



# MORSECODIANS MESSENGER

The official newsletter of the Morsecodians Fraternity of Western Australia (Inc.)

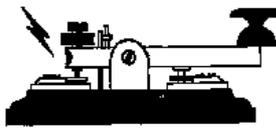
Editor: Larry Rice

Volume 2 Issue 5

08 9276 6936

Feb 2003

*Morsecodians*



*Keeping Morsecode  
Alive*

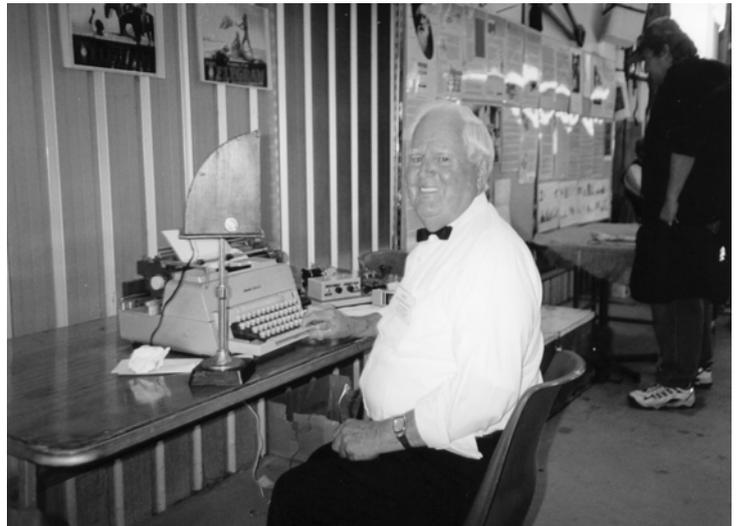
## 2002 Perth Royal Show

Proudly presented by the Royal Agricultural Society of Western Australia  
Friday 27th September to Saturday 5th October

A wonderful visitor attendance over the 9 days with the telegraphists on duty being in great demand showing off their skills to the interested public. The visitors were attentive as they watched the telegraph maestros in action and asked plenty of questions with most participating in the spirit of communicating via a bygone system by lodging a telegram at the counter and picking up the received copy a few minutes later typed on a special ornamental form.

The morsecodians handled a total of 1471 messages using battery powered point-to-point sets between tables, many nice comments were heard from visitors quite fascinated by our demonstrations.

Our club secretary has received an invitation for the morsecodians to again participate in 2003. The subject will be discussed at the forthcoming general meeting and any suggestions for possible improvements will be appreciated.



John Meadowcroft ready to receive

### The inter-colonial telegraph line Perth-Adelaide

- Commemorating 125 years since first operated in 1877.

A full complement of operators were kept busy both at Perth GPO and in Bay Discovery Centre Glenelg during the week of 2/12/2002.

Traffic figures: Perth: transmitted 162 received 268.

We received sufficient donations to more than cover the cost of postage but printing and other costs will leave us with a small deficit.

This commemoration would not have been possible without the continuing generous sponsorship by Australia Post in W.A. Geoff Cook and his various managers again provided us with accommodation, furniture, transport of equipment, telephone lines and assistance with stationery provision.

The Fraternity sincerely thanks all concerned.

### NEXT MEETING

**Hyde Park Hotel  
10 am 17th Feb 2003**

Please note the time and date for our next get-together. Members and non-members welcome.

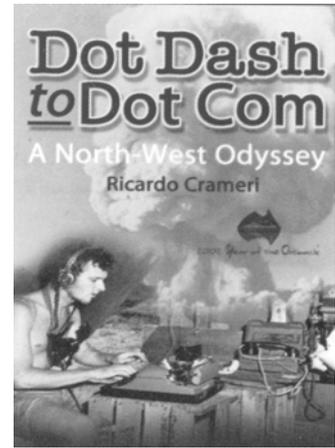


## Dot Dash to Dot Com

by Ric Crameri.

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### Midland Alive, old Midland railway workshops 3rd November 2002.

