



Dial-Log



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Jody Georgeson, EDITOR

Executive Director's Report

By Herb Hackenburg

Three weeks ago, while I was next door in the aerobics center, Jody had a scare as a major section of our built-in bookshelves pulled out of the wall sending hundreds of books crashing to the floor and bouncing off the opposite wall. Besides Jody's nerves, a few of our resource books were slightly damaged (covers dislodged from their bindings and pages folded and/or torn). Our main problem is that all of the books involved were properly shelved and entered on our database. We also used these books for research now they are stacked helter-skelter on any surface available. Jody and I are concerned for the material and our safety should the remaining shelves come tumbling down.

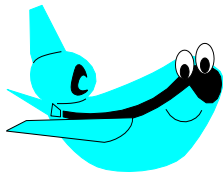
The contractor Qwest hired to fix the problem agrees with Jody and I, that the anchor screws used by the original builder are woefully inadequate. Thus, he has recommended to the Qwest real estate people that all of the shelves should come down and be remounted or be replaced by shelves that stand on the floor and are connected to the wall for stability. The contractor is scheduled to replace the fallen shelves later this week.

We'll also find out if all of the shelving in that area is to be replaced. This means removing hundreds of books and television tapes, then re-shelving them and adjusting our database.

(Note: As of June 20th, the shelves have been re-attached and most of the books re-shelved. Thank goodness for the willing hands of our volunteers!)

Qwest has contracted with a new outfit to operate the corporate mailroom that is outside our back door. When Xerox held the mailroom contract, the operation ran smoothly and we had a friendly, cooperative working relationship with each other. The new outfit, with a former U S Post Office supervisor running the operation, has been cooperative with us to date. Our problem is their curious and constantly changing arrangement of furniture, work areas and mail shipping bays that has left the THG staff and volunteers with some access problems to Archive C and concerns about blocked fire exits. While complaining may jeopardize our currently cooperative relationship with the mailroom staff, we are concerned about any blocked fire exit, even if it's temporary. So I'm planning to express

my concerns to the building manager later this week.



I'm hitting the trail for Montana the end of June. Montana's PR director, **Russ Cravens**, is an old friend who retired the first of this month. Russ is being hired as a consultant for a few months to re-write, edit, expand and update the telephone history of Montana and then turn over the result of his efforts to the Montana vice president and general manager, to THG, and to the Montana state history organization.

My job is to look over what's already available in Montana's telephone history files and guide Russ into specific areas in which THG is interested (e.g., IBEW history). I believe I'll be able to give Russ more directions than he anticipates. Russ has also set up a meeting with an interesting Montana character who has the world's largest private collection of historic computers (main frame and PCs) and is building a museum in Bozeman. The guy is also building a significant telephone history exhibit and Russ believes THG may be able to help. Through a special promotion by United my tickets cost \$190 round trip Denver to Missoula and back.

Our accessioning efforts continue with both **Jody** and **I** working with the volunteers by pitching in this area when our administrative duties allow us. Jody has processed several small collections, while I'm working on our collection of 16 mm. movies. Jody's specialty is writing excellent finder's aids - I have yet to write one.

We continue to serve a wide assortment of customers. Qwest Dex conducts its own research in our directory collection; Qwest Legal Department remains one of our best customers, with their para-legals doing the research. It seems we'll be doing more work for the Training Center for which we'll charge. And we continue to have assorted law firms, art directors and regular folks use our directory and photo collections for a fee. One of the more interesting jobs in this area is the use of a photograph we authorized to Smash Entertainment Group, to be used in a History Channel production.

I've given a few talks and conducted a few tours since the last newsletter. The most successful talk was to about 60 Sterns-Roger retirees and was arranged by volunteer **Beth Trudgeon**, a former Sterns-Roger secretary. The group seemed to enjoy the talk and we went on for 30 minutes after their normal adjournment time. This presentation has led to another speaking engagement, to the Arco Retiree Club.

Our most interesting building tour was last week. We conducted a tour for a "classic U S WEST" employee group and a "classic Qwest" employee group together. The USW employees were really into the history and seemed to have a great time; the Qwest folks were very reserved, but said they enjoyed the tour.

