

Jim Macdougall Scholarship for AAP Journalist

Cathay Pacific has joined with AAP to provide an annual scholarship to enable a promising young journalist to spend a month working abroad.

The airline will provide a return airfare to London and AAP will organise other details of the assignment.

The award will be known as the Jim Macdougall Scholarship to recognise the work done by the veteran Sydney journalist and public relations consultant to establish Cathay Pacific in Australia through his weekly column in The Australian newspaper and other promotional activities.

Bill Rothery, Cathay Pacific General Manager for Australia and New Zealand, said the scholarship was intended to benefit a young journalist from AAP, who would gain valuable experience from working overseas.

It is intended to be ongoing and will be reviewed regularly to make certain it is meeting the desired objectives.

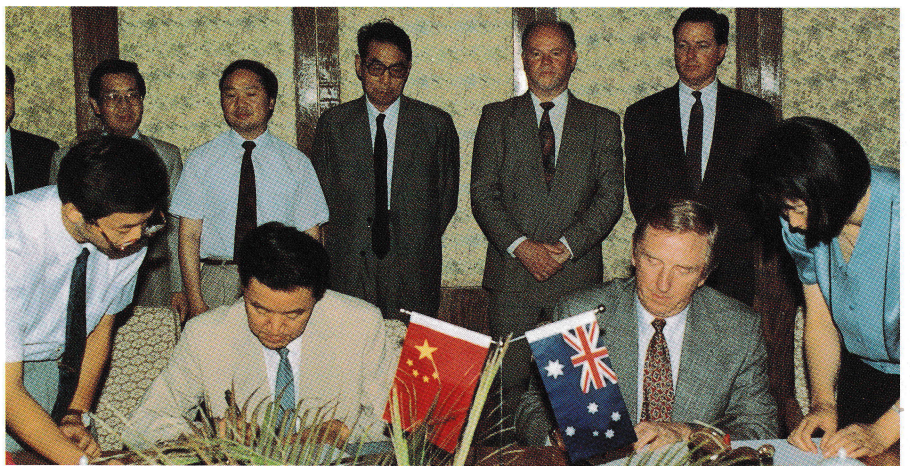
Editor in Chief Peter Brown said the selection would be made on the basis of youth and ability. The prize in the first year would be a month working in AAP's London office, but other destinations would be considered in subsequent years.

Applications would be invited from cadets and journalists in Band One in all AAP offices. They would be asked to submit the original, the subbed version and any published copies of their best story for the year.

Peter will narrow the field down to a final group of three and Jim Macdougall will then award the scholarship to the one he judges to be the best of these. Entries will close on September 1 with any story written in the previous 12 months eligible for entry.



AAP OPENS NEWS BUREAU IN CHINA AND SIGNS SERVICE EXCHANGE AGREEMENTS WITH XINHUA/YONHAP



AAP Chief Executive Lee Casey and Xinhua President Guo Chaoren sign the agreements in Beijing. Peter Brown and Greg Holland are pictured standing behind them.

Chief European Correspondent Mike Osborne and his wife Louise Evans will open an AAP news bureau in Beijing in September.

Mike and Louise, who are both 30, have been based in London for the past two years.

Their appointment follows the signing in Beijing on June 23 of three agreements between AAP Information Services and China's Xinhua News Agency under which they will jointly investigate the sale and distribution of news and economic data in the Asia-Pacific region.

The two national news agencies will look at marketing each other's news services in their respective regions and at a range of other profit-sharing possibilities.

AAP will have exclusive rights in Australia and New Zealand to Xinhua's China Economic Information Service, providing news and official information on China's economic, political and commercial activities.

"I think the signing of these agreements with Xinhua will have long term benefits for both organisations and countries," AAP Chief Executive Lee Casey said.

"In view of the rapidly expanding ties between the Australian and Chinese business communities, there is a need to improve and widen the level of information being exchanged.

"Australian enterprises already doing business with or looking at breaking into the China market will have access to a service that will provide valuable information on general and specific trends and developments affecting trade and business in China."

The China Economic Information Service will include official and unofficial exchange rates, commodity prices, business opportunities, company, product, exhibition and trade news, company listings and treasury, bond and stock quotations from the Shanghai, Shenzhen and Zhejiang stock exchanges, government regulations and policies, government tendering details and statistics.

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AAP-Xinhua and Yonhap Agreements

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"The service will also provide news and information on agriculture, industry, communications, energy, economic law, infrastructure, science and technology, tourism, foreign economic relations, foreign investment and real estate," Mr Casey said.

"We are looking forward to a long and fruitful association with Xinhua, as indeed we are with the Korean news agency Yonhap, with which we have signed similar agreements, and later also with other Asian news agencies."



AAP Chief Executive Lee Casey and Yonhap President - Publisher Hyon Sowhan shake hands on the new agreement as Editor in Chief Peter Brown looks on.

AAP maintains news bureaus in Jakarta, Port Moresby, Suva and London and also has correspondents reporting from Bangkok and Tokyo in the Asian region, as well as other centres in the United States, Europe, Africa and the Pacific.

Editor in Chief Peter Brown visited Seoul and Beijing with Mr Casey last month for final discussions on the new agreements with Xinhua and Yonhap.

He welcomed both agreements, saying they would greatly assist AAP's policy of expanding news coverage of the Asia-Pacific region.

"The importance of this for our media and commercial subscribers is obvious as China and South Korea are two of Australia's most important and fastest growing markets," Mr Brown said.

"More than 540 Australian companies already have established operations in China and trade with Seoul last year topped \$4 billion.

"Our new agreements mean we can call on the vast domestic reporting resources of Xinhua and Yonhap to gather information of specific interest to our subscribers.

"Having two correspondents in the new Beijing Bureau will be an added bonus as Mike will concentrate on finance and Louise on general news. It will also give us continuity of coverage whenever either one is on assignment off base.

"We will be looking closely at other opportunities over coming months to further expand regional coverage and commercial activities in the region."

Signing of the agreements was timed to coincide with visits to China and South Korea by Prime Minister Paul Keating and Mr Casey, Mr Brown and Greg Holland, Manager, Group Corporate and Public Affairs, attended business lunches for Mr Keating in Seoul and Beijing.

Greg, who is also Executive Director, Strategic Development, Asia-Pacific, spent several weeks in China with the Executive Director, Strategic Marketing, Asia-Pacific, Colin McDonald, to investigate possible communications services opportunities there.

The Xinhua agreements were signed with the Chinese news agency President Guo Chaoren and the Korean agreement in Seoul on June 21 with the President-Publisher of Yonhap, Hyon Sowhan.

Mike and Louise will be reopening the AAP China bureau after a break of nearly 20 years.

AAP was one of the first Australian news organisations to send a correspondent to China after the People's Republic was recognised by the Whitlam government in 1972.

Veteran newsman Lachie Shaw opened the first AAP bureau in Peking, as the capital was then known, but was based there for only a few months in early 1974.

ConferNet an Award finalist

ConferNet, the satellite based video conferencing network developed by AAP Communications Services, was nominated as a finalist in the prestigious 1993 Computerworld Smithsonian Awards.

The awards, announced in Washington last month, recognise innovations in information technology which benefit the world community.

ConferNet is being used by the Walpiri and Pintubi Aborigines of the Tanami Desert, to link their isolated communities of Yuendumu, Lajamanu, Willowra and Kintore with each other and the world.

The system allows fully interactive video calls to be placed from any remote location in the network to any other, without the need for any central management intervention. Simple commands on a personal computer allow users at each site to control the scheduling and reservation of their video calls.

Education, legal, social and health services are being provided to the communities through ConferNet, in some cases for the first time.

ConferNet, nominated in the Media, Arts and Entertainment category, is the first Australian product to be nominated for a Computerworld Smithsonian Award. The category was won by



ConferNet links the remote Aboriginal communities of the Northern Territory

the US Holocaust Memorial Museum for devising a new way of accessing the vast amounts of multimedia information in its archives.

Other finalists included a system of digitally capturing, storing and displaying art works, developed for America's National Gallery of Art, and the Descriptive Video Service, which makes television and film accessible to the visually impaired by describing key elements on the screen.

The Computerworld Smithsonian Awards were founded in 1988 by Computerworld, a leading US newspaper in the information technology industry, and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

"It is a great honour to be recognised by such a prestigious organisation and is a testament to our ability to compete in the international arena," Terence Nickolls, Chief Executive of AAP Communications Services, said. Mr Nickolls was in Washington for the event.

Tahiti Looks Nice for AAP RES

The French Polynesian island of Tahiti is receiving up-to-the-minute financial information for the first time thanks to the introduction of AAP Reuters Economic Services.

The International Data Network (IDN) information is delivered 6000 kilometres across the Pacific from Sydney to the Tahitian capital of Papeete, via an international satellite link.

Initial clients in Tahiti are Westpac and Banque De Tahiti, which are both subscribing to Money 2000 and International News Retrieval.