An extremely worthwhile public awareness exercise by morsecodians demonstrating morse-code to visitors attending the old railway workshops on 3rd November 2002. Tom Sargent reports they were located in the pattern shop with other stands but most of the attention was centred around the morsecodians from Armadale. They handled 119 messages for the day 9a-4p, that's only 17 messages an hour I hear readers exclaim, but they were explaining all about morse code whilst sending y'know!

### Pacific Cable centennial commemoration event 31/10/2002 Southport-QLD

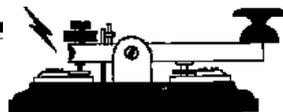
The use of computer software connecting morse stations together did an excellent job on the day, there were 11 stations logged onto the working channel all making a valuable contribution to the event. Celebratory messages were passed by hand-morse around the world in real-time bringing to life once again the old cable stations of Bamfield, Porthcurno, Southport, etc. The cable station at Porthcurno in Cornwall transmitted by hand morse the Queen's message just after midnight GMT and all original C&W cable stations on channel confirmed it was well received for their respective audiences.

This is what Porthcurno sent by morse just prior to the Queen's message.

*" 31/10/2002 CQ CQ CQ DE PORTHCURNO. GREETINGS TO EVERYONE MARKING THE CENTENARY OF THE FIRST PACIFIC CABLE FROM ALL AT PORTHCURNO. HERE AT THE MUSEUM OF SUBMARINE TELEGRAPHY WE ARE DELIGHTED TO BE TAKING PART IN THE CELEBRATIONS. PORTHCURNO IS ENGLANDS HISTORIC HOME OF WHAT SOME TODAY ARE CALLING THE VICTORIAN INTERNET. IN 1870 THE FIRST CABLE WAS LAID FROM HERE TO BOMBAY AND BY THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY PORTHCURNO WAS THE WORLDS LARGEST TELEGRAPH STATION. TODAY IT IS A HERITAGE SITE WHICH CELEBRATES THE WONDERFUL HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL SUBMARINE CABLE COMMUNICATIONS. WE ARE PROUD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CELEBRATION TO MARK THE LAYING OF THE LAST MAJOR LINK IN THE VICTORIAN GLOBAL NETWORK."*

Here is the Queen's message.

*" 31/10/2002 DE PORTHCURNO: BUCKINGHAM PALACE 30TH OCTOBER 2002. THE QUEEN WAS PLEASED TO RECEIVE YOUR KIND MESSAGE OF LOYAL GREETINGS SENT ON BEHALF OF THE CABLE AND WIRELESS PORTHCURNO AND COLLECTIONS TRUST ON THE OCCASION OF THE CENTENARY OF THE FIRST CABLE ACROSS THE PACIFIC OCEAN FROM BAMFIELD VANCOUVER ISLAND BRITISH COLUMBIA IN CANADA TO SOUTHPORT QUEENSLAND IN AUSTRALIA WHICH CONNECTED THE ALL RED LINE AROUND THE WORLD AND IS BEING CELEBRATED BY SENDING A MESSAGE IN MORSE CODE VIA THE INTERNET TO CANADA NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA. HER MAJESTY SENDS HER BEST WISHES TO ALL THOSE CONCERNED FOR A NOTABLE AND SUCCESSFUL EVENT IN THIS HER JUBILEE YEAR. ELIZABETH R."*



News "CUT-UP" Feb 2003

## What's happening "over East"

.....

- Bill Morrow's broadcast

Item in the last issue of the *Messenger* should have read:  
Monday 5pm-10pm 25 wpm.

-News from Peter Shaw-:

- Bendigo

Group bookings to the "Making a Nation" exhibition are keeping us busy. We attend if possible when any group is booked in, day or night. We have just had a 'running' electric sign installed plus old look writing desk and a telephone exchange master clock. We had the Governor-General in recently and we sent and received messages to/from Eden for him.

