



Dial Log



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Jody Georgeson, Editor

Director's Report

By Marty Donovan

I am writing the **Director's Report** for **Jody** in this edition of Dial Log. She and **Renee**, one of our volunteers, are vacationing in Italy. We at THG wish we were with them!

It's been a busy summer at THG. The exhibit at the Denver Public Library has been on display since early May and will run through the end of September. We aren't sure how many people have visited the exhibit, but according to Wayne, a DPL librarian, those who work near the exhibit "have grown accustomed to the phone ringing and the telegraph ticking." I got the impression that quite a few people have dropped by to take a look. Hope you get a chance to visit before September 28.

Pat Mack from Colorado Public Radio interviewed **Jody** in late July about the exhibit. It aired on August 4 on Colorado Matters. Jody talked about the history of telecommunications, including telegraph operations and costs, phone book publications in Denver in 1879, and the evolution of the industry over the years.

We continue to receive and assess various artifacts that members have contributed to our collection. We recently received a variety of materials including golf balls, hard hats, ball caps, and pins.

We are sorry to bid farewell to **Gary** and **Kathy Fleming**. **Gary** held the treasurer's position for THG's board and **Kathy** served as a board member. The couple enlisted in the Peace Corps, and received their assignment to work in Morocco. We'll surely miss them and wish them well.

We are expecting to have our museum up and ready for tours in early October. Building management at 931 14th St. replaced windows over the summer, and we are anxious to resume tours soon.



The Right Thing?

By Graham Patterson

I recently I had the great pleasure of a visit from members of our telephone family from Canada, Graham and Millie Patterson. I later received this email from Graham and thought it would be of interest to our readers.

After visiting with you, Millie and I walked over to the 16th Street Mall, to catch the free bus and go to lunch. During the walk, I solved a puzzle which had been bothering me for a long time. At the heart of the question is whether Judge Greene, on balance, did the "right" thing by breaking up the Bell System. Well, from our gut, you and I are quite sure that he didn't. Actually he did the world and the USA a great disservice. I wasn't sure about this until last week though.

In my work career (especially towards the end of it when I was consulting and working as an expert witness) I ran across evidence to support the thesis that AT&T needed breaking up. The popular notions of the time to support this were that AT&T was too comfortable and that Bell Laboratories was getting a little "set in their ways" as far as the evolution of switching was concerned. This second assertion was unfortunately quite true: Nortel would never have made so much out of the DMS-10 and DMS-100 families; and a Texas upstart outfit called Danray made MCI's switches, which were quite good.

The technology thing would have sorted itself out without the draconian solution that divestiture was. In fact, this had started to sort itself out. The same week that Northern cutover the 40 thousand or so line SXS Iona St. office

here in Ottawa, the BTL director of digital switching was replaced. His problem was that until then he had steered #5 ESS away from a completely digital subscribers' line interface, in favour of an analogue concentrator "in front" of where the digitization was done. BTL changed course with the 5E right after that and it ended up looking more "DMSish".

The terrible side effect of divestiture became clear to me after Millie and I met you. We were "family" and we three knew it! That sense of common objectives and a cooperative method of attaining those objectives through the use of standardised procedure was what the Bell System was about. Judge Greene missed that essential fact. The great gifts of Vail and Carty were squandered.

Any number of companies could have competed with the various parts Bell System. Long Lines didn't need a monopoly and could have lived beside MCI (it would have made 'em both sharper) and Northern Telecom provided very good products to the Bell Operating Companies, which made the BOCs stronger for employing them. WECO would have caught up, though, and both Western and Northern would have been the better for that, too.





Steamboat Springs Winter Olympics

By John Swartley

In the late 1960's I was part of a PBX crew in located in Boulder, Colorado. The Steamboat Springs ski area was starting to expand and required one or more of our crew to travel there to install or repair PBX's on a weekly basis. I enjoyed the smaller town atmosphere and when the company agreed to pay for my move I convinced my wife it was the thing to do.

