



RTEA - Proud of its Union Heritage

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2024

Welcome to your September 2024 newsletter.

John Lane

I devoted much of my August 2024 newsletter article to commemorating the life of Colin Cooper. I had the privilege to attend a special function held at the Petersham RSL to celebrate the life of Colin Cooper. Colin's wife, Peggy, organised the function. Peggy was incredibly kind in inviting Retired Telecommunications Employees Association members. Many of our members attended, demonstrating the respect we held for Col.

Prime Minister Albanese attended and spoke of his friendship with Col. The attendance of the Prime Minister showed the high respect that Col had within the Labor Party and with the Prime Minister personally. I know that Col had the support of PM Anthony Albanese in his and our Union's opposition to the selloff of public assets.

I also share Col's passion for opposing the selloffs. I can remember my discussions with Col at times when the Labor Government contemplated selling off public assets. Col was a proud member of the Australian Labor Party, and at the same time, he had reservations regarding privatisation.

After our recent August Committee Meeting, we finished lunch and had some drinks, and our conversation was coming around to fix up the world's problems, yet once again. I asked the question: how would you describe this current Labor Government? After some thought, one suggestion was "caring," to which we all agreed. The next was "empathetic", which we also agreed with. Today, Colin Cooper would have been unreservedly proud of the Labor Government's description as caring and empathetic because I think that was a good description of the man himself. Colin Cooper: "Rest in Peace".

VALE KEN DOUGLAS

Soon after I finished my article for this month's newsletter, I heard the news that Ken Douglas had passed away. Accordingly, with the assistance of the editor, I made an update to my regular article.

Ken was a member of the Retired Telecommunications Employees Association since 2001.

Ken Douglas was the State Manager of NSW. If memory serves me correctly, he was the last State manager before Telstra reorganised along a national product and customer service structure, eliminating the requirement for the State Manager positions.

Although I have met Ken several times, I cannot profess to know him well. I always found him to be an easy person to speak with. There is one thing I will never forget about Ken. Several years ago, after I had written an article in the newsletter about our failure yet again to get anywhere with our attempts to have proper recognition of the contribution of Telecommunications within the Australian National Museum in the ACT, Ken rang me and encouraged me to keep pursuing this agenda and even offered a different direction, which I embarked upon. Needless to say, I was unsuccessful, yet once more, it has, for various reasons, been an uphill struggle. However, I am forever grateful for the encouragement he gave me when I needed it.

Fellow member and friend of Ken's John Davies has written an excellent and detailed account of Ken's life and career. You will find John's tribute in this month's newsletter.

Ken Douglas, "Rest in Peace".

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

It has come to that time when everyone should consider attending the Christmas luncheon because it is all organised. We are having our Christmas Lunch on Thursday, 21st November 2024, at the Petersham RSL.

Continued on Page 4



Vale Frank Wilkinson



Frank Wilkinson passed away on Wednesday, 4th September 2024.

Frank was a Retired Telecommunications Employees Association member of our Association since January 1993.

Frank had a distinguished career with PMG, Telecom, and Telstra.

He was well-known, liked, and respected by Engineers, Draftsmen, and Technicians in Metropolitan Installation No. 2 and Network Design and Construction.

The Association extends its condolences and sympathy to Frank's wife, Jean and his children, Narelle, Wayne and Craig.

RETIRED TELECOMMUNICATIONS EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

Office Bearers

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Committee

Trevor Anderson, John Bryce, Allan Fairbairn, Bob Hamblion, Vince Haywood, Terry Livingstone, John McAuliffe, Arthur McCarroll, Paul Rewhorn, Barry Robinson, Garry Masman, Ron Milosh, Warren Morley, Lee Walkington.

Continued on Page 2



Retired Telecommunications Employees Association

SEPTEMBER 2024 General Meeting

Thursday, 26TH September 2024

Meeting Commences at 11.05 am

The September 2024 General Meeting will be held at the Petersham RSL Club (301 Trafalgar Street, Petersham, an easy 150m walk from Petersham Railway Station).

