



# Dial-Log

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Jody Georgeson, EDITOR

## Executive Director's Report

By Herb Hackenburg

During the last quarter I believe THG has established a new record for being busy. Besides our normal activities, several significant events occurred which took up much our concentration and many work hours.

### Ownership issues

Board members Larry DeMuth and Karen Tatelman worked with the U S WEST Legal Department and Bill Morey, corporate records manager, for nearly two years to establish bailment agreements, and a deed of gift to establish the ownership and/or control of artifacts, photographs, equipment and manuscript material we have on hand. This process required detailed inventories of everything in the archive or displayed in the two Denver telephone museums. Dressed in grubs, records managers Morey, Steve Dory, and I spent two days conducting a pallet by pallet inventory of our 43 tons of raw material. Prior to this duty the three of us sifted through 13 pallets of "new" old material Morey had pulled from

U S WEST's massive records storage facility. I was pleasantly surprised to find that much of the "new" old stuff was originally sent to the USW archive by me in the mid-80s while I was researching *Muttering Machines*.

Anyway, a master inventory was completed – at the same time we culled out about 50 percent of the original 43 tons of material. Plus, removing so much stuff in Archive C enabled us to pass a fire inspection two weeks later.

In June, a deed of gift and a bailment agreement was signed between U S WEST and the Telecommunications History Group. Thus, the THG owns the administrative equipment (chairs, files, tables, etc.), photographs, nearly all manuscript material, video tapes, BSPs, reference library, and artifacts currently in its control; and we have bailment agreements covering the directory collection and copyright issues.

*I'd like to add an observation. Later in this report I'll cover Jody's and my attendance at the Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting held in Denver in August. One of the*

**Merger acquisitions**

A current Qwest employee told me that it was dangerous to be in the main lobby at 1801 California during USW's last days because one could get caught in the stampede of USW officers leaving the 52<sup>nd</sup> floor. As Sol Trujillo and other officers packed their personal items, one of our friends was near by. Anything interesting the officers left behind (except for strategic/proprietary material) was quickly packed up and sent to us. We received notebooks and records that were strategic nearly two decades ago, other material, assorted pictures, trophies, and a new briefcase with Sol's name on it.

We've also received several cubic feet of material from departments (e.g. Public Policy, Law Department) as they've been closed or drastically downsized. We've received all kinds of clothing and memorabilia items containing the U S WEST logo from the USW (now Qwest) gift stores, and we've collected an estimated 15 cu. ft. of excellent telecommunications legal history from the old USW Law Library—material we could never have obtained anywhere else.

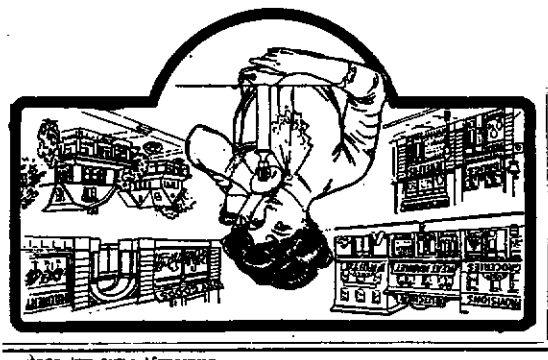
**SAA meeting**

Jody and I attended several of the SAA sessions and each of us attended a one-day workshop: Jody--Oral History; me--Archives Administration. We learned much but the main benefit to us was meeting archivists from all over the nation. We spent considerable time with the two archivists from SBC (see the "Intern" story on page 4). We also visited the display areas and gathered much information concerning emergency procedures, digitizing, using the Internet and met and talked to our major suppliers.

themes at both of the SAA Business Section Roundtable sessions at that meeting was the constant turf issues and battles that go on between records managers and archivists within the same company. Frankly, I was an innocent in this area because of the cooperative and professional relationship established between THG and U S WEST's top records manager Bill Morey.

After hearing some of the horror stories from Ford, Coca-Cola, Gap and Proctor and Gamble, I wanted to find Bill and give him a big hug. Bill has since informed me that it's good that I didn't do that.

**Sidebar:** Bill has survived the current Qwest downsizing and continues to hone the excellent records management system he designed and implemented at U S WEST, now Qwest. THG has asked Bill to join our board of directors and he's said he'd be proud to join.