One of the plus points when deciding to move to Steamboat was the 1976 Olympics coming to Colorado. The plans were to have the ski jumps in Steamboat, downhill races in Aspen, skating in Colorado Springs and the rest of the winter events scattered throughout Colorado. They built a large new ski jump on Howelsen Hill located in the town of Steamboat Springs.

In 1972, as the excitement grew for the coming event, Governor Lamm quietly moved a bill through the State Congress to block all funding for the Olympics. This created quite an uproar, and to this day I am not sure if he did the right thing. It killed my dream of being right in the middle of the exciting world event. He said the State of Colorado could not afford it and there would be too much environmental damage. Colorado is the only State in

history to turn down a Winter Olympics; most states spend millions of dollars trying to get them to come.

In February 1977, Steamboat hosted the first International Special Winter Olympics. More than 500 athletes from all over the world competed. The Special Olympics were televised by all three of the big networks. I had the pleasure of meeting and working with Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the founder of the special sports competition. Mountain Bell was at that time very involved with the Special Olympics and I spent a lot of rewarding time during that week with all the Special competitors. The Special Olympics more than made up for missing the regular Olympics in 1976.

Several years later I transferred to Montrose, Colorado. One of Mountain Bell's (then U S West's) customers was the sheltered workshop in Montrose. On my first repair call to the workshop a lady in her mid-forties came running over to me to show off the medallions hanging from her neck on a well worn strap. They were from the Steamboat Springs Special Winter Olympics in 1977. She repeated showing them to me and every new person to come into the building each time I had a service call at the workshop. It brought tears to my eyes and made me realize how important all the work Eunice Shriver had done to realize her dream of Special Olympics for Special people had been.



Special Olympics

100 Years ago – 1911

Man Who Operated the First Telephone System in Flora, from the Carroll County Commet, March 30, 2011 (Flora, Indiana)



Mr. W. H. Reppeto was one of the first to experiment with telephony. It was before the Bell patents were granted that Reppeto and W.H. Lenson, our fellow townsman, erected a crude telephone line in Flora. The original plant consisted of two oyster cans, two shingle nails and a ball of wrapping twine. The oyster cans served as both receiver and transmitter. The nails were placed cross wise of the small hole in the bottom of the can and to its middle was attached the string which soon gave place to the broom wire which has been found more efficient during storms and sleet.

50 years ago - 1961

Pacific Northwest Bell Telephone Company officially began operations to serve Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The new company had been an operating division of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company since February, 1960.

Western Electric turned over two newly completed defense communication systems to the U.S. Air Force. One was the eastern segment of the DEW Line and another linked Anchorage, Alaska with the Aleutian Islands.

25 years ago – 1986

(From Events in Telephone History, published by AT&T)

Various aspects of the divestiture decree were still being debated; principally whether the line-of business restrictions on Bell operating companies should be retained, whether the court should retain its role, and whether the regional companies could provide exchange service outside their areas...

Judge Green had ruled that they could only provide exchange services within their discreet territories. The ruling was appealed by Bell Atlantic, and the Court of Appeals held that the Modification of Final Judgment did not prevent the Regional Holding Companies from providing exchange services, like electronic paging, outside of their respective geographic areas. The ruling effectively stripped Judge Greene's court of authority to regulate extra-regional exchange services.

In Memory

Elsie Verburg



Long-time member of the THG family, Elsie Verburg passed away on June 29, 2011, at the age of 90. She is survived by daughter Maradee (David) Peakman; grandchildren, Lindsay (John) Wylie & Jonathan (Hannah) Peakman; and by great grandchildren, Allison & Matthew Wylie.

North Side Story

I'm often asked who uses our archives. One of our researchers is Phil Goodstein, author of numerous books about the history of Denver. The following is taken from his newest publication.



At midnight, on May 6, 1939, the new North Denver telephone exchange opened. It replaced a building at 3130 Zuni Street that had served the North Side since September 1906. The Zuni building was central office of the Gallup exchange for single lines; those with party lines were on the Hickory and Walnut exchanges.

After the phone company moved out, the building was the home of the North Side Community Center for a few years. The Colorado Department of Agriculture subsequently acquired it as the quarters for its division examining stock feed, commercial fertilizers, and airy products. It was additionally the home of the Colorado Civil Defense Agency. A new building displaced it in the early 1970s.

