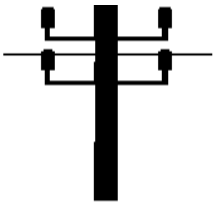
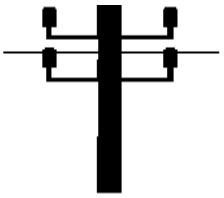
MORSECODIANS MESSENGER

The official newsletter of the Morsecodians Fraternity of Western Australia (Inc.) *Editor:* **Larry Rice**

Volume 2 Issue 12	**08 9276 6936**	**June 2005**



Morsecodians *Keeping Morsecode Alive*



Ahoy there—the editor advises that there are now a couple of options which members could care to consider how to receive their current and past issues of the *Messenger*.

Firstly, for those members who have internet access, instead of a paper copy an option is now available to download the current issue from:- **http://members.iinet.net.au/~oseagram/current.html**
We have to do our little bit to save the forests and all that.

The file will be in .PDF format. If you do not have a PDF reader details are on the above web page how you can obtain one free from the internet. The electronic version of the current *Messenger* will be available from the above website from 14 days before the next general meeting and well before the paper copy hits the letterboxes. Would members electing for this option email the secretary so their address can be deleted from the mail-out from API.

Secondly, for those members who have access to a computer, a CD containing all previous *Messengers* from the first issue is available from the secretary. Contact Richie or see him at the next meeting for details how to obtain a copy of the CD.

Perth Royal Show

24 Sept - 1 Oct 2005 Claremont Showgrounds

That big event on the W.A. telegraphists calendar has come around again.

As this is the last newsletter before the show, Ken Knox our roster clerk would like volunteer operators to contact him so he can commence to pencil in names to days.

With eight days of telegraph action this is a great event, so don't miss out, contact Ken for your preferred day/days.

Thanks to API, our sponsor.

api leisure lifestyle

NEXT MEETING

Hyde Park Hotel 20th June 2005 10 am

EYRE TELEGRAPH REPEATER STATION (1877) BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE (2005)

** Barrie's dream becomes a reality**

Eyre Telegraph Repeater Station served Western Australians for fifty years until the original line closed in 1927 to be replaced by a telegraph route along the Trans Australian railway 150 kilometres to the north.
The recent installation of morse telegraph equipment by Morsecodian members will be a permanent reminder to visitors how communication by morse-code opened up the country.
It's been 78 years since telegraph equipment was in use at Eyre, originally known as Eyre's Sand Patch.

THE MORSECODIANS FRATERNITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA (Inc.)

Wishes it to be known that the Morse code equipment displayed in this building,
The former

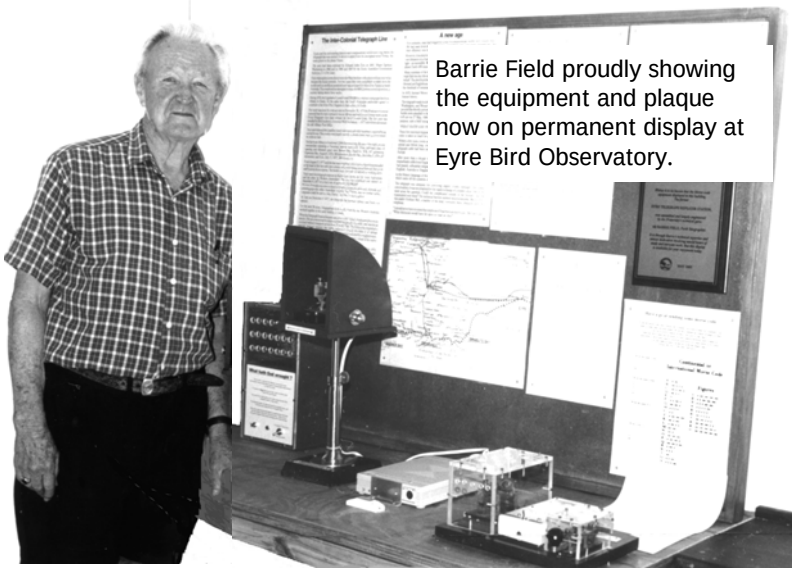
EYRE TELEGRAPH REPEATER STATION,

was assembled and largely engineered by the Fraternity's technical guru:

Mr BARRIE FIELD, Perth Telegraphist.

It is through Barrie's technical expertise and utmost dedication involving untold hours of study and intricate work, that this display is available for your enjoyment today.

MAY 2005



Barrie Field proudly showing the equipment and plaque now on permanent display at Eyre Bird Observatory.

The former Eyre telegraph station 50 kilometres south of Cocklebiddy, now in the control of CALM but leased to Birds Australia as a bird observatory, regained some of its former glory on 9th May 2005 when members of the Morsecodians Fraternity of Western Australia (Inc.) travelled there to install morse code telegraph equipment for visitor information and interactive display.