While the General Meeting will have Zoom Video coverage, you are encouraged to join with us in person at the Petersham RSL. Petersham RSL has an excellent bistro where you can get together with fellow members over lunch.

NOTICE OF MOTION

"That the September 2024 General Meeting ratifies the decision of the committee to donate \$300 towards the Colin Cooper Celebration of Life function."



The Meeting will also be held via ZOOM

Access details will be emailed to members on
Monday afternoon , 23RD September 2024



Welcome to your September 2024 Newsletter (Cont'd)

The lunch is \$65 per person and includes a three-course meal. We will have the obligatory lucky door prizes with the opportunity to win one of the two dozen bottles of wine. I have contacted Santa, who confirms that he has put our lunch in his diary. You can pay using a bank transfer to our Treasurer, and you will have booked in.

I look forward to seeing as many as possible at this event. Further details are inside this edition including bank transfer details.

OUR OCTOBER SOCIAL FUNCTION

I have organised a trip to the State Library of NSW for the October social, function where they currently have a Sydney Morning Herald historical photographic display. There is also a fine display of other artefacts that the library cherishes. The library is located on Macquarie Street, so afterwards, we will take a walk to George Street and catch a brief tram journey to the City of Sydney RSL for lunch. We went to this venue in April and found the food to be excellent and the prices of both food and beverages to be most pleasing. You will find further details within this edition.

The date for our visit to the State Library is **Thursday, 17TH October 2023** and we meet outside the library at **10.30 am**. More details will be in the **October 2024** issue of the newsletter.

COFFS HARBOUR TRIP AWAY

While we still have room to include more people on our trip away to Coffs Harbour, we are at a stage where our motel people are asking if the motel can now accommodate other tourists. I have booked the whole motel. *Tourist accommodation is currently at a premium in Coffs Harbour and throughout NSW; therefore, I will need to let go of the vacant rooms very soon.* So now, not later, let me know if you would like to join us on the trip away. *If you book later, there is still a chance you can join us, but I cannot guarantee your accommodation at the same motel.*

The trip away commences on Sunday, 10TH November through to Friday, 15TH November 2024. If you want to know more about the trip away's itinerary, please have a read inside this month's newsletter.

NOTICE OF MOTION: SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

At the September 2024 General Meeting, the committee will sponsor a notice of motion:

“That the September 2024 General Meeting ratifies the decision of the committee to donate \$300 towards the Colin Cooper celebration of life function.”

I remind members that, per our constitution, the committee must seek the endorsement of our membership for donations at a general meeting.

We believe our donation to this special event is unusual. It is unusual because it does set a precedent. All of our previous donations have been to organisations involved with health, such as *Alzheimer's Australia, Prostate Cancer Institute, Garvin Institute and Guide Dogs Australia* and to a lesser extent, our donation to *“Doctors without Borders”*.

Our donation is for a function. The committee's rationale for donating was that we became aware of the considerable cost for Col's wife. She had to hire a function room at a significant cost. Peggy and a friend of Col had made a substantial donation towards a bar tab. Our decision was to help round up the bar tab.

We were celebrating the life of a friend and colleague who had led us through tumultuous times of struggle to improve our working conditions. On top of this, we had been advertising strongly to encourage our members to attend. I am pleased to say we were successful in this regard.

I will also add that this is an unusual donation, so no member should feel obligated to rubber-stamp the committee's decision. Should the motion be lost, the committee will find an alternate way to fund the donation.

SEPTEMBER 2024 GENERAL MEETING

Nothing is left for me but to remind you of our **September General Meeting at Petersham RSL this Thursday, 26th September 2024, commencing at 11.05 am.**

I look forward to seeing you there.



