



Dial Log



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A Note From Our Director

Fall has arrived. I love this time of year when the temperatures cool down, the leaves start to change colors and our schedules get back to some kind of normalcy. The summer flew by here at THG and we had an exciting thing happen.

At the Rocky Mountain Book and Paper Fair we had a special visitor stop by our exhibit. Alexander Graham Bell's great, great granddaughter **Missye Bonds** visited our booth and introduced herself. It was an honor meeting her, and she even let us snap this picture of her standing in front of a painting of Alexander Graham Bell.



We would like to welcome two new Board members to THG. **Lori Dubois** with Marketing Troubadour and **Cliff Stice** formerly Vice President of Media One International joined the Board in June. Welcome to both.

As always we are looking for volunteers so just give us a call at 303-296-1221 and let us know when you are available to come down and help us out. Or be sure to call and schedule a tour for you and your family and friends. It's a great way to spend a few hours and we would really like to see you.

Enjoy the remainder of 2015.

Warm regards,
Lisa Berquist

The Telephone Hour

The Bell Telephone Hour (also known as The Telephone Hour) was a concert series which ran from April 29, 1940 until June 30, 1958 on NBC. Sponsored by Bell Telephone as the name implies, it showcased the best in classical and Broadway music, reaching eight to nine million listeners each week. It continued on television from 1959 to 1968. The following is an announcement heard on Radio Program No. 32, December 2, 1940.



The first advertisement for the telephone appeared in May, 1877, a little four-page circular, headed simply and with Yankee brevity: "The Telephone." It announced that speech could be transmitted for a distance of twenty miles and then went on to point out, with complete candor and honesty, the shortcomings of those early telephone facilities by saying, "Conversation can easily be carried on after slight practice and with the occasional repetition of a word or sentence. On first listening to the telephone, though the sound is perfectly audible, articulation seems indistinct, but after a few trials, the ear becomes accustomed to the peculiar sound and finds little difficulty in understanding of the words."

It is doubtful if any advertisement ever told, with more complete frankness, the defects of its sponsor's product. Such candor won confidence and friends for the first telephone company . . .

Today research has improved the quality, eliminated the factor of distance and brought the cost of service lower and lower. And today radio makes it possible for you to hear as well as read your telephone company's advertisements. One thing, however, remains unchanged. Your telephone company is still glad to tell you or show you anything about this business.

The TV show, seen on NBC from January 12, 1959 to the summer of 1968, was one of the first TV series to be telecast exclusively in color, using the color TV system perfected by RCA in 1954. Throughout the program's run on both radio and television, the studio orchestra on the program was conducted by Donald Voorhees, at right.





Rocky Mountain Book & Paper Fair

THG had a very successful exhibit at this year's Book and Paper Fair. We had many visitors stop to chat about their own or friends and relatives experiences working for "the telephone company." Others expressed interest in becoming members and/or attending a tour of the MST&T headquarters building. Some signed up as members on the spot!

Mark your calendars for the 32nd Annual Fair on Friday, August 5 and Saturday, August 6, 2016. Exhibitors from across the nation and beyond will be offering thousands of books, maps, prints, photos and paper items.



Colorado's Most Significant Artifact

The Colorado Collection Connection has chosen our 1959 custom-built high security telephone, used in the North American Defense Command's Cheyenne Mountain complex during the nation's first DEFCON 2 alert status during the Cuban Missile Crisis) as a finalist in the 2015 Colorado's Most Significant Artifact campaign.

The 10 artifacts with the most public votes will be announced in December 2015. You may see all of the nominations that will be voted on at:
<https://collectioncare.auraria.edu/.../colorados-2015-most-si...>

Please take a few minutes to vote (preferably for our artifact).

Farewell, Joybubbles

by Herb Hackenburg

Joe Engressia (right) was his name and phone phreaking was his game. In the early 1960s a bunch of very smart high school and college boys discovered a massive gap in the Bell System's national telephone network. Just dial a toll-free number, (e.g. information, which was a free call in those days). With the right timing and the right musical notes played into your phone, you could call nearly anyone, anywhere for free.

