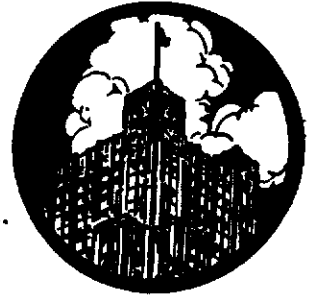




Dial-Log

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Herb J. Hackenburg, EDITOR

THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS HISTORY GROUP, INC. 1996 ANNUAL REPORT TO ITS READERS

The President's report

During this last year the passage of the first major telecommunication legislation by Congress in more than 60 years, and the continuation of rapid technological change in our industry have combined to obscure the importance of the history that has brought this nation the best telephone system in the world.

Competitors and users alike have been so involved in preserving the best features of our current system and in meeting the changes which are occurring that the mission of the Telecommunications History Group has become even more important. Without a concentrated effort to capture the reality of the past, the important history of what preceded us would be lost forever in today's environment.

Such a loss will be increasingly devastating as the major players in the industry seek to preserve and utilize their identities as a way to compete successfully.

With these factors in mind, the History Group's efforts and successes have been especially meaningful. Aided by a substantial grant from the U S WEST Foundation which supports an aggressive business plan, our corporation has finally started to realize its potential and discover its importance.

Now armed with a solid financial base, staffed with competent and enthusiastic persons, assisted by a growing pool of volunteers and dedicated to preserving what has been accomplished in the past and to revealing to the public what is possible in the future if those accomplishments and successes of the past are preserved. The Telecommunications History Group can now play a major role in insuring continued and positive change and education.

As you read the rest of this report, consider how you too can contribute to preserving and improving our industry which is leading the knowledge revolution.

Original Signed by

Laurence W. DeMuth, Jr.
President

Executive Director's report

The writing of this report has just been interrupted by the arrival of a pallet of historic material...

We're back.

This little event seems to be a natural

place to begin because it graphically demonstrates the Telecommunications

History Group's growth over the past year.

On January 2, 1996, the History

Group was settling into its new, expanded

quarters at 1005 17th Street, and beginning

to function with a significant operating

budget provided by the U S WEST

Foundation.

On the same day, there were 28

pallets of historic manuscript material locked

away in a dusty storage area in a U S WEST

office in Thornton, Colorado. The pallets

contained the last remnants of the records of

the Colorado Telephone Company, Rocky

Mountain Bell Telephone Company and the

nearly 300 little independent companies

purchased by the Northwestern Bell

Telephone Company as it grew into a full-

sized Bell System operating company. In

other words, these dusty pallets contained

U S WEST's roots.

Now that the History Group had

storage space available, arrangements were

made with the Thornton Building mailroom

to start shipping one or two pallets a week to

the new facility which already housed 5.6

tons of Bell System Operating Practices

(BSP's) from Pacific Northwest Bell and an

additional 37 pallets of manuscript material

from Northwestern Bell. The idea was to

bring all of U S WEST's history under one

roof as soon as possible.

The pallet in the opening paragraph

was #20 from Grant St. The remaining

eight Grant St. pallets were "home" by

January 29, 1997.

Pallet #20 arrived on the 1005 17th

Building loading dock, where a History

Group volunteer used a hand-operated pallet

jack (one of the unique skills learned by our

volunteers) to move #20 into our recently

built Archive C. The shrink wrap will be

removed from the new pallet and the general

content of each of its one-cubic-foot archive

boxes will be inventoried by a team of

volunteers. The archive boxes will be

restacked in designated areas of Archive C.

Once we have all our historic material

inventoried and housed within our facility,

we will begin the accession process of the

"raw material" stored in Archive C.

While the inventory step gives us a

"quick look" at the material we are receiving,

accessioning (which calls for winnowing out

unneded historic material, detailed records

of material kept, and storage in proper

archive-quality boxes) is the first serious

step in a professional archive operation.

About Archive C

When U S WEST moved its central

mailroom operation to the area just outside

of our new location, BRI (our U S WEST

landlord) replaced an open dock area we had

been using to store our pallets with a new,

walled, secure archive room (Archive C).

Our pallet receiving process now includes an

initial inventory, discarding obviously

unneded material (e.g., records of records

destroyed), removing critically important

historic material (e.g., photographs) for

instant archiving and restacking archive

boxes two pallets high, thereby doubling our

raw material storage space.

Wednesday, November 20, volunteer

Ken Pratt began the first accessioning of

material from Archive C. The material

included the financial records and the

Secretary's Minutes from the Big Bend Rural

Telephone Company of Wilely, Colorado, circa

1902-1912.

