinations I became a 5th Grade, and later, a 4th Grade Supervisor.

In 1936 I accepted an offer from Head Office, London, to attend the Hamstead Training School for a month then on to Porthcurnow for a similar period, this gave me valuable cable technical knowledge and experience. Porthcurnow at that time was the terminal for thirteen submarine cables out of England.

Leaving Porthcurnow, I returned to Adelaide for a short time then transferred to Fanning Island at the suggestion of my brother, Fabian, who was there at that time as a 4th Grade Supervisor.

After Fanning Island I went to Suva and stayed there for nearly three years, then on to Cocos Island in 1942 where I spent two terms, total just over 4 years. This was during the Second World War (see article in Transit, September 1972 by Brax Horrocks).

After furlough in 1947 I again went to Suva where I met and married Mavis Claughton of Nelson, New Zealand. We remained in Suva until 1949 when I was sent back to Cottesloe.

Unfortunately, after two years there, my health broke down so I retired at the age of 57. About a year later we bought our present home overlooking the lovely Harbour entrance at Nelson.

ANTHONY JOHN WHITE

Tony White was born on 27 March 1936 and died on 5 December 1992. From 1954 to 1960 he served as a Marine Radio Officer, operating and maintaining ships radio, radar and other electronic equipment.

From 1960 to 1962 he was a radio technician with the New Zealand Civil Aviation Administration, maintaining navigation aids and communication equipment. 1962/65 Technician (Radio) and Senior Technician Grade 1 with OTC at Doonside, maintaining MF & HF transmitters.

In 1966 he became a Senior Technician II at Paddington IMC with short time acting as Field Training Officer where his duties were mainly the maintenance of COMPAC cable equipment.

From 1966/1973 he became Supervising Technician I and Technical Officer II at Cairns SEACOM cable station, operating and maintaining the SEACOM terminal equipment, diesels and power supplies.

1973/1977 he was at Paddington ITMC and ISMC looking after the COMPAC/SEACOM terminal and ARM telephone exchange.

1977/1987 he spent at Paddington doing various duties until he was posted to Head Office Business Operations Branch, STO II Network Arrangements.

ROY (BLUEY) TULLY

Regrettably, Roy passed away in May 1993. I first met him when the Beam Wireless blokes were shifted to the old C&W building in Spring Street.

He was the type of bloke that you just couldn't help but like. A keen sense of humour went in hand with a personality which could become pretty fiery if he was aroused, but a bloke who couldn't hold any grudge for any length of time.

He served time in the Army during World War II, and though he didn't talk about his service much, some of his escapades whilst serving in the Philippines were hilarious.

He was a telegraphist when I first met him, but proceeded through the ranks of Senior Telegraphist, Traffic Officer and was a Shift Controller until he retired. A most likeable man, a brilliant raconteur, and one of the old guard I will miss at future meetings of the Sydney veterans.

EDWARD (TED) GUNNING

Ted was another man with a keen sense of humour. What am I saying? We all know that without a sense of humour in the communications game you were doomed, and I can imagine all you old hands reading this will say, "You can say that again!"

He initially joined the Cable Service in 1944, and after three years service there he was posted overseas where he served in Colombo and Batavia. This was followed by another term in Adelaide, then four years in Suva and finally, in 1953, he ended up in the Sydney Operating Room.

The last twelve years of his service he was in the Investigation Section and retired with the rank of Senior Investigation Officer.

At Colombo and Batavia, Ted was a member of the Far East Telecom Group. This group followed up the armed services and as each place was recaptured it was their job to get the Cable stations going again. A couple of well-known characters who served with him were Ken Banks and Randy Payne.

Ted's health was never what you could call tip top. In his early thirties he had a massive heart attack, and was taken off shift work and assigned to the Traffic Investigation Branch. He finally retired and went to live at a place called Saratoga, in the Brisbane Waters area, but a couple of years ago moved to Kurri Kurri on the Hunter coalfields.

To his wife and family go our deepest sympathy.

DON SHAW

We don't know much about Don. All we know is that he came from one of the Victorian stations to Bringelly, and we think he was an Assistant Manager on retirement. He died in September, 1992. I would welcome any information regarding his service to communications.

ORMONDE E COOPER

Orme Cooper died on 17 June 1993. Unfortunately he had not enjoyed good health during the last few years, but did manage to get to our meetings and reunions with the help of his two walking sticks.

He was an active "ham" in retirement, call sign VK2CP, and used the air waves to convey news in and out of the city from our city and interstate members.

Orme started his service as a Beam Messenger boy in 1928, followed by a varied technical and operating career. He graduated from the Messenger Service to the AWA Broadcasting Section, where he was trained as a Control Room Operator. Gordon Cupit says he first met Orme in 1934, when he was in the 2SM Control Room and used to come over quite

often to the Beam Despatch to see Warren Clark. Later he was transferred to the Operating Room where he was trained in telegraphic duties. At the end of the war it was decided to transfer him back to Technical duties as Control Officer in Sydney Operating Room, where he had a lot to do with the advent of TED and TOC.