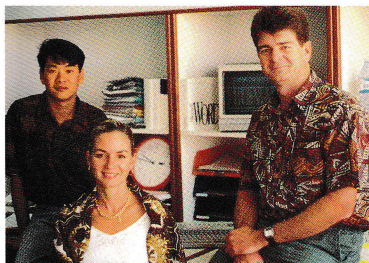
Tahiti's main languages are French and Tahitian, and Sydney technician Chris Knighton, who installed the equipment in Papeete, had a more interesting time than usual trying to locate specific electronic equipment.

But the service is proving to be a huge success and the banks are thrilled with the results, according to Clark Chappel, Brisbane-based AAP RES Sales Manager for Northern Australia, Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific.

"The banks in Tahiti had never had an information service before. They relied on phones, faxes and telex," Clark said. "Because of their position in the Pacific there was a real sense of 'no man's land' in the world's financial day. The US is closing as they are opening and New Zealand and Australia are still in bed.

"They were absolutely thrilled to see what was happening in real time. I've never seen anybody get so excited over a Money 2000 directory like Valari De Marigny (Vice President and Manager International Services for Banque De Tahiti). She couldn't stop saying how wonderful it was — in French, of course."

AAP RES Economic Services also supply Monitor Services to Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Vanuatu, which Clark advises are in the process of being upgraded to IDN services. It is hoped New Caledonia will begin receiving information soon.



Banque De Tahiti's Yannic Wong and Valari De Marigny with Clark Chappel

Queensland TAFE Colleges Install Video Conferencing

Queensland's TAFE colleges have put in place a \$2 million, state-wide video conferencing network using AAP Communications Services' PictureTel system to make occupational education more widely available.

Work on the network is well underway and courses using Videolinq — as it is known by TAFE — will start this month.

The new service has the enthusiastic support of the Queensland government and was launched with a linkup between Deputy Premier Tom Burns in Brisbane and Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations Matt Foley in Mackay.

Mr Foley said TAFE*TEQ (Technical and Further Education — Training Employment Queensland) has 32 colleges and more than 60 campuses, annexes and specialist centres spread across the state.

Potentially thousands of extra students would have TAFE subjects available to them at regional video rooms.

"Video conferencing can also be used to set up classrooms in the workplace, which opens up training opportunities for employees at remote mine sites, or people undertaking shiftwork," he said.

"Videolinq services will increase the possibilities for many more subjects to be presented more fully, more efficiently, more often and to more people," he said.

AAPCS won the tender last October to supply video conferencing equipment to the Queensland Government and the TAFE*TEQ contract for a 14-site pilot network was formally approved by State Cabinet in May.

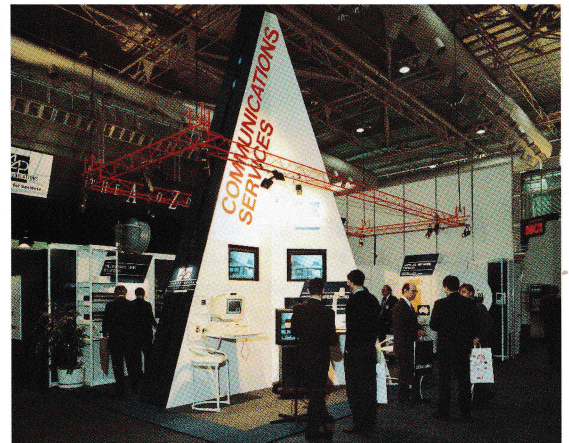
Queensland Sales Executive Mark Schebella said AAPCS is also setting up a state-wide bureau network for the government's Media and Information Services unit with Townsville, Cairns, Brisbane and Mt Isa the first four centres linked.

"TAFE TEQ will be the largest PictureTel user in Australia and one of the largest dedicated networks in the world," said Mark.

"We are also developing in conjunction with Media and Information Services a network management system including billing and booking facilities."

The TAFE-TEQ contract is worth \$1.5 million initially to AAPCS, with the prospect of expanding that in the next 12 months if the pilot project proves successful.

Mr Foley said the Videolinq pilot project, which will run for a year to determine its feasibility and explore its potential, was intended to take TAFE-TEQ into the 21st century.



The AAPCS stand at ATUG

AAPCS assisted the government in two week-long trials of the service last year, one of which involved 400 people from 21 State and Commonwealth departments and statutory bodies, and the other was an exchange of training programs between the Mt Gravatt and Cairns Colleges of TAFE, Comalco at Weipa and University of Central Queensland sites at Mackay and Rockhampton.



AAP Queensland Sales Executive Mark Schebella demonstrates the PictureTel system.

Man of Explosive Interests Looks Back on Good Career at the Supreme Court

Thirteen years in the Queensland Government Railways is an unusual prelude to a successful career in journalism.

But Ron Good, who retired recently after nearly 40 years of reporting, used his spare time in the guard's van on lonely, long-haul goods trains to teach himself shorthand and typing with the same dedication and enthusiasm he showed during his long stint in the law courts.

Ron, 66, was the doyen of Sydney court reporters after 12 straight years in the Supreme Court at Queen's Square, where he sometimes covered four or five cases in a day.

He was better known around the sprawling courts building than in the AAP newsroom, where several of his colleagues knew the tall, impressive, white-bearded figure who occasionally appeared among them, only by his byline.

Ron's other great passions are volcanoes, tennis and steam trains, especially volcanoes. He has travelled the world to view and study them including Hawaii and the western United States, Vanuatu, Java, Bali, South America, Japan and the Philippines.

This month he is on a four-wheel drive expedition around Iceland, which according to Ron is the most exciting country of all to see the massive forces of nature at work.

"It is the only country in the world where the separating mid-ocean edges of the tectonic plates come to the surface," he said. "Iceland is literally being pulled apart and expanded. A volcano has erupted beneath one ice cap and its heat maintains a large lake that never freezes in the middle of the ice cap."

Of the hundreds of court cases he covered, those which remain most strongly in Ron's memory are the odd quirky one or an occasional trial where he believes justice was not done.

For while he is clearly dedicated to the legal system and a great admirer of many of its practitioners, he is also critical of its flaws.

"Early on, I used to be confident I could predict the outcome of jury trials but seeing the result of some cases shattered my faith in the jury system," he said.

"You just can't predict how they will decide."

He cites in particular an acquittal in a rape trial several years ago and the great variation in damages awarded by juries in defamation cases.

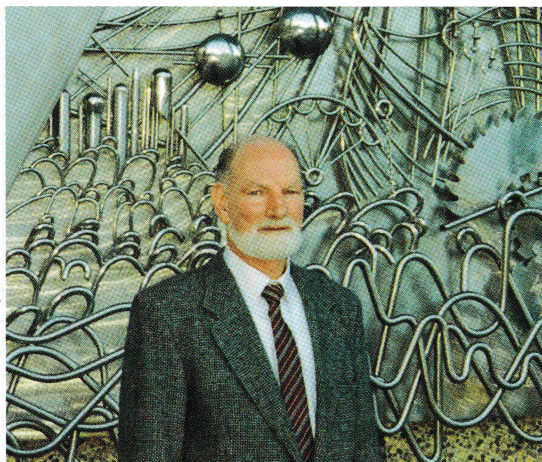
He is also critical of those judges who are clearly

out of touch with community standards and believes the Court of Appeal too has been wrong on occasions.

Ron lists as one of his key skills the ability to pick up what had happened in a court from the people involved when he was unable to be there himself.

"A most important aspect of the job was to get to know the barristers and solicitors and let them know you and have respect for and reliance on your discretion," he said.

He always made a point of getting their names and telephone numbers at the start of a case, "because you never knew when you might need to check an important detail.



Ron Good outside Sydney's Supreme Court Building. Behind him is the sculpture 'Order out of Chaos'.

"The judges' associates occupy key positions. They could often tell you in advance what a case was about so you could judge if it was worth sitting in on and you could set your priorities.

"Most of them were cooperative, but you got the odd snag who thought court cases were a private affair between the barristers and the judge, and viewed the public, as represented by the press, as an intruder.

"But they were a small minority.

"I got to know many of the barristers very well and had no problem asking them what might have been regarded as impertinent questions from other reporters," Ron said.

"Often court officers — the lowest in that hierarchy — could give you helpful hints on interesting cases if you were able to call them by their first names. They sat through all the cases and some had quite a good news sense."

Ron believes that a lot of the personal litigation which occupies so much court time is misguided, though it often makes good copy.

"People don't get the satisfaction they expected and it costs an awful lot of money, particularly defamation actions," he said.

"People's feelings are hurt by what is said about them in court. I often get the impression halfway through a case that the plaintiff regrets having started it. More details of their personal lives are brought up in court than they ever expected if the defence lawyers have been assiduous in their research."

Ron rates Roger Giles QC as the best of the many advocates he witnessed over the years and David Hunt as the most outstanding of the judges.

Hunt, who was for many years in charge of the defamation list and is now Chief Judge in Common Law, "was the most impressive intellectually," he said.

"His knowledge of the law in the complicated field of defamation was legendary. He was never afraid to speak his mind and this sometimes landed him in trouble."

