

## Vale Bruce Muirhead

John Lane

Our committee members and so many of our general membership were shocked when they heard of the sudden passing of our secretary, Bruce Muirhead.

Bruce passed away on Monday, 30<sup>TH</sup> September 2024.

Bruce was such a close friend to so many of us. Bruce commenced his career as a Technician in Training in 1962. After his first year of training at the Strathfield Training School, Bruce received an appointment to Coogee Telephone Exchange. There, I got to know Bruce, mainly on the traffic desk order wire, as I was also a trainee at City East Exchange.

During his eastern suburb days, Bruce met his wife Heather, who worked in the business office.



I lost touch with Bruce in 1976 when I moved to the city. It was not until we were re-acquainted through the Retired Telecommunications Employees Association that we became close friends.

*"I am very saddened to hear of the passing of my dear friend and colleague Bruce. I first met Bruce when I joined the PMG in 1974 on the mezzanine floor at Redfern Exchange where our customer faults dispatch office was located. On occasions I was asked to assist on test desk duties which is where I was introduced to Bruce and Robert Horton (I hope I have the correct name). We developed a great friendship. Bruce was a motivated, knowledgeable, pleasant person to work with. My condolences to his family. R.I.P Bruce. Thank you for the lovely memories.*

Roger Cefai

Bruce was second in charge of the State Field Service Group stationed at Concord in the twilight of his career. He retired in 2001 after 39 years of service.

Bruce joined the RTEA in 2008 and became the assistant secretary in 2012, the same year I took on the role of social secretary; I suppose that is what gave us an instant connection. Bruce became secretary in 2014 after Peter Hack had moved to the bush. Bruce has remained in that position until the present day.

*Hi John,  
So sorry to hear about Bruce. My thoughts and prayers are with the family.  
Regards, Judy Cornwall.*

One of my fondest memories of Bruce was his love and knowledge of music. During COVID, we both got interested in a programme on ABC702 it was hosted by Simon Marney on a Saturday at 11 am. The Simon Marney programme specialised in a variety of things, from artists to instruments. Along with Vince, also an avid music enthusiast, the three of us would remind each other what to expect on the coming Saturday. The musical connection may well have been the spark that brought Bruce and Vince so close together. I understand Bruce owns an extensive vinyl record collection.

*Hi Peter,  
I was so sad to receive the message about Bruce. I know he was a great friend to you, the other blokes, and me. His wonderful smile. He was such a gentleman.  
Christine Berle-Keys*

Bruce was also a massive Swans supporter, and the 60-point loss in the grand final must have been a very hard pill for him to swallow.

For several years, Bruce has spent a lot of time researching and documenting the history of our organisation. Fortunately, he has stored it electronically, and we owe it to him to complete the task.

My sincere condolences go to his wife, Heather and their two sons, Stuart and Peter.

**Bruce Muirhead, Rest in Peace.**

*I got a message from Bruce nearly every day about the benefits of an early morning coffee. So sad R.I.P. OLD FRIEND*

Peter York

It was the early seventies when I really got to know Bruce when he was working in the Redfern district. Bruce worked on subscriber maintenance, then in the fault despatch centre (FDC) on the test desk and later as a programmer.

*Hi John,  
On behalf of Colin and myself, please extend my deep condolences to Heather and her family, at such a sudden and shocking loss of Bruce  
Sincerely, Peggy Trompf*



Retired Telecommunications Employees Association

# OCTOBER 2024 General Meeting

**Thursday, 24<sup>TH</sup> October 2024**

Meeting Commences at 11.05 am

The October 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 welcomed to join with us in person at the Petersham RSL. The Petersham RSL has an excellent bistro where you can get together with fellow members over lunch.

## SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

ASH FOWLER FROM THE COMBINED PENSIONER & SUPERANNUANTS ASSOCIATION WILL SPEAK ABOUT THE SCAMS AND FRAUDS AIMED PARTICULARLY AT SENIOR CITIZENS.