In the early sixties, Orme was selected to go to the UK with Percy Day to train and become familiar with the proposed COMPAC Cable. On return to Australia he was made responsible for, and ably conducted, the initial training of practically all OTC personnel involved in the new system. Percy became an expert and tutored staff in cable jointing. Following COMPAC Orme was employed in numerous technical areas of Paddington and Broadway, and on retirement was Deputy Manager, Broadway.

He retired in December 1978 after 50 years service. His health suffered in the last few years.

WILLIAM ORMOND FERGUSON

William Ferguson passed away suddenly whilst on holidays in Western Australia on 15 October 1992 at age 67. Bill commenced with AWA Beam Wireless in December 1941 doing various junior duties in MOR until April 1943 when he joined the RAAF Service (Signals) until March 1946.

April 1946 Bill returned to MOR and was appointed Telegraphist then Senior Telegraphist until 1954 when he transferred to Facsimile Section MOR, sending and receiving radio photos and processing same until 1966 when he was appointed as a Circuit Control Officer, which entailed the setting up of operating circuits and equipment and link up of outstations, to approximately 1972.

Bill was promoted to Shift Controller MOR supervisory duties and relieving duties of the Traffic Superintendent MOR until December 1986 when he retired after completing 45 years' service and the closure of MOR.

During retirement Bill and his wife Nance travelled extensively throughout Australia, UK and Europe.

Bill is survived by his wife Nance and family and sadly missed by his mate of fifty years, Dick Lovett and family, and his many OTC workmates.

We extend to Nance and family our deepest sympathy.

WILLIAM HENRY SHEA

William Shea passed away mid-December 1992 at age 83 after years of ill health.

Bill joined Eastern Extension on probation as a messenger in October 1924. He started on staff, December 1924 and placed on seniority scale, October 1925.

1943	Transferred to Traffic Land-Lin Operator
1956	Promoted to Senior Telegraphist OTC(A)
1959	Promoted to Traffic Officer
1953	Promoted to Control Officer
1968	Promoted to Shift Controller
1974	10 April - Bill retired after 49½ years in International Communications

Bill's main hobby in life was his music since boyhood. For ten years he was connected with an adult band in Devonport, then with the Collingwood Citizens' Band from 1924 to 1959 and also with the Hyde Street Footscray Band from 1928 until about 1986. As bandmaster he was connected with several championships.

Bill's favourite instruments he played were the cornet and tuba. There were many former students in attendance at the funeral.

Bill was also an original foundation year member of OTVA (Victorian Branch) held on 14 November 1947.

Bill is survived by his wife, Dorothy and family, to whom our sincere and deepest sympathy is extended.

RICHARD JOHN VALLIS

Richard Vallis, aged 34 years, passed away suddenly on 13 June, 1993.

Although not a veteran, he worked for OTC for about 11 years or so and he often assisted me by taking phone calls at about AGM and reunion times.

Richard was well liked and always willing to help. He started as a Circuit Assistant then as Counter Officer, then onto the Marketing branch.

Richard suffered from ill health periodically throughout his life. Our deepest sympathy to his mother and sister and family.

Now at rest.

JACK NOSEDA

Jack Nosedo passed away in June or thereabouts, 1993. After recently returning to Melbourne from Queensland, Jack formerly worked in MOR as a Senior Telegraphist.

Further details not known at this stage.

CEDRIC FRANCIS DALE

Cedric Dale passed away on 11 October 1993, aged 94. He started his career with the Tasmanian Postal Service in 1914 and worked in many locations throughout Tasmania.

In 1920, he became a Telegraphist and worked in Hobart, Perth and Esperance. He later served as Radio Officer in Sydney, Hobart and Thursday Island. He became Officer in Charge in Port Moresby and Darwin and from 1950-52 was Manager, Port Moresby. From 1952-61, he was Superintendent Coastal Radio Service and from 1961-64, Manager Melbourne.

Ced also served for about 3½ years as Chairman of SLAPS.

In later years he suffered with middle ear trouble which prevented him from attending meetings. His wife, Daisy, passed away in 1987.

To his family we offer deepest sympathy.

VALE - CHARLES WILLIAM FREDERICK CARTHEW B E M (21.12.1901 - 30.9.1993)

By Robert Hall & Gordon Cupit

It is with much regret that we inform you of the death of CHARLES CARTHEW who died on 30 September, 1993 at the age of 91. For the past two years he has been in ill health, the last year having developed Alzheimer's disease at his residence at Centennial House, Windsor, Victoria. His devoted wife, Vi, moved into a nearby home for ladies in order to be close to him. He had been in bad health for the last ten years, having suffered a serious illness in 1979 and a stroke in 1983. Despite these setbacks he still took a keen interest in the Vets.

Charles and Vi had been together for 63 years, and their children have produced 11 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. He was a dedicated family man who loved and took a great interest in children. He was a proficient magician and provided many shows at children's events and parties, all gratis. In retirement he assisted at a local primary school and helped children in the 8 to 10 years age bracket in spelling, writing and reading.

Charles started work with the Post Office in Western Australia from 1916 until 1921, when he joined the AWA Marine Wireless Service. He later transferred to the Coastal Radio Service of AWA until 1930, at which time he joined the Beam Wireless in Melbourne. In the last few years prior to his retirement he served as an Instructor in the Melbourne Telegraph Training School with OTC from 1950 until his retirement in 1966.