On one celebrated occasion, when a defence lawyer was objecting to his conduct of a case and threatening to use it as grounds for an appeal, Hunt told him, "I don't think you would get far with that even with the current state of lunacy in the Court of Appeal."

"It was always a pleasure to sit in his court, especially on a Friday when the list of defamation cases came up for mention," Ron said. "He would often indicate if he thought a particular action

Hard Act to Follow

Editor in Chief Peter Brown wrote to Ron Good in a letter of appreciation on his retirement:

"You have earned the respect and admiration of all of us who have had the privilege to work alongside you over the past 20 years. We are only too well aware that yours is going to be a hard act to follow.

The highly professional way you covered the demanding and complex Supreme Court round set the standard for all those to come.

The quality of your reporting has earned not only the admiration of your fellow journalists, but unstinting praise from those in the legal profession who look to the media for fair, balanced and accurate reporting of the courts.

To be quite frank, I really don't know how we are going to match the breadth of cover your tireless reporting has provided."

would waste the court's time, and the party's money, to run it."

Ron also enjoyed the informed views of Michael Kirby, now President of the Court of Appeals, but noted he was often outvoted by his fellow judges.

Ron formally retired in December, 1992, after staying on for an extra year beyond his 65th birthday at the request of Editor in Chief Peter Brown. He then returned for another month in February and is now helping develop a legal guide for AAP journalists.

He also keeps his hand in writing regular articles for *Justinian*, a legal journal, and for the *Gazette of Law and Journalism*, which deals mainly with actions for defamation and contempt of court.

"I retired with regret in many ways," he said, "but these other jobs have given me an interest."

His earlier love, and one for which he retains a fondness, was steam trains.

"My old man was an engine driver on the Queensland railways. I've loved steam trains since I rode with him on the engines as a child and I automatically followed him into the railways," he said.

Ron's first job was as Lad Porter in Ayr, where his 91-year-old mother still lives. His next, he says with a laugh, was relieving Station Mistress — the woman was on holidays but her job title remained.

Over the next 13 years he worked as a junior station master, shunter and then guard travelling all over Queensland, working extraordinary hours, until he decided that he really wanted to be a journalist.

It was while he was based in Rockhampton with the railways that he achieved his greatest fame as a tennis player with a victory over Rod Laver.

"He was only 12 or 13 at the time and I was 23," says Ron, "but he still took me to three sets. He was a serious competitor even then and his old man was on the sidelines exhorting him on every point."

Ron still plays a very competitive game of tennis three times a week.

While Ron practiced his Pitman's shorthand outlines by the light of oil lamps in the guard's van, he wrote to regional newspapers in New South Wales and Queensland until he was offered a job as a third-year cadet on the Gympie Times.

He was then 27. Within nine months he had moved on to the Newcastle Sun as a D grade.

He spent five years there until he married, and "desperate for money," moved on to the Maitland Mercury as a C grade.

He spent three years there, three years on the Sydney Sun, a year with the ABC and then became head of the Sydney office of the Newcastle Sun in December, 1963. He remained there until that paper folded and he was transferred to the AAP staff in December, 1971.

David Beddall Visits AAPT



Pictured left to right are Larry Williams, David Beddall, Barry Wheeler and Lee Casey

With the Federal Parliament in winter recess, Communications Minister David Beddall was one of the few ministers who opted not to take off for the warmer climes of the northern hemisphere.

Instead, he was coming to grips with his new portfolio by using the break to get insider briefings from major industry players — and AAP Telecommunications was at the top of his list.

"Mr Beddall and his close advisers requested an on-site briefing and tour of AAPT's Sydney headquarters, and spent a morning with the company's senior executives last month," said Barry Wheeler, Chief Executive of AAPT.

It was the second meeting between the Minister

and the company, following an introductory session in late April.

The June briefing, which was attended by AAPT Chairman Lee Casey, included formal presentations by Mr Wheeler, Director Network Services Oscie Brown, and Director Sales and Marketing Allan Palmer. A lengthy informal round-table discussion on key industry issues also involved Chief Operating Officer Larry Williams and Director Regulatory Affairs Brian Perkins.

The familiar question 'If Optus paid \$800 million for the second carrier licence, what gives AAPT the right to compete in the long distance market without having paid a licence fee?' was raised during the discussion.

"It gave Larry Williams the chance to articulate his favourite response," Mr Wheeler said. "That Optus, by their own admission, paid \$630 million for AUSSAT and another \$170 million for the second mobile licence. That means they got access to the switched long distance market, under preferential terms and conditions, for zero!"

"Judging by the energetic note-taking by the ministerial advisers, it was clearly a rationale that was seeing the light of day for the first time in political circles," Mr Wheeler observed. "And it was clearly one that would not be forgotten."

National Marketing Made Easy by New Inbound Services

Two new telecommunications products aimed at reducing costs and improving customer contact for Australian service industries were introduced by AAPT at the ATUG conference in May.

According to AAPT's Director Sales and Marketing, Allan Palmer, the products InBound and Presence offer considerable savings on comparable services offered by Telecom.

AAPT has developed the products for service organisations with high call traffic volume and a need to provide customers with a low cost contact number.

InBound enables callers to contact an organisation at no charge or at the cost of a local call, by dialling a six digit '13' number or a nine digit '008' number.

It can route calls to one destination from across Australia, or to multiple capital city destinations.

Presence also provides a boost for business, by enabling customers in remote capital cities to call a central office using a local number, thus giving them a long distance service at the cost of a local call. The cost of the long distance component is billed to the called party.

"Presence gives businesses the ability to take up opportunities and establish a local identity in remote cities," Mr Palmer said. "It also allows for one local number to be used to route callers to one of several locations, enabling calls to be localised to one region."

Both Presence and Inbound offer volume discounts, making them a cost effective choice for use in national marketing campaigns.

New Service to Unravel Travel

The Federal Tourism Minister, Mr Michael Lee, launched AAP's newest information service, TravelNet, at Darling Harbour on May 31.

TravelNet is the world's first commercially available real-time flight arrival and departure information service and is the result of years of work by AAP staff.

The service provides up-to-the-minute arrival and departure information for all domestic and international airlines operating from every airport in Australia. Data on aircraft movements is constantly updated.

"This service is very important because it demonstrates once again that here are Australian companies looking at ways to improve the service that we provide to visitors to our country," Mr Lee said at the launch.



AAP Chief Executive Lee Casey and Federal Tourism Minister Michael Lee at the TravelNet launch.

"One of the best things about TravelNet is that it's providing information about our aviation industry, an industry that's undergone tremendous change since deregulation. There has been a 30 per cent increase in the number of aviation travellers since deregulation.

"The beauty of TravelNet is that it can provide an improved service to travellers."

Guests at the TravelNet launch were welcomed by Lee Casey, Chief Executive of AAP Information Services, and David Jensen, General Manager, Corporate and Media Services, who demonstrated the TravelNet service.

AAP worked in close cooperation with Qantas, Australian Airlines and Ansett to develop TravelNet. The service is ideal for the hotel, hire car, taxi and freight industries, but can be applied in any sector where access to accurate airline movements is an important part of business.

NATIONAL FLIGHT DEPARTURES - SYDNEY					
FLIGHT NO.	DESTINATION	SCHEDULE	ETD	STATUS	
TN 886	COFFS HARBOUR	21-MAY 1525	1520	DEPARTED	
TN 740	NEWCASTLE-W town.	21-MAY 1535	1538	DEPARTED	
TN 7	COOLANGATTA	21-MAY 1540	1538	DEPARTED	
TN 754	TAMWORTH	21-MAY 1555	1558	DEPARTED	
TN 465	MELBOURNE	21-MAY 1600	1607	DEPARTED	
TN 425	CANBERRA	21-MAY 1605	1615	DEPARTED	
TN 432	BRISBANE/CAIRNS	21-MAY 1610	1610	DEPARTED	
TN 44	ADELAIDE/PERTH	21-MAY 1620	1623	DEPARTED	
TN 491	MELBOURNE/HOBART	21-MAY 1630	1630	DEPARTED	
TN 709	CANBERRA	21-MAY 1645	1645		
AN 85	ADELAIDE/PERTH	21-MAY 1650	1650	FINAL CALL	
AN 647	CANBERRA	21-MAY 1655	1655	FINAL CALL	
AN 37	MELBOURNE/HOBART	21-MAY 1700	1700	BOARDING	
TN 403	MELBOURNE	21-MAY 1700	1700		
EW 916	COOLANGATTA	21-MAY 1705	1735		
AN 6645	NEWCASTLE-Belmont	21-MAY 1705	1705		
TN 466	BRISBANE	21-MAY 1710	1710		
AN 134	BRISBANE	21-MAY 1720	1720		

TravelNet shows the status of all commercial passenger flights in Australia in real time.

