



# Dial Log



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Editor, Jody Georgeson

## Director's Report

By Jody Georgeson

Another year is nearly gone and we at THG are still collecting telecom history. It's a good thing, because the history of our industry continues to evolve. Most of us remember when AT&T introduced the Picturephone® or when Telstar first orbited the Earth; we thought it was the stuff of science fiction. Who would have thought we'd be sending text messages, taking and sending photographs, talking to people across the globe, reading books, playing games, and who knows what else, all on the same "phone"?

Telecom companies continue to evolve, too. Several of the "Baby Bells" have recombined to form giant companies (like Verizon and AT&T), while Qwest is about to become part of CenturyLink and a cable company is the third largest provider of telephone service in the country. All of these developments are grist for the mill of history. With the support of members like you, and the hard work of our loyal volunteers, we will continue to collect and disseminate evidence of this ever-changing, endlessly fascinating industry.

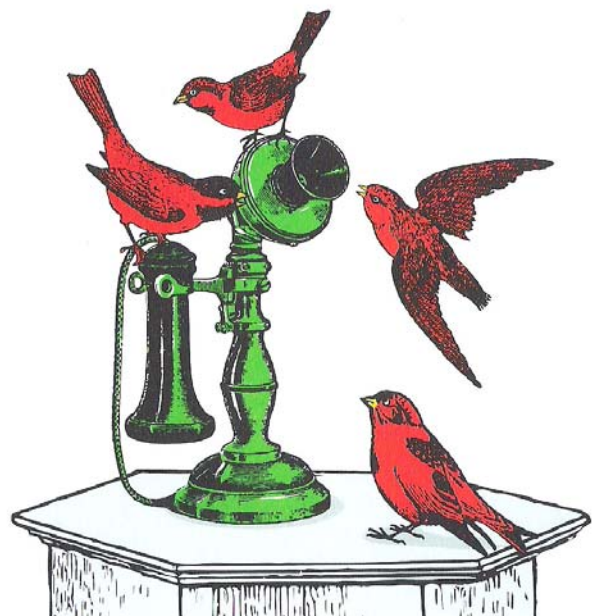
Some of those changes are represented in this issue of the newsletter. On page 2, you can read a description of what it was like to leave family behind before we had telephones. **John Herbolich** describes the formation of a post-divestiture company, Teleport Communications

group, and later in the issue, we continue the early history of the telephone in Washington state.

We are proud to be the first publish a new short story by our own **Marty Donovan**. We hope you enjoy reading about a young family and their adventures with an old Strowger-dial telephone.

I thought you'd enjoy seeing a Christmas card we found. They can be ordered at [seltzergoods.com](http://seltzergoods.com).

## Four Calling Birds...





**Can you imagine leaving friends and family to resettle far away where you'd never hear their voices again?**

*"I think I should like to whisper in mother's ear many things which I cannot write. If I could only see her in her room for on-half hour..."*

*Diaries and journals of Narcissa Whitman, 1836  
En route from Philadelphia to Walla Walla, Washington*

During the period from 1840 to 1890, thousands of Americans migrated to the unsettled lands of the West. The late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century brought thousands of immigrants from other countries to the U.S. They left family, friends and home, hoping for a better life. Most knew they would never see their loved ones or hear their voices again.

In the 1840s and '50s, letters took several weeks or even months to reach Europe or destinations west of the Mississippi River. They might travel on ships to San Francisco from New York via the Panama Canal. A Southern pack mule route operated from St. Louis and Memphis to El Paso to Los Angeles to San Francisco. Other letters traveled via stagecoach, railroad and with individual travelers. All were slow and undependable.

The Pony Express departed once a week from April 3 to mid-June 1860 and twice a week from mid-June, to late October 1861. Departures were from both the east and the west from St. Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento, California, through the present day states of Kansas, Nebraska, northeast corner of Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, and California. The entire trip took 10 days in summer, 12 to 16 days in winter. The price was \$5 per 1/2 ounce at the beginning. By the end of the Pony Express, the price had dropped to \$1 per 1/2 ounce. \$1 in 1861 was equal to about \$25 today, still much too expensive for most people.

