



Dial - Log



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Jody Georgeson, EDITOR

Director's Report

By Herb Hackenburg

Three recent good-sized acquisitions, shelving our newly bound 2002 directories, and a unique purchase all have driven home the point I've made in a few previous reports: THG is really running out of room to do its work. We need both work and storage space.

Our recent acquisitions include: records of QwestLink providing an extensive view of "Classic Qwest's" national and international operations; several new models of business phones and one new/old Bell System-issue all weather phone; and a unique individually designed and stitched Bell System retiree quilt.

Lack of room and money to pay for the move forced us to turn down an eight-position LD cord board from the Pioneer Museum in Davenport. All of the fine, old antique telephones and small switchboards in this museum have been given away to assorted Iowa museums. There doesn't seem to be any official documentation on any of the distribution of these significant pieces of Iowa's telephone history. I'm scheduled to visit the Pioneer Museum

in Colorado Springs to see if we've got room to accept some of the excess old telephone equipment there.

Howard Doerr and I met with **Joan Walker**, executive vice president, Corporate Communications, Qwest, who encouraged us to prepare a three-year grant request to be submitted to the Qwest Foundation. We are optimistic that it may lead to continued support for our operations.

Because of a broken leg and the 100-year blizzard, we have not progressed very far in our oral history program. In spite of a badly broken leg, Carol is bravely working from home. At this time we have only a transcribing machine for large tape cassettes - we have to buy a different machine for the micro-cassettes.

I'm happy to report that for the first time in our history we had two consecutive weeks during which we banked more than \$10,000. One week was when we deposited the money from our \$11,040 collector's stock certificate sale; the other week we deposited a large check for research services, and a partial payment of a three-year grant.



Memorial

In Dedication to **Ken Roper**
December 12, 1945 –
February 17, 2003

It is with love and admiration that we dedicate this issue of the Dial-Log to **Ken Roper**.

Ken was an invaluable member of the THG family. He kept us on the financial straight and narrow with detailed monthly and annual reports, tax returns and payroll. Most importantly, he was a delight to work with. Ken was always upbeat, with an unbeatable spirit of fun and a wonderful sense of style.

Ken was a CPA who worked in the finance department for Northwestern Bell before moving to Denver in 1983 to work for the newly-formed U S WEST. He retired as finance director last October.

In addition to his volunteer work for THG, Ken was very active in his church, was the President of the Rocky Mountain WaShonaji Quilt Guild, and served on the board of the Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum. He made nearly 100 quilts, many of which have been displayed at the Colorado History

Museum, the Governor's office, libraries, churches and senior centers.

Ken is survived by his wife Juanita, their daughters Anita and Charyl, and innumerable relatives and friends.

In dedication to you, Ken, we miss you very much and thank you for all you've done for us.

Mountain Bell Says . . .

Please Don't Shoot

*The following article is from The Brush Banner, September 7, 1977. This Colorado newspaper was published by THG member (and coincidentally, the mother of Dial-Log's editor) **Dru Georgeson**, from 1975 through 1986.*

"Please don't shoot phone wires and cables – they're out of season."

That's the annual plea issued by Mountain Bell just before hunting season opens in Colorado. It's being issued again.

"It's hard to believe, but there are a few so-called hunters who use telephone wires, cables and glass insulators for target practice," said **Jim Wright**, customer services manager for Mountain Bell.

He went on to point out the hazards and inconvenience involved when someone shoots at aerial telephone lines. Shotgun pellets and rifle bullets can easily penetrate the protective sheathing around a telephone cable, cutting the many small wires inside. Bullets and pellets can also shatter glass insulators and sever individual telephone wires.

"We've had some communities completely lose service because someone used telephone equipment for target practice," Wright said. He added the telephone is the only way some

people, including hunters, can summon help in an emergency.

Sometimes telephone lines damaged in the fall hunting season will not affect service until the winter months when water seeps into the cable. This can make repair work difficult because of the inaccessibility of many areas in the state during winter.

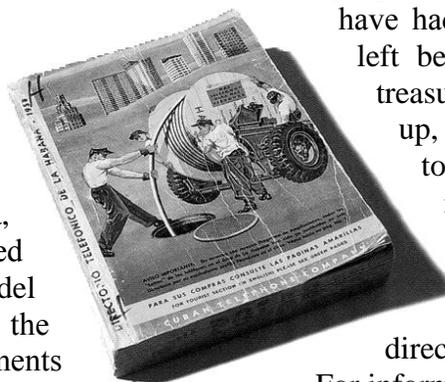
“We’re only asking target shooters and hunters to protect themselves, their friends and their neighbors by not shooting at or near telephone lines,” the telephone manager said.

He added that willful damage to telephone transmission lines is a first-degree criminal tampering violation, punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or 24 months in jail.

The World’s Most Valuable Phone Book

We keep telling you how valuable our directory collection is to genealogist, lawyers, and historians. This article describes another, more poignant value. It originally appeared in American Heritage, December/January 2001, page 14.

The University of Miami’s Cuban Heritage Collection has a surprising star attraction, the Directorio Telefonico de La Habana, Havana’s last published telephone directory before Fidel Castro’s takeover. Out of the collection’s 500,000 documents and artifacts, the 1958 phone book is one of the most frequently asked about. Half a million Cubans fled the country in the decade after Castro took power, but almost none took along a phone book – a key, it turns out, to



reconstructing and imagining life in those days. As a result, hundreds of people each year consult the university’s copy, which was long kept under lock and key. Esperanza de Varona, coordinator of the Cuban Heritage collection, says it lets exiles “remember the feeling of the time that they left, and pass those memories on to their children.”

