



Dial - Log



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Jody Georgeson, EDITOR

Director's Report

By Herb Hackenburg

It has been a busy time around the archives:

Museum clean up - A couple of weeks ago, the new real estate manager for the 1005 17th Street building began a general redecorating and clean up of the building's public areas. A major part of this job included the main lobby, the main component of which is our museum displays. In a nice way, **Mr. Tosh**, the real estate guy, told us that our displays were shabby and dirty, and asked if we would work with the house service people to clean them up. He was pleasantly surprised that I agreed with him whole-heartedly. I thanked him for furnishing the people who would vacuum and wash the glass inside and out of each display. THG staff and volunteers cleaned and refurbished the artifacts inside the displays. Then I found out that the house service crew had refused to touch anything inside the display cases without someone from THG being there to supervise. The building manager found out that THG owned everything in the cases.

With the house service people doing the heavy clean up, the THG staff and volunteers cleaned, dusted, buffed, polished and repaired every item inside the display cases. It was a full two-day job, but when we finished, our museum never looked better. We did remove the WWI 405th Signal Battalion flag. It is made from silk and is in bad shape. I decided the flag needed to be retired, wrapped in non-acidic tissue and properly stored in a light-proof box.

Before the building project is over, our display cases may be moved to another part of the lobby and placed closer together. We've been asked to supervise this move and are working with the interior decorator on the final design of the lobby.

Display cases clean up - Part of the same redecorating job was the removal of the display cases on the second floor. This included the old display cases left over from the original museum and all the "sports trophy" cases along the interior hallway. Repair and cleanup of our leaded glass window display was also part of the job. The leaded glass window was repaired (light switch was replaced

and a timer added for light behind the window) in about an hour.

Since THG had done such a good job, we were asked to empty the second floor displays and told we could keep any of the trophies inside them. THG volunteers did this job in about three hours. As a result, THG now owns a couple of high-class trophies such as the U S WEST first-place-team trophy for the National Corporate Games.

Our main prize is the AT&T Arthur Page Award. This 45-pound sculpture is a highly detailed, down-scaled replica of "Golden Boy", the giant statue that was originally on top of the AT&T Headquarters Building at 195 Broadway in New York City. A picture of "Golden Boy" (one of the many names the statue was known by) was printed on the front cover of every Bell System phone book in the United States for more than a decade. This trophy is an extremely well-done scale model bronze. It was awarded annually for the "Best Public Relations Program in the Bell System." Mountain Bell's Colorado State public relations office won the 1978 trophy the first year it was awarded. Now THG has it.

THG also has a very rare small-scale model of the modern sculpture that was commissioned to replace "Golden Boy." Fortunately, Divestiture intervened and the full-sized sculpture was never done.

New shelving - One of our routine jobs at the beginning of the year is to prepare the previous year's directories to be sent to Denver Bookbinding to be bound. Volunteer **Betty Vigil** prepared the directories and we sent them to the bindery; now we're waiting for them to be returned. One problem - we're short of shelving space to store them. We solved that problem by moving part of our BSP (Bell System Practices)

collection from the directory room to our basement archive room, thus freeing shelving in the directory room. I thought - since we'll need new directory shelving every year - we might as well move the entire BSP collection downstairs, thereby making room for newly bound directories for the next few years.

We purchased the new shelving we needed for the basement archive and, thanks to volunteer **Jerry Wild**, it's assembled and waiting for the BSPs, which the volunteers and I will soon move to the basement



From a NWB bond issued in 1957

New stock and bond certificates - In my last director's report I mentioned several boxes of Northwestern Bell bonds sitting in **Scott Cornelsen's** office. Since Scott is the THG Treasurer, I asked him if THG could take those canceled, un-issued certificates off of his hands. He said he'd check it out. It was checked out and that's how **Carol Baird** and I ended up transporting boxes and packages of bonds on our two-wheel handcart from 1801 California to 1005 17th Street. It took 3 trips to haul an estimated \$800,000,000 "worth" of bonds. We found out that one unopened package of 500 bonds weighs about 50 pounds and several such packages on a two-wheeler are nearly impossible to control.

Ken Pratt, our stock and bond volunteer, has several days' worth of bonds to inventory, box and shelve.



Vignette on a NWB 40-year bond issued in 1969.