Robert (Bob) Ernest King



The Retired Telecommunications Employees Association is sad to report that Bob King passed away on the 19th July, 2024. The Association was only recently informed of Bob's passing. There was a private funeral service for Bob according to his wishes.

Bob was aged 79 years, born on 20th July 1944, and missed his 80th birthday by just one day. Bob had been a member of our Association for over twelve years.

Bob commenced as a Technician in Training on the 18th of January 1960.

Bob was a dearly loved husband of Catherine and a loving father, father-in-law and grandfather.

The Retired Telecommunications Employees Association extends condolences and sympathy to Bob's wife, Catherine, and other family members.



Retired Telecommunications Employees Association

Sydney Morning Herald Photos Exhibition NSW State Library

An intimate look at key events and moments captured through the lens of Sydney Morning Herald photographers.

Returns to the Library with an intimate look at key events and moments captured through the lens of Sydney Morning Herald photographers, including the Herald's award-winning chief photographer Nick Moir and Gold Walkley winner Kate Geraghty.

Thursday, 17 October 2024
Meet at 10.30 am, outside the
Library - 1 Shakespeare Place,
Sydney

After our visit to the library, we will have lunch at the City Of Sydney RSL

**VALE KENNETH JAMES (KEN) DOUGLAS****15/6/1926-15/9/2024****FORMER PMG/TELECOM AUSTRALIA ENGINEER AND NSW STATE MANAGER****(1980-1988)**

Ken Douglas was born and raised in the southern Sydney suburb of Arncliffe. His secondary school education was undertaken at the academically selective Sydney Technical High School, located in the nearby suburb of Bexley. In 1943, he joined the Postmaster General's Department (PMG) as a Cadet Engineer and studied at the University of Sydney.

From start to finish, a total of 45 years, Ken had an illustrious career in the PMG and its successor, Telecom Australia. In 1948, at the age of 22, he was appointed Divisional Engineer, Telegraphs, making him the youngest person ever to make that grade. In the mid-1950's, Ken moved to Country Primary Works, where he was tasked with managing the workforce engaged in upgrading and extending the trunk and customer networks as the switching network was progressively automated. In 1959, he was promoted to Supervising Engineer and then in 1964 to Deputy Superintending Engineer in the Planning, Services and Construction Branches.

In 1976, subsequently, to a major review of the organisation, the Operations Department was established in Telecom, and this led to 28 substantially autonomous Telecommunications districts being set up in NSW, each under a local District Manager. Ken was appointed Regional Operations Manager, South in this organisation and managed the 14 Districts from south of the Sydney CBD down to the Victorian Border.

In 1979, Ken was appointed Chief State Engineer, a position he held for only a year, for in July 1980, when existing State Manager Dr Ron Cullen resigned to become head of the Victorian Public Service Board, Ken was appointed NSW State Manager. And to cap off his stellar career, in 1984, and while retaining his position as State Manager, he was appointed Assistant Chief General Manager and Relief Chief General Manager Telecom Australia.

In 1988, after a lengthy review of Telecom Australia's operations undertaken by Mr Clem Doherty, a Senior Partner of the International Consultancy firm McKinsey and Co, a major restructure occurred. The new structure, recognising the changed nature and increased complexity of the business that had occurred over time, replaced the six separate state management, geographically-based structures with a national product and/or service-based structure. All positions of State Manager were accordingly abolished and, in Ken's case, led to his retirement at age 62 on 15 September 1988 after 45 years in the job. Interestingly, Ken and Clem became good friends during the review and have remained so over all the years since.

Ken's career no doubt will interest members of the Retired Telecommunications Employees Association. However, of special interest, I am certain, is his attachment to the members of the Technician-in-Training Class of 1943. As part of Ken's Engineering Cadetship, he had to undertake extensive in-house training and to do that he was placed with the 1943 intake of trainees at various times. The association must have left a lasting impression on him because one of the first things he did 34 years later when he became State Manager, was to invite all members of the group to a luncheon in his board room! And even after retirement, Ken would often join me at my annual Class-of-1946 Technician-in-Training reunions held at the NSW Masonic Club Sydney in February for many years.

