

NEWSLETTER

LAST MONTH, MY REPORT STARTED WITH THE GOOD NEWS THAT OUR TRIP AWAY TO CRESCENT HEAD IS TO GO AHEAD. WE HAVE NEAR FULL CAPACITY FOR THE TRIP AWAY. I THANK MEMBERS WHO ARE GOING AWAY WITH US FOR THEIR PATIENCE AMIDST THE UNCERTAINTY WHETHER THE TRIP COULD GO AHEAD. I AM SURE WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A GOOD TIME; I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING MANY OF YOU AGAIN AFTER SUCH A LONG PERIOD.

Latest Updates
John Lane

The news about the Christmas Party this year is not so good. Unfortunately, because of COVID-19 regulations (limits on formal function numbers and spacing), we must cancel this year's Christmas Party. However, there is an opportunity for us to have drinks at the Petersham RSL on Tuesday, 24th November, starting around 11.30 am. I emphasise this is not a formal function; we will have drinks in the primary area of the club. You can order a meal in the main dining area during the lunch period. We welcome spouses and partners to attend.

Again, we need to be aware there are COVID-19 regulations in place; Petersham RSL has a restriction of 60 people. Also, you will need to be a member of the club. You can join as a member at the reception; it will cost you just \$5 for the year. Therefore, **I would ask you to either text, email or call me (my contact details are on page 2 of the newsletter) if you are going to attend.**



I know one question you will ask, is Santa Claus going to be there? Unfortunately, the answer is no. On the upside, our members will not have to witness yet another embarrassing scene of Bruce Noake staging his regular walkout just before Santa arrives. Over the years, I have unsuccessfully tried to mediate between Santa and Bruce. Although we have no Santa we are all going to be able get Christmas Pud and Custard for desert. How good is that!

For the past few months, I have reported on the progress of our constitution review. I can now tell you that the sub-committee has completed their review and finalised their draft. The whole of Committee is currently reviewing the draft document and will decide soon whether to recommend it to the general membership. Next month in the newsletter, I hope to explain the draft constitution's main recommendations.

One more thing, Chris Cartledge has prepared a calendar for our membership. Normally, we place the calendar on our website. This year, we have included the calendar with the October 2020 newsletter. Thank you Chris. Until next month, John.





Retired Members Association



November 2020 General Meeting

Thursday, 26th November 2020
Meeting Commences at 10.30 am.

The General Meeting will take place via Zoom Video Conference Please note there will be no in-person meeting at the Financial Sector Union (FSU) office.

Members can join the meeting using your PC with a camera and microphone. You have a PC without camera you can still join, just no one will be able to see you.

You can also use a smartphone (iPhone or Android) by downloading the Zoom application. You can also attend using a home phone or dial in with your mobile. Of course, there will be no video.

Members who receive their newsletter via email, will receive an invitation, you need to reply to email (detailed in the email). Members who have replied will receive a Zoom link to access the General Meeting on the Wednesday afternoon/evening prior to the General Meeting.

Retired Members Association Office Bearers

PRESIDENT	<i>John Lane</i> 0417 238 687 a-lane @bigpond.com	SECRETARY	<i>Bruce Muirhead</i> 02 9639 0990 muirhead @bigpond.com 22 Cameron Avenue Baulkham Hills, 2153	TREASURER	<i>Bob Hamblion</i> 02 9502 2525	SECRETARY	<i>Bruce Noake</i> ASSISTANT SECRETARY 0409 332 464 bnoake @bigpond.net.au
WELFARE OFFICER	<i>Peter Hack</i> 0408 969 530 hackysnr @bigpond.net.au	VICE PRESIDENT	<i>Colin McQueen</i> 0429 151 209 colin.mcqueen @bigpond.com	VICE PRESIDENT	<i>Bruce Coxall</i> WEBSITE 0418 414 658 02 9597 2224 webadmin @cwuretired.org	EDITOR	<i>Paul Rewhorn</i> 0418 626 625 pdrewhorn @me.com

Committee

Alan Bassman, John McAuliffe, Trevor Anderson, John Bryce, Allan Fairbairn, Steve Flynn, Terry Livingstone, Paul Rewhorn, Jim Spencer, Ron Milosh, Garry Masman, Warren Morley, Alan Stevens.