Or you could dial your favorite "inward operator" and she would place your call to wherever and whoever you wanted. Phone phreaks built their own inward operator phone directory. The inward operator in area code 604 was especially popular. Area code 604 is British Columbia. Inward operators were the operators' operator, and could place non-billable calls to anywhere at any time

Joe was born blind. He was also born very bright and with perfect pitch. He was about four years old when he discovered the telephone and it became his friend. He could call and talk to people, or he could just listen to it buzz, beep, and click. Over the years Joe learned what every sound the phone made was doing. He got so good that he could troubleshoot a central office just by listening to it handle his call.

When Joe discovered that the Bell System was using musical notes to direct switching equipment, he was in telephony heaven. While other phone phreaks were using blue boxes to produce the musical notes needed to direct their free calls, Joe just needed his voice. At times, Joe would bet non-believers that he could place a call around the world and make the phone in a nearby phone booth ring. He won his bet every time.

Ever since he was a little boy and his mom put tape on the three and seven number holes so he could feel the numbers to dial the time lady on his own, he wanted to work for the phone company when he grew up. Being blind was a roadblock to being hired.

Joe was not one to give up -- ever. He decided to become the nation's top phone phreak, then allow himself to get caught. Joe thought that the resulting publicity would get his name known to a high-level phone executive.

In a roundabout way, Joe's plan worked out.

By now Joe was a student at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Tampa was one of the few major cities not served by the Bell System, but that was alright; Joe had already figured out General Telephone's switching system. This knowledge allowed him to offer cheap long distance calls to any of his fellow students for a buck instead of the phone company price of \$2.60.





His “service” grew so popular he started to attract a crowd of students everywhere he walked on campus. It helped that he was also a nice guy with a quick mind and a sense of humor. Joe’s fans called him, “The Whistler.”

Eventually, The Whistler whistled a tiny bit off key and the call went to an operator in Montreal (area code 514) instead of Long Island (area code 516). The Montreal operator was sharp and didn’t buy Joe’s plea to connect him to Long Island. She made the connection, but listened to the call. She reported the fraud and Bell of Canada and General Telephone began to investigate the now famous “Whistler.”

The General Telephone public relations people decided that prosecuting a blind college kid for ripping off a three-dollar phone call would not be a good thing for them, so they turned Joe over to the college. Joe pleaded his case before the school’s disciplinary appeals board, paid a small fine and went back to school on probation.

Joe’s plan to become the top phone phreak in the country was working. He didn’t have to allow himself to be arrested and get his name in the newspaper for a top level telephone executive to notice. He just had to move to Denver and attend a rate case hearing. Joe found that attending the public rate hearings at the PUC (Public Utilities Commission) was a fantastic way to learn new things about the phone company. And it was free and legal.

One particular Mountain Bell rate case witness caught Joe’s ear. The witness answered questions and testified about the rate case with “clarity and no-nonsense style.” The witness was **Lloyd Leger**, a tough, hard-ass manager who started in the Plant Department and was now the Vice President and General Manager-Colorado.

Leger knew the blind young man sitting in on the rate case hearings was the phone phreak known as the Whistler. He had mentioned seeing him in the hearing room to **Dick Rothmeier**, his assistant general manager. Rothmeier passed the word along to the Public Relations Department.

After a hearing one day, Joe talked to Lloyd. Joe had a problem with the phone company in New York. It seems that the New York phone company had an exchange that was so badly wired it allowed Joe to make hundreds of free calls with no trouble at all. He tried to tell them what was wrong, but they ignored him. Could Lloyd tell him someone at New York Tel. who would fix the problem?

Lloyd looked into it and found everything Joe told him was true. Using the straight talk he was famous for, Lloyd got the New York people to fix their 24-line problem. Leger was warned about “Super Phone Phreak” Engressia by security people at both AT&T and Southwestern Bell.

Leger hired Joe in 1977. My first interview with Joe was in 1978.

In that story, I wrote about Joe’s old guide dog having to be retired and Joe having to briefly leave his Mountain Bell job, which he loved, to train with his new guide dog. The Telephone Pioneers, made Joe’s old guide dog an honorary Life Member. I believe it was also a Pioneer family that adopted the dog.

Joe left the Mountain Bell Service Center not long after my second interview with him. While he loved his job, he was getting “itchy” about all the rules (BSPs) at the phone company. Those rules were beginning to really run against the old phone phreak’s nature. He left the Network Service Center in 1980, worked as an operator for a while and then moved to Minneapolis on June 12, 1982.