There was one box that did not contain any bonds, but contained several legal envelopes; inside two of these envelopes were stock certificates from two small cooperative telephone companies. Northwestern Bell had to buy the shares in order to get telephone service in those service areas (each of which housed a NWB microwave tower). These relatively rare certificates are now part of the THG historic telephone company stock certificate collection, already the largest such collection in the world.



Cherokee Youth Brought Phones to Area

C. W. "Dub" West wrote several books about the history of Muskogee, Oklahoma. Turning Back the Clock is made up of reprints of his columns in the Muskogee Sunday Phoenix. This one has to do with the first telephones in the area, and is reprinted with the gracious permission of the Three Rivers Museum (www.3riversmuseum.com).

[The] telephone came to the little remote hamlet of Muskogee just 10 years after it was introduced to the world. A 16 year-old Cherokee lad's interest was responsible for this feat.

The new marvel, the telephone, made its debut at the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia in 1876.

The mother of Ed Hicks, a descendant of a Cherokee chief, died when he was an infant. He was raised by his grandparents and uncles and aunts. When he was 16, he and a friend attended the World's Fair, held in St. Louis in 1882. [What most] captivated the attention of young Hicks was the telephone.

Hicks had a vision that a telephone line between Tahlequah, the capital of the Cherokee Nation, and Muscogee, the headquarters for the Union Agency, would be of enormous value.

In the summer of 1886, he went to Tahlequah with the purpose of organizing a telephone company and securing the proper financing. The original members of the company were Hicks, C.W. Turner, J.B. Stapler, J.S. Stapler, John S. Scott, and L.B. Bell.

[One] problem . . . was obtaining a permit from the Cherokee Nation to construct the line. The Cherokee National Council granted the permit

when it was found that the new-fangled contraption "could talk Cherokee" [and] that no surveying instruments could be used, because [the Council was] afraid that might lead to building a railroad.

Ed and his uncle, J.W. Stapler, went to St. Louis, where they purchased three telephones for \$75 each. Late in the summer of 1886, two wagons - one for tools and the other a chuckwagon - were equipped, and Hicks, a teamster and two other workmen began stringing the telephone line beginning at Tahlequah. The wires were strung in trees when possible and tightened by the wagons and team.

They reached Fort Gibson on August 6th, and the first conversation carried over the new telephone line was between one of the workmen and J.S. Stapler. The workman said, "Hello - who is this?" Stapler replied, "This is the devil, and I'm coming after you." - quite different from the first words transmitted by Alexander Graham Bell.

The difficulty of getting the line through the canebrakes and swamp and across the Arkansas River [was great]. The latter was done by unwinding the wire as they crossed the river on a flatboat. They again tightened the wire using a team and wagon.

The line was completed five weeks after leaving Tahlequah, and there was communication between Tahlequah and Muscogee - the first commercial telephone line in present Oklahoma. The success was short lived - the copper wire strung across the river broke after two

weeks, and it was necessary to replace it with steel wire.

Headquarters were established in Muscogee at Turner Hardware with Jim Bozeman as operator. The Tahlequah headquarters were in a store operated by J.W. Stapler and Sons, and J.B. Stapler

was the operator. The small telephone company later became the Pioneer Telephone Company with E.D. Nims as president. This company was eventually brought into the Southwestern Telephone Company in 1916, and Nims became

vice president of that company.

"Cherokee Youth Brought Phones to Area." Turning Back the Clock. C.W. "Dub" West. Muscogee Publishing Co., 1985. Copyright granted to Three Rivers Museum of Muskogee, 2001.



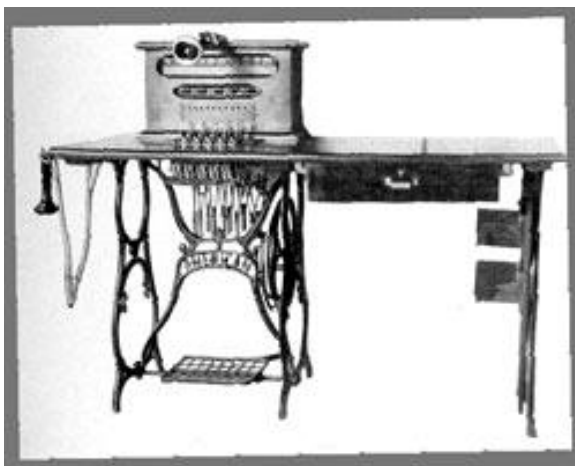
Missed Connections

In the opening stages of Anglo-American planning in 1942, using American WACs on the telephone switchboards led to some difficulties. British planners being asked "Are you through?" thought the operators meant, "Are you connected?" When they answered in the affirmative, they were dismayed to be unplugged!