In opening the \$150,000, two-story exchange at 32nd and Federal, Mountain States expanded and modernized its North Denver service. This included placing many lines underground. For years, it handled

phone numbers beginning with a four such as Genesee 3, Glendale 5, Grand 7, and Harrison 2—the last was once Gallup 2. A massive addition in 1968–69 saw the expansion of the structure all the way to West 32nd Avenue and Eliot Street.

All this and more is described comes in a fascinating new book, **North Side Story by Phil Goodstein** (Denver: New Social Publications, 2011, vi + 570 pp. ISBN 0–9742264–6–7. \$28.95. maps, illustrations, index. Anyone interested in Denver history should read it.



Adventures in Yonkers

By Ken McLaughlin

In October 1971, I was a new supervisor attending a staff meeting, when one of the senior supervisors said to the boss, “The New York strike has been going on for four months; they are asking for supervisors throughout the Bell System. Why don’t you ever select one of us for strike duty?”

The Wire Chief said he didn’t think any of us wanted to go, but he would talk to someone at the district level. A week later he came to me and said that he had to send a man to New York for strike duty. He had offered it to the senior supervisors and they all declined, and since I was junior, I was to go to

work in New York for two months, November and December.

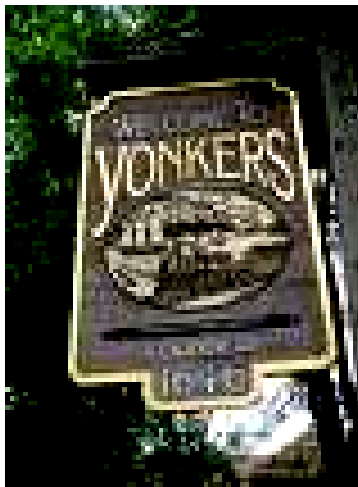
I flew to New York and was met by a driver who took several of us to White Plains, NY to receive our work locations. I was then driven to a motel near Yonkers. The motel had several New York Bell cars in the parking lot. My instructions were to catch a ride with one of the drivers in the morning (11/1/1971) to go to the Yonkers garage.

I checked into the motel and was assigned a musty room in the back lower level. I was feeling pretty miserable about this time, but started unpacking. Then I heard a knock on the door. It was a supervisor from my home district and another supervisor from the Deep South. They said, "What are you doing in this flea bag motel? We have a room for you in the Holiday Inn up on the hill." I was delighted to get out of the moldy room, and find someone to show me the ropes.

The next morning I rode with these fellows to the garage. We were greeted by people throwing eggs, but got safely into the garage. (I saw a Cadillac parked out behind the garage that disappeared piece by piece over the next two months.) In the garage I loaded a nice new van with installation and repair parts. I was given a map of Yonkers and told where to call for trouble. We were to work twelve hour days, seven days a week. We were paid \$15 cash a day for meals.

The first evening I found myself in an upscale neighborhood putting up service wires that had been torn down by a truck. It would have been ok if it

hadn't been dark and rainy and if the poles weren't made of old hardwood trees with several ends to climb over. New York Bell had been replacing their old hard wood poles with straight pine poles, but the project was not yet complete. All of the hardwood poles were red tagged, showing that they were unsafe to climb. Also, acid rain had eaten the pole steps, down guys, (wire brace) and suspension strands to about half size, so I couldn't trust any of them to support additional weight.



Yonkers had been laid out in the 1600s, not on a grid pattern, but wandering roads ending in five or six way intersections, similar to London. To find an address, I looked on the map and memorized three or four turns, then stopped at a street sign to memorize more intersection turns. That didn't really work. I drove down an on ramp by mistake, to a cars-only turnpike. There were no off ramps until I got past the toll booth. After paying toll, I exited at the first off ramp and wound up in The Bronx, completely off my map. However, I did manage to find Broadway, which led me back to Yonkers. The van I had picked out was entirely too long to park in tight spaces, so I often had to park several blocks from trouble addresses.