Thursday, June 22, 1911

**At Your Elbow**

They are all in reach at a moment's notice: the butcher, the grocer, the merchant, anyone you wish. Whether weather conditions are stormy, threatening or fair, the Bell Telephone is in waiting to save unnecessary footsteps. Everybody is your neighbor; every town, county and state is next door. This is because the Bell System radiates throughout the country and is universal.



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN BELL**  
**TELEPHONE CO.**  
S. G. KNEP, Manager.

One of the things I learned from my sessions with the business archive section is that we all face the same problems, mostly having to worry about funding. Our perspective is a bit different than most, but THG still has funding worries, especially since our major benefactor, the U S WEST Foundation is no longer in existence. We're working on a menu of alternative funding sources including the sale of our duplicate historic telephone company stock certificates.

The universal resolution to this problem seems to be constantly providing management with specific examples and proof that you're more than paying for your keep. We agree that this is a good idea and we know that THG has a strong story to tell, for some reason we haven't been telling it as aggressively as we need to.

### Burlingame request

A few weeks ago I received a phone call from the Pioneer Association office. It seems that the current Association President is Hal Burlingame, AT&T vice president of human resources. Hal and I joined the Bell System on the same day, in the Ohio Bell PR department. Hal wanted some historic perspective and photographs for the Pioneer National Assembly's opening multimedia show and we've been providing most of it.

In addition, as his legacy, Hal is publishing of a hardcover book about telephone heroes and heroines through history using a format similar to Tom Brokaw's book about World War II heroes. To help gather the stories, Hal and the Pioneers have set up an interactive web site ([www.telephonepioneers.org](http://www.telephonepioneers.org)) for people to submit their stories. I was asked to "salt" the site

with some of my stories. I've written a dozen little stories and I'm in the process of getting them on the web site (not an easy chore when you have more than one story). One of those stories is about a former Pioneer Association President, who I happen to know and admire, and a job he did for the United States Air Force. This former operating company president serves on our board, most of you know him. His initials are R. K. T.



**SAVING TIME by TELEPHONE**

When a man feels the necessity of being in two places at the same time he goes to the nearest Telephone and send his voice.

In the daily use of the Telephone a man travels all over town by wire in a few minutes. It is just as easy to travel all over the state and other states by means of the universal Long Distance Service of the Bell System.

**Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Co.**  
Wm. UPHAM, Manager.

### Tours-R-Us

There must be something in the air - we're being asked to give tours of the old headquarters building or our archive every week. The first week in September we gave archive tours to new employee classes Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday mornings, and on Wednesday evening we conducted of tour of the headquarters building for the Rocky Mountain Guides Association. More tours are being scheduled and two of the instructors at the Training Center

problem is that SBC has been closing the very fine archives these companies have maintained over the past 120 years.

Just prior to being acquired by SBC, SNET closed its archive (one of the nation's oldest telecommunications archives) giving most of the important documents to the Thomas A. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut. Thankfully, the documents weren't destroyed and are being professionally processed. However, they have left the telecommunications industry.

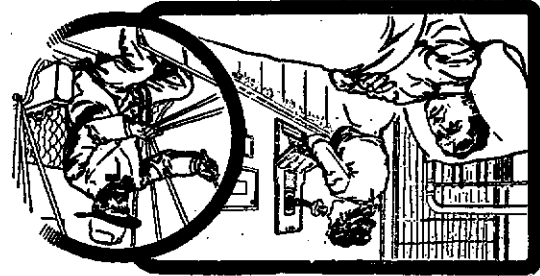
After it purchased Pacific Telesis, SBC closed Pacific's archive in San Francisco, long considered one of the industry's most complete and well-maintained archives. To date, this archive remains closed, unavailable to anyone.

Americitech was one of the few "Baby Bells" to have a full-time, professional archivist managing its archive in Chicago.

After its purchase of Americitech, true to form, SBC closed the Americitech archive and fired archivist Bill Caughlin. However, Iana Pergam, an inordinately spunky archivist intern still working at the Americitech archive, went into battle. It seems Iana's husband is a member of the Chicago Economics Club. Iana found herself attending the annual meeting of the Economics Club where the principal speakers were Americitech CEO Richard C. Notebaert and SBC CEO Edward E. Whitacre, Jr.