Fifty Years Ago

To many of us, 1954 doesn't seem so long ago. Here are some things that were happening in the telephone industry fifty years ago.

- Canada and the United States agreed to build a 3000-mile-long array of radar warning stations across northern Canada (the DEW line - Distant Early Warning). PNB technicians played a major roll in its installation.
- MST&T celebrated 75 years of telephone service in Denver.
- There were 94 million phones in the world - 62 million in the US.
- AT&T Long Lines announced that it would build the first transatlantic telephone cable.
- Duluth, MN began using the 2-5 numbering system - seven digit dialing consisting of two letters and 5 numerals (**CHerry 4-5123**).
- Bell Labs scientists, working with the Douglas Aircraft Company, designed the Nike anti-aircraft missile.
- Western Electric shipped over 3,200,000 telephones.



The first long distance switchboard used in Denver was constructed on the frame of an old sewing machine.



The Museum of Communications

By Don Ostrand

Don is Director of the Museum of Communications in Seattle, WA. This is the fourth in a series of articles by Don.

With Pacific Northwest Bell's official approval of 8,000 square feet of space (now renovated for museum use) the team of volunteers from PNB, AT&T, Western Electric and a few interested outsiders (now part of the family) assembled, the museum movement was in motion.

Word of available equipment items came into the museum task force. Major items of switching equipment removal schedules were obtained. The equipment selection coordinator and "the Pioneer junkie(s)" began the selection process. Word of the museum project was spreading. Artifacts and top quality display items were coming out of the

woodwork, and commitments to donate many more items were received.

Preliminary equipment floor layout plans, display area space, a meeting area, the entrance configuration, and the planned elevator were beyond a vision and available for on-site review. The Seattle Fire Department rejected the "best laid plans," and a re-grouping was undertaken.

The entrance staircase plan with historic displays was scuttled; the Fire Department classified it as a fire escape and said that NO displays would be tolerated. An adjustment in the plans became an immediate concern. A new "main" entrance would be required. The change from the southwest corner to the northeast corner of the building, and a corresponding relocation of the elevator, emerged as the answer to the problem. Plans were drawn, estimated costs were provided, construction funding from PBN was allocated, and the City of Seattle granted approval.

The space was ready, the equipment started to become available, and the team was anxious to get started.

In the next issue: The equipment arrives.



Workers in a Wichita, Kansas, auto-repair garage have stopped saying "Body shop" when they answer the phone. A number of long silences, gasps, and indignant disconnections led to the discovery that their phone number was just one digit away from that of a local funeral home.

Hot Rail! Grand Junction

By Florence M. Rush



*From time to time, we publish excerpts from an original manuscript by our friend, **Florence Rush**, who traveled with her husband Lee, a member of a Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph construction crew. This story tells of their days on Colorado's western slope.*

In the late thirties we moved to Grand Junction, Colorado (Mesa County). Grand Junction was only one of the many small towns and cities we lived in during our ten-year telephone company travels.

The drive to Grand Junction from the eastern slope was an all day trip. My husband, Lee, was required to travel in the construction truck, leaving my children and me to travel in our personal car. Driving over old Loveland Pass was indeed a challenge. The roads in those days were steep, graveled and hostile.

We arrived in Grand Junction in a "Babes in The Woods" frame of mind. The landscape was so different and it was HOT! We cruised the streets (which was our custom) looking for signs reading "For Rent" or "Rooms for Rent."

During this search we saw Beth and Emory Schutt, who were members of another crew which was coming in. Together we continued to cruise.

Suddenly we saw a sign advertising a two-family semi-furnished house for rent. The neighborhood wasn't very appealing, but in our desperation we rented it together.