The next day, I picked out an old Chevrolet at the garage that was smaller and had a tight turning radius. With this vehicle I could squeeze into the smallest spaces.

Some of the streets in Yonkers were very narrow and usually filled with parking on both sides. If you met a car coming in the opposite direction, you needed to pull over into a loading zone

or a driveway. The garbage trucks had the right-of-way and they were followed by about five or six workers walking and picking up garbage bags and cans along the way. This made maneuvering through the street rather difficult.



Consolidated Edison Company also had walking crews. One day a crew walked by while I was up a pole. One of their members tried to get in my vehicle. He yelled up at me, saying he needed an extension cord. I told him to call our business because we charge for them. He said "I'm going to come up there and kick your a__." I was very comfortable on poles so I invited him to try to come on up. The rest of his crew was walking away; perhaps he thought discretion would be the better part of valor, and left.

Yonkers is comprised of rich ethnic areas; including Irish, Jewish, Puerto Rican, African-American, Greek, and Italian. The Italians were my favorite people. The men of these households would clear out the kitchen, set up drinks, and invite you to sit down and negotiate a good telephone repair job.

Some people would ask you to go around back to the service entrance, which seemed kind of strange, since repairmen would be running wires all over their house. At one home, a

woman answered the door and asked if I was an electronics expert. I replied, "No, but I know a little about electricity." She threw up her hands, turned around and walked back in her house, saying "Harold, they sent someone who doesn't know anything." I turned to walk away, as her son came running out and asked me to stay, and to ignore his mother. They complained about noises in the night and thought it may be coming from the telephone line. As it turned out, Harold was an architect and had designed the house. He probably had made some mistakes. I upgraded the protector and assured them that the telephone line feeding their house was slack enough not to make noise.

Every person for whom I fixed phones wanted to give me a tip. I felt it somewhat degrading, and it made for some awkward departures from the customers premise. An elderly woman in a wheel chair wanted to tip me for fixing her phone, when another telephone person had left the protector cover off, which caused the problem.

Another time, I was sent to an ambulance center to help a supervisor from Maine string in a new drop wire. He was not comfortable climbing poles, so I strung in the new service wire for him and let him finish the job. I told him that I was going down to the diner for brunch. He showed up fifteen minutes later and handed me \$10 and said, "Here is your share of the tip." I was surprised, because another supervisor had caused the trouble by stealing an alarm circuit to use for a new dial tone line. On another occasion, a doctor gave me \$5 for fixing his phone, which I handed to the beggar lady on his front office steps.

To be continued in the Winter issue of the Dial-log.

Curt's Works of Art

By Marty Donovan

Alexander Graham Bell comes to life. Well, not exactly, but the sculpture that Curt Furness, (one of our volunteers) carved of Bell feels as though the telephone inventor is alive.

Curt recently presented THG with a sculpture he carved of Alexander Graham Bell. He entered other pieces in the 21st Desert Contest in Mesa, Arizona and won 1st prize for a bust of a woman, and 2nd for a sculpture of an American Indian.



I asked Curt how he undertakes such a project. He said that once he has chosen a model, (either from a magazine, brochure, picture, or drawing) he sketches the front and side views of it on paper. From there, he draws a three-dimensional design onto the wood.

Curt works primarily with basswood and butternut, since both are easier to carve than other types. Basswood and butternut are native to Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Curt set up a studio in his backyard in Arizona where he carves his works. Curt puts a lot of time and energy into his projects. Not only did he cut tiny

slices to form Bells' beard, he also carved a tie and jacket button at the nape of Bells' neck. The detail is amazing.

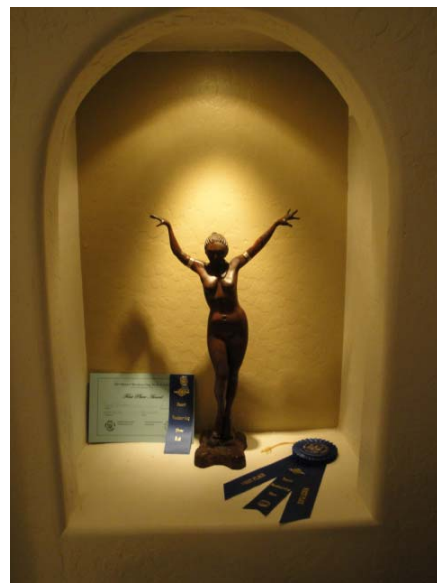
Once Curt finishes carving his sculptures, he sands each one. He told me that this was a "very labor intensive process."