Ken's wife Vera pre-deceased him three years ago. He leaves a son, Keir and wife, Jackie (Brisbane) and a daughter, Marion (Tuncurry-Forster).

(Contributed at the request of The Retired Telecommunications Employees Association by John Davies, Ken's work colleague and friend of many years)



Vale Peter Marshall Gordon Hollis

It is with deep sadness that the Retired Telecommunications Employees Association informs members that Peter Hollis passed away on Wednesday, 11th September 2024. Peter's private family funeral service was held on Wednesday, 18th September 2024.

Peter joined our Association in December 2016. He took a keen interest in our Association and was a regular attendee at our monthly general meetings via Zoom. He attended our previous August 2024 General Meeting.

Peter passed away as a result of a fatal fall in the car park of the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital. Peter had been suffering poor health over an extended period.

Peter celebrated his 80th birthday on September 1, 2024. He has been a member of our Association since 2016.

Peter commenced as a Technician in Training in 1961. After training in Adelaide, Peter moved to Kangaroo Island. He was stationed there with the installation team between 1964 and 1968. He met his wife Jenny here in 1967, and they married and moved back to Adelaide. Their son Brendon was born in Adelaide in late 1968.

In 1970, Peter and his young family were posted to the township of Cook, centred in the Nullarbor Plains. There, Peter as part of a two-person team looked after the overhead communications between Sydney and Perth. Peter's wife, Jenny, worked as the Post Mistress at Cook. Peter's work included weather forecasting three hourly observations and collecting data and atmospheric sounds from a NASA hut.

In 1971, Peter took a permanent position at Cootamundra Telephone Exchange and lived on a five-acre property outside the town. Their daughter, Peta, was born in their first year there. The family lived there for twelve years.

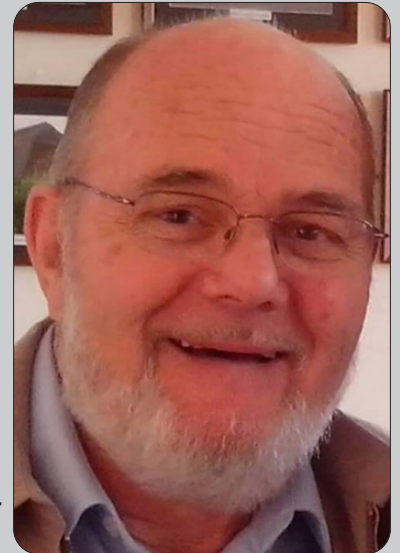
During their time at Cootamundra, Peter took long service leave in 1976. Peter and the family travelled worldwide for over the year to Asia, Russia, the United Kingdom, Europe, Africa, the USA, and New Zealand. The majority of the touring was via campervan.

In 1983, Peter transferred to the Junee Telephone Exchange. The cleaner, Jan McCarthy, provided the best morning teas each morning. People from all over would drop by to enjoy a cuppa with a cream bun, etc.

Around 1993, Peter transferred to Wagga Wagga Telephone Exchange, where he ultimately took a redundancy pack from Telstra on 30th June 1999.

The Association extends its appreciation to Peter's daughter, Peta, who provided details about Peter's career. As an aside, Peta informs us that Peter had every pay slip from 10th January 1962 to the 23rd June 1999 in his home office

The Association extends its condolences and sympathy to Peter's wife, Jenny, daughter, Peta, son Brendon and grandchildren Adam, Winnie and Oliver.





RTEA Christmas Lunch

**12 pm, Thursday,
21ST November 2024**

This year, our Christmas lunch at the Petersham RSL. is an excellent opportunity to catch up with fellow members over a three-course lunch. There will also be lucky door wine prizes. The cost is \$65

Petersham RSL Club's address is 301 Trafalgar Street, just a 200m easy walk from Petersham Railway Station platform, parallel to the railway. Please note that there is a lift at Petersham Station.