TravelNet can already be found at several sites around the country. Among the first companies to sign on are Burswood Resort Casino Hotel in Perth, the Sheraton Sydney Airport and Sydney Airport Parkroyal hotels, Taxis Australia (a booking service provided by Taxis Combined), the Hyatt Regency in Perth, Astra Hire Cars and Commonwealth Cars.

Welcomed By Hotels

TravelNet, like its stablemate service NewsTrack, is finding a niche in Australia's competitive hospitality industry, where it is being applied in a variety of ways to provide an extra service to guests.

Hotels are choosing to display TravelNet through the television in each guest's room, or through the concierge desk.

"The benefits to guests are far greater than champagne and fruit, which are passé. Both TravelNet and NewsTrack are tailored to the corporate visitor and help make their stay more comfortable," claims AAP Sales Executive Paul Marshall.

Paul, who has extensive experience in the hospitality industry, believes TravelNet will help give hotels an edge in today's competitive market.

"It is an inexpensive way of providing a sophisticated level of service, and goes beyond the expectations of the guest."

Burswood Resort, one of Australia's leading hotels, finds TravelNet an invaluable asset, according to Executive Assistant Manager Ken Johnson.

"It is an absolute gem for us and a great service to guests," Mr Johnson said.

"One of our big problems was always the delay in trying to get through to the airport when we wanted to check guests' flight details.

"TravelNet means guests no longer have to wait around for flights. We can tell them what is going on and they can spend more time in the casino next door."

TravelNet's flight information is generated from the airlines' central computer systems and is transmitted to subscribers from AAP's central database in Glebe. The service, which can be networked, is received on a PC running TravelNet software.



Robert Roberts, Head Concierge and Jennifer Perret, Guest Officer using TravelNet at The Burswood Resort Casino Hotel

AAP Group Annual Report Sees Good Growth in 1993

AAP Group turnover rose by 6.4 per cent to \$139.1 million overall in 1992 and year end trends indicated increasing growth in 1993, according to the company's annual report.

The operating profit of the parent company, AAP Information Services Pty Ltd, improved over 1991 from \$6.7 to \$7.1 million despite a four per cent decline in revenue to \$108 million.



The AAP stand at the recent ATUG conference

AAP Telecommunications Pty Ltd returned a loss of \$8.5 million in its first full year of operations.

But it entered 1993 with an annualised turnover of \$23 million and excellent prospects of further rapid growth.

AAPT is a joint venture with the MCI Communications Corporation of the United States and the Todd Corporation of New Zealand, which each hold a 24.5 per cent shareholding.

"The AAP Group firmly established itself in 1992 as a major participant in the newly deregulated telecommunications market by continuing rapid expansion of its communications interests," Chief Executive Lee Casey said in his annual report statement.

In its first full year as the nation's pioneer competitive service provider under new legislation, AAPT had rolled out a wide range of long distance telephone services under its trademark, "A better deal for business."

AAP Communications Services Pty Ltd, which specialises in satellite, microwave, voice messaging

and video conferencing technologies and installation and maintenance services, also showed good growth with revenue rising by 22 per cent to \$22.8 million.

Total Group revenue is projected to grow to \$170 million in the calendar year 1993 with revenue from the communications companies rising to \$60 million.

Revenue from the traditional media services clients remained substantially unchanged in 1992 at just under \$25 million while revenue from financial and other information services declined marginally to just under \$85 million.

Mr Casey said this decline in revenue had been arrested mid-year and year end saw a sustained upward trend.

Overall the Group returned a net after tax profit of \$186,740 for the year after taking the AAPT loss into account and writing off establishment costs of the venture.

"While economic conditions are likely to remain difficult in 1993,

the AAP Group is well placed to continue to expand its wide range of services in news, information and communications," Mr Casey said.

The Group will continue to develop its telecommunications interests in 1993, looking to possible expansion in China and the Southeast Asia region.

"New products in 1993 will include AAPT's Vantage Virtual Private Network services and AAP Fax, a sophisticated facsimile store and forward bureau to be operated by AAP Communications Facilities Pty Ltd.

"In the information services sector emphasis will be on meeting increased competition with new products in the AAP Reuters Economic Services range for both international and domestic services backed by the highest level of customer service, while continuing to improve news and information services to the media," Mr Casey said.

"The Company's range of electronic information products including NewsTrack and TravelNet and the MediaNet press release network all entered 1993 with good growth trends."

Bonyng Conducts Canberra Gala



Pictured backstage with conductor Richard Bonyng are Muriel Wilkinson, wife of the Chairman of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra, Graham Wilkinson, and Lindsie Jensen, wife of AAP General Manager, Media and Corporate Services, David Jensen.

The AAP Group sponsored the Opera Gala presented by the CSO and conducted by Bonyng in Canberra on June 29.

The program featured four stars of the Australian Opera - soprano Rosamund Illing, mezzo soprano Elizabeth Campbell, tenor Yu Jixing and baritone John Antoniou.

Canberra Manager Peter Monaghan invited 100 guests to attend the performance and to a light supper backstage to meet Bonyng and the opera singers.

Mr Wilkinson said he did not think he had ever seen a Canberra audience react with such enthusiasm to a performance. He added that without the AAP sponsorship, the concert would not have taken place.

Bonyng, one of the world's foremost opera conductors, said that his last concert in Canberra had been with his wife, Dame Joan Sutherland, in the 1970s. But he is now considering returning there for a similar gala event next year.

For the second in our series of interviews with members of the AAP Executive Committee, we spoke with General Manager Finance, Ian North.

IN Man Who Controls the Purse Strings Sees Great Opportunities Ahead for AAP Group

Ian North, the man at the centre of AAP's financial destiny as General Manager Finance, has seen vast changes in revenue flows, outlook and future prospects in the 10 years he has been with the company.

"The AAP Group has grown from a staff of around 400 when I joined in 1983 to more than 750 now and turnover has increased from \$17 million to an expected \$171 million this year," he said.

"I think we are in a marvellous position to take advantage of changes taking place in technology and communications.

"We are lucky to be part of a company like this right now. Everyone should get so much satisfaction out of their own and the company's achievements.

"There are companies in the US that have come from nowhere to positions of great prominence over the past 10 to 15 years. AAP has that opportunity."

Ian said that the changes which would take place in the next 12 to 18 months through Lotus Notes, Windows, Microsoft NT and company-wide networks would be astonishing.

"Information will be shared right across the company so that all staff can access it and use it for the benefit of the Group.

"Within the next four years companies will be finding that some of their staff will be working two days a week at home and three days at the office, and we will all be much better off for it.

"The home will be a seamless office," he said.

"Sales staff will soon be placing orders via their laptop computers from a customer's premises as they make a sale. Their base will be their computer rather than a city office desk and this will make them far more mobile and able to cover many more clients."

Ian sees AAP Telecommunications as one of the main strengths of the Group.

"Its projected revenue will be close to \$200 million by 1997 in a total market in excess of \$13 billion, and it will continue to grow."

He said the purchase by British Telecom of a 20

per cent stake in MCI, combining their clout with MCI's innovation to create super communications highways throughout the world, would also benefit AAP.

"If you are not part of the world scene in five years you are going to be struggling.

"We spent over \$40 million to get into the communications side of the business and positioned ourselves there to the point where MCI wanted to take up with us. We had something which drew them to us. We were operating our own communications networks before they came in, before deregulation.



Ian North in his Sussex Street office.

"They saw a company with the drive and innovation to match their own.

"It seems easy now looking back, but setting up the group and trying to see where the opportunities lay a few years hence was very difficult. The company can be very proud of its achievements."

Ian believes that AAP Communications Services could also grow to be a very large company — "it is positioned right in the middle of the growth areas including communications networks, PCs and LANs"— and that the outlook is also bright for AAP's electronic information products.

"More and more people will be working from home and will need access to electronic services and this will open up a new market for these products."

He admires the way Rupert Murdoch has continually positioned his business interests to take advantage of the way technologies will drive the future, describing him as "a visionary with a lot of guts.

"We believe that our involvement with Vodafone in the third cellular mobile telephone licence will also lead to significant growth for the AAP Group," Ian said.

AAP's other strengths, he believes, are its access to information and the connections it has right across corporate Australia, the government, media and communications industries.

"I had never realised what an entree the media gave people until I joined AAP," he said. "It has such tremendous contacts and many interests across so many people. And I think AAP does it very well to tell the truth."

Ian's great loves outside AAP are "the real game" - Aussie Rules - cricket, travel, the opera, music, ballet and reading. He is a renaissance man riding the surge of late 20th century technology.

"When I arrived there was only one computer in the finance area. I knew nothing about PCs, so I taught myself," he said. "We are most fortunate in that we have a very talented and dedicated team in what is now a sophisticated department.

"We have a total staff of 62 with people based in Pitt Street and at Glebe as well as in Sussex Street."

Ian also loves doing jobs around the house, including plumbing and painting, and says, "I'd do my own extensions if I could only find the time. The day, and life, is not long enough."

He is an avid traveller, possibly dating back to the childhood expeditions with his father from Ballarat to the MCG to watch their beloved Demons play.

