



Dial Log



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Jody Georgeson, Editor

Director's Report

By Jody Georgeson

The big news is that we're moving to the 930 15th St. building. We'll share a floor with the National Pioneers organization, which we're very excited about. We've begun working with the Qwest move team and plan to be in our new digs by the end of the October. It will be quite a job but well worth it, I think. Fred Gurule, our Qwest RE contact, assures me that there will be no more floods. We'll also have windows in our offices, which will be a welcome change. And we'll be right next door to the historic MST&T headquarters building, where we do so many tours. We'll be sure to invite you all down for a look-see as soon as we get settled.

Board Vice President and faithful volunteer **Mary Riffle** invited us all to her beautiful North Denver Home for what we hope is the first annual volunteer picnic. See Marty's article on page 7 for more about that and for pictures.

Lest you think we're all play and no work around here, I hasten to point out that we're still busy entering data into databases, giving tours, fixing computers, fulfilling

research requests and doing all of the other things that go into operating this place.

Bob Haack has finished indexing the NWB Magazines from 1921 through 1965. This will allow researchers to find articles through a simple search of the database. He's started on the NWB News, which began being published in September, 1971. We're at a loss as to what the employee publication was between 1965 and 1971. If any of you know, please contact me. If you have any copies, please send them to us!

Norman Birt is developing a retention guide for our corporate records, something we sorely need. (I'm sure all of you one-time Bell and U S WEST people remember the retention guide with fondness!)

We continue to add to the Virtual Museum. Our next project will add a virtual tour of the Museum of Communications, so even those who can't make it to Seattle will be able to view our wonderful exhibits there.

Finally, you should all have received your annual fundraising letter. If you haven't paid your membership dues, please do so. We count on you, our members, for support of our efforts to keep our telecommunications history alive and accessible.

A Visit “Straight Over the Mountain”

Edited by Herb Hackenburg

It was my privilege to write Muttering Machines to Laser Beams, the first history of Mountain Bell, published in 1986. The key word here is “published.” Twenty years before, another history of Mountain Bell was written by Bob Shelton, a talented writer from the Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph Co. Public Relations Department. After four years of work, Shelton’s book, Straight Over the Mountain, was ready to go to the printer. For unknown reasons, top management of MST&T decided not to publish it. Residing in THG’s collection of green manuscript boxes is Shelton’s hand-edited 300-plus-page final manuscript. I think THG members will find segments of Bob’s book to be an educational, entertaining and unique read. This is the first installment; the brackets [...] are my edits.

While Gallows

An old lineman who worked with both Western Union and the Colorado Telephone Company started his job in the early ‘80s [1880s]. When interviewed around 1920 he said, “One day we was busy near the old depot at Raton (New Mexico) when I looked down and seen this gambler dash out of a saloon door and make for the depot. He was bein’ chased by a big bartender—apron, rolled-up sleeves an’ all—with a six-gun in one hand. He overtook the gambler right under the pole I was workin’ on and knocked him on the head with the gun-butt. The gambler keeled over, and in less than a minute a gang of hangers-on from the saloon gathered ‘round him. Purty soon, the gambler opened his eyes, an’ the bartender called up to me: ‘Hey, you! Come down off

that pole—we want to use it for a few minutes.’

“I did what he said, right now. I didn’t want to be shook off that pole. When I got down they’d cut a bell cord from a passenger train on the sidetrack and tied one end of it around the gambler’s neck. “Now gimme them hooks there, buddy,” said one and I handed ‘em over. He strapped ‘em on and up the pole he went, with the loose end of the rope. He slipped it over the cross-arm and the gang on the ground lifted the gambler clean up the pole while the bartender tied the rope fast...



“I learned later that the gambler tried three aces while the bartender was holdin’ two hisself. I had to hold up my job ‘til someone cut the bird down....”

This adaptive but irregular use for telephone poles is substantiated in the autobiography of a retired detective who worked in Denver in the late ‘70s [1870s]. He wrote:

“The new telephone poles, which were put on several of the downtown streets, attracted a lot of curiosity. As Denver was one of the first towns in the frontier section to have such an innovation, the poles were pointed out to all visitors who came here. About the first thing the rough element thought of was the great desirability of the poles to hold lynchings.

“Trees were so scarce in those days, we had difficulty sometimes in finding a suitable place to lynch a horse thief or a crooked gambler....

“We believed that if the bad-man insisted, a pole was the best place from which he could be hung. The phone company soon put through a city ordinance, however, prohibiting the use of its poles as scaffolds for hanging bees, and we had to hunt up a good bridge or a big tree for such festivities.



“We finally brought a tree from out near Morrison and transplanted in the vicinity of the West Colfax Avenue bridge. We used that as a hanging tree and let the phone company’s poles alone.”

