



# Dial Log



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[www.telcomhistory.org](http://www.telcomhistory.org)  
Jody Georgeson, editor

## **SPECIAL EDITION**

### **Who are we?**

The Telecommunications History Group, Inc. (THG) is a nonprofit organization funded by membership dues, research fees, grants and endowments. The mission of the organization is to serve as a public resource for the history and role of communications in the United States, and to preserve and publicize the heritage of the telecommunications industry in our society.

The organization promotes a broad humanistic understanding of telecommunications and its role in our culture. Audiences served include school children, teachers, students and scholars, researchers, and the general public (especially current and former telecom employees!). Our purpose is to help our communities understand how telecommunications changes our lives and our world.

### **Denver Archives and Telephone Museum**

THG Headquarters is in Denver, where it serves as a center for education and learning that furthers understanding of the history, cultural context, and applications of telecommunications. The THG archives, which houses many irreplaceable, one-of-a-kind items, is open to researchers by appointment.

The Denver museum is housed in the historic Mountain States Telephone building in the downtown theater district, and presents a graphic timeline of the people, procedures, and equipment used to provide communications services to the Rocky Mountain Region. We also conduct tours of the 1929 building. Tours of the building and museum are by appointment. Call 303-296-1221 or email [telcomhist@aol.com](mailto:telcomhist@aol.com) to schedule research and/or tours.

### **Seattle Herbert H. Warrick, Jr. Museum of Communications**

The Seattle Museum contains exhibits from 1876, ranging from a model of Alexander Graham Bell's first successful telephone, to the modern cell phone we all take for granted today. Automated displays and special exhibits permit hands-on participation.

Our museum exhibits are unique and virtually all the equipment is currently operational. The Museum of Communications is visited by people from all over the world and may well be the best museum of its type in the world. The museum is open every Sunday from 10 am to 3:00 pm. Call (206)767-3012 or see <http://museumofcommunications.org/> for more information.

### **The Telecommunications Virtual Museum**

This web resource is a collection of sites dedicated to the preservation of telecommunications history. Here you'll find many different exhibits, each in a virtual room and extensively cross-linked with areas both inside and outside the museum.

This site was developed to make the assets, processes and successes of the communications industry available to all for research and enjoyment. We not only exhibit the history of the industry, but also tell the stories of the people who made it all possible. See our website at [www.telcomhistory.org](http://www.telcomhistory.org).

## **Rocky Mountain Book and Paper Fair**

Every year, the first full weekend in August, RMABA hosts the Annual Rocky Mountain Book and Paper Fair. Currently in its 30th year, RMBPF will be held July 31-August 1, at The Denver Merchandise Mart. THG will once again have a display at the fair, showing off some of our most interesting documents and equipment. Other exhibits will be a Preservation Station by the Guild of Book Workers, Rocky Mountain Chapter; letterpress demonstrations by The Book Arts League of Lafayette, CO; calligraphy demonstrations by the Colorado Calligraphers Guild; and an exhibit by the Wild West History Association.

Special Events will include:

- Exhibits and displays
- Presentation by Sherlock Holmes Expert
- Ghost Stories in Literature
- Displays and Demonstrations (both days)
- Drawings Saturday for Gift Certificates



The 30th Rocky Mountain Book & Paper Fair will be a celebration of the Past, Present and Future of book collecting. Whether you are a serious collector; print enthusiast, or casual shopper, the RMBPF has a lot to offer from rare books and maps to cultural oddities and whimsical finds. Over 80 exhibitors from across the nation have selected their best inventory to present at the fair. If you're looking for something specific, ask our exhibitors: you never know what they have in store that you have been hoping to acquire or might never have imagined exists! Watch the videos for a taste of past RMBPF, take a look at the featured items, events and speakers. See you at the Fair! Read more:

[http://www.rmaba.org/rmbpf/2014/rmbpf\\_2014\\_GeneralInfo.html#ixzz3eeLqFQTN](http://www.rmaba.org/rmbpf/2014/rmbpf_2014_GeneralInfo.html#ixzz3eeLqFQTN)

## A Few Good People

As for most non-profit organizations, the Telecommunications History Group's volunteers are its life's blood, keeping the group functioning and the archives and museums in good order. Volunteers are essential to the building and maintenance of our collection, performing a variety of jobs, including archival and curator functions.