Archive workshop

Ken and 16 other volunteers, board

members and staff learned about the

accession process from Ann Hillinger of

Colorado State University, who was hired as

a consultant to conduct a two-day workshop,

"A Basic Workshop on Identifying and

Managing Historical Records," which served

as a first step for us to becoming more "professional" in our archiving program.

Hilfinger and her assistant, Wayne Latham, toured our facility and studied our operations in preparation for conducting the workshop. Frankly, Ms. Hilfinger was overwhelmed by quantity and quality of material the History Group has to archive--about 25 tons of manuscript material not counting our artifact, photograph, directory, BSP, and video tape collections.

After conducting the workshop, Hilfinger provided us with a list of suggestions on how we could improve our operations and make our archives even more useful to the general public and the academic community.

Hilfinger's suggestions were practical and achievable. First, she suggested that we not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the awesome task we've set out to accomplish. She suggested adopting more stringent archive procedures such as photo archivists using white gloves while they work with photographs (which they now do); putting an alarm on the front door so people cannot enter the archive without the staff being aware of it (volunteer **Jerry Wild** has installed an alarm); moving the food preparation area farther away from the photo files (yet to be done); placing the general public's study desk in a more conspicuous location (done); instituting more stringent archive work rules such as only pencils, but no pens in the archive area (working on it); and preparing the legal forms it takes to operate an archive (a set of 14 different forms has been prepared and is being adapted and adopted by the Acquisition Committee).

Hilfinger's major recommendation concerned our archive job. Because our initial supply of material to be archived is so massive, normal accession procedures cannot be used. A "retrofit" was suggested. Part of this retrofit is the inventory process we use on our incoming pallets. This step allows us to quickly store generally cataloged material and to discard significant amounts of

material prior to subjecting it to the time-consuming accession process.

Hilfinger also recommended that we use the accession process on all new collections we receive, which we have been doing.

Significant Collections added in 1996

We added several collections to our archives in 1996, the most significant being:

- The **Jerry Sain Collection** consists of five archive boxes of Yellow Pages promotional and give-a-way memorabilia--everything from Swiss Army knives to ski jackets, circa 1929-1990.
- The **Marge Gorshe Collection** contains many awards, directives, position papers, brochures collected by Marge over her career as an operator, first Mountain Bell female Plant Department district manager, and Vice President of the AT&T Account Team in Carrier, circa 1955-1995.
- The **Arizona Building Picture Collection** contains nearly 1,000 black and white prints of historic telephone buildings in Arizona, circa 1930-1970.
- The **Ralph Crawford Collection** is the history of the Cherry Creek Pioneer Life Member Club in Denver which was folded into the Blue Spruce Life Member Club in 1996. Crawford is the former Reid Chapter administrator.
- The **Dorothy Cosgrove Collection** was secured by Board Member **Walt Maulis**, and is a collection of Communications Workers of America manuscript material and memorabilia given to him by a long-time union member and activist, circa 1960-1986.
- The **Young at Heart Collection** consists of five scrapbooks providing a delightful word and picture history of a group of Denver operators, circa 1957-1984. The collection was also secured by **Mr. Maulis**.
- The **Ida Muzzy Collection** consists of manuscript material and service pins

(Denver architectural historian) and Larry DeMuth, Howard Doerr, Mary Riffle, Jim Travers, Michael Flavin, Eleanor Gehres (board members contributing work above and beyond their board work) have helped to expand our volunteer hours. As of December 31, our volunteers have contributed 3,365 hours of work to the Telecommunications History Group.

Basically, the volunteers have been preparing our manuscript material to be archived. While manuscript material (paper and printed documents) makes up most of the 40 tons of material we have on hand, we also are archiving other types of large collections. For example volunteers: Jerry Butler and Lowell Todd are archiving our photograph collection (70,000 black and white prints, 15,000 negatives, 200 color prints, 11,000 color slides);

- Ken Pratt is our telephone directory collection specialist (our 14-state collection consists of approximately 2,500 volumes, containing 18,000 individual directories, 3.7 million pages, circa 1890-1992);
- while Carol Baird's volunteer work is entering this huge collection in our data base;
- Jerry Wild is becoming a specialist in our artifact collection;
- Bob Cook is a specialist in our video collection and is a computerist;
- Pratt, Dale Norblom and Herb Hackenburg are now beginning the serious archive work related to the manuscript material on hand;
- Hackenburg's volunteer specialty is building the central reference files (to date, more than 1,000 files from "AB Club" to "Zycom Corp."); and

Our Intern Program

Joann Emerson attends Metropolitan State College, has a teen-age daughter and operates her own small business. This busy young woman is our first intern. Board member Dr. Monys

from a retired Illinois Bell/Mountain Bell operator, circa 1924-1992. A small collection with important material concerning female employment practices in the 1930s.