On 9th Feb 2003 at 2 pm, ABC National radio will broadcast a programme devoted to morse telegraphy with segments recorded at Bendigo and Castlemaine stations.

- Beechworth

This continues to be busy. I took 27 messages from him on Wednesday at the centre and later at home. Usually an operator attends on Sunday morning, Wednesday morning and all day Friday. They had their Celtic festival over the weekend of November 15/16/17. 6 operators were in attendance using 2 dial-up lines. Tels 03 5728 2517 and 03 5728 3262.

[ex Richard Youl]; In the next few weeks, Beechworth will be operational on dial-up teleprinter.

- Coal Creek Korumburra

A new station in the confines of the historical township. Ron Leighton attends some Wed. mornings and on Sat. and Sun. afternoons. The very large village is manned entirely by volunteers. The telegraph station is housed in a building on the railway station platform. This will change when they are wired into the fax line via a CO switch.

- Hawthorn

Up and running in the Hawthorn telephone exchange building Melbourne. Operators attend between 10a and 1p on Wednesdays tel. 03 9819 5918.

News from Jack Gibson :-

- Alex Grant

Alex has recovered well from a recent stay in hospital and is busy on the dial-up again. He acts as Sydney Receive for Bendigo, Eden, Wagga Wagga and Beechworth, with help from daughter who has produced Alex's own telegram forms.

- Bankstown

Bankstown is now fully operational. The telephone display has [a] working 'step by step' exchange, PABX, two old type PT cabinets and a large display of handsets, plus manual switchboards. Richard Youl has been busy with a bank of various teletypes [full range of all makes of teleprinters used in Australia .Ed] which can operate point to point or dial-up. Morse section is both local and dial-up. There's also a small section of pneumatic tubes from the old Sydney CTO. The museum is open to the public on Wednesdays.

## NORSEMAN POST-OFFICE



Post Office shown pre 1910

The construction of the Post Office was completed in 1897. Today the building itself remains essentially unchanged from that time. Originally, the building also functioned as the telegraph office. This is one function that has become redundant with time. A newspaper of the time described the future building as "*of a commodious character and suited to the requirements of a growing township.*" The building has housed the postmaster's residence since its construction.

In 2002, a couple of rooms now serve other functions e.g. the original dining room is now the lounge room and an office is now a bedroom. The public space was altered in the 1950's to replace the original counter and the telegraph instrument room was removed and converted into office space.

Sadly, at some stage two chimneys have also been blocked off and the fireplaces boarded over.

Dundas Post is the last opportunity for east bound travellers to pay bills and perform banking functions or post letters before travelling the Nullarbor.

We prefer to think of ourselves as the first Post Office in Western Australia.

The Post Office is currently being assessed for inclusion in the Heritage Council of WA's register.

We also read the weather for the Bureau of Meteorology.

This is done 7 times a day and includes temperature, rainfall, cloud cover. Information gathered is used in conjunction with the automated site at the airport.

Jo and Mark Thompson who own and operate the Norseman PO are keen telegraph historians having traced the line from Widgiemooltha to Balladonia. They have visited Israelite Bay and would very much like to see any old photos of that telegraph station in its heyday. They can be contacted c/- Dundas Post Norseman WA 6443.

Email: [explorer59@westnet.com.au](mailto:explorer59@westnet.com.au)

Website: <http://www.dundas.com.au>

## AG/S morse circuit 25th April - 4th May 2003

**THE** Powerhouse museum will again be the Sydney operations centre with a circuit to the old Alice Springs repeater station. Jack Gibson would like to hear from anyone who has not participated yet, so if anyone will be in Sydney during the event and would like to assist either in an operative or a supporting role, please contact him on 02 9810 2155.

### A letter from Jack Morgan

I thought you might be interested in the following item for your newsletter covering the early years of my nearly 50 years in the P.M.G.

I started work as a telegraph messenger at the Moora P.O. after talking to Roy Phillips the senior P. A. on Sunday 13th Sept. 1925, my 14th birthday. I had been instructed how to attend to the telephone switchboard.