The Meeting will also be held via **ZOOM**  
Access details will be emailed to members on Monday afternoon ,  
21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2024

## Office Bearers

### President

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### Vice President

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### Vice President

*Bruce Coxall*

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### Secretary Treasurer

*Alan Bassman*



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### Welfare

*Peter Hack*



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### Newsletter Editor

*Paul Rewhorn*



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[pdrewhorn@me.com](mailto:pdrewhorn@me.com)

## 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.



# Welcome to your October 2024 newsletter.

**Our front page brought you the sad news of the passing of our secretary, Bruce Muirhead. When you read the tribute to Bruce you will realise the extent of Bruce's contribution to our Association and the importance of the secretary role. The secretary's role is a vital role on the committee. Therefore, the committee decided to immediately appoint a person to the secretary role until our annual general meeting in February 2025.**

**Alan Bassman kindly volunteered to fill the secretary role and continue as our treasurer. Alan's workload is increasing, and I greatly appreciate him taking on this extra workload.**

## LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS

I received news over the past few days that some members were award recipients and warrant special mention in our newsletter.

*Julia Morgan*, wife of the late Dave Morgan, received the Girl Guides and Trefoil Guild award for twenty-five years of service. Still with the Girl Guides, *Barbara Fairbairn*, wife of Alan Fairbairn, has also received the Girl Guides and Trefoil Guild award for her sixty years of service.

*Colin McQueen* received a nomination for the 2024 State Volunteer of the Year award for his fifty-five years of service with the State Emergency Services (SES). Nominees attended a special event announcing this year's recipient. Colin is already a life member of SES.

I congratulate all three and sincerely thank them for their service to the community. If anyone wants to pay tribute to a member who has been an outstanding volunteer, please email me the details.

## STATE LIBRARY VISIT – A REMINDER

Thursday, 17th October, is the day of our visit to the State Library. We meet outside the library at 10.30 am.

Afterwards, we will head to the City of Sydney RSL for lunch.

## STEVE FLYNN - MERIT AWARD

*Still, about volunteers, I caught up with Steve Flynn on Wednesday, 25th September, over coffee. The purpose of meeting with Steve was to present him with the Retired Telecommunications Employees Association Merit Award for ten years of service on our committee.*

The award nomination occurred some time ago; however, because of Steve's poor health, it was challenging to find an appropriate time. Steve had some good news; he told me he had not felt this good for a while. Congratulations, Steve, and thank you for your contribution. I am sure members will join me in wishing you continued good health.

## GUEST SPEAKERS

We have guest speakers for our October and November general meetings.

At the October 2024 General Meeting, *Ash Fowler from the Combined Pensioner & Superannuants Association* will speak about the scams and frauds aimed particularly at senior citizens. Only a couple of months ago, I was a scam victim and lost some money I could not afford at that point. It was not only the money loss; it also had a detrimental effect on my health over the following weeks. Do not underestimate scammers; they employ tech-savvy means of defrauding us. We all need education when it comes to scams; therefore, **I urge you to attend in person or via Zoom our October 2024 General Meeting**

At our November 2024 General Meeting, we invited *Roger Bamber to speak*. Roger was the Regional Operations Manager who dealt with significant disasters in the Sydney network. One was the cut cables within the city cable tunnels. Roger will talk about Telecom's response and some preventative now employed.



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## Welcome to your October 2024 Newsletter (Cont'd).

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

*This is a reminder that our Christmas Party is on Thursday, 21st November 2024, at the Petersham RSL. You will find all the details in this month's newsletter, including the luncheon menu. 21st November may seem like a long time into the future, but it is just over a month away. Therefore, I urge you to mark our Christmas Party in your calendar and let us know you are attending ASAP.*

### TRIP AWAY,

Well, we are off on our trip away commencing Sunday, 10th November 2024. I thank members for their positive response to this year's trip away. I will let you know the exact departure once it is finalised.

### OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

Nothing is left for me but to remind you of our October General Meeting at Petersham RSL on Thursday, 24th October 2024, commencing at 11.05 am.

I look forward to seeing you there.