Charles was the foundation Secretary of the Victorian Veterans' Association, a position he held from 1957 until 1984 when he suffered from his stroke. In 1972, he served as

National Secretary, a position he held until his death. He coordinated the State branches and kept a valuable liaison with overseas kindred bodies.

During his service he was always interested in welfare matters, particularly staff, and was a member of the AWA Welfare Committee for many years from 1930 onwards. He was a member of the world-wide Marconi Guild, a group formed to keep in touch with marine operators and to visit sick colleagues.

The Victorian Veterans honoured him with their first Life Governor's Certificate which was presented to him by the then President, the late George Magnus on 14 August 1984.

In 1962 he had been awarded the B E M for meritorious public service, a well deserved honour.

Telegraph Canada Quarter Century Club granted him Honorary Membership. He was also a very active Mason and held high degrees in that organisation.

Charles was a regular contributor to the NEWSLETTER, most of his stories being about the exploits of his colleagues. His name appears in various NEWSLETTERS on 72 occasions. Many of his own exploits have appeared under the heading of "Diary of a Wireless Operator". His scrapbook, together with other Veteran memorabilia, has been donated to the Victorian State Library.

He was a traditionalist, and was very critical of the lack of procedural discipline at the Sydney Annual General Meetings. In Melbourne they always had a President Elect, and changed Presidents every year. Charles felt that Sydney should follow Melbourne's example, but we had other ideas - but that is another story.

About 40 people attended the service, including Vets Audrey Bright, Jim Kennedy, President Jack White, Robert Hall, Charlie Grech, Clive Purvis, and Doug and Marie Crabtree. During the service Charles' grandson, MARK, gave a memorable insight of Charles' life as he knew it.

He was a true Veteran and will be sadly missed. To Vi and his family we offer our sincerest sympathies.

His wife, Vi, can be found at the Royal Freemasons' Home of Victoria, 313 Punt Road, Prahran, 3181.

IN SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy to HORRIE McINNES on the loss of his life partner.

FOUNDATION MEMBER OTVA - VICTORIA

Of the 86 original members named on 14 November 1947, there are only 11 I know for sure are alive and 6 not known if are still alive, as at 11 October 1993.

KNOWN

D J Crabtree
G H Cox
A W Green
R L Lane
T L Lang
F J Paytrick

C Purvis
E Turner
E E Trezise
A G Vagg
M Wilton

UNKNOWN

W Denny
C F Green
M P Hart
N Seabrook
J W Turnbull
L G Waters

TRAVELLING IN INDIA

TONY RICHARDSON is the man I have to thank for onpassing to me a series of letters he has received from Tommy Hughes who is doing a bit of globe-trotting it appears.

A little on the battered side and smelling strongly of curry he has headed each letter with the words "Travelling in India", and for the want of a better title that's what I am going to label them too.

But firstly, a word about the author.

I have been acquainted with G T (Tom) Hughes for some time, but our paths crossed in an unexpected manner.

When OTCA came into being it was modelled more on the grounds of a clerical organisation rather than a communications group. In the old days the operators of the Beam Wireless Service, Coastal Radio, Eastern Extension, Cable & Wireless etc. were regarded as the cream of the crop and those who were unable to make the grade as such, through no fault of their own, only that they could not grasp the Morse code, were reassigned to the Clerical section, and which, frankly, did not avail them of the chance of advancement in a Communications career.

As I said, when OTCA came into being, the whole manner changed, with the clerical people given a better chance of advancement than that available to the operator. A couple of the old operator types who had been co-opted into the clerical section demonstrated that they were no "dummies" by their rapid rise to top positions.

This appeared grossly unfair to the Clerical department heads who were fearful that operators invading the clerical province could limit their chances for advancement, and rightly so. They successfully lobbied the Management to invoke a "barrier" examination which required any aspiring operating staff to pass what was called an "Inservice Examination" requiring operating staff to demonstrate that they were skilled in clerical duties before applying for what were regarded as clerical positions.

A lot of the operating staff sat for, and passed, the examination and went on to bigger and better things, but the majority were content to remain where they were, as operators, mainly because they enjoyed the work and the thought of 9 to 5 day in and day out terrified them.

Though I had no intention of transferring to the clerical section I decided to sit for the Inservice Examination for two reasons: one, to see if I could do it, and two, against the day when I might have a heart attack and have to apply for a job with regular hours.

So I applied.

And my application was accepted.

And this is where Tommy comes in.

I was located in the International Section at Paddington at the time, and one day Tom appeared on the scene with a pile of books, announcing that he was there to tutor the aspiring examinees to ensure their every chance to cope with the impending examination. If he was surprised to find out that I was the only one located at Paddo who had nominated for the task, he certainly did not show it. We retired to the lecture room where Tom revealed his vast knowledge in all factors of communications, such as traffic accounting, the method used to determine how much each carrier was allotted per word, the history of the communications systems, and God knows what else.

And the beauty of the thing was that I had him all to myself. My own personal Tutor! It was beyond my wildest dreams.