"We'd leave Ballarat at 5.45 a.m. for the hour-and-three-quarter trip to Melbourne. We used to time it post office to post office," he said.

"There were no car heaters in those days and we used to stop halfway and sprint along the road for a few hundred metres to warm up. I've followed Melbourne since I was knee high to a grasshopper.

"For years the ball never got past their centre line.

Then they had their golden era and won the premiership four times in seven years.”

The Demons have not won a premiership since, but Ian recalls the thrill of their victories, especially over Collingwood.

He also recalls the thrill of seeing West Indian batsman Rohan Kanhai make 200 runs in the session between lunch and tea against Victoria at the MCG. “It was like poetry.”

His earliest solo journeys were by Volkswagen across the Nullarbor and back and up to Cairns in the 1960s.

The road across the Nullarbor was unsealed in those days, and was virtually made by the trucks which travelled it.

“Thick branches were placed to indicate the worst potholes, which could lose half a person,” he said. “For hours between Ceduna and Madura, I did not get out of first gear, or above 20 miles an hour.

“There was dust through the car, the boot, the engine. I emerged covered in it and looking like a ghost.”

The theme that recurs in conversation with Ian is how lucky he has been in life.

“I had a fortunate childhood,” he said of growing up in Ballarat, where he lived until he was 18.

“You were part of a family but you had your independence. You never needed a lift, you could go anywhere you wanted by bike. City children today don’t have that freedom.

“You were up at 5 a.m. to go fishing for trout or perch in Lake Wendouree. We built boats and went sailing. We played cricket and football until dark. By the time you came home you were exhausted. You did your homework and went to bed.”

One of his first school holiday jobs was in Thomas’ Store, “a fascinating place where they sold cutlery, china and clocks. I must have done very well because come Christmas the owner asked me if I would like to stay on for a few weeks. I agreed, but trade was rather slow and I became restless.

“One day I set the alarms on every clock in the store to go off at 20 minute intervals.

“The owner, a subtle man, said a couple of days later he said he thought they could manage without me and would I like to finish up at the end of the week. I was more than happy to get back to my friends and fishing and cricket.”

Ian lists two of his attributes as a sense of humour and a love of life.

“I wake up in the morning and I am always happy,” he said.



Ian and his wife Deborah sampling Louis XIII cognac at the Remy Martin tasting room during their honeymoon in France.

“Maybe it’s the genes, maybe my parent’s influence. We were always a happy family, myself mum and dad and my sister. There was never much money about, but always a lot of laughter and fun.

“That has stood me in good stead. Even when things get serious, I can still see the funny side. You must retain a sense of humour.”

Ian’s favourite travel destination is Europe, which he has toured extensively, especially France, where he returned for his honeymoon after marrying his wife Deborah in Melbourne in March last year.

He has also visited China, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Bali and the US, but still has the Greek Islands, Canada, South Africa, South America and Russia on his must see list, plus a cricket series in the West Indies.

“I will have to live to 110 to fit in all the things I want to do,” he says.

“My aim is to spend six months here and six months abroad. Not touring and staying in hotels, but to rent a place and learn the language and culture.

“Travel is not just the places but the people. You have to take time to discover them.”

Ian studied and passed his accountancy degree while working in Melbourne with Comalco.

He then joined the British-based Thorn company as Financial Controller of its electronics and lighting divisions which employed a total of 2,000 people.

For a year, he shuttled back and forth between Melbourne and Sydney, dividing the week between the two cities, and helped to turn around losses of \$2 million to a profit of \$3 million in 18 months. “We worked our guts out,” he said.

He then spent two years with Acquilla Steel as Company Secretary and Treasurer before joining AAP.

Ian studied Japanese at Macquarie University and made frequent business trips to Japan in the 1970s when he was with Thorn.

“What really struck me on my first visit was the totally different culture and way of doing business,” he said.

“On the first day all we did was engage in polite conversation and drink many cups of tea and I kept wondering when we would get down to business.

“The next day we were ushered into a boardroom which had a table at least 10 metres long. There were just the two of us seated at one end with a small Australian flag and about 20 Japanese opposite with their flag. Throughout the day there were other people coming and going and there could have been up to 50 in total.

“Some of them would drop off to sleep but there were always three or four taking notes.

“Foreign visitors to Japan then were still something of a rarity.”

Ian is an enthusiastic member of the Balgowlah Rotary Club.

“It builds up your community awareness and it provides a complete departure from the workplace,” he said. “You meet some tremendous Australians. They really are people who put service above self.

“We help the young who are on drugs, children suffering with cancer, the elderly who need help at home. Rotary sponsors an annual summer science school for children gifted in that area and the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) help develop leadership qualities in our youth.

“Last year our club alone raised \$30,000. Rotary worldwide raised \$350 million for polio. The plan is to eliminate it by the year 2002. That has already been achieved in the Americas, where, for the first time last year, not a single new case was reported.”

The role of Ian and his department is to look after the financial affairs of the AAP Group as a whole and to plan its financial strategies for the short and long term, taking into account business, market and general economic trends.

“One of the ways AAP is going to develop is by opening up to new people and new thoughts,” he said, “and that is happening. The attitudes and outlook now are very different to a decade ago.

“The Group has wonderful opportunities ahead of it and it is up to all of us to grasp them and make the best of them. No one else will do it for us. We must work together as a team to capitalise on those opportunities.”

Rachel Aims For Miss Australia

Rachel Henderson of AAP's Canberra office has entered the Miss Australia Award, which raises money for spastic centres around the country.

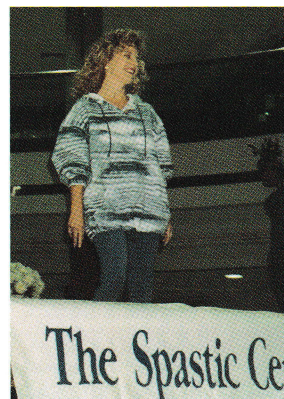
Rachel says the chance to contribute to a good cause and take advantage of the self-improvement courses available to entrants motivated her to sign up.

"I'm getting great pleasure out of it. I needed to gain a bit more self confidence and improve myself and I wanted to do something for other people."

Rachel has been raising money since April, through fashion parades, luncheons and raffles. She also received a \$500 contribution from AAP.

Entrants in the Award (no longer a 'quest' to emphasise it is not a beauty quest) are judged on presentation, general knowledge, public speaking and their understanding of cerebral palsy and the work of the spastic centres.

Miss ACT, Miss ACT Fundraiser and Miss ACT Achiever (assuming no men win, of course) will be chosen later this year. They will go on to the national finals, to be held in January.



Rachel Henderson

GuestDial Improves Pan Pacific's Bottom Line

GuestDial, a new Service from AAP Telecommunications, is helping to cut costs significantly for one Gold Coast hotel.

Since its introduction to the 298 room Pan Pacific Hotel last year, GuestDial has led to savings of around \$20,000, according to the hotel's Financial Controller Gary Wilkins.

"The Pan Pacific Hotel Gold Coast is a 24 hour a day operation, and like any hotel or resort is continually looking for ways of slicing operating costs without sacrificing the quality and level of service we provide for our guests," Mr Wilkins said.

"GuestDial meets our specific requirements very precisely. Its impact on our bottom line has been significant."

GuestDial operates by directing long distance calls made by hotel staff and guests to the AAPT network. From there, they are delivered to their

dialled destination at a substantially reduced rate.

The Pan Pacific's telephone switch is programmed to route the calls to AAPT automatically, ensuring staff and guests are not inconvenienced by any additional dialling.

The service has been specifically designed by AAPT for the unique demands of the hotel industry. It provides immediate savings on national and international calls without the need for costly new or upgraded equipment. Recent pricing changes to the service are expected to further broaden its appeal.

"GuestDial now accommodates standard, peak, off-peak and economy rates and provides volume discounts on national and international calls," Kevin Erwin of AAPT Corporate Development explained.

"It also provides dynamic meter pulsing, which is essential for the hospitality industry because it facilitates real time billing."

Kevin estimates GuestDial can save hotel chains up to 40 per cent on STD costs and up to 10 per cent on international calls.

"The development of GuestDial is an example of AAPT's response-orientated philosophy and commitment to the specific needs of specialised markets," Kevin said.

The Pan Pacific Hotel is also benefiting from AAPT's unique billing and reporting system, InSight, which provides such details as top ten dialled destinations and daily and hourly traffic profiles.

AAPT Expands National Sales Team

AAPT Telecommunications has expanded its national sales team with the appointment of four regional branch managers to ensure the company's continued growth in the General Business area.

The new appointees include Miriam Sutherland, formerly a senior account manager with AAPT in Melbourne, who will spearhead the Perth operation, and John Horgan, who has moved from AAPT's Sydney head office to lead the Brisbane team.



Pictured are (L-R) John Horgan, Keith Sutton, John Stuckey and Grant Riddell.

Two new recruits, Grant Riddell and Keith Sutton, will manage AAPT's business centres in Melbourne and Adelaide respectively. Both Grant and Keith bring a wealth of experience and knowledge in the field of high volumes sales management to their new positions.