1861, Western Union built a transcontinental telegraph line and messages could be sent immediately to major cities. Messages then had to

be decoded and delivered to the recipient. In 1869 the transcontinental railroad was opened. Mail could now travel at a more reasonable cost, and only took a week or ten days to reach its destination.

*It wasn't until 1915 that a phone call was made clear across North America and 1927 before one was made across the Atlantic Ocean.*



**Ron Swanson**  
**THG Volunteer of the Year**

## **Volunteer Appreciation**

We celebrated our wonderful volunteers on November 17, with a luncheon at the Rialto Cafe on the 16<sup>th</sup> Street mall in Denver.

**Ron Swanson** was named 2010 Volunteer of the Year. Ron is an AT&T retiree who has been working with us since 2005. He is a man of wide-ranging interests and knowledge, and is our go to guy when we need to find something out about a piece of equipment or a system. We especially appreciate that he's always cheerful and more than willing to take on any task we ask him to do.

We are grateful to all of our volunteers and to our all-volunteer board. A big thanks to all of you!

## Teleport Communications Group

by John Herbolich

*This explanation supports the two Denver Network Facility Maps dated 1997 and 1999, Teleport Communications Group and AT&T Local Services, which John donated to our collection. (TCG = Teleport Communications Group, a CLEC -Competitive Local Exchange Carrier)*

The following is based on my recollection as an employee of TCG. The company was formed in 1983, shortly after **Bob Annunziata** (former AT&T national account manager for the Merrill Lynch account with 17 years service) was selected as the key leader in anticipation of the Bell System break-up. He would be focusing on satellite service to bypass Bell. Initially, Staten Island, San Francisco, and Denver were the three 'teleport' cities. The initial intent was to transport all data traffic from the banks and brokerage houses. Denver is unique as it is located on the 105<sup>th</sup> meridian, and can communicate directly with either Europe or Asia to fully exploit domestic and international customers.

Based on the changing environment, including a number of competitive metropolitan fiber optic cable companies being established, TCG decided in 1989 to expand nationally, going beyond having metropolitan networks in New York and Boston, to Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago, Minneapolis, Houston, San Francisco and Los Angeles by 1990.

President William J. Clinton signed the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to stimulate competition, which allowed CLEC's to lease dedicated space in telephone company central offices for their transmission equipment, to purchase power from them, and to allow direct interconnection between the CLEC and the

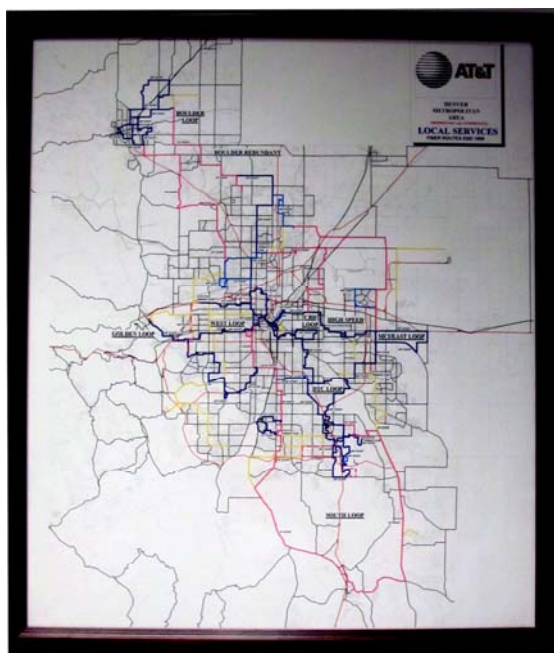
incumbent telephone company. This was also the impetus for competitors to install telephone switching systems in their buildings and offer switched local service (i.e. dial tone) to local customers.