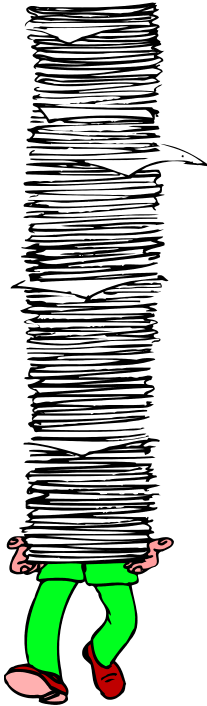
NO JOB IS SO IMPORTANT AND NO
SERVICE IS SO URGENT -
THAT WE CANNOT TAKE TIME TO
PERFORM OUR WORK SAFELY

BELL SYSTEM

Volunteer Corner

By Herb Hackenburg

Jerry Wild continues accessioning artifacts when he isn't working on our computers. **Dale Norblom** and **Ken Pratt** are working on the main documents. **Terry Quirk** and **Betty Vigil** continue with the directory collection. They are nearly finished with all directories through 2000 – now the 2001 books are coming in.



New volunteer **Lynn Graves** has traveled all over Colorado collecting historic switching tools to fill in our collections and he is now working on our film collection. **Kurt Furness** continues his work on our photograph collection. Active Qwest employee **Renee Lang** is also working on photos four to five noon-hours a month.

Bruce Amsbury helps in a variety of ways. **Beth Trudgeon** helps me to file newspaper clippings. **Ken Roper** continues doing his treasurer thing, and **Bob and Annetta Haack** continue their telecommuting work into our database from Arizona.

We miss the efforts of two of our stalwarts, **Georg Ek** and **Mike Flavin**. A combination of age and health has forced Georg to “retire” as a volunteer; and Mike, we all hope, will be able to come back after his health returns.

A Safety Engineer's Speech

By James R. Sampson

Mr Sampson is “a professional safety engineer, safety director, historian, church member, collector and citizen” currently residing in Rock Island, Illinois. He has collected the speeches he has given in all of these fields, and has kindly given us permission to republish excerpts from those about telephony. The following – relatively recent historic perspective - is from a speech given between 1984 and 1988.



1889

The years 1983-1984 compare somewhat with the situation just 90 years ago, 1893-1894, in the telephone business.

It was in 1893 that Alexander Graham Bell's 17-year monopoly patent ran out. During the six years following the patent's expiration, more than 6,000 companies started up and began manufacturing telephones and parts.

Well, here we are, again - 1983-1984 - 90 years later and hundreds of companies are manufacturing telephones. The U. S. Government's anti-trust suit against AT&T was finally settled. The suit began, nearly ten years ago, on November 20, 1974, and was the second time the government took action against AT&T on the anti-trust laws. The new suit was far more comprehensive than the 1949-1956 suit, which was settled on a “consent decree” that was basically in favor of AT&T! It appears to be a little different this time. AT&T must divest itself of the local portions of its 22 Bell operating companies. The new companies will be

independent not only of AT&T and Western Electric but also of each other. The operating companies can offer new customer premises equipment, but they cannot manufacture it or offer electronic information services. A good many independent companies are quietly waiting for the court's final interpretation and implementation of the anti-trust suit. The breakup holds the promise of opening the equipment market to competition and of equalizing competition for long-distance services. When the divested Bell operating companies become independent of AT&T and Western Electric, many independent companies' place in the U. S. market should improve as competition would be allowed in all areas of the telephone business.

But even before the anti-trust suit against AT&T was settled, there were over 2,000 independent telephone companies operating in the U. S.; mainly in rural and suburban areas. They controlled over 20% of the total number of telephones in the U. S.

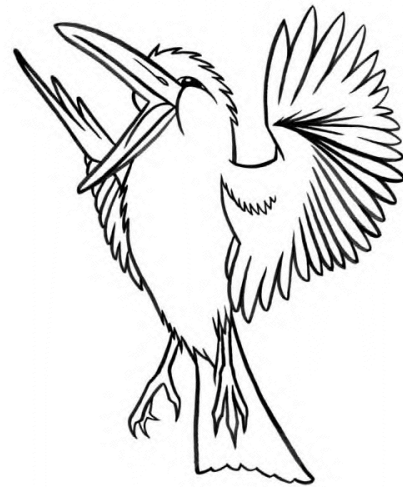
The biggest independent by far is GTE (General Telephone and Electronics). In second and third place are United utilities of Kansas City, MO, and Continental Telephone of St. Louis. Of course, there is IT&T (International Telephone and Telegraph) which is a world-wide corporation supplying telephones, telephone exchanges and



equipment all over the world and which would jump into the U. S. market if the suit's interpretation allows it to deal with all the Bell operating companies as well as other independents. . . .

Today, there are hundreds of companies manufacturing and selling telephones which are being sold to everyone and anyone at every place you can imagine – department stores, big companies, little companies, etc. – and you can hook them up yourself to your own home phone lines. And where will it end!?