According to AAPT's National Sales Manager - General Business, John Stuckey, the four will help expand the company's First Choice and Vista telecommunications services throughout the country.



The Pan Pacific Hotel's Financial Controller, Gary Wilkins, pictured (right) with AAPT's Corporate Development Manager, Kevin Erwin.

Corporate Fun and Games

Nearly 1200 competitors from 62 teams took part in the 1993 Australian Corporate Games held in May.

The teams competed in 10 sports — basketball, dragon boat racing, netball, rugby league sevens, road running, soccer, touch football, tennis, triathlon and volleyball — at a number of locations around the city.

AAP fielded a team of 32 and was awarded four medals over the eight days of competition. The games were won by Macquarie Bank, whose 51 strong team won 13 medals. AAP was placed 10th overall.

Three of AAP's medals were won in tennis, where Bruce Montgomerie of Racing Services and Chief Executive Lee Casey came second and third respectively in the men's singles 40+ category. Lee Casey also teamed up with Craig McIvor, Manager of AAP Reuters Economic Services, to win bronze in the open doubles.



Brenden Harvey competing in the triathlon.

AAP's other medal was won by the men's soccer team, captained by Ramsin Shamon, which came second. Honourable mentions must also go to Pietro Fu, Derek Hazell and Rick Webster in the tennis, the mixed touch football team, captained by Jerianne Verhille, and Brad Weier and Brenden Harvey in the triathlon. Brad finished a creditable 6th in his category, with Brenden coming in 21st.

Brenden's effort is particularly noteworthy, considering that two years ago he could barely walk up a flight of stairs, due to his severe asthma. Under Brad's supervision, Brenden began weight training to build up his chest, and step by step has worked his way up to running 80 km each week. Like Brad, Brenden is now a dedicated triathlon competitor.

Next year's games, to be held from February 26 to March 6, will include additional sports. Golf, squash, softball and table tennis are all being considered. Already preparing is AAP's women's soccer team, who were narrowly defeated by this year's winners, Optus Communications, in a social match.



AAP's second place-getting soccer team. Back (L-R): Grant Liptrot, Jeff Rollason, Manny Kokkonis, Greg Dimitropoulos, Andrew Meagher, Scott Frain, Owen Keogh, and Dave Camm. Front: (L-R): Brad Weier, Fedele Galuzzo, Ramsin Shamon (Capt.), Angelo Tilocco, and Bekir Kilic.

Yachties Race the Perth Regatta

Ten 36ft yachts competed in the AAP Reuters Corporate Cup Yachting Regatta held in Perth on May 9.

The event, decided over three short races on the Swan River, was organised by the Western Australian Yachting Foundation and the South of Perth Yacht Club.

Last year's runner up, Michael 'Nipper' Manfred, Managing Director of Paterson Ord Minnett, skippered the winning team. He is pictured being presented with the winner's trophy by John Lowing, General Manager, Financial Markets Services.



Gearing Up for 1994 Great Bike Ride

Dennis Riepon became a widely recognised figure in cycling circles when he was featured on the cover of this month's issue of Australian Cyclist magazine.

Dennis, of Technical Development at Glebe, was pictured in full AAP livery taking part in the RTA Big New South Wales Bike Ride from Port Macquarie to Darling Harbour, which raised some \$200,000 for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

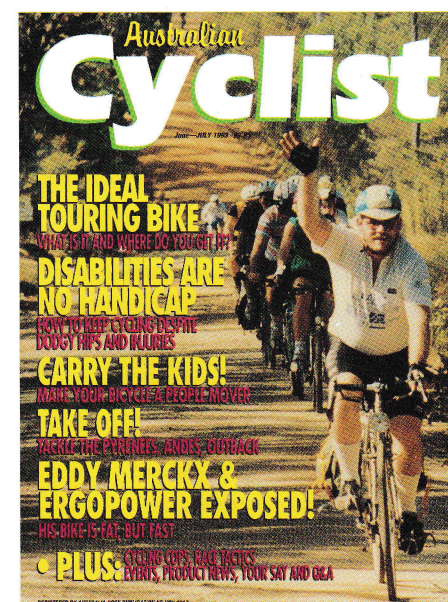
The ride is on again in 1994 and Dennis will again be leading the AAP-sponsored team.

The dates of March 5 to 13 have already been set. Riders are encouraged to express interest early, as numbers will be limited and entries taken on a first in, first served basis.

"The ride is designed for everyone, from kids to the elderly," said Dennis, who stressed that novices shouldn't be daunted by the distances of up to 70 kilometres covered per day. "It's a lot of fun."

If you're interested in lining up for the 1994 ride, or would like more information on the event, contact Dennis on extension 1947.

AAP's other riders in this year's event — Max Gerlach, Dave Morrissey and Martin Finnis — feature in a video of the event made by the organisers.



Queen of the Broken Ones

*As a child she collected
only the broken dolls.
She lined them up along the shelf
pointed out the cracks
in their porcelain faces,
their lack of hair and lolling eyes
the torn rag stomachs
spilling straw stuffing.*

*She sat among them
Queen of the Broken Ones
comfortable in the knowledge
that compared to them
she was whole.*

*Now she has a circle of friends
who sit broken
all around her kitchen table.*

*She hums a little self-satisfied song
points at their pain
sips tea
nibbles on their tragedies.*

Leone Marten
1986.

In Mildred's House

*I have come to this place a stranger
on a sojourn from the west
listening for a healing message
from the sea*

*I haunt the silver beaches
stumbling burdened across the sand
genueflecting crabwise
for driftwood*

*The smoke from my fire mingles
with salt mist and ocean's tongue
among the quiet winter houses
while I dream the waves are sealords
roaring deadly orders at the wind*

*Seabirds helicopter overhead
in search of drowning sailors —
surfers ride in rubber bodies
all aboard the rocking water*

*In the house
Mildred and I collide
like poltergeist*

*Her seawild ginger tomcat steals
swiftly smooth and thieflike
through the peeling green back door
to curl up in my lap and offer
his gentle purring cure*

*The driftwood burns
like velvet*

Leone Marten
1988
(Winner of the Ann Danckwerts Poetry
Prize, 1989)

**AAPT Brings
OneGovernment
To Canberra**

Commonwealth Government departments and agencies can now make substantial savings on the cost of long distance calls by accessing AAPT Telecommunications' OneGovernment service.

An agreement signed between AAPT and the Department of Finance on May 12 gives Federal government departments and agencies greater flexibility when making long distance calls.



Steve Sedgwick, Secretary of the Federal Department of Finance, and Barry Wheeler, Chief Executive of AAPT, sign the OneGovernment agreement.

OneGovernment was specifically developed for the Commonwealth by AAPT. The system recognises the various departments and agencies as one corporate customer, thereby enabling them to achieve greater savings and efficiencies than would be available to them as separate customers.

OneGovernment is expected to save Federal departments up to 20 per cent annually on the cost of long distance calls.

Mr Barry Wheeler, Chief Executive of AAPT, said the agreement cemented the relationship with the Federal government which began in 1991, when AAPT first provided an alternate long distance service.

"We look forward to bringing the benefits of deregulation to a greater number of Federal Government agencies," Mr Wheeler said.

In addition to cutting expenditure, OneGovernment will also provide the Commonwealth with AAPT's unique billing and reporting system, InSight, which contains features such as statistical and graphical analysis of system usage and costs.

The Secret Life of Leone Marten

Journalist Leone Marten began writing poetry when she was a 12 year old growing up in Orange, but it's a talent she rarely talks about.

"People look at me strangely when I tell them. I think in Australia you're better accepted if you tell people you play football rather than write poetry."

Although Leone is reluctant to call herself a poet ("that's something your peers have to decide"), she has had recognition for her work on the few occasions she has been persuaded to submit it publicly.

'Imitations', written in 1976, won the 1979 Charles Thatcher Award, while 'In Mildred's House' won the Ann Danckwerts Poetry Prize in 1989.

Leone describes her work as personal and painful, and says she's her own harshest critic. "I think poetry has to be personal because if it's not the truth then it's not poetry." But it's that truth which makes it so difficult to publish. "Because my

poems are so personal it's like baring your soul."

Despite her busy schedule, Leone is constantly writing poems. "It's hard not to do it. Lines come

thundering into my head in the middle of the night and I have to get up and write them down. They never come back unless you grab them.

"Journalism is totally different — you have to use another part of your brain."

According to Leone the biggest problems facing Australian poets are lack of recognition and funding, making it virtually impossible to make any kind of living from the craft.



The Trotter: Uncle Ned, Not Johnny Rotten

Former AAP journalist Howard 'Trotter' Northey died on May 22 from complications following a heart transplant. He was 42. Howard first joined AAP in November 1976 after working as a casual contributor phoning in the trots results from Sydney tracks. He went on to become one of the company's best travelled and best-loved correspondents. Melbourne Deputy Bureau Chief Mike Hedge, who got his start in much the same way, wrote this appreciation.