Duties can include research, preservation activities, inventory, database entry and management, repair of antique equipment, tour conducting, educational speaking and oral history collection. Most of the work is performed at our Denver and Seattle locations, but a limited number of positions are available for long distance "tele-volunteering."

We are especially interested in talking to people with database management, telephone equipment/networks and organizational skills, but the primary requirement is an interest in history.

Be sure to visit our web site at [www.telcomhistory.org](http://www.telcomhistory.org) to learn more about us, and to see the kind of work we do.

If you are interested in volunteering, or want more information about becoming a member of The Telecommunications History Group, contact us at [telcomhist@aol.com](mailto:telcomhist@aol.com), or at 303-296-1221.

## Starting a New Career as a Volunteer

by Jerry Wild



]After leaving a 38 year career with Mountain Bell and a 2 year Army tour of Korea, it quickly became evident to me that I was not meant to spend the rest of my life in a rocking chair on my front porch. So I first found a job that was a spin-off of my old one and that was tearing out Step X Step switching systems that I helped maintain for years.

In my idle time my wife decided I could start doing our grocery shopping. So off to the closest market I went with a full list of groceries to buy. While doing this I kept running into this guy that I knew from "Ma Bell". We would stop and chat for a while and I soon found out that he had put together a small group to preserve the history of the Bell

System. He referred to it as "The Telecommunications History Group" (THG), and he was looking for volunteers as well as artifacts.

This immediately rang my chimes, as here I am throwing artifacts in the Denny Dumpster every day. This fellow happened to be **Herb Hackenburg**. So we exchanged a few thoughts along with phone numbers and it was a beginning on the preservation of some Bell System junk – oops - artifacts.

After six years this work came to a conclusion and I was out of a job. However, I still could not see the thrill of sitting in the rocking chair for the rest of my life, so I once again talked to Herb and found myself as a volunteer at the THG facility in the 1005

17th St building, just off of the docks and, oh yes, the annual freezing of the pipes and the months of clean up so we could do it again the next winter.

One of the first items I was introduced to was building shelves to store our collection on. This led to lettering shelves and numbering spaces so, like a library, we could find our historic items. Which, in turn, brought the development of utilizing computers, adapting filing systems into software programs that identified hundreds of items, by type and where they were located. This included all types of artifacts, from various paper records and telephone directories, to material artifacts such as phones, a Step X Step switching display (which at that time needed fixing and cleaning up) and, as you can imagine, all kinds of other hardware items.

Somehow we got three computers, but sadly we had more than three volunteers, all of whom were working on different items with different filing requirements. This was in the time frame where the floppy disks were in use. So I would pass out a clean floppy disk to the input people every Wednesday morning and then collect them every afternoon so that I could put them in our major database. Then I'd reformat the floppy so it could be utilized the next week. I had no idea of how to make a computer network.

Somehow Herb managed to get me in a 3 -day computer class in the old Mayflower Hotel. Supposedly this was a beginners' class, but I soon found out I was probably the only beginner in this class, which consisted of 50 of us at least. Thankfully, they paired me with a young, 21-year old girl (yes she was cute, but she was also smarter than smart). She was a great help. I told her I had no idea how to make a network and I was hoping this class would cover this subject. She handed me a piece of paper and told me to take notes and she would tell and show me at one of our breaks, and she did. She also asked the History Group, took the "Wall Street Journal" which Herb was. She told me to look for the articles by their computer expert. She said he is outstanding and that his articles were always a big help. I started looking for his articles and they were always very good and of great help.

I can't remember for sure, but I think we only still had three computers. But I started building our first network. I had to make up Ethernet cables and then string them through the false ceiling to tie the computers together and then do the software piece. When I found out it worked, I was so content with the results that when I got home I connected my laptop and desktop so that I could use my printer from either one.

Now I honestly look forward to coming to THG. It has become family to me. I would miss the companionship of this group, the exercising of my brain and the opportunity to have lunch with the gang. I encourage others that are sitting at home to get out, volunteer, learn new things, forget the Boob Tube, and enjoy doing what you can do to help the cause.

I have been at this for close to 20 years, I'm still not eager for the Rocking Chair and, believe me, exercise of the brain is becoming more and more important. So join the group and enjoy the exercise.