From "The Telephone" in A Safety Engineer's Speeches from 1960-1988 by James R. Sampson



Birds are imitating cell phones

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) -- The electronic tweeting of mobile phones is so widespread that some Australian birds are mimicking the sound as part of their mating and territorial songs, a bird expert says.

Australia has six so-called mimic birds which commonly imitate sounds in nature, particularly other bird calls, as part of their mating and territorial displays.

Australia has one of the highest rates of mobile phone use.

Common Australian mimic birds are increasingly hearing the ringing of

mobile phones in rural areas, Queensland Museum bird expert Greg Czechura said Tuesday.

"It's the males that are largely doing it. It means there is a male that is up to date, on the ball and has the latest sounds," he said.

Australia's lyre bird, considered the world's greatest mimic, also imitates the click and whir of cameras, the buzz of chain saws and the roar of motorcycles.

(Reprinted with permission of The Associated Press)

(Dale Norblom, THG volunteer and world traveler, says that the New Zealand Kia birds work the tourists in pairs. One performs funny antics to get your attention, while the other steals your food!)

Contest Results

Our Spring contests were apparently too difficult – no one guessed correctly!

The first was a picture of and article about our volunteer, **Georg Ek**, at the Telemuseum in Stockholm Sweden. The article first appeared in the Winter 2000-2001 edition of *Phonetiken*, published by Sveriges Telehistoriska SamlarFörening. Because of his ongoing support and his many contributions to the body of knowledge about telecommunications history, Georg was made an honorary member of the Swedish museum. *Phonetiken* is only one of the many titles we have in our periodicals collection.

The second part of the contest was the title from a 1989 U S WEST stock prospectus when U S WEST stock was first being sold on the Japanese stock exchange. This document is part of our U S WEST Ventures Group collection.

El Paso History

The James V. Laird collection is one of our newest, and contains material from El Paso, which was once part of Mountain Bell's territory. Mr. Laird was a Plant engineer. The following was originally published in The Texas Times, El Paso Centennial Edition, 1983.

The telephone had its beginnings in El Paso when the Erie Telegraph and Telephone Co, established service for about 40 subscribers on September 20, 1883.

Little is known about El Paso's first telephone exchange. However, the recollection of at least one old-timer indicated that on matters requiring urgent action it sometimes was easier and swifter to walk several blocks across town than try to reach the person by telephone.

In a September 1883 issue of the El Paso Herald, a writer questioned the usefulness of the new talking machine and expressed concern that it might foster local gossip. He asked readers, "What's the benefit of a telephone? We talk too much, anyway."

Despite skepticism, the telephone not only survived, but took its place in history as one of the most useful inventions of all time.

In 1897, Southwestern Bell Telegraph and Telephone bought out the Erie Company. In 1910, Southwestern was acquired by the Tri-State Telephone and Telegraph Co., which a year later became a subsidiary of the Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph Co.

In 1920, the two companies merged their books and Tri-State's name was officially changed to Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph. In 1970, the corporate name became Mountain Bell.

Then, in 1982, El Paso operations transferred to Southwestern Bell, and our name once again is Southwestern Bell.

Editor's note: At Divestiture, in 1984, Southwestern Bell became one of the Regional Bell Operating Companies. By 1994, they had changed their name to SBC Communications, Inc. SBC subsidiaries now include Southwestern Bell, Ameritech, Pacific Bell, SBC Telecom, Nevada Bell, SNET and Sterling Commerce.

WHAT IS IT?!



This artifact is a recent addition to our collection. Do you know what it is?

The first person to tell us what it is called and what it was used for, will receive a prize.

Entries may be made by phone at 303-296-1221, or by email at telcomhist@aol.com.

Good luck!



"The preservers of history are as heroic as its makers." Pat M. Neff, Texas Governor and president of Baylor University

Fund Raising

We will soon be undertaking a new campaign to raise funds for the History Group. As you know, we no longer receive matching funds from Qwest, and must rely increasingly on individual donations.

Those of you who are Pioneers will receive a fundraising letter. This mailing will be sent out by states, so some of you will receive the request in the next month and some not until later in the year.

We will be offering some new contribution incentives, and hope to increase our membership substantially. Just in case you want to get a jump on the campaign, here are the particulars:

- Donate \$25 and you'll receive a subscription to *Dial-Log*.
- Donate \$50 and you'll receive an original, historic stock certificate and *Dial-Log*. These certificates are not currently available for sale to the public.
- Donate \$500 and we'll send you a framed picture of the old Northwestern Bell or Mountain Bell headquarters building sign by Jack macAllister or Robert K. Timothy, plus a stock certificate and *Dial-Log*.

Have a Happy Summer!