Thanks to Tom, who had unlimited patience when it came to my ignorance of accounting procedures, I was able to do the examination with all the confidence in the world, and bearing in mind that I had gained the Intermediate Certificate at school with very good marks for English, Essay and Composition in my younger days, I went through the paper with gusto.

Needless to say I passed, and awaited the Staff circular to check my Order of Merit. Normally, each successful candidate was rated in an order of merit according to his marks, and it was my ambition to top the class. All I got was notification that I had passed, and when I pushed for the information as to where I came in the group I was advised that the order of merit had been "given away" as not being a requirement any more.

It was only after I had retired that I found out just how well I had done, and I was elated at the news, even at that late stage.

And I will never forget that I owe it all to me ole mate, Tommy Hughes.

Now, here are his letters.

TRAVELLING IN INDIA - 2.5.93

Dear Jim

Warmest regards. The following is submitted for publication if you think the material is suitable.

At Easter, in 1977, at age 60, I suffered a total cardiac arrest. A fortnight later I had another total heart and breathing stoppage.

By good fortune, great support and help from dear ones and marvellous surgery, I have had 16 bonus years - but it can't last forever. And so, I have come to India for my eighth, and last, visit.

Well may you ask "Why India?", because I ask myself the same question. India has had three stormy years up to now over Ayodya mosque, and only last December the mosque was torn down by Hindu extremists. So the timing of my visits is not favourable.

To be fair to India, we have had no trouble whatsoever and only welcome from Hindu, Moslem, Sikh, Jain and Christian alike! But still, why to India when there are so many comfortable countries I could visit?

Well, first of all, I know of no other country in Asia where a mono-lingual Australian, like me, can find out what is going on; a democracy - imperfect as all democracies are, but a democracy nonetheless, on secure foundations, where well-informed citizens are happy to discuss affairs of the world as well as local issues. A country with a press more fiercely independent than our own, and ownership not concentrated in a few hands. But these are not the reasons I come here, although they help.

For India is an uncomfortable country to travel in by our standards. It has health problems although so far I have escaped them. I am very careful. It is often very hot, as now, very dusty and, regrettably, often extremely dirty.

But I know no place on earth that is more colourful, more diverse, more fascinating. And it has always been here, in India, that I have been forced to think about life and death, about the meaning and purpose of life (if meaning and purpose exist), about the nature and pursuit of knowledge and the enormous diversity of religious beliefs and the constant need to reconcile the people of different faiths which are clearly in fundamental conflict.

Before anyone hastens to the conclusion that Tom, at this time in his life, has become religious, I profess myself as a profound sceptic. But enough of my own peculiarities.

One great attraction about India is that it is easier here to engage in peaceful discussion of fundamental religious differences with complete strangers - but sensibly never in a crowd. The advantage of discussing with a complete stranger is that no lingering animosities result.

Another aspect is to contemplate on India's effect on the world at large - its imports and its exports, for instance. Australia exports manufactures, food, minerals, etc and imports - well, you know. Japan imports almost everything and exports high-tech computers, cameras, cars, watches. Britain made a name for itself in exporting the first steam-driven machines.

India does nothing like that. It makes about everything its people need and grows its own food. It is not efficient but it is largely self-supporting. If that sounds good, India is also appallingly poor and likely to remain so. Her imports and exports of note are not material things, but of the mind.

It has been the world's largest exporter of religions, particularly Buddhism (to Nepal, to Tibet, to Burma, Thailand, Sri Lanka, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Cambodia and Japan). Buddhism has largely vanished in India but it lives on in all these countries, even the People's Republic of China.

Hinduism has been exported to few countries - Nepal, Bali and the countries to which Indians have migrated.

It has also imported other religions - Christianity and Islam, in particular. Islam has also been exported to wherever Indians have migrated. India was also an intermediary in the transit of Islam to Indonesia, Malaysia etc.

India's other great export has been the arts and philosophy. The influence of India on the arts of countries east of India, in particular, has been enormous.

I must confess that what fascinates me most about India is its colour and diversity - in its people and particularly its religions. Everyone knows about the conflict between (some) Muslims and (some) Hindus. What amazes me is the tolerance shown by the great majority of Hindus and Moslems who live in close contact with little outward conflict. Because of all the major religions of the world it seems to me that Hinduism and Islam are the most incompatible. To a Muslim there is only one god, Allah. He is the unknowable and no Muslim would consider attempting to portray him in any form. To a Hindu, on the other hand, there are three physical representations of the one omnipotent god, with hundreds of lesser gods, etc. Any one of these gods may also have different forms and aspects. All these gods are depicted in all manner of ways, forming a significant part of Indian art. This portrayal of gods is highly offensive to Islam.

Islamic art is restricted on religious grounds to geometric designs and inanimate things. Flowers and vines, etc are permitted but the depiction of human or animal is forbidden.

Hindu art is virtually without restriction, with great prominence given to the human reproductive organs. It also includes the most extreme forms of erotica. Much of this is offensive to (some) Christians as well as to Muslims.

The Hindu reverence for the cow is often seized upon by Islamic leaders to pour scorn on their Hindu counterparts. On the other hand, the Muslim (and Christian) practice of eating beef (ie the cow) is highly offensive to Hindus.