From Petersham station's overhead bridge, looking towards the City, the club is on your right. Walk towards the pedestrian crossing, cross and then turn right and walk parallel to the railway for about 60m.

An electronic payment can be made (see adjacent for bank details details). The cost is \$65 per person. **Anyone with special dietary needs please email or text John Lane to let him know.**



MENU

- Entree:** Tomato bruschetta, garlic prawns and an arancini ball
Main: Choice of roast pork or barramundi (every second placement)
Desert: Christmas pudding and custard

You can pay via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). When using EFT, please type your surname in the details. If EFT is unavailable to you, please pay at our next General Meetings to Alan Bassman.

**Great Southern Bank
BSB 814-282
eSaver Account No: 10642769**





**Thursday
7TH November 2024**

Southern NSW Reunion



**Goulburn Workers Club
1 Mckell Place
Goulburn**

**PMG, Telecom and Telstra.
If you have ever worked
anywhere near Goulburn,
you will be most welcome.**

Facebook: PMG, AUSTRALIA POST, TELECOM AND TELSTRA REUNIONS

**Further details: Geoff Chadwick 0407 164 466,
Kel Morby 0427 266 125 (SMS pls)**

**Bob Speer 04088 639 00 e-mail speer.r.65@gmail.com.
Barry Jordan, 0419 480 542**

**Please RSVP by 29TH October to allow for name tags to be processed.
Should your circumstance require, please just present your self on the day.**

Country Installation Office Party

YO-HO-HO!!

*Wishing everyone a
Merry Christmas and a
Joyous New Year*

Crystal Palace Hotel

The Silly Season has rolled around again, and it is time to have a couple of drinks with some old workmates. This year the Country Installation Office Party will be conducted as follows:-

**Peter Clarke 0419 394 349
Email:- hipshot@bigpond.com**

**Thursday
5TH December 2024
When:- 1200 for 1230 hrs**



RETIRED TELECOMMUNICATIONS EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

Coffs Harbour Trip Away 2024

PRICE

\$1,310 per person twin share with an extra \$350 single supplement. The price includes venue entries & meals (5 breakfasts and 4 dinners in the motel).

SUNDAY, 10 NOVEMBER TO FRIDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2024

Sunday, 10th November 2024

Day 1

We will begin our travel to Coffs Harbour and have morning tea alongside the coach. We will stop at Taree for lunch and have time to enjoy a stroll along the Manning River.

Continuing our journey, we will call into the Maria River Distillery to listen to a talk and have an opportunity to purchase from their range of gins and rum. Finally, we arrive at Coffs Harbour and settle into our rooms before dinner.

Monday, 11th November 2024 Grafton and Woolgoolga

Day 2

Today, we journey up the Pacific Hwy to visit the City of Grafton. Grafton is named the Jacaranda City because of the Jacaranda trees throughout town. Grafton celebrates a Jacaranda Festival every year.

We will stop at a sea park for morning tea alongside the coach. We will do a town tour of Grafton, including a stop at the old Grafton Jail, built in 1893 and now heritage-listed. Then, visit the Christ Church Cathedral, constructed in 1894.



On our return to Coffs Harbour, we will stop in the beautiful seaside town of Woolgoolga, and there we will have an afternoon before our return to our motel. Our visit to Grafton is just one week after the Jacaranda Festival, so all the trees should be in blossom.

See next page →



Tuesday, 12th November 2024

Dorrigo & Bellingen

Day

3

During the morning, we drive up into the hinterland of the Coffs Harbour coast. Then, we drive across to Dorrigo Rainforest Centre, explore the information centre, and stroll on one of the walks, including a skywalk.

After working up an appetite, we head back to Bellingen, visit the old butter factory, and listen to a talk about the factory's history, which dates back to 1906.