- The Mexican Exchange Sale Collection is an extremely interesting and historically significant record of the sale of the Juarez, Nogales and Agua Prieta telephone exchanges by Mountain Bell and Pacific Bell to the Border Telephone & Light Company of Mexico, circa 1920-1927.

- The Henry W. Staub Collection is from Staub's son, Henry, Jr. Staub, Sr., was one of the William Bollman architects who worked on the Mountain Bell Headquarters Building from 1926-1929. The collection consists of Staub's diary kept during the buildings construction and several architectural renderings of the building, including a 16-story and a clock tower version never shown to the public.

- The Mountain Bell Union Contract and Grievance Collection, circa 1901-1983. An extraordinary 40-binder collection of CWA and IBEW contracts and grievance records-- more than 80 years of labor/management negotiations.

Our volunteers, bless every one

One of our "regular" volunteers, Will Ebeling, now lives in Sun City, Arizona, and we miss his weekly contributions. However, we gained four new volunteers: Lowell Todd, a NWB retiree who works two to three days a week; Dottie Graham who works three hours a day, three days a week; Edie Bates and Betty Labe, who work as a pair, one day a month. Regulars Ken Pratt, Jerry Butler, Jerry Wild, Dale Norblom, Georg Ek, Bob Cook and staffer-volunteers Herb Hackenburg and Carol Baird have contributed the bulk of our volunteer hours.

Specialist volunteers Lynn Graves, Kurt Furness, Leroy Katz (antique telephone specialists), Dave Spencer

Hagen, who teaches history at Metro State, is **JoAnn's** site supervisor (teacher) and serves as the interface between THG and Metro State.

JoAnn is obligated to spend 150 hours working with the History Group. Her major assignment is to develop a middle school level presentation on the invention of the telephone and its social significance. **JoAnn** is also to study the THG photo and manuscript archives.

A unique aspect of the intern project has recently developed. **JoAnn** is working with an honors class at Denver's Horace Mann Middle School (inner city) to get the History Group's supposed full-scale, working models of A. G. Bell's first working phones to actually work. The History Group is supplying the two models of the "liquid phones," and a small stipend to buy needed supplies (e.g., animal skins for the diaphragms). The honors class is to supply the research, repair work and final demonstration. **JoAnn** is to be the THG/school interface and is to photograph the final event which is to be part of the school's annual "History Week."

Other Work

While we haven't yet launched a national publicity program, we are gaining a national reputation and have fulfilled several research requests from across the nation.

Besides research requests from an assortment of local (front range) individuals and businesses we've fulfilled requests from: the United States Department of Justice (three requests), the United States State Department, U S WEST Direct, U S WEST, Inc., U S WEST Communications (three requests, each), AT&T, MCI, the Rye (Colorado) Telephone Company, the State Historical Society of Colorado (also furnished them a complete cross-arm with insulators and hardware for a current major display), OPASTCO's (Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Communications Companies) **Roundtable Magazine**,

Fortune Magazine, Public Broadcasting Service (five separate requests, concerning a program called "Telephone" in the American Experience series which was broadcast over the national network in January), two students working on graduate degrees (one is a U S WEST employee), a graduate student committee from MIT, and Edwin Grosvenor (he conducted four full days of research concerning a book he is co-authoring about his great grandfather, Alexander Graham Bell).

We've conducted seven tours through the historic Mountain Bell Headquarters Building at 931 14th Street (87 senior citizens from Aurora and Englewood, 37 grade schoolers from Denver and Broomfield, 21 telephone historians from the United States and Canada).

We've provided some limited curative service to the U S WEST historic displays in the Lobby of 1005 17th Street and on the 14th Floor of 931 14th Street, the most distasteful being the supervision of packing and shipping 12 of "our" most valuable and historic items back to AT&T. AT&T demanded the return of all historic items on "permanent loan" to its former operating companies. We've since replaced two of these items with identical items from our sources.

We began publishing *Dial-Log*, a quarterly newsletter, this summer. We plan to expand *Dial-Log's* mailing list by 20 percent each issue, then use this mailing list as the base of our fund raising mail program. We've had much positive feedback on our newsletter and it has been instrumental in enhancing our collection of memorabilia.