Archives Month

Once again, it's time for Archives Month, a national celebration of repositories that maintain and preserve our nation's history. This year, the theme in Colorado and Wyoming is *Rocky Mountain Memories*.

Check your local libraries, museums and other cultural institutions for activities.

Because of the impending move, THG will be celebrating archives month in November with special exhibits, an open house, and the second annual Hall of Fame ceremony.

We will also have materials available that will help you preserve your personal documents and photographs.

When: November 29
Where: THG Archives
930 15th St.

9 am-4 pm
12th floor
Denver

Scientist Studies Telephone Telepathy

NORWICH (Sept. 5) - Many people have experienced the phenomenon of receiving a telephone call from someone shortly after thinking about them -- now a scientist says he has proof of what he calls telephone telepathy .

Rupert Sheldrake, whose research is funded by the respected Trinity College, Cambridge, said on Tuesday he had conducted experiments that proved that such precognition existed for telephone calls and even e-mails.

Each person in the trials was asked to give researchers names and phone numbers of four relatives or friends. These were then called at random and told to ring the subject who had to identify the caller before answering the phone.

"The hit rate was 45 percent, well above the 25 percent you would have expected," he told the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. "The odds against this being a chance effect are 1,000 billion to one."

He said he found the same result with people being asked to name one of four people sending them an e-mail before it had landed.

However, his sample was small on both trials -- just 63 people for the controlled telephone experiment and 50 for the email -- and only four subjects were actually filmed in the phone study and five in the email, prompting some skepticism.

Undeterred, Sheldrake -- who believes in the interconnectedness of all minds within a social grouping -- said that he was extending his experiments to see if the phenomenon also worked for mobile phone text messages.

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The Call Box Caper

Part Two
by Don Ostrand

When we last saw our intrepid volunteers, they were on their way to Boeing Field to meet the plane carrying their British Call Box. We'll join them there as the Call Box Arrives in Seattle.



We (Dick & Bev, Paul & Pearl, Lois, Ron, **Don Fagerholm** and myself) got off slightly late and with a small degree of disappointment saw that the Anatov was on the ground when we arrived. Checking in at Flightcraft, we caught their van for the ride to the plane. It had not been there for long as its jet engines were still running and customs and agriculture folks were just starting their inspections. We're talking big! That was the impression we all had of the four-engine Anatov. (It was, reportedly, the 2nd largest aircraft in existence. The largest was the six engine Anatov. One report was that the C5A was longer but not as wide and that the Anatov carried a larger payload.) We all accepted the fact that this plane was huge.

Soon the rear cargo door opened and we were allowed to look in the cargo bay. A Rolls Royce engine bigger than one could imagine was all that was visible. Within a very short time the Russian crew had the engine hanging from the overhead hoist built into the plane and were moving it out the cargo door. A Boeing lowboy tractor/trailer promptly backed into place and the engine was loaded. (An interesting

sidelight was the comparison of the size of the tractor/trailer and the plane. The rig looked like a 'Matchbox'® toy next to the plane.)

Next on the plane were some accessories from Rolls Royce; they were unloaded next. Now the call box was in line to be unloaded. Unfortunately, the Boeing truck that had been volunteered to haul it to the museum had developed a fuel filter leak and could not be started. A minor delay! The second RR engine was then hoisted and unloaded while the Boeing truck mechanic fix the fuel leak problem. The truck was finally backed into place. The overhead crane was attached to the call box and the lift began. At last we could get a good view of it.



During the delay I had paged BRI's **David Johnson** and **Noel Struthers** to update the status. Since they were only blocks away they decided to come to the airfield in case their truck could be of use. **Don West** followed them over as he also was waiting at the museum. Don West was the only one of us, beside Paul, to go on the aircraft to take pictures. Soon the call box emerged from the plane and was lowered onto the now fixed Boeing truck. Its driver, **Bill Murphy**, chauffeured it to the Museum followed by BRI's truck and soon after, the rest of us. The Flightcraft van picked us up and returned us to the terminal.

Upon leaving, Dick noticed that the UK flag on the Boeing International Airport's flagstaff was being flown upside down. He promptly returned to the terminal to inform them of the error. They thanked him and asked, "How do you tell?" They were educated on this point. And we moved on to the museum.

With the boom truck in place and the sling straps around the call box, the final 10 - 15 foot journey began. The call box was lifted off the Boeing truck and was hanging loose. Bill Murphy and the Boeing rig bid farewell. The second floor door was open and a smiling crew eagerly awaited. Slowly the call box was raised to the second floor equipment door and once at that level was pulled partially into the floor. The sling strap at the inboard end came in contact with the building above the door, preventing the call box from being fully pulled into the building. The winch line was slowly slacked off -- looks OK, slightly tipsy, but OK.