Barrie Field—the driving force behind this project along with 6 other telegraphists who made the trip to Eyre, celebrated the return of telegraphy to Eyre by having a dial-up circuit on the day with Fraternity members back in Perth GPO exchanging greeting telegraph messages for the first time for 78 years.

Traffic = Perth to Eyre 11 messages - Eyre to Perth 17 messages.

The Eyre Expedition Crew
L-R: Charlie Spalding, Rhonda Sherwoood (Caretaker), Milly McShane, Ken Knox, Jack McShane, Gwen Field, Darrell Govan, Bradley Field, Barrie Field, Terry Keays, Allan Greenslade.
photo by Ken Knox

Richie Bright, John Meadowcroft, Alan Jolley, Ron Brinkworth and Huck Fathers in attendance at Perth GPO.

more P3

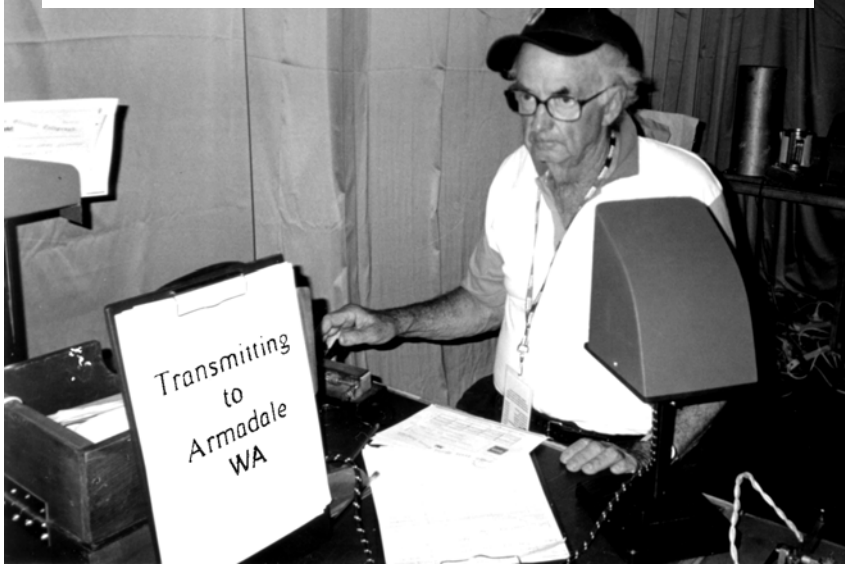
Eyre.....contd.

The Fraternity wishes to also acknowledge and thank the following further contributors:-

- Richard Schipper, a Melbourne-based Telstra computer boffin, constructed the automatic morse transmitter.
- Tyler Bros. (Don and Bert) donated the base and telescopic stand for sounder.
- Colin Hopkins made and donated resonator for sounder.
- Charlie Spalding made the noticeboard and obtained earlier separate stories of the Intercolonial line and Eyre Telegraph Repeater Station for display thereon.
- Richie Bright compiled for display the Fraternity's version of the history of the Eyre Telegraph Repeater Station.
- Larry Rice produced a map of the south coast highlighting repeater station locations, for display; also telegraph forms used.
- Ric Crameri donated two copies of his book 'Dot Dash to Dot Com'.
- Bradley Field, Jack McShane and Charlie Spalding made their vehicles available for the expedition, thus enabling others to travel to Eyre. In addition, Bradley Field ably assisted Barrie with the on-site equipment installation.
- Klaus Tiedmann, District manager CALM (Esperance) and Rod Smith, Chairman Eyre Bird Observatory Management Committee both gave their blessing to installation of the telegraph items at Eyre.
- Australia Post was again generous in allowing us to use the GPO as the Perth office for exchange of telegraph messages with Eyre.
- Rhonda and Leon Sherwood volunteer caretakers at E.B.O. for every assistance possible.

In their usual slack manner, of course, your slothful Secretary and President did as little as possible towards ensuring the success of this exercise. *DISCLAIMER [Pres words, not mine……Ed]*

TAMWORTH COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL 14th-23rd JAN 2005.



As a follow-on to the short report in the last newsletter, Ken Knox reports:-
The 2005 show turned out to be another great exercise with the 3 dialup sending positions being used simultaneously a lot of the time.
A very noisy place so operators were thankful no receiving was done.
Telstra and in particular Lisa Enright OIC Telstra museums was marvellous in looking after staff needs.
Traffic was worked through to Darwin, Adelaide, Melbourne, Beechworth, Sydney, St. Helens/Tasmania, Armadale WA, Yass and Canberra.

Ken remarked that the signs supplied were excellent in advising the public where a particular circuit was working to. Maybe something to consider for W.A. events in the future.

Remember the "Connecting The Continent" website during the Federation of Australia 2001 celebrations?
Well, it's still available for viewing, this time on the National Library of Australia website at :-
http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/14085/20010926/www.connectingthecontinent.com/ctcwebsite/index.html
It includes songs by Ken Ferguson with "The Singing Line" and other songs with an OTL theme.