While it isn't part of our Charter, we've been able to pass on a few of our obsolete 286 computers and monitors to other nonprofit agencies (after **Bob Cook** repaired them), and a surplus business phone was also given to The Golden Landmarks Association, a nonprofit agency.

Thanks to **John Herbolich**, an alert board member being in the right place, we were able to increase our business reference and telecommunications history library by

from the niece of Luella Little, Reid's private secretary.

History Group Executive Director Herb Hackenburg, was commissioned by U S WEST to write the history of telecommunications in Denver section of a major new history book being edited by famed Denver historian Tom Noel. The book will be published in time to be given to attendees of the International G7 Conference in Denver this summer.

Finances

Prior to 1996, the History Group's total financial operation amounted to \$2,700 over a five-year span. Our bookkeeping basically consisted of keeping accurate check stubs. After gaining a grant from the U S WEST Foundation, the History Group Board decided that a much more sophisticated accounting system should be used. Former Mountain Bell treasurer, Jim Travers was asked to serve as the organization's treasurer. No small task. Jim set up a relatively simple new accounting system so we could track where and how much money we were spending. Jim helped us keep our records, tax payment, license and registration fees up-to-date with the assortment of city, county, state and federal agencies we must deal with.

Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed by

Herbert Hackenburg

Executive Director

The Telecommunications History Group, Inc.

January 4, 1997

nearly 100 percent by collecting nearly 300 books from the U S WEST Training Center Library when it closed.

The History Group co-hosted the Fourth International Symposium on Telecommunications History in June (Hackenburg served as general chairman). A total of 36 presenters and participants attended the symposium where 14 papers were presented. The group was made up of university and college history professors and advanced telephone collectors from the United States and Canada. Perhaps the most interesting paper was the keynote address by Dr. Russell A. Pizer. The thrust of Dr. Pizer's paper was that there was a deep pile of hanky-panky around A. G. Bell's original patent, including a very strong case for graft in the U.S. Patent Office via Bell's father-in-law, Gardner Hubbard.

Thanks to an extraordinary contribution by Board Member Mary Rittle, the History Group, now has a beautiful, professionally designed and printed volunteer recruiting brochure. The illustrated, four-fold brochure, introduces the Telecommunications History Group, lists our accomplishments to date, provides a brief description of our assorted programs, describes the volunteer jobs we have available, notes that we wouldn't turn a monetary contribution if it were offered and contains a detachable self-mailer for those who want to sign on. To date, we've distributed 400 folders which have added three volunteers and ten others to our mailing list.

Thanks to Board Member Sue Keesen, the History Group was featured in a recent U S WEST Today insert which was mailed to all U S WEST employees. As a result we have three new "off-site" volunteers, one each in Omaha, Minneapolis and Portland. We also gathered in a couple of small collections of historic manuscript material. We also recently got our second mention in the U S WEST Retiree Newsletter. This story may result in our acquisition of several pictures and private papers of Frederick H. Reid. The material is

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The History Group is lucky to have such a dedicated group of volunteers who work with such enthusiasm and as a team.

Dottie Graham is our newest volunteer. **Dottie** called us after she read the article, "The Business of History," printed February 9, 1997, in the *Denver Post*.

Dottie has finished archiving the old stock certificate collection which consists of certificates from 260 former telephone companies. **Dottie** is now working on **Herb's** reference files; sorting news clippings by subject, filing, etc.

Jerry Wild spent his volunteer hours in January and February disassembling a switch we had acquired. The switch was donated to the Vintage Telephone Equipment Museum in Seattle, Washington.

WHAT'S SHAKIN' IN THE ARCHIVES

Herb Hackenbourg

Since our last newsletter, we've added 600 different telephone, telegraph, railroad insulators to our collection. This significant collection (the donor family wishes to remain anonymous) was appraised at \$5,000. The collection contained two \$150 insulators, while several more were worth between \$50 to \$90 each. Of course, there were also several \$1 to \$8 insulators.

Our new insulator collection also helped us to collect two new volunteers, both nationally known insulator collectors. **Larry Volmer** (works for the Public Service Company and lives in the Denver area) and **Mike Bliss** (owns a business which installs sophisticated telephone systems for movie producers on location anywhere in the world and lives in Fort Collins).