YO-HO-HO!!

Country Installation Office Party

The Silly Season has rolled around again, and it is time to have a couple of drinks with some old workmates. *This year the Country Installation Office Party moves outside of the Sydney CBD to Orange.*

I have booked chairs for 20 Starters. Would you please let me know if you intend coming!!!

Thursday, 3RD December 2020
When:- 1200 for 1230 hrs
Royal Hotel Orange



Wishing everyone a
Merry Christmas and a
Joyous New Year

Peter Clarke 0419 394 349
Email:- hipshot@bigpond.com



SENIORS ENERGY REBATE

Have you applied this year?

Paul Rewhorn

Holders of a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card may be eligible for a Seniors Energy Rebate. This year the NSW government has made little fanfare about the \$200 rebate per year to help cover the cost of your electricity. Therefore, it is worth reminding members about the rebate. The Seniors Energy Rebate is available for eligible independent self-funded retirees.

You can apply for a Seniors Energy Rebate online:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-seniors-energy-rebate>.

To be eligible, you will need to hold a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card (CSHC). Services Australia (formerly Centrelink) and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) issues the CSHC, which is a means-tested concession card.

Apart from the requirement to have a CSHC, other eligibility criteria include:

- ◆ **You are NSW resident**
- ◆ **You're the primary account holder named on the electricity bill**
- ◆ **The rebate is for your primary place of residence.**

When you apply online, you will need to have available:

- ◆ **Your CSHC.** The online form will require you to enter your Centrelink Customer Reference Number (CRN). The CRN is on your CSHC. If you can't find your CRN, contact Centrelink on 1300 169 468.
- ◆ **Your latest electricity.** The electricity bill will have your National Metering Identifier (NMI) number. You will need the NMI to complete your online application. Also, the address on your electricity bill must be the same as on your CSHC.
- ◆ **You will also need to include your banking details** as Services NSW directly pays your rebate into your nominated Bank/Credit Union account. Payment usually takes about five business days.

Note, the rebate does not automatically apply each year. You will need to reapply each financial year. It is worth noting on your calendar. If you're unable to apply online, you can visit an NSW Service Centre or call them on 13 77 88.





The Power Room

By Chris Cartledge

The October newsletter features an article written by member Chris Cartledge. Chris writes about his earlier time before joining the PMG (Postmaster General Department) as a technician in training in 1959.

Chris, because of his earlier rounds as a paperboy, already knew many of the technical staff at Wollongong Telephone Exchange. This story is Chris' first article; hopefully, we will be able to enjoy more in the future.

It seems many members are having a try of writing their memoirs. We have featured some before. First, we had Ralph Britten tell us of his experience at York Telephone Exchange and later Barry Robinson and Bob Hyde told stories about earlier-on in their careers. I have received positive feedback about their stories, and trust you will enjoy the following article. Thanks, Chris for your contribution.

Before I joined the P.M.G.' Dept. at Alexandria as a 15-year-old on the 12th of January 1959, I had numerous jobs during my high school years.

The first was decanting potatoes from 60-pound hessian potato sacks into three and six-pound paper bags at a roadside stall on the banks of Cabbage Tree Creek in Fairy Meadow just around the corner from where I lived. I was also a J.P.O. (Junior Postal Officer) in Fairy Meadow, delivering telegrams during the school holidays. Another was delivering bread door to door from a horse-drawn bakers' cart (as you progressed along the street a whistle would bring the horse up to you for a refill of your basket). I also worked at a local dairy as a roustabout where I was eventually taught to hand milk the cows.