To be truly engaged in conversation with the Trotter you had to be up to speed on horseracing, cricket, rugby league and rock 'n' roll. It also helped to be educated in rhyming slang and to have a Bill Collins like appreciation of a cool'n.

Or you could be stoned.

Howard Northey, the Trotter, was a different sort of bloke. He was a relentless gambler whose strategy relied on running out of races before running out of money. He was generally broke and mostly happy.

One of his many friends wrote recently that Howard spent considerable time and money in search of his own Nirvana; an observation that will mean more to some than to others.

There were a lot of times when too many Abduls or too much Hilton –or both– left him with a Frankie that wouldn't Bondi.

And many of us, at one time or another, were victims of his urgent requests for some spare Gene for immediate despatch to the Angora.

Howard could carry on a private conversation in a crowded pub just as easily as ordering a Vera and Phil.

While his adeptness with rhyming slang was generally entertaining, there were occasions, like the one involving the Bureau Chief and the rugby player, when it caused a certain consternation. During his stint in AAP's London bureau, Howard led rugby great Mark Ella to believe this was indeed a laid back operation when he introduced his boss Jane Eyre as "the Pitch". Ella, like the staff of many London pubs, mistook the P for a B and Jane admits she sometimes did her bit to maintain the confusion.

Howard could also be fairly erudite in his analysis.

At the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane in 1982, the quicksilver Northey mind summed up the debacle of the men's 4x100m relay in which

Australia, the winners, and Canada, the runners-up, were both disqualified and the gold medal awarded to a British team which had finished half a lap behind.

Observing that Prince Philip had just arrived at the pool, Howard turned to colleague John Coomber with the comment: "Jesus Coomber, they've stacked on a boat race for the Duke."

The same venue also provided an example of the priority Howard gave to the punt.

With a capacity crowd at the Chandler pool urging an Australian swimmer to a gold medal, Howard was doing his best to get a message down the phone line to a TAB operator: "Race six, Harold Park trots, 50 units to win, number three." Lifting his head in time to see a pool full of exhausted swimmers draped over their lane ropes, Northey uttered an immortal: "What happened?"

Howard's career with AAP was chequered. It took him from Harold Park in Sydney to Sabina Park in Jamaica; to the Los Angeles Olympics and on tour with the Wallabies in Argentina.

In Australia he had a couple of stints on the Sydney sports desk, one of which ended abruptly after a weekend trip to the country property of a Sydney horse trainer. Howard didn't show up at work on the Monday or Tuesday and by Wednesday he figured he may as well not come back at all.

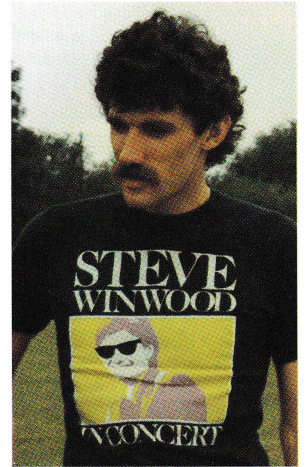
But after a short stint running bets for an SP bookie in Kings Cross, he was forgiven and returned to AAP where he resumed as if nothing had happened.

Soon after (in 1983), Howard was posted to London where he became a character of renown in a city full of oddballs. From the UK he covered the Wallaby Grand Slam tour of 1984, an Ashes cricket tour, an Australian tour of the West Indies, the Los Angeles Olympic Games, Wimbledon, the British Open golf and sundry race meetings.

The Trotter never married and never held a driver's licence. He was less cautious in just about everything else he did. Not even the ultra-conservatism of Thatcher's England had a noticeable effect on Howard. The second thing he said to me when our 20-year-old friendship was renewed there in 1986 was: "Come on Hedge, you must have *some* cash."

After returning to Australia, Howard's Nirvana searching intensified. He chose the path that led to his departure from AAP in January 1989, a few months after a celebrated incident on a sports desk overnight shift during the Seoul Olympics.

Howard either failed to see, or failed to grasp the importance of, a story which was destined to be the Olympic scoop of the century. It was an AFP report that 100m gold medallist Ben Johnson had tested positive



Howard Northey

to anabolic steroids. For whatever reason, Howard hit the "spike" button and the first break of the story never saw the light of day. It gained Howard international notoriety. This was perhaps best illustrated by the tale of a colleague who was at a party with a group of Indian cricket writers three years later. At the first mention of the initials AAP one of the Indians brightened and asked: "AAP! You must be knowing the man who spiked the Ben Johnson story, isn't it?"

It was about the same time as Howard was found to have cardiomyopathy. He had a heart transplant, only to suffer a series of complications.

Friends from many sports, among them Test cricketers Mike Whitney and Greg Matthews and rugby union internationals Nick Farr-Jones and Peter FitzSimons, were at his funeral. So were about 30 of his colleagues from AAP.

There will be plenty who'll miss the entertainment, the friendship and the good humour of the bloke who unfortunately will be known too readily as the one who got the Tijuana.

There are a lot of us at AAP who knew him better than that.

Howard always took it for granted that everyone knew what he was talking about, but for those who didn't, a short glossary:

Cool'n — Cool'n Groovy — movie

Abdul — Abdul Qadir — beer

Hilton — Hilton Cope (a jockey) — dope

Frankie won't Bondi — Frankie Lane won't Bondi Junction — brain won't function

Gene — Gene Tunney — money

Angora — Angora goat — Tote

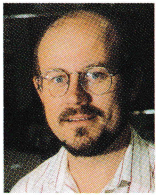
Vera and Phil — Vera Lynn and Philharmonic — gin and tonic

Pitch — Pitch and Toss — boss

Boat race — a fixed horse race

Tijuana — Tijuana Brass — the sack

From AAP to the Engine Room of Government



AAP's Canberra bureau has lost two of its most experienced journalists since the federal election.

Mark Lever

Kate Hannon and Mark Lever are now press secretaries helping to feed – and fend off – the chooks, Kate for Industrial Relations Minister Laurie Brereton and Mark for Attorney General Michael Lavarch.

Both say the pace of life has dramatically increased since they began their new jobs.

"I started here on May 10 and finished at AAP the Friday before, so I felt a bit schizophrenic the first two weeks," admits Kate.

"It was a fast learning curve, especially as Parliament was sitting, to find out what the Minister wants and what he needs to be briefed on for Question Time, and working out every possible angle that he might be questioned on for news items."

Three weeks into his job, Mark barely has time to catch his breath. "It's been a bit manic, I'm still adjusting to the pace. There's a lot of travelling and you need to be on top of 10 to 15 things at once. You have to be very organised, and I'm not – yet.

"People may find this surprising, but being a journalist you really have a lot more time to think about things. The pace of this job is much more frantic, different issues are coming up all the time."

Mark joined AAP in 1978 after a cadetship on Brisbane's Courier Mail. He left to join the Australian Federal Police in 1981 ("keeping them out of trouble"), but rejoined the Brisbane bureau in 1983. He has since worked in the Sydney, London and Canberra bureaus, and in 1986 became the first Bureau Chief in Perth.

"Those were interesting times, the days of the movers and shakers and the America's Cup. It was a fun time to be there," he recalls. "We went out on Bond's \$28 million yacht for a Christmas party and one of the engines blew up. There was an awful lot of Bollinger though so nobody minded very much."

Mark left Perth the day Rothwells collapsed, and was working as economics correspondent in

Canberra immediately before joining the Attorney General's staff. He says his varied background was an important factor in his appointment as Press Secretary.

"As the Attorney General is legal advisor to the government, we get to poke around in all the various departments and they needed someone with an all round feel. The last thing they needed was another lawyer."

Kate Hannon has relied on her experience in reporting industrial relations in her new job. Kate joined AAP's Adelaide bureau in 1984. She moved to Melbourne, where she covered the Supreme Court and Trades Hall rounds for three years, and joined the Canberra bureau in 1990.

"I've been covering industrial relations since 1987. I couldn't imagine trying to do the job without that background knowledge.

"A journalistic background is a big advantage, you know the press gallery, you're on first name terms with most of them and you're familiar with their work and what areas they're interested in."

Kate says small but subtle changes are beginning to emerge in her relationships with some former colleagues. "You find out how they work, who's sloppy at quotes and who isn't."

Both Kate and Mark are enthusiastic about their ministers' plans for their portfolios.

According to Mark, "Michael Lavarch has a bit of a reformist agenda, especially in family law, corporations law and the cost of justice, those types of issues, and that interests me."

"We have a big year ahead in IR. The government is introducing a new package, with changes to enterprise bargaining and sanctions against unions," Kate says.

Trading in her professional objectivity is the one area where Kate is having a problem.

"Being part of the political side of things is new. I'm still finding it difficult not to see things from both sides of the fence, but that will probably wear off!"

Both admit to enjoying the taste of power which comes with the territory as Press Secretary.

"One pleasant thing is that all the people I've spoken to at the department over the years who

were coy or wouldn't comment are now at my beck and call," laughs Kate.