Frank Angones, now a lawyer and member of the Florida Bar Board of Governors, came to the United States from Cuba in 1961, when he was 10. He says of the phone book, “I found my family’s listing, and my grandmother’s. It reminded me of better times.” The playwright Luis Santeiro, also a Cuban exile, used a prop version of it in his recent play *Praying With the Enemy*. “Powerful memories come out of that directory,” he says.

The refugees from Cuba settled almost exclusively in southern Florida, and Castro’s revolutionary government required that they leave behind all their household possessions. Never believing Cuban Communism would last, many of them hid their valuables in Cuba for safekeeping. Today those Cuban exiles have had to accept that they’ve left behind more than hidden treasures. The lives they gave up, and expected to return to in due time, are irretrievable. The closest they can come is the yellowed pages of a lone phone directory.

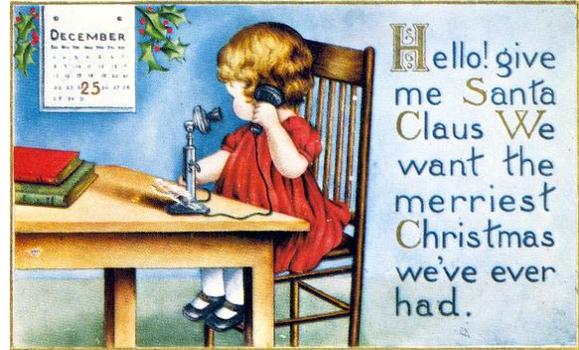
For information on seeing the book yourself, go to www.library.miami.edu/umcuban/cuban.html or phone 305-284-900.

Postcards

By Jody Georgeson



In 1873 - three years before Bell invented his telephone - the first penny postcard appeared in America. Advertisers immediately saw its potential, and began selling to the public via original illustrations sent through the mail. In 1892, the U.S. Post Office granted Charles Goldsmith permission to print and sell souvenir post cards of the World's Columbian Exposition, and the Golden Age of postcards began. Travelers, politicians and families soon began mailing messages and holiday greetings throughout the world. To meet the demand, printing companies chose diverse subjects to catch the buyer's eye.



The two new communication inventions complimented one another. Cherubs and lovers, babies and Santa were all shown using the telephone on postcards. THG volunteer **Renee Lang** recently inventoried and digitized our collection of postcards, a few of which are presented here.



What kind of name is that?

By Anu Garg, Wordsmith.org

lucent (LOO-suhnt) adjective

1. Luminous; shining.
2. Translucent; clear.

[From Latin *lucent*, from *lucere* (to shine). Other words derived from the same root are *elucidate*, *lucid*, and *translucent*.]

"Now I am nestling on the sofa, antique crystal glass in one hand, elegant bottle of lucent amber in the other."

Victoria Moore; *Sweet Surrender*;
New Statesman (London); Dec 18, 1998.

"Fair Hope with lucent light in her glad eyes,
Fleet as Diana, through the meadow speeds;"

Henrietta Cordelia Ray;

The Quest of the Ideal; 1893

Anu is author of A Word a Day service on the Internet, and the new best-selling book, A Word A Day: A Romp Through Some of the Most Unusual and Intriguing Words (ISBN: 0471230324). It can be purchased at your local bookstore, or on line at: <http://amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0471230324/ws00-20/>

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The Memory Quilt

By Jody Georgeson

A couple of weeks ago, I was shopping at an antique mall, and came upon a beautiful quilt. It consists of 42 signature squares, alternating flowers with telephone-related pictures, embroidered and signed or initialed by her coworkers. The large center square is embroidered with a Bell System logo, the words "Congratulations **Mildred Lammon**", and the dates March 11, 1948 – June 30, 1987 (presumably her dates of service). The price tag read, "One-of-a-kind quilt from Mildred Lammon retirement from the telephone company. Family did not want to keep..."

I'm sure that Mildred treasured the quilt, and the memories and good wishes it represented. It seemed sad that Mildred's friends went to so much trouble for something that would ultimately be sold to strangers. I hated to leave it hanging there, but the price was more than I could afford.

Herb felt the same way I did, and we had some budget dollars set aside for the purchase of artifacts. I was able to rescue the quilt, and it will soon hang in a place of honor among our exhibits.

We feel like Mildred's quilt has come home.



I also had a call recently from a man who purchased a memory book at a garage sale. He planned to take it apart, use some the pictures, and throw the rest away. Luckily, he, too, was touched by the effort and sentiments that went into the book, and was looking for a better end. Thanks to the internet, he found us.

Many of us are moving to smaller homes, and don't have room for all of our treasures. Families may not recognize their historical worth, or may not be able to keep them for various reasons. This material is very valuable to THG, as we try to preserve our industry's history. With our limited budget, we can only afford to purchase a very few.

If you know of telecommunications artifacts or memorabilia that are in danger of being lost, please suggest that the owner or their family donate them to the History Group. We can promise that they will be well cared for by people who share and appreciate the memories they represent.

Oral History Project

By Carol Baird

*In addition to her many administrative duties, Executive Secretary **Carol Baird** has taken on the management of the Oral History Project.*

THG's Oral History Project is an ongoing effort to preserve the knowledge, insight and memories of individuals involved in the evolution of the telecommunications industry.

Over the past 10 years numerous interviews have been done and we are beginning to transcribe the interviews. These tapes provide an invaluable glimpse into the minds of people who have helped guide our industry's history. Our goal, upon completion and approval of each of the individual interviews, is to make the tape and/or written transcript available to researchers, students, and historians. We hope, ultimately, to make some of the material available on the internet.

Carol recently finished the transcript of **Marge Gorshe's** interview, and has begun work on **Larry DeMuth's**. She is also reviewing standards for the Oral History transcription project, and will establish a THG standard very soon.