The most interesting job was delivering papers in Wollongong CBD. I would ride my bike into town after school to work at A.V. Green's newsagency in the main street. I worked Monday to Friday after school and on Saturday mornings, which was the best day of the week. Firstly, because the papers were very thin, about 20 pages (mostly a racing guide) and thus very easy to carry. Secondly, because most offices and many shops were closed Saturdays, only one paperboy was rostered for the whole CBD. This meant the boy rostered got to sell his papers in all seven hotels in the Wollongong CBD. Selling papers in pubs can be quite lucrative because the drinkers often gave tips, telling you to keep the change, and depending on the price of the paper at the time, the tip could be half the price of the paper. I always did a second round of the pubs on a Saturday.

During the week there were four paper rounds in the CBD, and luckily mine included the top end of town where the local telephone exchange was located. At the time, the Wollongong exchange complex consisted of a 2000/SE50 type auto exchange in a temporary fibro building. There was a manual trunk exchange where around 80 telephonists worked, an associated semi-auto trunk exchange and a long line/radio section. Remember, this is in the period before S.T.D. (Subscriber Trunk Dialling). All but the auto exchange was located in a two-story brick building with the Power Room for the whole complex in the basement.

Adjacent to the Power Room was the Battery Room and Emergency Plant Room.

I had regular customers in both buildings except, however, for the boss in his office (Eric Bourne), who bought the Sun, you never knew where they were working on a particular day so I would walk through both buildings down the aisles of the equipment rooms looking for my regulars. I was not allowed in the Switch Room where the telephonists ('switches') worked connecting trunk calls, taking complaints, and providing information to subscribers. There was a total of around 70 single women working varying shifts. It was not until 1966 that married women were allowed to work in the public service.

The Power Room was down three flights of stairs, and they were quite steep. In those days there was a Senior Technician in charge of the Power Room (thinking back today I'm not sure what they did all day). Bob was one of my regulars, and although he didn't tip, he bought both the Sun and the Mirror every day, so he was worth looking for. Like all the other Senior Technicians he was on a six-month shift rotation which included the Power Room.

Whilst Saturdays had the thinnest papers, in the mid-50s Thursday night shopping had been introduced so on a Thursday the papers were the biggest they would be all week, sometimes twice as thick and certainly a lot heavier. We carried the papers out the front using a large leather strap going diagonally across our chest, a bit like a seat belt in today's cars. The buckle was to the front as you needed to adjust it depending on the number and thickness of the papers you were carrying.

One Thursday, when I was particularly pregnant with papers, I couldn't find Bob in any of the equipment rooms, so I headed for the Power Room. I was at the top of the last flight of stairs going down to the Power Room when I stumbled.

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The Power Room

By Chris Cartledge
(cont'd)

As I fell forward, luckily the buckle let go and the papers spread out in front of me across the remaining stairs and so I slid down headfirst on my belly like I was on a slippery dip, stopping when I slammed into the Power Room door. Not hurt, except for my pride, I was picking up the papers when Bob came through the door to investigate the noise. It was then that I noticed the buckle had become detached from the strap. Bob was a good bloke; he said to wait there and in a couple of minutes came back with a lacing needle and waxed lacing twine and sewed the buckle back on the strap. It appears he borrowed the repair gear from the CI6 (Country Installation No.6) technicians who were in the auto exchange doing block cabling for new equipment racks.