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



## **RTEA Christmas Lunch**

**12 pm, Thursday,  
21<sup>ST</sup> 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**





## October: A Special Month in the Association's History

At our September 2024 General Meeting, Vince Haywood presented his regular report, but this time with a captivating twist: an in-depth exploration of our Association's history from its inception. Vince guided us through the forty-four-year progress of the Retired Telecommunications Employees Association, highlighting key achievements and significant moments that have shaped our Association. Vince also acknowledged Bruce Muirhead's dedicated work examining the Association's archives in his report. I found it fitting to share Vince's history story with a broader audience in this month's newsletter, offering everyone an opportunity to reflect on our Association's origins and growth.

Our Association's inaugural meeting took place in October 1985. As we approach our 45th anniversary in 2025, it may be the perfect time to plan additional articles and special events to celebrate our Association.

**October is an important month in the Retired Telecommunications Employees Association's history. Our story began with Bert Harris's vision in 1980. While not an official of the original organisation, Bert was the driving force behind its creation. He saw the need for a community of telecommunications retirees to protect and secure retirees' superannuation and pension rights, provide a platform for regular discussions, and offer socialising opportunities for members. His dream came to life in July 1980, and a Provisional Committee had formed by September of that year. The first general meeting occurred on October 8, 1980, with 34 members attending. It marked the birth of our Association, which would grow and thrive for decades.**

The initial committee consisted of dedicated individuals: Allan Driver as President, Gordon Richardson as Vice President, Frank Morris as Assistant Secretary, and Bill Loughlin as Secretary-Treasurer. Alongside them were committee members like Des Dixon, Alf Barnes, and K Chance. Together, they laid the foundation of the Association, which sought to safeguard members' financial rights and reunite workmates in their retirement years, fostering long-lasting friendships through social gatherings and regular monthly general meetings.

The Retirees Association saw remarkable growth, with about 930 members across Australia. The Retirees Association played an active role in industrial campaigns, supporting causes such as the CPSU, Nurses Association, and the Maritime Union of Australia and campaigns against Work Choices and the privatisation of public assets. These efforts demonstrated the Association's commitment not only to its members but also to the broader community.

### UNION CONTRIBUTION

On the banner of our monthly newsletter, you will read the words "RTEA – Proud of our Union Origin". These words are there for a good reason; we remember the vital role that our Union, the NSW Technical Services Branch of ATEA, for their fostering and ongoing support. Before the prevalence of email, the Union printed and mailed out our newsletter and made a meeting room available. Likewise, the Finance Sector

Union (FSU) made their conference room available for our monthly general meetings for many years.

Without this assistance, our Association would have faced fixed costs that would have stifled our growth during our formative years. Today, the Petersham RSL generously makes a room available for our monthly general meetings.

### SOCIAL FUNCTIONS



Over the years, social functions have become an indispensable part of the Association's activities. Our Social events include lunches, visits to interesting locations, and guest speakers at our monthly general meetings. Finally, we have our annual trip away touring throughout NSW (and occasionally interstate). There is also our much-anticipated Christmas party.

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## October: A Special Month in the Association's History (Cont'd)

The social events provide members with opportunities to connect, relax, and celebrate, reinforcing the importance of bringing former workmates together in retirement.

Over the years, our leadership changed, but the commitment to the Association's original values has always been there. **When Bert Harris retired from the ATEA in 1983, he took on multiple roles of Secretary, Treasurer, and newsletter editor in our infant association. Bert managed all these responsibilities until illness forced him to step down in 1998.**

### EARLY COMMITTEE

Harry Collins succeeded Alan Driver as President, while Ralph Britten took on the roles of Secretary and Editor, and Alan Fairbairn became Treasurer.

**In 2001, Ralph Britten relinquished the Secretary position in favour of Peter Hack. Ralph continued in the role of Assistant Secretary until 2010 when he took the reins as Welfare Officer after Peter Connell's long tenure. Ralph passed on newsletter role onto Bruce Coxall in 2006. Bruce was to stay as editor until 2010. Pat Leonard took on the Assistant Secretary role in 2012 but later stepped down due to the demanding commute from the Blue Mountains. Bruce Muirhead succeeded him and eventually assumed the role of Secretary in 2014 after Peter Hack moved home to Temora.**

**Peter Hack voluntarily assumed the Welfare Officer's duties from Ralph; a position he still holds today. Peter makes numerous calls to members who are undergoing illness and to their carers. He reports to the monthly general meeting keeping us informed.**

The leadership baton was passed from one capable individual to another, with members like Peter Hack, Pat Leonard, Bruce Muirhead, Bruce Noake, Bruce Coxall, and Paul Rewhorn continuing the tradition of keeping members informed and connected.