Larry and **Mike** have given us a quick introduction to the world of serious insulator collecting. For example, at a recent insulator auction, a cranberry red, unthreaded insulator sold for \$29,800. **Mike** loaned us a series of the custom-made catalogs, featuring color pictures mounted on every page, the average

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Carol J. Baird



As I mentioned in the Fall edition of

Dial-Log, the History Group has a collection of approximately 70,000 photographs and approximately 15,000 negatives. One of **Jerry Butler's** goals is to sort the negatives by subject, (using his subject file categories); place the negatives in protective mylar wrappers, create an index and file them in their own storage area.

The volunteers decided to help **Jerry** meet his meet goal. To do this we decided to have an All Volunteer "NEGATIVE PARTY—WITH A POSITIVE END" one Wednesday in February. The objective of the party was to begin to sort the negatives by subject, add the Who, What, Where, When, and Why, whenever it was available, identify historically significant negatives for duplication, have some fun—which we did, and have **Herb** pop for the pizza and pop (that's part of the Positive End).

Coincident with this event, **Bob Cook** was doing some shopping at his local auction house on the Saturday before the party. **Bob** spotted a 6 foot by 4 foot hydraulic drafting light table. Knowing the History Group only had a desktop light box (12 inch by 9 inch) he decided the table would be a great acquisition for the Group.

Fortunately for us, he was the successful bidder. **Bob** loaded the table in his truck, brought it down to the office, did a little fix-up-clean-up, plugged it in and it now sits in Archive A. **Bob's** donation to the History Group is very much appreciated.

The day of the party, volunteers, **Ken Pratt**, **Jerry Butler**, **Dale Norblom**, **Herb Hackenbourg**, and myself sorted and placed the Who, What, Where, When, and Why on about 1700 negatives. The day was so successful we will have another party.

estimated prices for the insulators pictured ranged from \$200 to \$3000.

Mike is working on getting a small, but high-quality, insulator collection donated to the History Group. **Mike** also told us that most of the insulators now on display in 1005 17th Street Museum were originally donated by him when he worked for Mountain Bell. One of these insulators is now worth more than \$1500!

Larry is the collector who appraised our new collection and prides himself on going into the back country and actually collecting insulators. **Larry** was **not** a volunteer when he did the appraisal, but became interested in our operation after he learned about us and joined up. He has an extensive collection of the majority of the styles and colors of insulators manufactured by the three glass companies that used to be in Denver. Also, at 6 foot 7 inches, **Larry** is outstanding no matter what he's doing.

We plan to put our new collection on display in the 1005 17th Street Museum.

At the present time, **Carol, Dale** and I are conducting research for a movie production company in Texas, two advertising agencies, a television production company in Hollywood, an independent telephone company, Dex (U S WEST's directory publishing company) and the U S WEST legal department. We've also got a researcher flying to Denver to spend some days working in our archives, and an Idaho television producer is coming to Denver to do some research for a production he's doing for the McCaw family.

The Telecommunications History Group has had a spate of publicity. We were named in the credits in the PBS American Experience program called "TELEPHONE," when it premiered on February 27, we appeared on the national CBS morning news show on March 3, we were on Denver's ABC news show on March 10, and we've been featured in the *Denver Post* and the *Rocky Mountain News* in recent weeks.

The CBS show announced 10-digit local numbers. Before long, you'll have to dial 10-digits to call next door. Anyway, the CBS producer wanted some eight-year-olds marveling over an old-fashioned rotary dial phone, so the network set up a telephone history talk for me with Mrs. Walsh's third grade class at Mark Twain Elementary School near my home in Littleton. The also filmed volunteer **Louise Frances**, a retired operator, sitting at the cord board in our 14th Street Museum, talking about the old days when the operators did all the dialing.

The third grade class was a kick! We're talking a great bunch of well-behaved, bright kids. They'd studied Alexander Graham Bell and could answer questions that even college freshmen couldn't answer. Here's an unedited sample of thank you letters we received:

"Thank you for telling us facts about the telephone. I learned that young boys use to be operators then they fired them because they were breaking the equipment and calling the customers bad names and thanks for showing us the phones and giving the checks and tokens."

"Thank you for coming to our class and teaching us about telephones I learned that when you make a string phone, you have to use something metal for the sound to bounce off of. I also learned that without dial phones people had to call operators (centrals) to hook them up with the person they're calling. P.S. I also learned what a T.V. camera looks like."

"Thank you for coming to our room and for putting us on the news. It was really fun. Expechaly when you maid the two kids talk on the string phone. You were really nice and funny. It was nice having you guys."

And thank you, Mrs. Walsh's third graders, the pleasure was all mine.

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