Curt begins with 150 grit and works through various grits until he gets to 400-600 grit. He has even used 1200 grit. While he enjoys carving his projects, Curt said that sanding was his least favorite part of sculpting. But it's worth the effort, because in the end he has produced a terrific piece of art.

To add the finishing touches and to protect his work, Curt paints several coats of sealing and applies a paste wax to hide any finger prints.

Curt has carved Native Americans, female torsos, and full figures. He's recently developed an interest in mythology, so we expect to see new sculptures from Curt in the future.

"So many subjects to carve and so little time."



The Good ole' Days

I had to look twice when I came across the historical, billhead (below) while thumbing through old documents at THG. My wish was to purchase several billheads and frame them.

As I looked at each, I noticed something very amusing. It's a little difficult to see but the invoice is dated 7/7/1911. It is a bill from the **Continental Oil Company**, to the **Leadville Telephone Company** for the purchase of five gallons of gasoline. I couldn't believe that gasoline went for 18 cents a gallon then. None of us will every see that again. It's hard to believe!

GASOLINE NOT SOLD FOR ILLUMINATING PURPOSES IN BUILDINGS
CUSTOMERS WHO DO NOT REQUIRE FOR USE BY THEMSELVES TO BE KEPT IN THEIR POSSESSION

No. 8580

M. *Leadville Telephone Co.*
Leadville, Colo.

OUR ORDER: _____
 YOUR ORDER: _____
 TERMS: _____ BOUGHT OF **CONTINENTAL OIL COMPANY**

F.O.B. *Leadville*

NO. 7-12 USE BY CARRIER OR IDENTIFICATION USE ONLY. NO PAY OR SERVICE OR EXPENSE CHARGES OR REMITTANCES.
 OPEN ACCOUNT AND DELIVERIES ARE MADE FOR IN ADVANCE, UNLESS THE CARRIER WILL BE PAID.

DATE	QUANTITY	GRADE	PRICE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
	<i>5</i>	<i>Super Gasol</i>	<i>18</i>		<i>90</i>

ORIGINAL

Lead

NOTE: YOUR EMPTY TANKS SHOULD BE RETURNED TO US PROMPTLY FOR CASH OR CREDIT.
 WE DO NOT HOLD INVENTORY ON OUR TANKS FOR RESALE PURPOSES.
 FOR DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCTS SEE REVERSE SIDE. Received Payment

A taste of Colorado in the 1800s

Remember Horace (H.A.W) Tabor? Those of you who grew up in Colorado may recall learning about his larger than life presence, and the role he played in Colorado history.

Tabor mined silver in Leadville, Colorado for several years. At the time, he was married to Augusta and life was good; that is until Tabor met a young woman who called herself Baby Doe.

He was so enthralled with her that he divorced Augusta. Tabor gave her a large sum of money, but it was worth it to him to marry Baby Doe. The newlyweds lived a life of luxury until the silver crash in 1893.

Not long after, Tabor fell ill and died. Legend has it that his last words to Baby Doe were "Never give up the Matchless," Tabor's silver mine in Leadville.

Baby Doe stayed in Leadville until her death 35 years later. She died penniless.

I heard a story years ago from some old railroaders who said they'd set plates of food outside for Baby Doe as their train chugged past her cabin.



I was reminded of this story when I came across an old **Leadville Telephone Company** stock certificate that Tabor signed on August 4, 1882.

The **Colorado Telephone Company** purchased the **Leadville Telephone Company** in 1888.

See www.telcomhistory.com.



The leaves are starting to change color and the weather is cooling down; the first signs of autumn. We at THG wish all of you a wonderful fall season.