### SOCIAL SECRETARY AND TREASURER

**We fondly remember the late Denzel Fogarty, whose dedication as Social Secretary from 2005 to 2011 has left a lasting impact on the Association. Following Denzel, John Lane accepted the responsibilities of Social Secretary while he continued as Vice President. Vince Haywood became our Association's third President in 2005. He later passed the role to John Lane in 2020.**

**Bob Hamblion's tenure as Treasurer spanned twenty years, making him our longest-serving Treasurer.**

Today, our Treasurer is Alan Bassman. We have Bob and Alan and those before them to thank for today's strong financial position.

### JIM SPENCER

**No account of our history would be complete without recognising the contributions of Jim Spencer.**

Jim became our Vice President following the retirement of Stan Large. Jim did a magnificent job as our delegate to the *Council of Retired Members Associations and the Aged Care Alliance*. At our general meetings, Jim would report on the activities of our affiliate associations. He would also give his unique perspective on current politics, especially on senior issues. His report to our monthly general meeting was known as the "**Spencer Report**" and was eagerly anticipated at each general meeting.

Our Association continues its affiliation with the *Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association, ABC Friends and the Senior's Rights Service*.

### MORE RECENT TIMES

In 2022, the Association revised its constitution to expand membership eligibility to retirees from various telecommunications companies, not just former retirees from PMG/Telecom/Telstra. Additionally, we changed our name from the Retired Members Association to the Retired Telecommunications Employees Association (RTEA). As our membership has grown that little older, we have introduced Zoom video conference facility for our monthly general meetings, hopefully to assist as many members as possible to stay engaged.

Preserving the Association's history has always been a priority. Vince highlighted the importance of archiving original documents, newsletters, and meeting minutes, noting that physical copies of newsletters from 1990 onwards are archived at the State Library of New South Wales. He expressed his desire to digitise older newsletters to build a more complete archive, ensuring that the history of the Association is available to future generations. He also mentioned plans to donate old rulebooks to the Museum of the Communications Workers Union, further preserving the legacy of the Association and its members.

Looking ahead, Vince acknowledged the challenges facing the Association, with membership numbers declining. He raised the question of whether the organisation would "*wither on the vine*" or "*go out with a bang*," urging future leaders to consider the group's long-term sustainability.



**Thursday  
7<sup>TH</sup> 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 29<sup>TH</sup> 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  
5<sup>TH</sup> December 2024  
When:- 1200 for 1230 hrs**





Retired Telecommunications Employees Association

# NEW MEMBER APPLICATION FORM

Email Address: webadmin@rtea.net.au



Alan Bassman  
46 Lyle Street, Girraween  
NSW 2145

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 we email members a monthly newsletter.

- Complete the Form**
- Send the completed application to the RTEA via one of the following options:**
  - Click the Submit button at the bottom of the form, your application will be sent via your email client to us
  - If your email client doesn't support option {a}; save the completed form as a PDF file and email it to the Secretary at [email address].
  - Print the form, complete by hand if necessary, and post the completed form to the address shown on the top of the page. Please do not include a cheque or cash with your form, we can only accept payment by a bank transfer.
- Make your Payment via a Bank Transfer (The form shows the Bank Details)**
  - A one-time membership fee is \$20.
  - A purchase of a "Name Badge", at \$15 will (including delivery) makes the total payable amount - \$35.
- Additional Information:**
  - The membership fee is a one-time payment with no annual fees.
  - Your information will remain confidential and will not be provided to third parties.

## Your Details

First Name  Last Name  Spouse/Partner Name

Address Line 1  Address Line 2

Town/Suburb  State  Postcode

Email Address  Phone/Mobile

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

*The Retired Telecommunications Employees Association does not share members' email addresses with third parties and without their expressed consent.*

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 delivery..

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.

## Confirm your Application

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:

## Payment amount and how to pay

**Payment Amount:** \$20

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.