Why that date? According to Joe, the Minneapolis area code is 612. That makes perfect sense to those who knew Joe.

Joe attended a spiritual retreat at a college in 1986 and on the first day the group was asked what name they’d like to use during the retreat. Joe felt the name “Joybubbles” just right for him.

Later, because he was sexually molested as a child in blind school in New Jersey, Joe legally changed his name to Joybubbles and decided to live as the child he never got to be. He was in the news again when he went to the University of Pittsburgh and listened to every single one of “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood” television shows.

According to Joybubbles, Mr. Rogers, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King are on the same level because of the peace and love they sowed.

Joybubbles’ heart stopped in 2007. If there is a phone phreak heaven, I’m sure Joybubbles is there making a call.



Telstar

On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched the world’s first manmade satellite, Sputnik, into orbit. The “space race” had begun.

The US launched its first, Explorer 1, on January 31, 1958.

On July 10, 1962, the first communications satellite was launched. The original Telstar was part of a multi-national agreement among AT&T (US), Bell Telephone Laboratories (US), NASA (US), GPO (UK) and the National PTT (France) to develop experimental satellite communications over the Atlantic Ocean.

Telstar 1 relayed its first, and non-public, television pictures (a flag outside Andover Earth Station) to Pleumeur-Bodou on July 11, 1962. Almost two weeks later, on July 23, at 3:00 p.m. EDT, it relayed the first publicly available live transatlantic television signal. That evening, Telstar 1 also relayed the first telephone call transmitted through space, and it successfully transmitted faxes, data, and both live and taped television, including the first live transmission of television across an ocean from Andover, Maine, US to Goonhilly Downs, England and Pleumeur-Bodou, France.

Telstar, though no longer functional, still orbits the Earth.

Mountain Bell's Adventures in Juarez

by E. A. J. Seddon, adapted by Herb Hackenburg

Most of this story was written in 1913 by a Mountain Bell employee living in El Paso, Texas. At the time, Mexico was suffering through a series of revolutions, many of which occurred in Juarez. This article appeared in the October, 1913 issue of the Mountain Bell Monitor Magazine. Herb's comments are in italic.

El Paso – “The Pass” -- is so named because here the Rio Grande makes its escape for the Gulf of Mexico through the beach that exists between the Franklin Mountains in the United States and the Juarez Mountains in Mexico.

As early as the days of the [United States] Civil War, El Paso was a point of importance. It was the meeting point of several overland stage routes, notably those from Kansas City, Santa Fe and San Antonio; also one from Chihuahua, Mexico. In those days it took a month to travel from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast and El Paso was a meeting point for the southern routes. For six hundred miles in every direction an arid, inhospitable region, with springs and water holes few and far between, stretched out in rugged mystery, and travelers after many days of weary travel found rest and grateful shade between the fine old cottonwood trees that lined the streets of the future metropolis of the great southwest.

Sixty years ago (162 years ago today), when Mexico was endeavoring to rid herself of the Emperor Maximilian forced on her by the French, Benito Juarez . . . [half Spanish, half native Indian] and “insurrecto,” had established his headquarters in a little village across the river, then known as El Paso del Norte, from which point he conducted his campaigns. After the French were driven out, Juarez was made president of the new republic and it is in honor of this Mexican “George Washington” that the Mexican town across the river is named.

In 1909 the El Paso Exchange had about 3,000 stations; now we have nearly 7,500 and expect to reach 8,100 by the first of the year. The Western Electric installing crew left us last April and we shall welcome them with open arms with the coming of the new year.