I started working for TCG in Denver, Colorado in January 1997 as Director, Engineering and OSP Construction and Operations, part of the Western Region. At that time there were 1800 employees with a national presence in 64 cities. Senior management was primarily AT&T former employees headquartered in Staten Island, New York and Princeton, New Jersey. Other leadership positions were filled with well-experienced employees chosen for their technical background and managerial expertise from within the industry, as there were virtually no "practices" to refer to in daily operation of the business. Primary owners were the three major CATV companies - TCI, Comcast, and Cox

Cable. This was critical, as it is very difficult for a

competitive telecommunications company to obtain approval from municipalities to conduct business (obtain a franchise to operate, to obtain permits to construct facilities, and to obtain right of way for construction). Consequently, many of the fiber optic cable routes were jointly owned, leased from a cable company, or constructed on their right-of-way. We built fiber routes primarily in downtown areas, business parks, and to large building complexes offering

non-switched services (data, direct connection to MCI, SPRINT, etc.) at DS-3, 45MB capacity or higher digital rates as required by the customer. We competed directly with the local telephone companies, offering lower prices, much faster provisioning time, and very high-reliability, redundant, self-healing fiber optic cable rings to insure reliability.





Mr. **C. Michael Armstrong** became AT&T President, and his vision was to offer total telecommunications service by “bundling” all services: land line telephone; long distance service; cellular telephone; video; and internet, with one monthly bill.

Because TCG was the most successful CLEC (and due to the extensive local network, high quality facilities, compatible technology, and a large high revenue business customer base) AT&T and TCG agreed to merge in January 1998. We were named AT&T Co Local Services, and continued with our business model. It was relatively easy to merge, as the three major cable companies were the stockholders. Price was not disclosed but was estimated at \$12B.

In 1999 AT&T acquired the CATV Company operating in Atlanta, Boston, Jackson and Minneapolis and in 2000 acquired TCI, the largest CATV operator, forming AT&T Broadband. In 2000 and 2001, they acquired MediaOne from U S West. AT&T subsequently sold Broadband to Comcast, which is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest telephone company.

*The following information is relative to the two Fiber Optic Network Route Maps titled TCG May 13, 1997 and AT&T Denver Metro Area Local Services December, 1999.*

The 1997 TCG Map has the colored legend showing owned, leased and proposed routes.

The 1999 AT&T Local Services Map depicts cable routes in much more detail and indicates the cable size, typically 24–48–96 fiber-count in the cable sheath.

These Route Maps were prepared for a general overall perspective of the existing and proposed facilities, primarily to show prospective customers the extent of the fiber optic ring architecture network. The major nodes are shown, which were transmission switching hubs or telephone switching offices for local switched services.

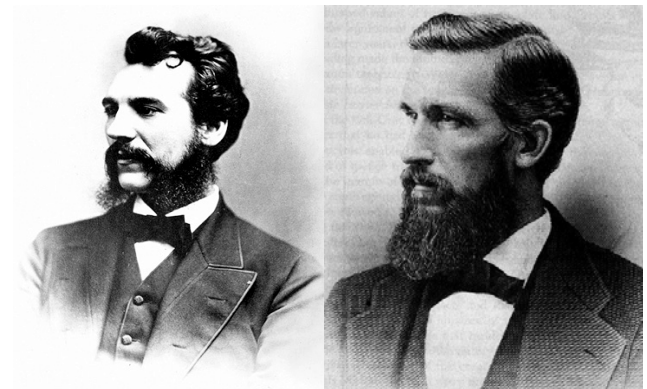
*John J. Herbolich resigned as Regional VP Engineering – Construction, Western Region. He is a THG volunteer and a member of our Board of Directors.*

## The Importance of Inventors

by Tim Wu

*Tim Wu is the author of **Master Switch**, (Knopf, 2010). This excerpt is from pages 17-20, and is used with his permission.*

[In 1876], Alexander Bell was in his laboratory in the attic of a machine shop in Boston, trying once more to coax a voice out of a wire. His efforts had proved mostly futile, and the Bell Company was little more than a typical hopeless start-up. Bell was a professor and an amateur inventor, with little taste for business: his expertise and his day job was teaching the deaf. His main investor and the president of the Bell Company was Gardiner Green Hubbard, a patent attorney and prominent critic of the telegraph monopoly Western Union. It is Hubbard who was responsible for Bell's most valuable asset: its telephone patent, filed even before Bell had a working prototype. Besides Hubbard, the company had one employee, Bell's assistant, Thomas Watson. That was it.