## The Line Truck Project

by Dave Dintenfass



One of our more ambitious projects at the *Herbert H. Warrick Jr. Museum of Communications* was the restoration of a 1955 International “line truck.” The truck was purchased by Pacific Telephone (we found the original “build sheet” taped to the top of the glovebox) in 1955 and outfitted with a body customized for telephone-pole installation. This also included a cable-operated boom.

The truck was donated to us in 2004 by **Mrs. Jean Williamson** of Port Angeles, Washington after the death of her husband Ed in 2003. Jean Williamson (who died in late 2004) retired from Pacific Northwest

Bell Telephone Co. in 1978 with more than 30 years as a chief operator. **Ed Williamson** (who died in 2003) was a cable splicer with Pacific Northwest Bell Telephone for 34 years, working mainly in Bellingham and Seattle. He retired in 1979 but continued to do telephone contracting work in several Western states and Alaska. Both Ed and Jean were very active in their local Pioneer chapter.

We made arrangements to store the truck in the parking lot of an AT&T facility in North Bend, about 30 miles east of Seattle where we later assembled a metal canopy to shield it from rain and snow. *On that note, now would be a good time to express our thanks to AT&T for use of their facility—so on behalf of the Herbert H. Warrick Jr. Museum of Communications, we would like to thank AT&T for their indulgence in letting us have unrestricted access to their parking lot at North Bend!*

Before we could move the truck, we made several visits to the Williamson property to ready the vehicle for transport. Once that was done, we began the restoration. This included rust-removal, rust-treatment, priming/painting, metal repair, new electrical system and wiring harness, new tires, rebuilt brake drums, exhaust system, and new seat covers. The initial restoration crew was headed by Don Ostrand and included **Dale Thompson, Ed West, Bill Dymont, Rich Barger, John Berkman, and Dave Dintenfass**. Later, **Stephen Jones** joined the effort and provided much of the volunteer effort in recent years along with Don, Rich Barger, and Dale Thompson.

Our intent in 2004 was to restore the truck and use it to publicize the museum at automotive shows and in parades and eventually have it displayed at our museum here in Seattle. Restoration proceeded slower than anticipated, however, due not only to the distance from Seattle but also because local weather conditions (North Bend is in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains) made work on the truck impossible for much of the year.

After Don's death, we evaluated the project and realized that it wasn't practical to continue and we began to search for a new owner. Museum volunteer Dale Thompson headed the effort and made a successful outreach to the Lemay Family Collection of Tacoma, Washington. In April 2015, representatives of the Lemay Family Collection took possession of the truck with plans to display it at their museum. We are tremendously thankful to both Dale and to the Lemay Family for the smooth ownership transfer and we look forward to visiting "our" truck at its new home. We are assisting the Lemay organization with advice on period-correct decals for the truck and on related signage.



*The line truck at the Lemay Family Collection*

The museum is open year-round on the grounds of the former Marymount Military Academy in Tacoma, Washington. "With over a century's worth of American vehicles represented, visitors may see more than 500 vehicles from the LeMay Family Collection, once the largest private collection of vintage vehicles in the world." Visit the Lemay Family Collection at <http://www.lemaymarymount.org/tacoma-car-museum/>

*From time to time we receive artifacts that do not fit our collection, are duplicates, or are, like the line truck, something we cannot care for or display properly. We do our best to find "a good home" for such objects in another museum or archives. If you have artifacts or documents that you'd like contribute to our collection, please contact us at [telcomhist@aol.com](mailto:telcomhist@aol.com) or 303-296-1221.*

## What was going on?

*100 years ago – 1915:*

The 'Archangel' submarine telegraph cable was laid between Great Britain and Russia.

*75 years ago – 1940:*

Television was transmitted over coaxial cable from Convention Hall in Philadelphia to television studio in Radio City, New York.

*50 years ago – 1965:*

The first Internet was begun by Bolt, Beranek & Newman (BBN). Called the ARPANET, it was a network connecting the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), SRI in Stanford, USA, University of California at Santa Barbara and the University of Utah, using 50Kbps circuits. It was completed to its original specification in 1969.