"The clout of the Minister's office is something to be believed," observes Mark.

"You ask for a piece of paper and you get it."



Kate Hannon

Staff Suggestions Award

Pitt Street based field technician Steve Goozee has won the first Customer Services suggestions program award, with an idea that is already being implemented.

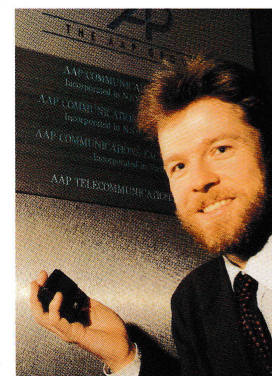
Steve suggested the introduction of alphanumeric paging, to give technicians more detail on customer problems.

Jeff Rollason, Customer Services Manager, who presented Steve with his prize of an AAP spray jacket and sports bag, moved quickly to implement Steve's suggestion.

"We've addressed the whole paging system. The new alphanumeric system enables us to provide more detailed paging information to all technicians," he said.

Steve, who gives equal credit to his workmates for his half-dozen entries to the suggestions program, says the new paging system is a vast improvement. "Before, using the numeric system, we just had a number on the pager, and we never knew who we were ringing.

"The alphanumeric system has meant better communication, both internally and for our customers."



Technician Steve Goozee with an alphanumeric pager.

Melbourne's Wedded Blitz

Whoever said 'marriage is out of date' is wrong — at least as far as AAP Melbourne is concerned.

Since the beginning of this year, the office has had four weddings, three more are due later in the year and another two are to be held in 1994 — more than in the past 10 years.

The first for the year was Racing Editor Mark Ryan, who married Fiona in January, the second time around for Mark and the first for Fiona.

Easter was a popular time for weddings, AAP Communications Services administrator Chris Millington went home to New Zealand to be married on Easter Monday to Charles Catanese. Chris and Charles then toured New Zealand for their honeymoon.

The weekend after Easter both sports journalist Darren Bardsley and AAP Telecommunications engineer Jeff Harris got married on the same day. Darren married Sharon and Jeff married Robyn. Darren and Sharon went to the Cook Islands for their honeymoon and Jeff and Robyn to Plantation Island in Fiji.

In September, AAP Reuters Economic Services Sales Executive Lisa Marsh plans to marry Jason Hutchinson, brother of AAP RES Sales Executive Craig Hutchinson. Lisa is wearing an antique ruby and diamond engagement ring that is the envy of the female staff.

In October, new AAPT secretary Corinne Archondakis plans to marry Alex Bardini. Corinne and Alex are currently renovating an old house in Dandenong and will move into their new home when it is completed.

In December, Rochelle Berryman, secretary to the Manager, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, Robin Strathdee, and Emi Borrelli, who heads AAPCS Integrated Cabling Systems, will tie the knot. Rochelle is now wearing a magnificent three diamond ring.

Another wedding is due in the autumn of 1994 when AAPT engineer Mark Rule marries Keryn, to whom he has just become engaged. They are having a difficult time organising their wedding as Mark lives in Melbourne and Keryn lives in Sydney — not to mention the travel expenses.

And to top all that off, on June 16 AAP cricket correspondent Patrick Keane rang from England to say that he had just "popped the question and she said yes." Patrick and Vanessa plan to marry in Adelaide after the South African cricket tour next year. Vanessa is now wearing a sapphire surrounded by six diamonds.



Rochelle Berryman & Emi Borrelli



Charles Catanese & Chris Millington



Darren & Sharon Bardsley



Patrick Keane & Vanessa



Corinne Archondakis & Alex Bardini



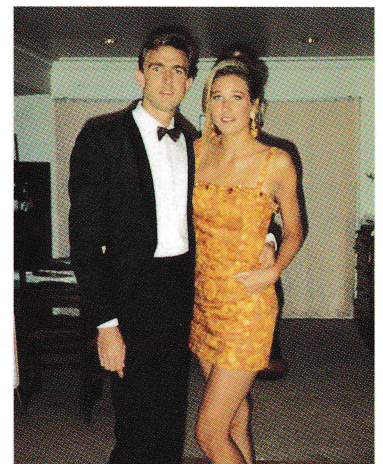
Robyn & Jeff Harris



Mark Rule & Keryn



Mark & Fiona Ryan



Jason Hutchinson & Lisa Marsh

Wisbeys' Winning Ways

The golfing Wisbeys have been cleaning up at the AAP Social Golf Club's monthly events, winning the last three tournaments between them.

Daniel Wisbey, the son of Peter Wisbey, Technical Administration Executive with Reuters in Barrack Street, won at Long Reef on May 9 with 41 stableford points.

Daniel also won at The Coast on April 4 with 36 points.

The two victories and some good earlier form has seen his handicap reduced from 21 eight months ago to 14.

So father Peter took over at Tuggerah Lakes on June 26, winning the competition with 37 points.

David Eskell was second at Long Reef with 36 points, while Margaret Woods was a close second at The Coast with 35 points. Eddie Williams was runner-up at Tuggerah Lakes with 36 points.

Ian Evans took out the Wakehurst event in March with 43 points from Pietro Fu on 40, while Gary Smith won at Windsor in February with 40 points from Andrew Doherty on 39. Neil Harvey took out the January event at Strathfield with 42 points.

All AAP staffers, spouses and friends are welcome to participate in the social golf days. Prizes are divided for low (0-24) and high handicaps (25+).

The remaining golf dates for 1993 are: July 11 - Fairfield, 9.24am; August 8 - Leonay, 8.30am; September 5 - Cumberland, 7.30am; October 3 - Glenmore, 8.30am; November 11 - Mona Vale, 7.12am (AAP Championships); and December 4 - North Ryde, 8.30am.

AAP Racing Formguides Set the Pace for 15 Years

The first newspaper formguide supplied by AAP was published 15 years ago - in *The Australian* on Saturday, June 24, 1978.

And there is evidence to suggest that it may now be the most widely read material in Australia.

"A minimum of 12 per cent of the population use the TABs each week, according to their statistics," said Director of Racing Services Geoff Want. "Assuming that most of them read a formguide, the AAP product would be read somewhere by at least two million people.

"In Melbourne Cup week you could probably quadruple that number."

The Australian formguide was the newspaper's first use of cold metal type and forerunner of the way thoroughbred horse racing guides for virtually all newspapers around the country are now produced.

The formguide was provided in typeset format in an electronic transmission from AAP's Racing Services computer database then located at Sussex Street but now moved to Glebe.

Computer-set formguides appeared in a number of other News Ltd papers including *The Sportsman*, *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Telegraph* soon afterwards, and later in virtually all metropolitan daily newspapers and specialist racing guides.

The AAP database now contains the complete career records of the nearly 320,000 horses which have raced in Australia and New Zealand since



Pictured are Adam Conrad, Manager, Information Services at News Ltd and News Ltd's Racing Services Manager, Barry Parkes, who were responsible for publishing the first AAP-supplied formguide in The Australian.

1982 - a total of more than three million form items.

The four years of race meetings held between 1978 and 1982 are stored separately on tape files.

The central database covers more than 50,000 race meetings and some 330,000 races, and is being added to at the rate of about 70 race meetings a week.

As well as newspapers, the system supplies race results and form to a large number of private subscribers including trainers, jockeys, breeders, bookmakers and punters.

Operations staff are on duty 24 hours a day Monday to Friday and on Saturday and Sunday evenings to provide the service.

Data entry and control staff are on duty from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week processing results and nominations and acceptance details.

Production Manager John Moir said detailed pre-race form was provided on 35-40 TAB race meetings around Australia each week. Results were gathered on all those meetings plus the country meetings not covered by the TABs, and all New Zealand meetings.

Mr Want said the AAP formguide occupies a unique position in Australia.

"It replaced the cumbersome card index system of form records that were kept by each paper and we do not know of a similar product anywhere else in the world.

"It's also greatly lessened the risk of inaccuracies, with every newspaper now receiving a formguide based on the official race club results.

"Every Thursday, when acceptances are declared for the weekend meetings, AAP sends out more than 200 separate field and form transmissions to meet the publication deadlines of newspapers around the country."

No Fools at April 1 Golf Day

Brisbane's bankers and brokers turned out in force on April Fool's Day for the first AAP Financial Markets Charity Golf Tournament in Queensland.

Held at St Lucia Golf Links, a public course owned and maintained by the Brisbane City Council, the tournament saw 116 golfing enthusiasts tee off to raise funds for charity.

The day was organised by the recently formed Brisbane Committee of the Financial Markets Foundation for Children. AAP Reuters Economic Services Brisbane Sales Manager Clark Chappel, Treasurer of the Committee, said that \$7030 was raised for the foundation on the day.

"I believe Brisbane children's charities have previously benefited from the National

Foundation, but until now Brisbane had never made a significant contribution," Clark said.

"It was a tremendous effort on the part of the Brisbane market."



Brisbane's financial market turned out in force to support the inaugural AAP Financial Markets Charity Golf Tournament