Alexander Graham Bell and Elisha Gray  
Circa 1876

On the very day that Alexander Bell was registering his invention, another man, Elisha Gray, was also at the patent office filing for the very same breakthrough. The coincidence takes some of the luster off Bell's 'eureka.' And the more you examine the history, the worse it looks. In 1861, sixteen years before Bell, a German man named Johann Philip Reis presented a primitive telephone to the Physical Society of Frankfurt. ...

Germany has long considered Reis the telephone's inventor. Another man, a small-town Pennsylvania electrician named Daniel Drawbaugh, later claimed that by 1869 he had a working telephone in his house. He produced prototypes and seventy witnesses who testified that they had seen or heard his invention at that time. In litigation before the Supreme Court in 1888, three justices concluded that 'overwhelming evidence' proved that 'Drawbaugh produced and exhibited in his shop, as early as 1869, an electrical instrument by which he transmitted speech.' ...

There was, it is fair to say, no single inventor of the telephone. And this reality suggests that what we call invention, while not easy, is simply what happens once a technology's development reaches the point where the next step becomes available to many people. By Bell's time, others had invented wires and the telegraph, had discovered electricity and the basic principles of acoustics. It lay to Bell to assemble the pieces: no mean feat, but not a superhuman one. In this sense, inventors are often more like craftsmen than miracle workers.

Indeed, the history of science is full of examples of what the writer Malcolm Gladwell terms 'simultaneous discovery' - so full that the phenomenon represents the norm rather than the exception. Few today know the name Alfred Russel Wallace, yet he wrote an article proposing the theory of natural selection in 1858, a year before Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*. Leibnitz and Newton developed calculus simultaneously. And in 1610 four others made the same lunar observations as Galileo. ...

Is the loner and outsider inventor, then, merely a figment of so much hype, with no particular significance? No, I would argue his significance is enormous; but not for the reasons usually imagined. The inventors we remember are significant not so much as inventors, but as founders of 'disruptive' industries, ones that shake up the technological status quo. Through circumstance or luck, they are exactly at the right distance both to imagine the future and to create an independent industry to exploit. ...

The importance of the outsider here owes to his being at the right remove from the prevailing currents of thought about the problem at hand. That distance affords a perspective close enough to understand the problem, yet far enough for greater freedom of thought, freedom from, as it were, the cognitive distortion of what is as opposed to what could be. This innovative distance explains why so many of those who turn an industry upside down are outsiders, even outcasts. ...

Another advantage of the outside inventor is less a matter of the imagination than of his being a disinterested party. Distance creates a freedom to develop inventions that might challenge or even destroy the business model of the dominant industry. The outsider is often the only one who can afford to scuttle a perfectly sound ship, to propose an industry that might challenge the business establishment or suggest a whole new business model. Those closer to - often at the trough of - existing industries face a remarkably constant pressure not to invent things that will ruin their employer. The outsider has nothing to lose.



Daniel Drawbaugh

But to be clear, it is not mere distance, but the right distance that matters; there is such a thing as being too far away. It may be that Daniel Drawbaugh actually did invent the telephone seven years before Bell.

We may never know; but even if he did, it doesn't really matter, because he didn't do anything with it. He was doomed to remain an inventor, not a founder, for he was just too far away from the action to found a disruptive industry. In this sense, Bell's alliance with Hubbard, a sworn enemy of Western Union, the dominant monopolist, was all-important. For it was Hubbard who made Bell's invention into an effort to unseat Western Union.