During a 10-minute break before the main program was to begin, Iana tucked a copy of a richly illustrated history of Americitech under arm and strode to the dais. She and Bill had written and produced the history as a farewell gift to its employees from Americitech. Iana had met Notebaert

are trying to insert a one-hour telephone company history session into the new employee training curricula. I would conduct the history class for a moderate stipend.



## Often Saves Human Life

When the doctor is summoned to the farm it is generally in an emergency case. A member of the family has been stricken with sudden illness or an accident has occurred. Every minute's delay reduces the chances of recovery. It is then that the Bell Telephone is "worth its weight in gold" to the anxious farmer. It pays for itself then and there. Consult your local manager and protect your family, next time you come to town.



## The Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company

## Never under-estimate a determined archivist intern

Over the past couple of years, SBC Communications has been busy buying former Regional Bell Operating Companies. To date, SBC has purchased Pacific Telesis, Southern New England Telephone and Americitech. The

while working on the history so she reintroduced herself. He remembered her and talked enthusiastically about the book. Ilana said, "I'd like to talk to Mr. Whitacre about the book, would you introduce me to him?" Notebaert walked Ilana over to Whitacre and introduced the five-foot, one, Ilana to the six-foot, five, Whitacre, then whispered into her ear, "Good luck."

Whitacre reached down to shake Ilana's hand and asked in his Texas drawl, "What can I do for you, little lady?" Ilana answered, "Tonight you're going to talk about the future of telecommunications, and I want to tell you that there'd be no future if there weren't a past. And this history book could not have been produced without the Ameritech archive. So why did you close it?"

As he slowly leafed through, *Snapshots in Time: A Photographic History of Ameritech*, Whitacre told Ilana that he had no idea that archives were being closed down by his company. A few days after his discussion with Pergam, Whitacre rehired Caughlin and moved him to Texas where he is now in charge of consolidating the Chicago, San Francisco and Dallas SBC archives into a newly restored historic telephone building in San Antonio. Pergam is no longer an intern, but a full-time SBC archivist working to prepare the Ameritech archive for an orderly, two-year move to its new custom-built home in Texas. She's also in charge of upgrading SBC's antique telephone exhibits in Chicago.

Thus, a Manhattan Island-born, former grade school teacher becomes a legend in both the archive and telephone businesses.

## We Have a Winner!

**Ralph Taylor**, of Lakewood, CO, was the first to identify the building as 1175 Osage St., in Denver. Others who answered correctly were **Richard Cloud, Raymond Cordsen, Jeff Garrett, Lynn Graves, and Bill Himmelman**.

The three-story building was built around 1890, and has served various functions over the years. Western Electric built and repaired PBX 'phones in part of it, and the Colorado Telephone Company used the ground floor to stable horses. Division Manager Raymond Cordsen reports that at one time, the plant training center was located in the Osage building. According to Ray, in those days "we took service pretty seriously." Richard Cloud, from El Paso, remembers it as the former teletypewriter service center. During the 1970s and 1980s, Mountain Bell corporate records were stored on the third floor.

In 1987, Mountain Bell/ U S WEST donated the building to Osage Initiatives, which works to help homeless and low income people learn job skills, become employed and stay employed. They also provide emergency housing, child care, adult learning, literacy training and technical skills courses.

So you see, the old building at 12<sup>th</sup> and Osage continues its rich history!

**NEW CONTEST**

What is the significance of Milk Street in telecommunications history?

The first reader to contact us with the complete correct answer will win a valuable prize. Entries may be made by phone at 303-296-1221, or email at [telecomhist@aol.com](mailto:telecomhist@aol.com).

Good luck!

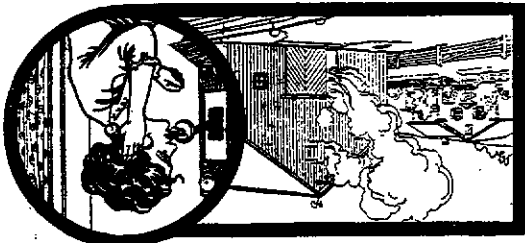
In this issue, we've printed several 1911 newspaper ads for the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Co. Ken Pratt found these for us while inventing some of our many boxes of old records. Ken often finds treasures for us - one of the perks of working with archival material.