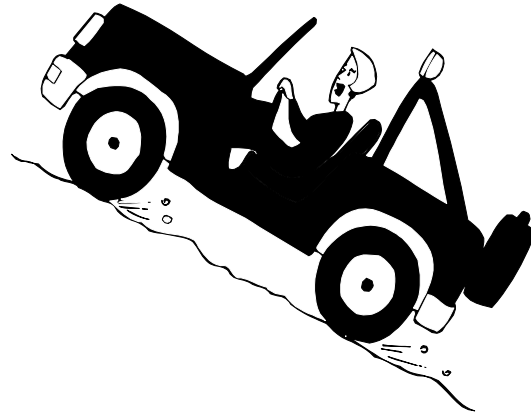
The house contained two sparsely furnished kitchens with small two-hole wood or coal stoves, which were called "monkey stoves." There was also a bedroom and a living room on each half of the house, with a bathroom in between to be shared.

We had lived there for only a few days when we became quite disturbed by the number of knocks at our doors at all hours of the day and night. Not being totally inexperienced in everyday life, we concluded we were living in a former house of prostitution. Knowing the scarcity of rentals, we decided to "stick it out" at this location. The prospective customers ultimately came to the conclusion we were no longer in business and discontinued their request for admittance.

As I said, Grand Junction was very hot; trying to cook on the monkey stove was almost unbearable. While walking to the store, the ladies' heels would sink into the hot asphalt. This made walking quite laborious; to say nothing of the ugly dark stains left on our shoe heels.

However, some memorable and humorous happenings occurred in Grand Junction. I remember one day being nonplussed when Beth, my little son Jere and I were in the grocery store. We had stopped in front of the Aunt Jemima pancake flour display when Jere shouted out, "Mom, here's Daddy's picture!" He was pointing to a picture of the first black face he had ever seen. What Jere was apparently seeing was a very sun-tanned smiling face with lots of white teeth showing. This picture looked to him like his dad's sun-tanned face.

Later I explained to Jere that many people with dark skins could be tanned by the outdoor sunshine. Others might be dark skinned because of their race or nationality.



Another humorous incident occurred when Jere walked into Beth's apartment through the connecting bathroom door and appeared from beneath her kitchen table (because he was so small). Noting she had not heard him approach, he hesitated in making himself known. Instead, he observed her smoking and absent-mindedly flicking the ashes into the sugar bowl instead of the ashtray. Beth finally noticed him but said she would never forget this experience, nor will I.

I remember when Lee, Jere and I were going to "Strawberry Day" with Beth, Emory and Chet. Chet was our good-looking bashful unmarried timekeeper. Emory was driving and Beth was sitting next to him. Chet sat next to the right hand passenger door. The car windows were open and a bee flew into Beth's brassiere! At this terrifying moment Beth looked at Chet and screamed, "Get it out! Get it out!" Poor Chet sat frozen, saying, "No! No! No!" Emory stopped the car and retrieved the bee. Luckily, Beth wasn't stung.

If this wasn't enough for Chet on one day, he accidentally walked into the ladies' dressing room at the Glenwood Springs hot pool and heard more screams. I won't forget that Strawberry Day!

Grand Junction, Carbondale, Paonia, Rifle, Basalt and many other lovely towns on the Western Slope had much appeal to me. If Loveland Pass had not been such a formidable winter adversary, I believe I would have chosen to live permanently on the Western Slope of the Colorado mountains.



Name That Tune

For those of you who missed it, Virgin Mobile USA and AT&T Wireless Services Inc. both recently announced music recognition services that identify songs for mobile phone customers.

When a customer presses #43 on an AT&T Wireless phone and holds the handset near a speaker, they receive a text message containing the title and artist of the song. The services are similarly priced (99¢ from AT&T and \$1 from Virgin).

So if you can't get that tune out of your head, at least you can find out what it is!



Archives Month

The Society of Rocky Mountain Archivists (SRMA) is sponsoring a month-long celebration of archival facilities and collections to be held throughout Wyoming and Colorado during October. (THG is a proud member of the Society.)

The theme this year is *"The puzzle of history . . . You hold a piece of the past."* Each member organization will choose a conduct outreach activities such as tours, open houses and educational presentations.

Archives Month programs provide an opportunity for the public and resource providers to learn what archivists do and why it is important. They help trustees, administrators, office holders and the general public to understand and appreciate that historical records have a contribution to make to modern society.

THG is planning a series of tours and special exhibits to celebrate Archives Month. The next issue of *Dial-Log* will contain a schedule of events. Watch for it, and plan to participate!



The world listens in.

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