Add to this a long history of invasion and desecration and anti-invasion and counter-desecration (the Ayodhya mosque is an example), a history of slaughter over the centuries leading to the partition of (British) India with its massive migration of Muslims to Pakistan and Hindus (and minor religions) to India and one begins to realise the size of the task faced by successive Indian governments and the Indian people, not to forget the continuing tension with Pakistan.

(Here he says) I have to leave it here for the present. If and when I make it back to Sydney I can contact you and can write a concluding chapter if you wish.

(Ed: My main hope is that he makes it back. I like the bloke.)

FROM OUR QUEENSLAND VETERANS

Jim Anderson
PO Box 9
Homebush South NSW 2140

Dear Jim

Grateful if you would forward the following to Gordon Cupit at your reunion to be held on 4 June 1993.

Gordon Cupit
President NSW Branch OTVA

Fraternal greetings from all members of the Queensland Branch of the OTVA. We all hope your reunion is full of happy memories, goodwill and loads of good cheer.

Kindest regards to you all.

Kevin Bobrige
President Queensland Branch

Many thanks Jim and keep up the good work with the Newsletter.

(signed)
Kevin Bobrige

13 May 1993

ON SICK PARADE

My spies have been out in full force trying to glean information on some of the people who have been feeling poorly, with this result:

Sorry to report that KEITH VINCENT and ROGER ALLEN have not been well lately. Trust and hope for a complete and quick recovery for both you fellas.

KEITH (PANCHO) VINCENT

Keith is receiving treatment for a rather serious condition, I am told. In true form though, he is maintaining that he feels fine, and it's the right attitude to have if you are going to recover from any illness. To him we send our best wishes for a speedy recovery, and seeing he is under the ministrations of his good wife, SADIE, we know he is in the best of hands.

ROGER ALLEN

Roger is another of our veterans who has fallen on evil times, healthwise that is. Apparently it has not stopped him from hitting the airwaves on his "ham" rig.

Best wishes for a speedy return to good health, Roger, and fondest regards to your Child Bride.

Remember, laughter is the best medicine but it takes a bit of doing some time.

I wish to thank all those veteran mates of mine who made noises of concern at my recent illness, and I was very grateful for those who took time to visit me at Concord Repat.

For those who did not know, I became a diabetic just before my 72nd birthday. How is this possible?, you ask. I like to think it was through sheer dedication and perseverance. It was not through any form of routine check-up, I can assure you, as I put doctors on the social scale as being one rung up the social ladder above child molesters, and therefore refrain from receiving their ministrations wherever possible. How did I know I was a diabetic? I didn't, until I collapsed, busted my skull in two places, and was taken to hospital by the devoted members of my family.

I was whacked on insulin, and am still taking two small amounts of units daily. I feel as fit as a fiddle. Whilst I was in hospital, I was given a good going over, and after a prolonged series of tests I have now been cleared of anaemia, cholesterol, social diseases, high blood pressure, triglycerides normal, ulcer free. In fact the doctor has pronounced me so fit that if I do inadvertently die, it will be of natural causes, says my quack. Now you can see why I refrain from visiting them where possible.

I only mention this because Diabetes can strike anyone and there is no age limit. If you are over-thirsty, lethargic (and that's a prominent sign) or pass water more than usual, PLEASE have a check-up.

THIS HAS BEEN A COMMUNITY SERVICE.

THE FASCINATING PROCESS OF AGEING

"Old folk like yourself and me make a bluff about the advantage of age, but we know there's nothing in it. We have wisdom, but we would rather have hair.

We have experience, but we would gladly trade all of its lessons for hope and teeth" so sayeth Finley Peter Dunne.

When you're young you try to look older so you can see restricted movies.

When you're old you're trying to look younger, but your moves are restricted.

When you're young you have lots of energy to do many things, but you don't know how.

When you're old you know how, but you no longer have the energy.

When you're very old you can't even remember why you wanted to do those things in the first place.

Old age is something that creeps up on you.

Many people are not aware of it, believing that old is someone at least fifteen years older than they are.

It isn't always easy to know whether a person is old. Usually we try to judge a person's age by their face, but with so many hair dyes and cosmetics on the market and plastic surgeons on the make, one can easily be fooled.

Old age in men can be determined in ways quite different from that in women.

For instance, it is a universal habit for men to hoist their pants higher and higher as they grow older. By the time they have to open their fly to blow their noses, they are at least eighty years old.

If a woman looks best before she removes the mud pack from her face, she is a stone's throw away from Pharmacare and other old age goodies.

Ageing is a fascinating process. For instance, the younger you are the faster you age. When my son was one year old, I was 34 times older. Only nine years later I was only not quite five times older, and right now I am only a little less than twice his age. He's obviously catching up to me.

Research has shown that women age faster than men. Some believe that is because so many women live with men.

On the other hand most women outlive men probably because unlike men, women aren't married to women. Moreover, studies claim that married couples live longer than single people, but many married folks believe it only seems longer.

Most people like to live long but few want to be old. So it is not surprising that so many pretend to be climbing the hill when in fact they're already over it.

Obviously some people age faster than others, but sooner or later old age comes to most of us. Here are some clues that prove you're over the hill.

Each time after painting the town red it takes longer to apply a second coat. After you wake up in the morning you realise the best part of the day is over. You get up and get dressed, but you don't know why.