Thanks to Eric Meacock for passing this on.

Telegrams under the pavement.

Installation of the CTO-WAN pneumatic tube referred to in the last edition of the Messenger commenced on the 1st August 1938 and took about 1 month to complete.
It travelled via Forrest Place, Murray Street, William Street and St. Georges Terrace.
The brass tube was encased in concrete piping and was buried to a depth of two feet. It ensured that press telegrams were received at the West Australian within ninety seconds of receipt at the CTO.

Thanks to John Moynihan for this information.

News from the East:

May 22nd : Castlemaine Telegraph Station (opened 1.1.1857) will be open for one day during Heritage Week in that town—complete with dial-up facilities.

June 12th: Moama Telegraph Station (opened 1858) will be open for one day during the long weekend on the occasion of a Cobb & Co coach leaving the station bound for Wilcannia (along the long paddock as the road was known). Being a long weekend with the Rotary Steam Rally in adjoining Echuca there will be a big crowd in the area. The N.S.W. Road Traffic Authority has sponsored this event, and on finding out that the telegraph station will be fully operative—with dial-up on line provided by Telstra—they have asked if they can make the telegraph operation a feature of the day.

July 1/2/3: At Glenrowan, a BIG weekend on the 125th anniversary of Ned Kelly's capture at that town. Telstra sponsorship has been sought. The telegraph station will be operative in either the former police station/residence or the railway station. The organising committee were absolutely thrilled when the offer of a telegraph station operating was made to them. Dial-up will operate here too with visitors being able to lodge national/international messages.
Commemorative forms are being designed.

August ?: Unknown date as yet—the station at Cape Otway Light Station is to be operative—presumably with dial-up again. We had two Telstra dial-up lines at the opening last year.

Beechworth continues to be busy. I have taken 600 messages from them this year, and I am only one of the many receiving stations they use. thanks Peter Shaw for this news.

"A race to the wire as old hand at Morse code beats txt msgrs"

DOTTY and old-fashioned means of communication can still be the best: Morse code has seen off the challenge of the text message in a contest pitting the best in 19th-century technology against its 21st-century successor.

The race to transmit a simple message, staged by an Australian museum, was won — at a dash — by a 93-year-old telegraph operator who tapped it out using the simple system which was devised by Samuel Morse in 1832 and was the mainstay of maritime communication up until 1997.

Gordon Hill, who learnt to use the technique in 1927 when he joined the Australian Post Office, easily defeated his 13-year-old rival, Brittany Devlin, who was armed with a mobile phone and a rich vocabulary of text message shorthand. Mr Hill, whose messages were transcribed by another telegraph veteran, Jack Gibson, 82, then repeated the feat against three other children and teenagers with mobile phones.

In the competition, at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, Mr Hill and his rivals were asked to transmit a line selected at random from an advertisement in a teenage magazine. It read:

"Hey, girlfriend, you can text all your best pals to tell them where you are going and what you are wearing."

While the telegraphist tapped out the line **in full**, to be deciphered by Mr Gibson, Miss Devlin employed text slang to save time. She keyed: **"hey gf u can txt ur best pals 2 tel them wot u r doing, where ur going and wot u r wearing."**

Just 90 seconds after Mr Hill began transmitting, Mr Gibson announced that he had the message received and written down correctly. It took another 18 seconds for Miss Devlin's message to reach the mobile phone belonging to her friend. Mr Hill said that he was impressed by modern technology, even though his clunky telegraph machine emerged on top in three further contests. Text messaging, he said, had even been predicted by one of his colleagues in 1961.

"An engineer told me the day would come when we would be able to send messages without wires," he said.

Miss Devlin said that she had two years of texting experience. "I send about three messages a day," she said. "I used to send lots more but I ran out of credit." "The TimesOnLine newspaper" 16th April 2005 by Mark Henderson

2005 traffic figures annual Alice Springs—Powerhouse museum Sydney.
Alice Springs – Outward = 654 (incl. 128 overseas) Alice Springs — Inward = 719.

! ! New Members .! !

Welcome to the Fraternity :-
Jack McShane and Archie Mason.

The Morsecodians Fraternity of Western Australia (Inc.)

President	Terry Keays	(08) 9279 4696
Vice-President	John Meadowcroft	(08) 9386 6636
Secretary	Richie Bright	(08) 9276 6936
Asst. Secretary	Max Bowen	(08) 9271 4807

Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday in February, June and October each year in the Hyde Park Hotel North Perth.
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Newsletter Editor: Larry Rice (08) 9255 2280
Club Email jarbrite a t iinet net au
Newsletter email oseagram a t iinet net au

We regret to inform the passing of :-

Lorna Gregory, nee Waldie—our last female member. Lorna started training in 1942 at the WAAAF W/T school in Melbourne commencing duties as signals officer W/T section HQ RAAF Western Area, Perth the same year. VALE

Ron Mccormick Charter member VALE

Athol Higgins, proprietor of the Hyde Park Hotel VALE