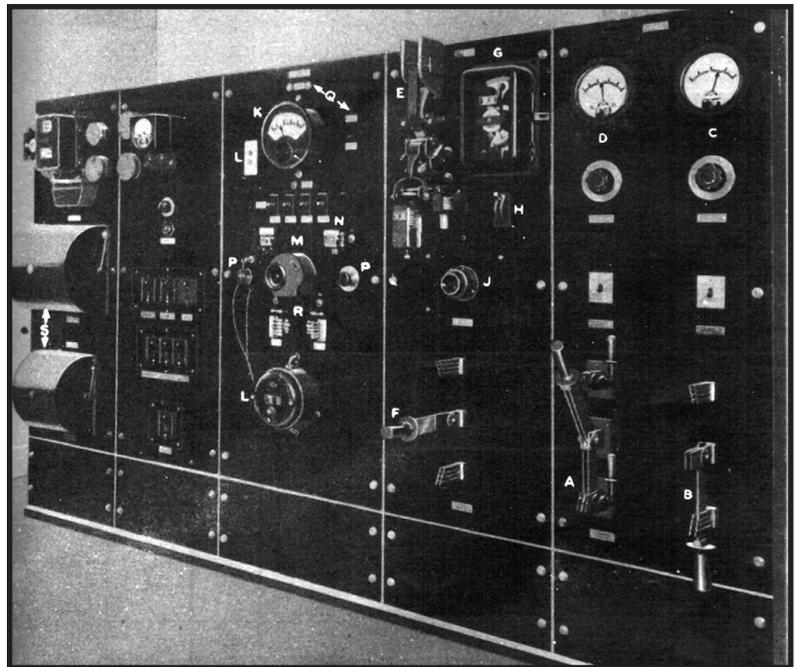
Supervising Technician Stan Hatton (brother of Bernie) was another of my regulars, he bought the Daily Mirror. As a shift supervisor, he too, could be hard to find. I would often find him in the radio section, working on the STC PCM (Sydney's Tightest Company - Pulse Code Modulation) radio carrier system or the newer Magneti Marelli radio terminal.

--oo0oo--

After my first year as a Technician-In-Training, in Nov 1959, I was assigned to Wollongong Telephone Exchange together with fellow first yearers Tony Jones & Reg Page. I soon met a great range of characters, Bill De Vries being one of the standouts. I will never forget the gang of third and fourth year trainees who, on my first day, stripped off my underclothes and painted my undercarriage with oildag – an oil infused with graphite used to lubricate the bi-motional selectors. The jet-black stains never washed out of my Bonds. Bill was not part of these shenanigans.

On paydays the trainees took it in turns to run the 'two-bob-in', a winner takes all raffle (there was about forty technical staff in the Wollongong multi-function district at that time). For a while, Bill ran an alternate raffle on paydays. The prize was a very interesting wax candle in a shape you can guess – he had picked up the mould in Asia where he usually stopped over for a few days on his way home from the Netherlands where his parents lived. Bill was a single man and only child.

Back to the Power Room, visually it is an interesting place, with large rectifiers, associated Control Panels with volt and amp meters and various rotary knobs and a Discharge Panel with large brass knife switches etc. The Battery Room had large open-cell lead-acid batteries (24v, 50v & 90v) and in the Emergency Plant Room a four machine all electric no-break set running continuously in case of any power interruptions which in the post-war 1950s was pretty often. The visual potential of all this technical gear was not lost on Bill De Vries, who was an amateur filmmaker.



Caption: A typical 1950s power panel (from Telephony 5, 1960).

It was the perfect setting for Bill's adaption of the pseudo-scientific Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde story. At different times Bill was an 'Area Tech' attending business around the CBD for maintenance purposes. Bill had visited H Parsons Funeral Directors (I think they had an A5 Intercom System) so he had no compunctions asking for a loan of some fancy handles for the coffin he made for his movie.

Using the backdrops described above and volunteers from the technical staff in their grey dust coats, Bill made an interesting and funny short movie, shot after hours of course!





RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION



Bruce Muirhead

Elected Committee

<i>President</i>	Vince Haywood
<i>Vice Presidents</i>	Allan Fairbairn John Lane
<i>Treasurer</i>	Bob Hamblion
<i>Secretary</i>	Peter Hack
<i>Assistant Secretary</i>	Bruce Muirhead
<i>Social Co-ordinator</i>	Denzil Fogarty
<i>Committee</i>	

Bruce Coxall, John McAuliffe, Jim Spencer, John Hickey, Bob Clifford, Denzil Fogarty, Norn Nelson, John Bryce, Max Wright, Dave Levit, Ron Milosh, Dick Orchard, Frank Ingersole and Dave Morgan

Returning Officer: Alan Stevens
Delegates - As appointed by the committee

Web Master: Bruce Coxall
Newsletter Editor: Paul Rewhorn

MEETINGS

General meetings are held at FSU Conference Room Level 2 321 Pitt St Sydney 741 George St Sydney commencing at 10:15 am except in May which was held at Woy Woy Roosters Leagues Club Woy Woy at 10 am.