You feel like the morning after without having had the night before. You look in the mirror and pretend it isn't you. You hope that it will be an uneventful day.

The ageing process can't be prevented, but it can be slowed down. When you are old you must take good care of yourself. Above all you must avoid too much excitement, so have sex only with your spouse.

And remember to make a donation to the Alzheimer Society before you forget.

It's not hard to tell when you are getting older:

- Everything hurts, and what doesn't hurt doesn't work.
- Your black book contains only names ending in 'MD'.
- Your children begin to look middle aged.
- A dripping tap causes an uncontrollable urge.
- You know all the answers, but no one asks the questions.
- You turn the light out for economy instead of romance.
- You sit in the rocking chair but can't make it rock.
- Your knees buckle, but your belt won't.
- Your back goes out more than you do!
- You put your bra on back to front and it fits better.
- You sink your teeth into a steak and they stay there.
- Your birthday cake collapses from the weight of the candles.
- You want to live long enough to become a problem to your children.

THE BALLOT

By Gordon Cupit

I am sure that by the time the Optus/Telecom ballot was held most people were sick and tired of all the media advertising, especially on the radio and television. The final straw came when Austel started to advertise. I was impressed that we did not see much of Telecom's Frank Blount, he leaving the say to members of his marketing staff. One did get a bit tired of seeing Bob 'Hamburger' Mansfield and hearing him offering the world.

The cost of Optus advertising was their problem, but that of Telecom and Austel should be of concern to the taxpayer for the following reasons:

- a) The majority of private phone users would not use long distance or overseas services, and their vote would no doubt confuse the issue.
- b) With Telecom billing both Optus and Telecom customers, the information required by Austel should be readily available in Telecom records.

In my mind the whole thing became an Optus Market Analysis project with Telecom and Austel sharing the costs.

THE OLYMPIC GAMES

All the present hype on the Olympic bid brings back memories of the 1956 Olympics and the traffic arrangements. It followed the Royal Tour, which was a good practice run. Management selected ARTHUR SHEPHERD, a relevantly unknown cable traffic man, as the coordinator. Arthur was a rather reserved man, and arrangements proceeded in a calm, smooth manner. Luckily, Doonside and Bringelly had recently been built, but even the new stations could not handle all the expected load. Remember, there were no telephone cables in those days and everything in the phone or fax line had to go by radio. Fortunately, it was not a sunspot period. In addition to our own circuits, radio channels of the Army, Navy and Air Force were offered and accepted.

When the Games finally commenced everything was organised and ran relevantly smoothly, with record traffic loads recorded.

It was a far cry from what we have today with our vast media and communication facilities, but in its own way just as big a problem.

AWA FINANCES

Whilst AWA could be proud of their past achievements, their present finances leave a bit to be desired. This year they recorded a fairly heavy loss and for the fourth year in succession are not paying a dividend to shareholders.

It is interesting to note that even claiming the launch of OTC in 1946 they lost the most lucrative section of the Company, the Beam Wireless Service. At the time the monies received from the government on takeover boosted their finances, but they never really recovered, and I am sure they wish they still were operating the International Communications Services.

This should be a lesson to government when considering privatisation.

HISTORY IS MADE - LADY SECRETARY FOR VETS

By Gordon Cupit

During the year, Secretary, TONY RICHARDSON, ceased employment with the Commission and went into a kitchen business with his in-law. (Anyone interested in a new kitchen can get him on 02 901 4002.) He found it completely impossible to continue on as Secretary operating on remote control and therefore did not nominate for the position at the Annual Meeting. It is always difficult to find a volunteer for this rather time-consuming job, but fortunately TELSTRA Officer, PAM HELPS, was nominated and accepted the job of Secretary of the NSW Branch of the Veterans.

This is the first time that a lady has held this important post. Congratulations, and welcome, Pam, we all love you. Pam is well-known to most of you, having worked in the administrative side of S.O.R. for many years, followed by several years as Welfare Officer. With such a background, and a surname like Helps, she is a natural for the position. This, together with the support of Steve Burdon and Peter Shore, and with the help of Martin Ratia, who is the Corporate Communication Manager and Managing Editor of TRANSIT, means we can look forward to a new era for us oldies. Should you want any assistance or information, Pam can be found on 287 4449 or at Telstra Head Office in Elizabeth Street. State Vets' Secretaries please take note, and should there be any coordination required, I am sure she will help.

During my thirteen years as Secretary, I was most fortunate in having extremely good bosses in Tom Molloy, Dick Christofferson, and Merv Gildea, who were interested in the development of the Veterans' Association, and gave me plenty of latitude. In addition, I had under my control a secretary, the typing pool, and the printing room, and was able to give the NEWSLETTER priorities. Unfortunately, Pam does not have these advantages, so it is requested that she receive copy for the NEWSLETTER as early as possible in order to meet the deadlines.