We will enjoy lunch at the factory and then have some free time to explore Bellingen before returning to the motel.

Wednesday, 13th November 2024

Coffs Harbour

Day

4

We will have a local day in Coffs Harbour, driving up (depending on road conditions) to the Sealy Park Lookout, 310 metres above Coffs Harbour. There, you will see spectacular views from the sky pier.

On our return, we will visit the Coffs Harbour Wildlife Sanctuary to learn about their work rescuing wildlife and enjoy the Dolphin show after a short drive to the Coffs Harbour jetty for lunch and a stroll around the harbour. We will take a walk along to the mutton bird lookout.

In the afternoon, we visit a piece of Holland in Coffs Harbour. Known as the clog barn, we explore this unique attraction that is not found anywhere else in Australia. Have the chance to explore the shop and see how they make clogs.

Thursday, 14th November 2024

Urunga and Bowraville

Day

5

This morning, we will take a drive down to Urunga. This town is the meeting point of the Kalang and Bellinger Rivers, where both empty into the Pacific Ocean. We take in these views while wandering along the elevated Urunga boardwalk.

Next, we visit today's sweet spot: the Urunga Honey place. We will see the world of the honeybee with the glass viewing area and have an opportunity to sample the local honey.

After lunch, we take a short drive up to the small town of Bowraville. We have the afternoon to explore the folk and military museums or the township before returning to the motel for our last night away.



Friday, 15th November 2024)

Day

6

Return travel to Sydney with a refreshment break at a service centre. Lunch at Nabic at the hotel or one of the other cafes before arriving back in Sydney in the late afternoon, after a thoroughly enjoyable trip away.



Retired Telecommunications Employees Association

NEW MEMBER APPLICATION FORM

Secretary: Bruce Muirhead
22 CAMERON AVENUE,
BAULKHAM HILLS
NSW 2153

Email Address: webadmin@rtea.net.au

The Retired Telecommunications Employees Association welcomes new members who have worked in Telecommunications. The Association holds monthly meetings followed by lunch, an option to meet with former workmates. We hold several social functions throughout the year, and email members a monthly newsletter.

You have a number of options when completing this form. **1. You can complete this form and then click on the 'Submit' button to forward to us by email.** **2. You can complete this form on your computer then save as a pdf file and email the form to the Secretary (email address shown above).** **3. Print as a blank form and complete by pen and post to the Secretary (address is shown at the top of the form).**

On joining, there is once only membership fee of \$15; there are no annual membership fees. The application form also offers the option to purchase a name badge for \$15.

Your Details

First Name Last Name Spouse/Partner Name

Address Line 1 Address Line 2

Retired Telecommunications Employees Association has regular social functions to which Spouses and Partners are welcomed.

Town/Suburb Post Code State

Email Address Phone/Mobile

The Retired Telecommunications Employees Association does not share members' email addresses with third parties and without your expressed authorisation

Former Company/Workplace Worked Outside of Telecommunications?

Retired Telecommunications Employees Association accepts membership from persons outside of telecommunications and without a retiree association.

Wish to Purchase a Name Badge?

Our badge costs \$15 which includes Name on Badge

Tell us about your work history in Telecommunication. If you worked with the PMG/Telecom/Telstra and a Technician in Training let us know the year you commenced as a TIT. Our members hold regular reunions for the TIT entrance year.

Application to Become a Member

I am applying for membership of the Retired Telecommunications Employees Association. I understand that by completing this application form and making payment, I agree to abide by the constitution of the Association.

Please tick if you agree and to confirm your membership application:

You can read and download (pdf) the Retired Members Association's constitution at: <http://www.cwuretired.org/docs/CONSTITUTION.pdf>

Payment Amount

Payment Amount:

The Association can only accept payment by Bank Transfers (electronic payment)

Great Southern Bank BSB 814-282, eSaver Account No: 10642769.

Please include your surname in Details on your bank's transfer transaction form.