



Dial - Log



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Jody Georgeson, EDITOR

Director's Report

By Herb Hackenburg

Raising our profile

As many of you know, the Telecommunications History Group maintained a low profile under the first Qwest leadership team. While the Qwest Foundation and the foundation of a major Qwest shareowner primarily funded THG, Qwest's executive leadership *actively distanced itself* from all the Bell System history that was the proud heritage of the local telephone company (U S WEST) part of Qwest.

The national media has comprehensively reported on what has been happening to that former Qwest executive team. The national media has also had much more friendly coverage of the new Qwest leadership team consisting mostly of the former executives of Ameritech, an original baby Bell.

Led by the new Qwest CEO, **Dick Notebaert**, Qwest now champions its Bell heritage and has changed its corporate slogan from "Ride the light" to "The spirit of service." Many of you have probably seen Qwest's new "Generations" television ads featuring generations of "telephone families."

The historic pictures used in the background of the "Generations" TV ad series are from the THG archive. Overnight, THG went from no profile to a *very high* profile. A wise person once said, "Be careful what you wish for, because you may get it."

THG has never been busier. We've been working with Qwest brand managers, advertising directors, lawyers, and public relations professionals along with advertising agency creative directors, producers, copywriters and editors. The THG staff and volunteers are being revitalized by the energy and creative firepower generated by all these wonderful young people. However, parts of our posteriors are beginning to drag a bit. Even so, it's a blast. Try it.

www.telcomhistory.org is a click away

THG archivist **Jody Georgeson** is learning how to be a "webmistress." THG now has a full-fledged web site on the Internet. Jody keeps adding more and more information about THG and what we do. Jody has also programmed a link between our site to the web site of The Museum of Communications in Seattle. The nationally significant Museum of Communications is now a

part of the Telecommunications History Group.

So, if you want to learn more about THG, telephone history, our collections, our museums or just check out Jody's work, get into the Internet and type in www.telecomhistory.org. You'll be at our web site at nearly the speed of light.



2002 directories being prepared

It's the year's end and volunteer **Betty Vigil** is beginning to get anxious. It happens every year at this time. You see, Betty is half of our directory processing team. **Terry Quirk** is the other half of the team, but he spends most of the winter at his cabin in the Florida keys so he misses the year-end fun.

Throughout the year, Qwest Dex sends THG a copy or two of each telephone book it publishes as it comes off the press. During the year THG receives a telephone book - or two or three - nearly every working day. Toward the end of the year, Betty begins to prepare the books to be shipped to a local bindery where their spines are sliced off and an extra tough library-grade hard cover is attached to them.

Betty makes sure that there are no books missing from the year's collection. She sorts the books according to state and she selects the smaller books that will be bound together (sometimes it takes four or five little books to make a big enough bound

volume.) Betty then packs the books for their trip to the bindery.

Usually it's six to eight weeks before all the books are bound. When the newly bound books return to the archive, the volunteers unpack them and shelve them according to state and then city. By this time, Terry will have returned from Florida looking tan and fit. Terry and Betty will then enter the newly shelved books into the ever-expanding THG Directory database.

And the 2003 books begin coming in.

No dirty pictures here

Renee Lang and **Curt Furness** are our two volunteer photograph archivists. Renee is an active Qwest employee and a proud member of the CWA. She spends many of her lunch hours at THG processing photographs. Curt is a recently retired school principal and volunteers one a day a week (he's missed the last few weeks but will be back on the job soon.)

Photographs require careful handling. There's no room in an archive for dirty pictures; many prints must be dusted, and smudges and grease pencil marks removed. Processed photos are placed in protective Mylar sleeves, then filed flat in acid- and lignin-free storage boxes. Of course, no photo is stored until its description is entered into our database.



A photo archivist becomes a good photo archivist by becoming a good detective. For example, one way to date a photo is to look at the style of clothes a

woman in the photo is wearing, or at her hairstyle, even her jewelry. Sometimes looking at a license plate or a calendar hanging on an office wall will date a photo. Photo archivists learn scores of such tricks, and a magnifying glass becomes their friend. Because learning to read the story a photograph tells is a challenge they enjoy taking on, Renee and Curt are becoming very good at what they do.

It's a good thing, too, because our two intrepid manuscript archivists, **Ken Pratt** and **Dale Norblom**, recently discovered an entire pallet of dusty boxes full of beautiful 8x10 black and white prints from Northwestern Bell and Pacific Northwest Bell. While many of these prints are fully documented, there are several thousand prints that will require Renee and Curt's detective work. Most of these photos have been in storage for 40 to 50 years, and have never been published.