## Texting

According to the *New York Times*, 10/18/2010, the average teenager in the U S sends more than six text messages every waking hour. Nielsen analyzed mobile phone usage by 13-to 17-year olds and found that teenagers are making fewer voice calls, but teenage girls make 4,050 text messages a month, or eight each waking hour.

## A Call Across Time

by Marty Donovan



My husband, Bill, and I bought the old gray-and-white two-story house just a few blocks from downtown Lincoln shortly after he returned from the war in 1945. With help from my father we put a modest amount down on the house, our first home. Bill searched for a job while our daughter, Margaret, and I worked to clean up the house. I started washing the walls and stripping the wallpaper. The days passed quickly as Margaret

and I tidied up the place. The parlor and kitchen on the main level needed a bit more work, but we painted the walls and cleaned the wooden floors, which helped make the home our own.

We painted the four bedrooms on the second story and cleaned the floors and windows. Now all we needed was furniture. Since Bill had landed a great job at the Lincoln Trust Bank several months earlier, we'd saved enough to buy furniture. Just in time for Thanksgiving, I thought.

However, my father suggested that we explore the attic before going shopping. "There might be some good stuff in there, Ruthie," he told me. Early the following Saturday, Bill, Margaret, my parents, and I climbed the old stairwell into the attic and found a treasure trove of things. "Daniel, didn't this house belong to old Doc Smythe and his wife, Annabelle?" Mom asked Dad. "Yes, I think that's right," he said. "What a tragedy, Marie," my father replied.

"What happened?" I asked as I gazed at my mother.

"It's a long story; I'll tell you about it later. Daniel, look at this. It's an old telephone," my mom said.

"An Automatic Electric with a Strowger dial to be exact," my father replied.

Margaret grabbed the receiver and started talking. "Hello, hello, I'm Margaret. Who are you? Why are you crying?" she said into the mouthpiece. "Don't be sad, it's ok."

"Margaret, what are you doing?" I asked.

"Talking to a lady on the phone, Mama. Listen."

I picked up the receiver. "What is going on?" I asked. All I heard was a woman crying and saying, "Help me, help me." How could this be? The phone wasn't even hooked up.

I put the receiver down and picked it up again, nothing. A third time. She was crying and saying, "Help me, help me." The family took turns. All of us picked up the receiver several times and listened intently as the woman on the other end cried out saying, "Help me, help me." We were so baffled that we forgot all about the furniture.

On Valentine's Day 1947, we climbed up the rickety stairs and returned to the attic. Again, we

took turns picking up the receiver but didn't hear anything. I knew we hadn't imagined hearing her voice before, but now the Strowger was silent.

Spring was right around the corner in Lincoln and my mother's flower guild was gearing up for the April parade. She took Margaret and me to the library to meet the women in her group. Now's my chance, I thought. Not wanting to give away our experience with the phone, I asked a couple of older women in the group, "Do you remember anything about Doc Smythe and his family? We moved into their house about a year ago and we found several antiques that I believe belonged to them."

One old woman, Mona, just shook her head, while another, Louise, quietly began the story. "What a sad, sad tale," she said. Louise glanced around the room at the other women and continued, "Doctor Smythe, his wife, Annabelle, and their two sons moved into that house in the late 1890s. My mother told me that he was a wonderful doctor and that she was very good friends with Annabelle. Their family spent several Sunday afternoons with us. The parents played cards and we children hid and chased each other around our yard. Apparently somewhere around 1909 or 1910, Doctor Smythe took Annabelle and the boys out for a ride in their new carriage. He handed the reins to Annabelle, as he stepped into the back of the coach to talk to their boys. Suddenly, the horses reared back and took off galloping at a fast pace. Dr. Smythe and the boys were thrown out of the carriage. So tragic. The three died a few days later from severe head injuries."



"Annabelle was never the same after that," Louise lamented. "My mother said she used to call her on that fancy phone the doctor owned. All she'd do was cry to my mother and say 'Help me, help me.'" Louise recounted.

"About ten years later, in 1919, Annabelle contracted the swine flu and died."