Editor's Note:

Well said, Gordon! I have known Pamela for more years than we both care to remember, and over that time I have developed a respect bordering on the affectionate for her. This came about when I was fortunate to have her assigned to me as my personal secretary and aide during the compilation of the draft copy of the Telex Manual, which became the bible for the training of officers in the International Telex Section (INTLX). Over the years dramatic changes have been made in Telecommunications as a whole and I am afraid that this publication has been long outdated. However, it was a necessary manual at the time and I must give Pam credit for her part in its final draft. We hit it off beautifully right from the word go, and the whole operation became an absolute joy rather than a task, with a lot of episodes too hilarious to relate here. Suffice to say that the production of the Intlx Manual was never regarded as a boring task by either of us, and frankly, I was a bit sorry when it was finalised and, reluctantly, I had to leave her effervescent presence and return to more mundane things.

I was delighted when I found out that she had accepted the position as the Vets' Secretary as it will mean that we will be in close contact once more. Her efficiency, disposition and

keen sense of humour are assets for any position and I, for one, know that she will do a great job.

If some of you get the impression from this that I am in love with the woman let me hasten to say that it is a distinct possibility.

OUR THANKS

To the Management of Telstra for the interest, understanding and assistance given to our Association, and for providing such a good venue for our functions and use of function staff. Our thanks also to LEANNE and KATHIE for their help with the NEWSLETTER, the typing, distribution and preparation and print of the index, tasks which are far and above the call of duty.

NEWSLETTER INDEX

We have a limited number of copies of the Index to Volume Four of the NEWSLETTER. Anyone having a complete copy of this volume can get an Index from PAM HELPS.

INTERSTATE MOVE

Eric Norris ex Doonside has recently moved to Queensland and is building a house at Elanora.

BROADCASTING

By Gordon Cupit

A book named 'Dawn of Radio Broadcasting' by Philip Geeves is now in newsagents at a price of \$4.95. Among Philip's other achievements are President of NSW Veterans' Association; 2CH announcer; Official broadcaster at the opening of the Harbour Bridge; a recognised historian on Sydney; starred in a documentary titled 'Stately Homes', featuring Admiralty House, Kirribilli House, the PM's Lodge, and Yarralumla; starred in a series on Australian History produced by Dick Smith; had a weekly session on 2BL with Caroline Jones answering historical questions; was one of the few Marconi Veterans in Australia; Manager of radio station 2CH; AWA Archivist; and wrote many articles for NEWSLETTER.

MORSE FRATERNITY

In July many old Morse Code men congregated in Darwin for the Morsecodians Exhibit.

I am not sure if ALAN ARNDT went to Darwin for the event, or that he just happened to be there at the time, but he sent a greetings from the exhibit, a copy of which is included in this NEWSLETTER. We may get a story on the event from Alan, when he has completed his wanderings.

MEMORIES

Interesting to see Telecom making such good use of OTC's 'Memories' advertising series. I understand that these ads were given the award for the best TV advertisements only just recently. Not bad, for they were produced about twenty years ago by George Patterson Advertising Agency at a cost of \$32,000 per ad. At the time I was one of the privileged middle management who was invited, with a number of VIPs, to preview the ads in the Broadway theatre. Randy Payne, then Manager Marketing, hosted the function - 'tis a pity that Randy is not now with us to share in the glory.



ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH

MESSAGE

Transmitted By Morse Code over the historic Overland Telegraph Route.

Date : 3 JUL 93

Station from : PORT DARWIN TELEGRAPH STATION

To: GORDON CUPIT
PRESIDENT O T V A
80 MARCO AVE REVESBY NSW 2212

GREETINGS FROM MORSECODIANS EXHIBIT IN DARWIN
TO YOU AND ALL OUR MEMBERS BEST REGARDS

ALAN ARNDT

2-8P PH

Courtesy of Morsecodians Fraternity volunteer operators using facilities
provided by **Telecom** and **Australia Post**

TELECOM BOND PROSPECTUS

By Gordon Cupit

A perusal of the Prospectus for Telecom Bonds found a couple of interesting facts.

On 13 April 1993, AOTC changed its name to TELSTRA Corporation Limited. However, the Corporation will continue trading domestically as Telecom Australia for at least a period deemed sufficient to avoid confusing the public during the preselection ballot. OTC moved straight into the Corporation's ultimate identity and began trading offshore as 'TELSTRA' from 14 April.

The Commonwealth required Telstra Corporation to make commercial dividend payments to it at a rate agreed to by the Board and the Minister. The Board has recommended 50% of Telstra's annual profits be paid as dividends. A dividend of \$263 million was paid in 1992, and \$345 million to be paid for 1993.

Telstra is limited by price controls for most of its services. The structure of the price controls is such that Telstra is restricted in the degree to which it can change the prices for many of its services. In particular, they constrain the rate at which prices can be increased for unprofitable or low profit services (eg. exchange access lines), to compensate for reductions in prices on services subject to competition, eg. STD, IDD and mobile telephone calls. It is significant that the Determination containing the price controls described above applies only to Telstra and not Optus Networks, Optus Mobile or Vodafone.

Telecommunication reforms have created effective competition for Telstra more rapidly than has been the case in overseas examples of deregulation. A key factor in this is the ease with which customers have access to the services of Optus. No special equipment or technical change at the customer premises is required. Another factor is that under Part 8 of the Telecommunications Act 1991, Telstra is required to interconnect other carriers to its facilities and supply telecommunications services to those carriers. Telstra is restricted by a determination of the Minister for Transport and Communications in the amount it can charge for providing those services. Charges are essentially limited to incremental costs (eg. many of Telstra's overhead costs may not be included in the charges).