Down-winder research continues

We continue our down-winder research. Most of you know that the down-winder program is a federal government project that compensates cancer victims who lived in certain parts of Arizona, Nevada and Utah during the atomic bomb tests in the 1940s, 50s and 60s. One of the few things the government accepts as proof of residence during the specified dates is a listing in the local telephone directory. Since we are one of the few directory repositories, we are asked to provide proof of such listings. When the down-winder lawyers and cancer benefits organizations first heard of our stash of historic phone books, we were inundated with research requests. The requests

have slowed down, but we still average two or three requests a week. Our volunteers and staff gain a particular satisfaction each time we find proof of residence for a claimant.

Old friends gROW the THG library

A few years ago I was asked make a history presentation at the grand opening of the new U S WEST Library. It was fun, and I think the audience enjoyed the presentation. I know the audience appreciated the new library.

The ladies who invited me to speak were named "Cathy." One was Reece and the other was Mrowka. An early executive decision by Qwest was to close the library. One day the library was providing research services to telephone employees and offering its customers the latest copies of books on business and professional improvement, and the next day the doors were closed. The staff just had time to box up the books and put the furniture in storage before the library was disbanded.

Recently, the two "Cathy's" remembered the odd, old telephone historian from the History Group and gave THG a call. They felt that instead of the library's book collection moldering away in a dusty basement storage area, many of the books could be put back in circulation if they were added to the THG reference library.

About 40 percent of the old U S WEST library has been added to the THG library. Now instead of 10 to 40 percent of the *Bell Telephone Magazine*, *Bell Laboratories Record* and *Bell Telephone Quarterly* magazines, THG has the complete collections. We also have hardbound copies of every

U S WEST Annual Report, several new histories of telephone industry-related companies, and a vast selection of telecommunications industry-related reference books, manuals, and textbooks. Our cellular technology collection grew from four books to a score.

Thanks **Cathy Reece** and **Cathy Mrowka!**



Presidential Trivia

President James A. Garfield was shot only 200 days after taking office.

Doctors tried unsuccessfully for 80 days to find and remove the bullet. Finally, they enlisted the assistance of Alexander Graham Bell, who rigged up a crude metal detector consisting of two coils of insulated wire, a battery, a circuit breaker, and his telephone. The ends of the primary coil were connected to a battery and those of the secondary coil were fastened to posts of the telephone. When a piece of metal was placed in the spot where the circuit breaker was, a hum could be heard in the telephone receiver. As the metal was moved further away, the hum became more faint. Five inches away was the maximum distance that a hum could still be heard.

The detector registered metal throughout the President's body, so the bullet could not be pinpointed. It was later discovered that the device was detecting the newly invented coil springs in Garfield's mattress.

Garfield died - not from the bullet, which had lodged near his spine in a protective cyst - but from massive infection, undoubtedly caused by the

unsterilized fingers of the doctors who probed his wound.

In 1929, Herbert Hoover became the first president to have a telephone installed in his office. Today, there are more telephones than people in the white House.

A Typical Telephone Employee

This story was found in "Insight", published in New Mexico on the occasion of the telephone's centennial (1976).

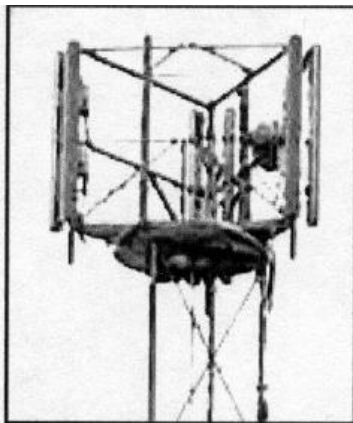


One day in August, 1877, a youth by the name of Robert W. Devonshire walked into a little office at 109 Court Street, Boston, and went to work as a bookkeeper.

So began the history - now covering a period of nearly 10 decades - of a peculiarly cordial and cooperative relationship between the Bell System and its personnel.

This young bookkeeper was the first telephone employee. His was the first name on the payroll of an organization that was destined to grow until its telephone employees now number nearly one million.