Almon B. Strowger

*This story is fictitious with the exception of the Strowger dial. It was the first of its kind, conceived by Almon B. Strowger, an undertaker in Kansas City, Kansas. He believed that local telephone operators were undermining his business by misrouting calls meant for him. His funeral home began to lose business, so he came up with the idea of a dial phone to receive calls directly from customers. With help from engineers like his nephew, Walter Strowger, he was able to construct a crude switch that he patented in March of 1891. He formed a telephone franchise, the Strowger Automatic Telephone Exchange, in LaPorte, Indiana, the same year.*

*Hearing about the device, the Brush Electric Company sent Alexander E. Keith, an engineer to investigate. Keith realized the switch's potential, and the rest is history. Almon Brown Strowger died May 26, 1902. You can read his story in The History of GTE The Evolution of one of America's Great Corporations, Thomas E. McCarthy, published in 1990 by GTE Corporation, Stamford, CT.*

*If you enjoyed this story, you can read more of Marty's work at [www.mrpickleton.com](http://www.mrpickleton.com) and at [www.mdworddoctor.com](http://www.mdworddoctor.com).*

## Matching Funds

A recent letter from THG member **David Bagner** reminded us that some companies offer matching funds for donations to nonprofit organizations. If you have recently sent, or are about to send in your membership renewal, check to see if your company will match it.

As an AT&T employee, David is participating in their Matching Gift Program. The AT&T Plan stipulates that it will support only educational, cultural and historical associations. "In my opinion," says David, "THG counts for all three."

Qwest matches employee volunteer time with cash donations, and Bell South matches donations by employees *and* retirees.

So check to see if your company, or the one you retired from offers a similar program. This is a quick and easy way to double your contribution to THG, helping us continue our job of preserving and disseminating the history of the telecom industry.

## We Get Letters

*One of the best things about working at THG is talking to and corresponding with our members. You all possess a wealth of information about our industry and its history. Here are just a couple of stories we've received lately...*

*From **Geraldine Aron**, in Santa Fe, NM:*

Enclosed are a couple of items from the medicine chest in the operating room of the Illinois Bell Telephone Company in Homewood, Illinois. They are from the 1940s – and earlier, judging by the contents entitled "Amonia Inhalents."

By the time I came to work as an operator in 1941, women did not faint, for which I assume these were intended, but we would use them for a stuffy nose when we had a cold. ...

The little vials are made of thin glass. When one crushed them between their fingers as directed, the cotton around the vial would absorb the ammonia and then she (*the operator*) would

get a good whiff of the contents. We have come a long way! ...

A bit of feminine history: after WW II, I became one of the first women draftsmen in the Plant Engineering Office in a suburb outside of Chicago. My boss decided to use me to drive to another city to deliver and pick up the blueprints we made up in our office. This way he saved the expense of using a higher paid engineer to run this errand. He had been a Major in the army and had seen women working as draftsmen as well as driving vehicles. However, when his "superiors" learned of a woman driving a company car, they put a stop to it. Tell this to the women linemen of today!



*And this from our good friend, **Laurel Wadley** in Sandy, Utah:*

At one point in my career I worked in the 931 14<sup>th</sup> St. building in Denver (when I moved from Southern California in 1974). I had transferred from Pacific Telephone in the San Fernando Valley and after five years of being a Drafting Clerk in Engineering, I had to take an "operator job." What a huge shock that was!

I found I was no longer the decision-maker of when I should be able to use the restroom. Being an employee with five years of service at that time (most of the other operators were brand new or had less than six months of service), I decided no one should be able to tell me when to use the facilities. So, when I "had to go" I would just unplug from the board and run like hell.



I can understand why the fifth floor, which was where Information Operators resided, had bars on the windows. When I first started working there, I asked an SA why the bars were there and she told me, "Because a few years ago, an operator jumped out the window." Made me really want to get my transfer FAST!

I was an Information/intercept operator for eleven Long months before I could transfer back to my beloved Engineering Department. ...