Committee meetings are held at the Union Office, 3rd fFloor, 741 George Street in the city at 9am

New Members

Archie Burns, Alan McKay, Ken Walton, John Walsh, Peter Jordan, David Attard, Peter Powell, Christopher Writghtson, John Rigg, Ross Edward Stephenson, Anthony Maguire, Ian Kenneth Quirk, Raymond Mayne Benson, Alby Fisher, Ian Quirk, Josef Zajac, John Hurcum, Bob Lewis, Colin Prowse, Alan Morris, Steve Polysup, Colin Krause, Alan Morris, Steve Palocz, Colin Brest and Greg Bryce

Those Who Passed

Harold Parkinson, Barry Everett, Jim Buckley, Fred Lehmann, Robert Dunbar, John Victor King, Alan Charlesworth, Cliff Lord, Nick Boris, Bob Woodford, Keith Dare, Denzil Fogarty, Fred Chettle, Brian Sissons, Ray Whiteman and Alex Green

Guest Speakers

- Paul Limmer gave a short talk on his recent trip to Libya,
- Caroline Woods from Ambulance Australia gave a talk on emergency, and modern treatments for over 55's,
- Phil Orchard spoke on the sinking of HMAS Sydney
- and Warren Doherty from COTA spoke for Beyond Blue and gave an excellent talk on depression and its treatment

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2011 (CONTD)

Social Events

- Trip to Kiama and lunch,
- Tramway Museum at Loftus,
- April Fools Day Lunch at Kyeemagh RSL,
- Autumn Leaves lunch at Springwood,
- Australian Maritime Museum,
- Port Macquarie Trip Away,
- RTA Control Room,
- Encore visit to HMAS Vampire including a visit to HMAS Onslow and
- Retired Members Association's Christmas Lunch held at the Castlereagh Club.

Reunions

- Class of 46 have their 64th Reunion, Class of 1958 Informal Get Together, Training School Reunion,
- 1951 Technicians in Training have their 60 Year Reunion, Telex Reunion,
- 1950 Technician in Training Reunion, North Coast Telstra Function,
- Telegraph and Data Reunion,
- 1957 Technicians in Training have their 55th year reunion,
- 1961 Technicians in Training have their 50th Year Reunion,
- Mid North Coast Get-together at Port Macquarie,
- Trunk Service Christmas Get together, NDC Christmas Party and Radio Christmas Get together.



Special General Meeting held at Port Macquarie Trip Away in 2011

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2011 (CONT'D)



Special General Meeting at the Port Macquarie Trip Away in 2011



Jim and Anne Spencer during the Port Macquarie Trip Away in 2011

Hot Topics

Ark Tribe found not Guilty in Australian Building and Construction Commission case a victory for the workers,
Changes to Residential Aged Care Agreement and,
Introduction of a National Disability Insurance Scheme

The Outside World

- Queensland floods
- Qantas grounds all aircraft
- Death of Osama bin Laden
- Japan earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear meltdown
- Steve Jobs dies
- The royal wedding of William and Catherine
- Cyclone Yasi
- Muammar Gaddafi overthrown
- Christchurch earthquake
- Maddie Pulver collar bomb hoax
- Phone hacking and closure of News of the World
- Cadel Evans wins the Tour de France
- Sam Stosur wins the US Open
- Norway shooting massacre
- Barack Obama's Australian visit
- Egyptians overthrow Hosni Mubarak
- Charlie Sheen's descent into madness



NSW GOVERNMENT SCHOOL HOLIDAYS
Summer 21 Dec 2020 - 26 Jan 2021
Autumn 02 Apr 2021 - 16 Apr 2021
Winter 28 Jun 2021 - 09 Jul 2021
Spring 20 Sep 2021 - 01 Oct 2021
Summer 20 Dec 2021 - 27 Jan 2022

2021

Year of the Ox



14 ComSuper Paydays

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7 Centrelink Paydays

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AUGUST						
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OCTOBER						
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NOVEMBER						
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DECEMBER						
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