In the Asia Pacific region Telstra is the largest full service provider (Nippon Telegraph and Telephone is larger but only a domestic carrier) and ranks in the top ten carriers worldwide.

POSITIONS VACANT

GENERAL SECRETARY

With the passing of CHARLES CARTHEW there is an urgent need for the election of a General/National Secretary of the Veterans. Charles has carried out the duties of this position for over twenty years in a most admirable manner. He has always kept in touch with the State Associations, and with overseas kindred bodies such as the NZ Cablemen's Association, Teleglobe Canada Quarter Century Club, and the US Society of Wireless Pioneers. Unfortunately, during his latest illness, this contact has been neglected.

To fill this honorary position we need a member who is very dedicated and has the time, and is reasonably good with correspondence. A couple of worthy fellows who come to mind are ALAN ARNDT and DES WOODS. Surely there are others. Any volunteers? If so, just let PAM HELPS know. You can live anywhere in Australia to carry out this job.

36TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OTVA

VICTORIAN BRANCH

**HELD AT THE CITY CONFERENCE CENTRE, COUNCIL OF ADULT
EDUCATION, 256 FLINDERS STREET MELBOURNE ON WEDNESDAY,
26 MAY 1993 AT 12 NOON TO 3.00PM**

1. Our President, Denis Chambers, opened the meeting by welcoming those present and then asked for a minute's silence in memory of Mrs Irene Annie Bentley, widow of Bill Bentley; Robert (Ron) Roger; Cliff Allison; William (Bill) Ferguson; all of whom had passed on during the year. Normal procedure of meeting continued on with some notes being:

- Mr Ted Turner aged 92. His health is only fair. After a long period in hospital he now resides at St Michaels Nursing Home, 1 Omama Road, Murrumbena.
- Geoff Whitmore reports on Cyril Martin who is alive and very well in Wales UK.

2. Members on Sick List

Keith Vincent, Dean Laws, George Fraser, Ken Stockdale, Jack Nosedo, Jack Birch.

3. List of Attendees

Les Foley	A McLean	G Russell
Alec Stewart	M & C Tancheff	N Stubbs
J B White	E Read	T Lang
J Fes	R Hall	S Bright
P Peat	E Suttie	M Short
J E M Fernando	D Chambers	G Hill
J Kennedy	J Davey	A Bright
V Findlay	B Williams	L Hingley
D MacGillivray	A Green	D Krisa
J Ferne	W Pierce	G Whitmore
B Prentice	H Newsome	
G McCarthy	P Barrow	

4. Apologies

J Robinson	R D Gault	T Payne
D Crabtree	J G Fraser	J Miller
J Bennett	I K Reed	E Turner
F Patrick	C Purvis	A Vagg
M Wilton	E Keil	J W Murphy

5. Election of Officer

President Denis Chambers nominates Jack White for President duly elected and Secretary/Treasurer Robert Hall reaffirmed.

6. General Business

- a) Mr Alan McLean proposes annual subscription of \$2 be increased to \$5pa for 93/94 - seconded by Mr Jim Fes and carried.
- b) There being no further business the meeting was closed at 1.00pm. Afterwards everyone enjoyed a very convivial luncheon.

36TH ANNUAL REUNION

MELBOURNE

**HELD AT THE CITY CONFERENCE CENTRE, COUNCIL OF ADULT
EDUCATION, 256 FLINDERS STREET MELBOURNE ON TUESDAY,
24 NOVEMBER 1992 FROM 5PM TO 8PM.**

The reunion was attended by 50 veterans and associate members who all enjoyed a few hours remembering old times whilst partaking a fine array of food and drink.

Attendees were:

Robert & Judith Hall	Jack White	Denis Chambers
Les Foley	Doug & Marie Crabtree	Howard Newsome
Alex Stewart	John Davey	Lilian Wilson
Arthur & Norma Green	Ann Dale	Norm Stubbs
Bruce Henderson	Paul S Murphy	Joyce Nicholson
Jim Kennedy	Page Barrow	Alan McLean
Chris & Mary Tancheff	John Caulfield	Brian Williams
David Ditchfield	Alan Vagg	Win Pierce
Pearl Peat	Jim Gowans	Vance Findlay
Robert Byrne	Roly & Pat Lane	Gerard McCarthy
Betty Prentice	Kevin Shea	Willie & Rose Becker
Eleanor & Robert Geake	Dick Lovett	Angelo Scambiaterra
Charlie Micallef	Mervyn Jessop	Geoff Whitemore
Artie Koopman	Tom Lang	Gary Kelly
Mervyn Cooper		

Apologies acknowledged:

George Maltby	Len Hingley	Sam & Audrey Bright
Mervyn Fernando	George Fraser	Daryl Garling
Vi Harrison	Elaine Keil	Jack McGrory
Joan Miller	Clive Purvis	Bill Shea
Yasmin Beaumont	Alex Siscos	John Coxhead
Eddie Trezise	Ted Read	Dave Gault
John M Bennett	Eddie Hope	Ian Reed

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