My father-in-law, **Ralph E. Wadley**, was a fifth level manager in Utah and retired in 1979. He is now 90 years and very close to leaving this world. I met my husband over the phone for our work, when I worked in Denver and he in Utah. I'm sure it was my FIL who "put in a good word for me" with the transfer bureau people. He said he never did anything to get me transferred to Utah, but I think differently.

At my wedding on August 6, 1977, **Mac Lawrence** (then president of Utah Mt. Bell) came to my wedding, but because I had just moved to Utah, I had no clue who he was (I was told later, of course).

Jim and I got married on the day the contract was up, and both men were waiting to hear if the company and the union had "signed"...This was before cell phones, so at our reception someone finally got word and relayed it to Mac and Ralph. (Yes, they did sign and there was no strike.)

I retired from Qwest-Utah in 2001 with 32 years of service, which did not count the two years I worked for General Telephone in Santa Monica, California.



## The Early Growth of Telephone in Western Washington State

by Don Ostrand

*This article traces the development of the network in western part of the Washington.*

Preceding articles did not describe growth in capacity of separate leads, many of which have grown from 25-foot bracket leads to 35- and 40-foot, 40 and 80 wire leads. The object has been to narrate the gradual spread of the toll plant, following the state's development, from a single short line in 1884 to a network covering the State in 1913, and furnishing service to every city, town and settlement.

As the various leads deteriorated through natural causes they were rebuilt, sometimes on the same routes and sometimes on new routes that afforded better construction conditions. Further building was a result of inadequacy; although the leads were designed to carry the ultimate requirements. The volume of traffic increased at a far greater rate than was predicted, and the pole lines were not big enough to carry the necessary circuits. Many other reconstruction projects, involving immense expenditures, were necessitated by the gradual improvement of roads and railroads. As the state became more heavily populated and its resources more extensively developed, the old roads and trails were abandoned and new modern ones were made. As the western part of the state is densely wooded, road construction involves the blasting of stumps and felling of trees, making it necessary to protect toll lines in the vicinity by temporarily carrying the circuits in insulated wire strung on trees or laid on the ground at a safe distance from the blasting operations.

### BELLINGHAM - SUMAS

In 1902, a 25-foot pole line was built from Bellingham through the towns of Alki, Lynden, Everson and Nooksack to Sumas. A 172# copper metallic circuit was strung on brackets on this lead.

With the growth and development of Whatcom County, the section of the country north and northeast of Bellingham needed telephone service. These towns grew up principally because of extensive logging operations and later because logged-off land was developed into rich dairy country. The Northern Pacific Railway Company built a line through Nooksack and Sumas. The latter, because of its location at the international boundary, became important as a port of entry from British Columbia.

In 1912 (in connection with changes required by the building of a high-potential power system in Whatcom County) the original pole lead was rebuilt from Bellingham to a point about three miles west of Lynden Junction. The balance of the lead remains as originally built.

### BELLINGHAM - DEMING

In 1898, a 25-foot pole lead, carrying one metallic circuit of #9 iron wire on brackets, was built between Bellingham and Deming. This lead was built to provide long distance service to the logging camps and mills which had started extensive operations near Deming in 1897 and 1898.

### BELLINGHAM - MARIETTA

The original lead from Bellingham to Marietta as a part of the existing Bellingham--Victoria route, was constructed in 1899 to supply local facilities to subscribers along the road between Bellingham and Marietta. A little later the Carlisle Cannery Company built a lead under a permit from the U.S. Government, from Marietta to Portage through the Lummi Indian Reservation, connecting their fish canning plant on Lummi Island with the Bellingham Exchange.

In 1904, the International Telephone Company (a subsidiary of the British Columbia Telephone Company) purchased the pole lead from the Carlisle Cannery Company and placed

two circuits of #9 gauge copper wire from Bellingham to Portage, connecting with their submarine cable to Victoria, Vancouver Island. These wires were placed on pins in the existing 20-knob crossarms on The Pacific Company's local lead from Bellingham to Marietta. The toll plant was not the property of The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company.