In his personal qualities – alertness, willingness to give himself to the service which he was engaged, loyalty to the best interest of the public, ability to cooperate with others, and a sense of fairness that made for pleasant relationships with his employers and his fellow workers alike – this first telephone employee was typical of the thousands of men and women who were to follow him.



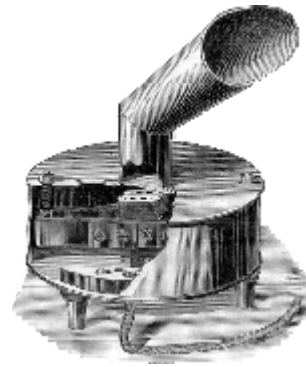
Severe Hangup

The town council in Warringah, NSW, Australia, was upset that they could not block a cell phone company from putting an antenna on the top of a new lighting pole in a council-controlled park. After a legal challenge was denied, the council changed their tactics: hours before the scheduled installation they sent a man out with a chainsaw to cut it down. (Sydney Morning Herald)

Council members tried to get the media to come cover the sawing, but for some reason they couldn't get their cell phones to work.

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Contest Answer

Ron Knappen at Phoneco, Inc. in Galesville, Wisconsin, was the winner of our Autumn photo contest. To quote from Ron's answer:

“Böttcher's Telephone . . . This magnetic telephone was exhibited at Vienna in 1883. It acts both as transmitter and receiver. It consists of two horseshoe magnets . . . joined by their poles . . . and suspended between the elastic bottom of the case and the membrane by elastic wire loops in such a way that they can be regulated by two fine screws.”

“On speaking into the telephone through the tube, not only the membrane, but the suspended magnets are thrown into vibration, and the telephonic effect is thereby considerably strengthened. The metallic telephone case rests on feet; a funnel-shaped mouthpiece is placed above the membrane.”

The 50 millionth telephone was installed on March 13, 1957, in the home of James S. Russell, the longest serving employee of the Bell System.



Acquisitions

By Jody Georgeson

We continue to amass treasures through the good wishes of our members. Some of our recent acquisitions include:

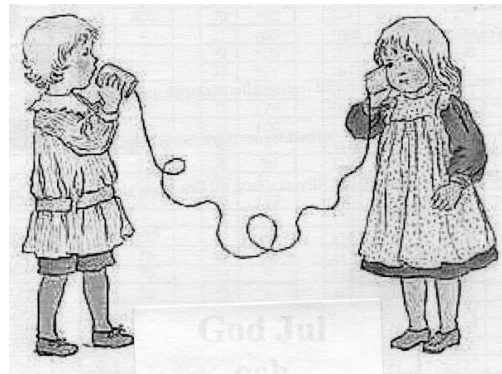
- ☎ The shirt worn by **Dick Notebaert** at the “Spirit of Service” campaign kickoff, on September 30, 2002;
- ☎ An AT&T banner and a System 75 PBX station, from **Doug Cook** in Colorado Springs, Co;
- ☎ Jewelry from **Lois Demos** (Rapid City, SD), who also submitted a delightful auto-biography;
- ☎ **Martin Gilman** of Lexington, MA sent his father’s (**Albert James Gilman**) work record, diaries, photographs and safety supplies;
- ☎ Outside Plant Engineer handbooks, with personal notes and drawings, from **Don Deming** in Sioux City, IA;
- ☎ From **Mrs. Kirby** of Denver (via THG volunteer **Beth Trudgeon**), service award jewelry and Yellow Pages memorabilia;
- ☎ **Gayle Rowe Isaac** sent us four large scrapbooks which were presented to her father, **Glen H. Rowe**, on the occasion of his retirement in 1971, after 43 years of service with Mountain Bell. These are especially fine examples of “memory books” prepared for service anniversaries and retirements in the Bell System. Of particular interest are photographs of job sites and buildings. Mr. Rowe’s civilian job was considered essential to the war effort during WWII, and his activities during that period are well documented in these books.



Glen H. Rowe, 1928, shortly after beginning work at the Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph Company

No More Posters

According to the Telecom Insider Newsletter (Sept. 5, 2002), “lost pet” posters will soon be a thing of the past, thanks to new technology. A Finnish company, Pointer, is marketing a system that consists of a mobile phone and a tracking unit to be strapped on an animal’s back. When a pet is missing, its movements can be followed via a map displayed on a handheld monitor by the pet’s owner. The system is expected to be popular with both pet owners and with hunters who need to trace their retrievers.



All of us at THG wish you and your family a safe, happy and peaceful New Year!



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