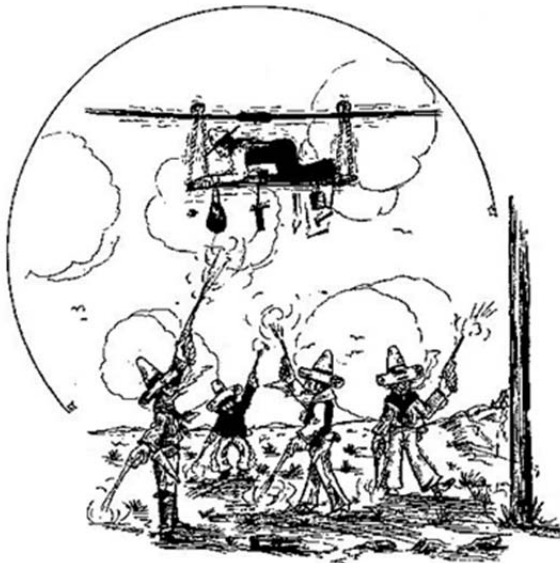
It may be a matter of surprise to many of our readers to learn that the town of Juarez has over 200 stations connected with the El Paso Exchange. The connection between the two towns is established by means of two 200-pair cables strung across what is the Rio Grande del Norte (the Great River of the North). A large portion of subscribers in Juarez are . . . [Chinese] who, when they have occasion to change places of residence on the first of the month, invariably take their telephones and house numbers along with them. Most of these Celestials (from China, the “Celestial Empire”) are there awaiting an opportunity to cross the line (into the US) and use the telephone to keep in touch with and be advised by their more favored brethren on this side.

The telephone lines connecting Juarez have played an important part in the annual battles of Juarez; however, this year's battle hasn't been pulled off yet, but we are expecting it 'most any time. During the Madero revolution, the decisive battle of Juarez was directed over the telephone. Madero had established his headquarters in the pass opposite the smelter and a line was hastily constructed (by Mountain Bell linemen) in record-breaking time to a small adobe house and the familiar “Blue Bell” local and long distance sign hung up outside. (Madero ordered the Bell logo to be installed because in

his eyes, that highly recognized blue bell made him the official insurrecto to deal with the federal commander on an equal level.)

Mr. Madero then called up the federal commander occupying Juarez and politely requested him to surrender. The federal commander with equal politeness told him to – well, whatever the Spanish equivalent is for “Nothing doing.” A year later the “Maderistas,” not quite sure what they were, started something else, burned half the town and shot up things pretty promiscuously. This year everybody is scared of everybody else—nobody knows where the other fellow stands and everybody is waiting for somebody else to start something. So there you are.

All this manifestation of patriotism has severely tested the strength of our plant in Juarez—in fact, most of the sheathing of the aerial cables is now in lead sleeves. Bill Calloway can tell you something about one of these patches in particular. After several battles, Bill was out in the middle of a span hunting for insurrecto bullets. A bunch of “Soldados” (*Mexican federal soldiers*) were coming down the street filled with the spirit of patriotism and other spirits, probably tequila, or possibly mescal. Just as they came under Bill suspended in mid-air their exuberance of patriotism manifested itself and with many “vivas” they shot off their guns, pointed straight up in the air. One of the bullets came through the platform upon which Bill was sitting . . . Bill did not attempt to get to a pole, but came down the hand line and was later found in El Paso in a dazed condition.



Adios Amigo.

During the first Juarez engagement (*November 20, 1910*) our cables were shot in 175 different places and at one point the fire was so heavy that two spans of an open lead consisting of five [cross] arms of wire were completely cut down. After the battle there was only one telephone working in Juarez. That happened three years ago and is likely to happen again any time, for there are still some places left for a few more split sleeves.

We consider Juarez one of our principal assets in spite of its explosive tendencies. When our Mexican neighbors finally decide what they want and give everybody a chance to make a living and develop their marvelous

country, we will be begging for one big blanket estimate and try to keep pace with the increased business. . .

Until then, “Adios, amigo mio.”
I couldn't agree more, Mr. Seddon. Herb

Although Texas was not one of Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph Company's states, El Paso was closer to service areas in New Mexico than to any in Texas. MST&T continued to serve El Paso until 1982 when, in preparation for Divestiture, it was absorbed into Southwestern Bell.

Mysteries Solved!



Thanks to all of those who responded to our mystery photos in the recent special edition of the *Dial-Log*. According to **Jim Kirchhoff**, the fellow on the left in this photo is **Lawson V. Smith**, Vice President and General Manager, Arizona, in the early 1960s. (If you know the man on the right, we're still in the dark about him.)

Several of you knew that this happy duo is **Randy Meissner** (left), Vice President Marketing, Home and Personal Services and **Jane Evans** (right), President, HPS, both of Phoenix.



Another Mystery!

Any idea who this fellow is, or where, or what he's up to? Contact us at telcomhist@aol.com or 303-296-1221 with any information.



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