### Coaxial Cable

*From the July 1940 Issue of The Northwestern Bell Magazine*

Coaxial telephone cable, over which it will be possible to transmit 480 messages simultaneously, is in place between the twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul and Stevens Point, Wisconsin. A Minneapolis newspaper recently described it as one of the scientific wonders of the modern world.

The new cable is a development that has come out of the Bell Telephone Laboratories in the past few years. Its outer covering is a lead sheath little more than an inch in diameter. Inside this sheath are four tubes of thin copper about the size of a lead pencil. Running through the center of each tube and suspended by fiber discs is a copper wire, about the size of the lead in a pencil. These tubes and the central wires are the conductors. The cable is called "coaxial" because each tube and its central wire have the same axis. . .

That part of the cable between Minneapolis and St. Paul is in conduit underground. That part between St. Paul and Neillsville, Wis., approximately 128 miles, is of the steel armored type, buried directly in the ground. The remainder, about 51 miles is aerial construction, the cable being suspended on poles. At Stevens Point the coaxial cable connects with long distance circuits leading to Milwaukee, Chicago and cities in the east. . .

The Minneapolis-Stevens Point project is the first in which this method of burying cable directly in the ground has been used in connection with coaxial cable. The new cable, fully equipped with terminal and repeater apparatus, ultimately will be able to do the work of five fully loaded open wire pole lines with four crossarms and 10 wires per crossarm.



## What the heck????

Our collection includes over 100,000 photographs, most of which are identified and catalogued. However, we still have many that are not. We'd like to solicit your help in identifying the names (and, if possible, the occasion) of the people in these photos.



Arizona?

Party time!



## Won't you consider joining us?

Your contribution supports our ongoing operations as the preeminent 501(c) 3 telecommunications history organization in the United States. With a world class archive chronicling the evolution of the telephone business and the only working collection of historical telephone switching equipment, THG provides unique insight into our country's communications technological history.

Your membership dollars help preserve the legacy that you helped to create. We will continue to keep you updated about the events, exhibits, and programs we offer through our quarterly *Dial-Log* newsletter and on our website featuring virtual tours of both the Denver and Seattle museum locations.

Enclosed is a renewal form and self-addressed envelope for your convenience. The Telecommunications History Group Executive Director, Lisa Berquist, is available to answer questions and provide information and assistance. Also be sure to visit our website [www.telcomhistory.org](http://www.telcomhistory.org) for news and information about both museum sites in Denver and Seattle.



### THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS HISTORY GROUP, INC

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**Yes**, I would like to become a member to preserve the history of telecommunications with the one-of-a-kind archives in Denver and Museum of Communications in Seattle and future initiatives about how telecommunications changes our lives and world.

\$35 Regular       \$50 Contributing       \$100 Patron       Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check payable to: Telecommunications History Group**

Mail to: The Telecommunications History Group  
PO Box 8719  
Denver, CO 80201-87

**Memberships can also be paid by credit card, by going to our web site at:**  
<http://www.telcomhistory.org/membership.shtml>

*Thank you for your support!*

## **SPECIAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS HISTORY ISSUE**

You are receiving a special issue of the Telecommunications History Group's newsletter, "The Dial-Log", courtesy of the AUSWR CO/WY retiree's association. The History Group catalogs and maintains an enormous amount of telephone material and equipment dating back to the earliest years of the telecommunications industry.

This special issue is a joint effort between your AUSWR CO/WY retiree organization and the History Group and is being sent to all members of both organizations. The History Group's function is to maintain and preserve the rich history of the telecommunications industry. Each of us is a part of this history. Each of us has contributed to the story of our industry by our years spent in building the great communications companies of the last century. The companies we built laid the cornerstone for today's networks and technology. We all have a great deal to be proud of and hold many recollections of those years.

We find that many retirees are not aware of the History Group's existence and many retirees that are aware, have not had the opportunity to tour the Museum. The main museum is located in Denver with a satellite location in Seattle. Both can be toured by making prior arrangements with the staffs. Information is included in this newsletter.

This special issue is dedicated to you. We hope you enjoy it and the memories it may arouse. You can make your own story part of the historical record by sharing your memories with the History Group. Please call 303-296-1221 or email [telcomhist@aol.com](mailto:telcomhist@aol.com) to find out more.  
A special thanks to Jody Georgeson for her efforts in producing this newsletter.

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