### SEDRO WOOLLEY JUNCTION - SEDRO WOOLLEY

In 1897, a circuit of #9 iron was strung on Postal Telegraph Company's poles from Mount Vernon through Burlington to Sedro Woolley. The section of the lead between Burlington and Sedro Woolley was located on the Great Northern Railway Company's right of way. This provided the first telephone service to Burlington and Sedro Woolley. Later, an additional 172# copper was strung between Mount Vernon and Sedro Woolley and a #9 iron between Mount Vernon and Burlington and a 4-pin arm was placed on the Postal Company's poles. Mount Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro Woolley were located in the center of a large cedar timber belt, with a number of shingle and lumber mills and other wood manufacturing plants.

In 1910, a new lead intended eventually for Mount Vernon-Bellingham, was built north from Mount Vernon on county roads through Burlington to Belleville (called Sedro Woolley Junction). A branch lead was built from this junction to Sedro Woolley. A 10-pin crossarm was placed the entire distance on this lead. Two #9 iron wire circuits and one 172# copper circuit were strung from Mount Vernon to Sedro Woolley, and two circuits of #10 iron were strung between Mount Vernon and Burlington. The plant on the Postal Telegraph Company's poles was dismantled.

In 1912, two additional #10 iron circuits were strung between Burlington and Sedro Woolley and an additional 172# copper between Mount Vernon and Sedro Woolley. This was followed in 1913 by the placing of two #10 iron circuits between Mount Vernon and Burlington and the placing of an additional 10-pin crossarm.

In about 1908, connection was made with a line of the Skagit Valley Telephone Company, extending from Sedro Woolley, east to Concrete and other points in the Skagit River Valley.

The large number of circuits placed between Mount Vernon, Burlington and Sedro Woolley was due to the rapid growth of these towns and the phenomenal progress made along agricultural lines in the entire territory.

#### COUPEVILLE JUNCTION - COUPEVILLE

The lead between Coupeville Junction and Coupeville on Whidbey Island was built in 1898. It extended from the south end of Fidalgo Bay, along Fidalgo Island, across Deception Pass in an aerial span and south on Whidbey Island through Oak Harbor to Coupeville. A metallic circuit of #9 iron wire was strung from Anacortes to Coupeville. Large 25-foot round cedar poles were used carrying the original single circuit.

Toll service was first installed due to demands for telephone connections between Anacortes and other points on the main land with Coupeville, the county seat of Island County.

#### MOUNT VERNON - ANACORTES

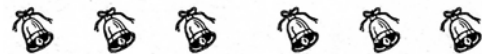
In 1895, the predecessors of The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company bought a private telegraph line between Mount Vernon and LaConner from a Mr. Miller. The poles were small twenty-fives and the circuit was a grounded #9 iron. A lead was built between LaConner and Anacortes, passing through Whitney and Fidalgo. It consisted of a circuit of #9 iron strung on small 25-foot poles. The grounded circuit between Mount Vernon and LaConner was made metallic

at the same time. The branch from Whitney to Bay View was built the same year. La Conner was an important agricultural center, and Anacortes was a prosperous mill town of about 1,200 inhabitants.

In 1902, the old lead between Mount Vernon and LaConner had become badly deteriorated and, an additional circuit was required between Mount Vernon and Anacortes to handle the rapidly increasing business. The old lead would not carry the additional load, so a new lead was built on a direct route between Avon (a town two miles west of Mount Vernon on the Mount Vernon-Bellingham lead) and Whitney. The new circuit was strung on the Mount Vernon-Bellingham lead from Mount Vernon to Avon and from Avon to Whitney, and on the existing lead between Whitney and Anacortes.

In 1909, an additional 172# copper lead was strung between Mount Vernon and Anacortes and a phantom established with the existing circuit. These additional facilities were made necessary by the growth of Anacortes, whose population had increased threefold between 1900 and 1909.

*The development of the telephone business in western Washington will continue in the next issue of the Dial-Log.*



***We wish you and your families a joyous,  
peaceful holiday and a bright  
New Year!***