When I started that Sunday morning the P.M. Mr. Harris told me that as well as attending to telephone calls I also had to wash the P.O. windows and polish the counter.

I still imagine I can smell the *Bon Ami*.

Later I thought I was treated rather hard when I would see the telephonists sitting at the switchboard reading books or doing fancy work while they waited for calls.

My interest in morse was fostered by Sam Ferguson the linesman who provided me with the code and a practice set. This was further improved when the late Monty Taylor came to Moora as P.A. Somehow with the connivance of Sam and Eb Thomas the mechanic, Monty set up a line between his house near the Moora Hotel and George Newman's home and mine which were on different sides of the town hall on the other side of the railway line, using spare telephone lines.

(This line was never given a number?). This set-up continued until the lines were required for paying services.

Oh: happy memories. Sincerely

Jack Morgan.

(known to many as "Blackjack" .Ed)

### The Morsecodians Fraternity of Western Australia (Inc.)

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

Meetings are held three times a year in the Hyde Park Hotel

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Club web page

<http://home.iprimus.com.au/oseagram/mfwahome.html>

### Morsemen on E-mail.

#### Additions

Brian O'Shaughnessy	<a href="mailto:brianos@bigpond.com">brianos@bigpond.com</a>
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Jack Gibson	<a href="mailto:jackgibson@bigpond.com.au">jackgibson@bigpond.com.au</a>
Graham Sinclair	<a href="mailto:grasinc@inet.net.au">grasinc@inet.net.au</a>
Des Ravenscroft	<a href="mailto:desravo@inet.net.au">desravo@inet.net.au</a>
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Art Phillips	<a href="mailto:aphil1@iprimus.com.au">aphil1@iprimus.com.au</a>

#### Change:

Ted Rankins	<a href="mailto:erankins@ozemail.com.au">erankins@ozemail.com.au</a>
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Alterations or additions to editor please.

### Retirees Annual luncheon at Halls Head Tavern 19th March 2003

**The** annual get-together for retirees is programmed for Wednesday 19th March 2003 at the Halls Head Tavern Mandurah.

This is the 7th annual foray and the committee is hoping for a good response.

The bus will leave from corner of William and Hay Streets (usual place) at 9.30 am. We will arrive back in Perth no later than 4.15 pm.

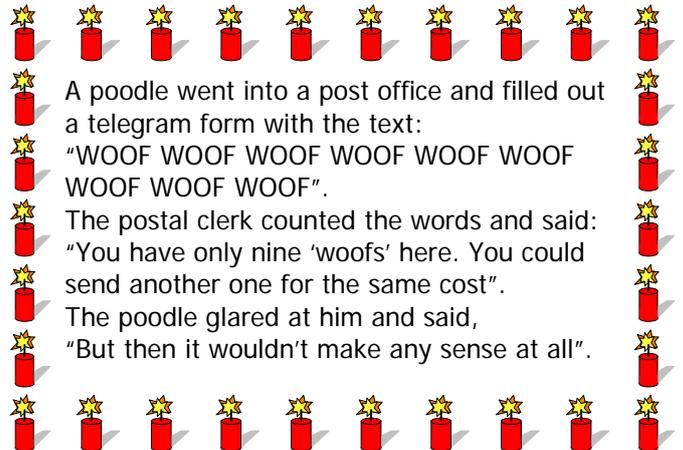
To book your seat please forward cheque for \$20 to Ric Cramer Unit 21/59 Wasley St North Perth 6006.

Bookings close 12th March 2003.

Please spread the news and encourage your retired mates to join in the good fellowship on this memorable day.

**Good news all round.**

**We are leaving later and arriving home earlier than previous years and the bus fee has been reduced by 20%.**



A poodle went into a post office and filled out a telegram form with the text:

"WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF WOOF".

The postal clerk counted the words and said:

"You have only nine 'woofs' here. You could send another one for the same cost".

The poodle glared at him and said,

"But then it wouldn't make any sense at all".

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