for their help. While many of our volunteers are returning, others have left us. Ron Pratt moved to California where he will be teaching college math and geology (he promises to return in December to finish sorting our insulator collection). Jay Langhurst went back to classes at Creighton University, and Kathy Mrowka has returned to the great Northwest. We'd like to thank them all

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We are especially happy to welcome back George Ek. George has recovered from his surgery and is getting back into the swing of things. He and Sonya have just left for a trip to England, Finland and Sweden, stopping off in Seattle to see their daughter. It's been a busy summer for our volunteers. Curt and Kathy Furness spent several weeks at their cabin in the Colorado Rockies this summer, and are now off to Alberta, Canada. Mike Flavin brought back beautiful pictures of his trip to Italy. Terry Quirk has returned from his annual stay in Florida, and Jerry and Sue Wild have been traveling around our great state of Colorado.


**Volunteer Corner**  
By Jody Georgeson



**Brings Prompt Aid in Case of Fire**

THE farm buildings are often at the mercy of the flames. A minute's time gained at the outbreak of a fire, means saving the property. A call on the Bell Telephone saves the precious minutes. The far-sighted farmer appreciates its protection as well as its economic value. The best time to join the army of progressive farmers is now. Consult our local manager.

**The Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company**



## Kindness Wins a Friend

By E.L. Williams  
Local Manager, Keokuk, Iowa

*The following story was published in The Northwestern Bell, October, 1921. This, and other employee publications, provide some of the most valuable material for historians and other researchers who use our collection. The publications provide not only a look into the past of the telephone industry, but reflect the culture of our country. Theodore N. Vail was the first president of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company and the "father" of universal service, who envisioned a national telephone system. Francis Elliot was the author of Pals First, Haunted Pajamas, and Lend Me Your Name.*

Professor Elliot is an author and playwright, and of course makes trips to New York City and other Eastern points several times a year. However, he lives in this city (*Keokuk*).

This story deals with the first time Mr. Elliott met the late Theodore N. Vail. It was several years ago, and at that time Mr. Elliott lived in Chicago and was on a business trip to New York, about the Christmas time of the year. He was invited by a friend of his to spend the week-end at a business men's club at Cranford, N. J., and while there the following incident happened. Here is the way Mr. Elliott tells it:

"I was sitting in the club parlor looking out of the window, and that man (pointing to a picture of Mr. Vail which I have hanging on the wall) came up to me and said, 'You are away from home and lonesome, aren't you?'"

"I said, 'Yes, a little.'

"He then said, 'You would like to talk to the wife, wouldn't you?'"

"I replied that I would be delighted to have a chat with her, if it were possible.

"Mr. Vail then walked over to a telephone booth, and I heard him say, 'Give me the big copper circuit; I want it right away!' Then he came over and asked me for my name and address, and if I had a telephone in my residence. I informed him that I did not, and he then asked for the name of the nearest drug store. In a little while he called me to the booth and told me that my wife was on the line, to talk as long as I wanted to and to tell Mrs. Elliott that it was a Christmas present from the telephone company.

"I never appreciated anything so much in my life as I did that . . . I consider Mr. Vail one of the biggest men of his time."



OF THE BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY  
SAY TO US

GRANDMOTHER may not be as spry as she used to be, but she is in close touch with her world for all that.

The telephone enables her to make as many calls as she pleases, and in all sorts of weather.

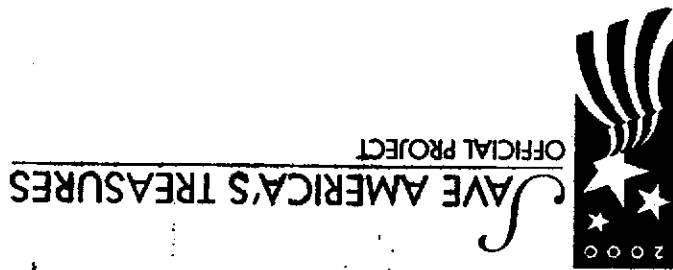
Personal gatherings have their place, but it is the many little intimate visits over the telephone that keep people young and interested.

Grandmother's telephone visits do not stop with her own town. The Long Distance Service of the Bell Telephone takes her to other towns, and allows relatives and friends to chat with her although hundreds of miles away.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN BELL TELEPHONE CO.  
FRANCIS E. L. WILLIAMS  
R. F. CARNEY, Manager.

Every Bell Telephone is the Center of the System.



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