The plan was to slack off the winch line to allow the inboard sling to be unhooked and to use the remaining sling to hoist as the call box was pulled totally into the building. The slack was now OK and the inboard sling was unhooked, when all of a sudden the wood pallet started to crack and give way. That momentum was all it took and the call box fell off the second floor into space. A dreadful picture was taking place right

before our eyes. After 8000 miles the call box was surely going to be destroyed. As luck would have it, the second sling and the winch line were still attached and lassoed the call box by the slight flair of the base. A substantial glancing blow to the first floor door helped break the fall of the call box. Has anyone ever seen a bungee jumping call box?

Well, the bungee prevented the call box from striking the ground with any degree of force and no damage was sustained. The winch line slowly lowered the load to the ground below and some reengineering of the sling placements was made due to the now-missing pallet.

With a deep breath and a few minor personal adjustments among the group, the lift was on. This time the call box was pulled further into the building and all was well. If one took notice of the article in the Seattle Times, Dickensheets was the overseer of the hoisting caper. Thanks Bob!

The call box was loaded onto a four-wheel cart and a pallet jack and rolled uneventfully into its new home. All entered into a discussion of great length on how to hoist the call box from its horizontal position to a vertical one. The outcome was to delay the hoist until Friday at 7:30 am and to employ additional tools that Don Fagerholm would bring. So far the entire day's events have been captured on film, maybe a plus, maybe not! I'm sure that someday we may laugh, but for now we all



are thankful no one was hurt and the call box was safely inside the museum.



Don Fagerholm and I arrived Just after 7:00, followed shortly thereafter by Lois and Ron. The hoisting crew was on the job. Using a 4 by 6 inch beam across the superstructure overhead, the Dons rigged a chain fall "come along" supported by the 4x6. A chain was attached to the call box. Next--using my floor jack--we raised the call box enough to remove the pallet jack and four-wheel cart and also placed a 12 by 6 inch timber under its midpoint to allow the call box to pivot as we started the lift. Soon the weight became greater than we anticipated and we paused to survey our plight. The result of our survey was to use the floor jack to assist in lifting the weight, so we moved the jack in place and continued our lift. The jack required readjusting several times but in the end this effort raised the call box to a point not quite on the balance.

Fortunately Don Fagerholm had a second "come along" and plenty chain. The second set of hoisting gear was set up between an adjacent pillar and the call box. As Ron worked the second "come along" and it started to pick up the load we were soon at a balance point and now Don F. had to start backing off the other "come along" so as to slowly and carefully lower the call box to the vertical position on the floor. All the hoisting gear was unhooked and packed away.

At last the call box is within inches of

where we intend to have it. "Well let's just turn it 1/4 turn and slide it about 6 inches closer to the pillar". Yeah, sure! With all four of us pushing the call box stood its ground. Again Don F. came to the rescue. He had brought his 6-foot steel pry bar and some short sections of pipe with him. So as Don lifted the call box with the pry bar, Lois slipped the pipe sections under each side and we rolled the call box home. After we gathered up all of Don's tools, we all stood back to admire the beautiful addition and exchanged our thoughts of the dream come true.



The call box was installed at 11:30 and the Museum held a reception in its honor that same day at 4 pm.

As a final touch, Bev Bendicksen provided a British Flag that was a gift to her sometime back, which now flies over the Call Box. The origin of Bev's flag was from the Queen's yacht, Britannia and was obtained by a friend when the Britannia visited Seattle.

All in all, this story could have been make-believe; a visit to the museum will be proof that it is very true. Thanks to all!

Volunteer Picnic

By Marty Donovan

THG held its first annual volunteer picnic August 16. We met at Mary **Riffle**'s house for a barbecue cookout. Her place is perfect for a picnic. The house was renovated from an old bakery shop. It sits away from the street, providing a lot of privacy. She has a large front yard with a covered gazebo and plenty of room for a picnic table.



Our hostess.....

Mary served barbecued hamburgers, hotdogs and an assortment of other goodies. We had quite a turnout, **Bruce Amsbury, Herb Hackenburg, Dale Norblom, Ken Pratt, Milo Masura, Merlin Crespin, Betty Vigil, George Howard, Jody Georgeson, and Marty Donovan.**



Good food....



.....fun and games.....

Some of the volunteers played basketball in her driveway while others visited in the gazebo. Milo told several stories of his adventures in Montana. Betty and Marty talked about their vacations overseas.



.....and fellowship.

More photos are available at our web site: www.telcomhistory.org. Click on "Volunteers."

To all of our members, have a wonderful autumn season. Enjoy the sunshine and colorful leaves, and don't forget to give thanks for family and friends. We at THG are very thankful for all of you!

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