

AAPT ELEPHANT TO RIDE ON CITY BUSES

AAPT Telecommunications is taking its advertising message to the streets – literally.

The familiar large black and white image of the trusty elephant's rear end, with the theme "turn your back on the big boys" will soon be appearing on the backs of buses in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth.

In Adelaide, the campaign will be concentrated on five strategically located outdoor billboards in and around the central city area.

National Marketing Manager Allan Palmer said research had shown that 80 per cent of AAPT's customer base either drove to work or caught a bus, while their reading habits were sufficiently diverse to make a successful advertising campaign in the print media almost impossible.

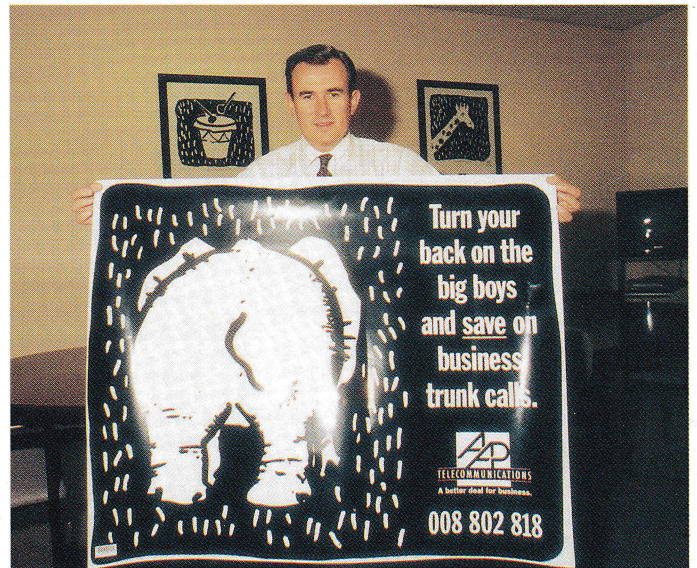
"We are therefore trying something a little different, which we believe will be a more effective means of raising the company's profile in areas strategic to AAPT's telemarketing and sales objectives."

The elephant will also appear on strip ads inside the buses.

The jungle animal theme has been remarkably effective in establishing the AAPT image with research showing wide recognition and identification of the company with the campaign. It began with prime time television commercials and has continued with a series of page-length, single column ads in the Financial Review and in magazines like BRW and airline in-flight publications.

Others animals used have been the giraffe, rhinoceros, eagle, rooster, and, for "the word in the jungle is competition" theme, a set of jungle drums. The logos are strictly black and white and AAPT has also recently changed its letterhead and business cards from blue to the same stark colours.

AAPT has a marketing budget of just under a million dollars a year, and Mr Palmer said,



AAPT National Marketing Manager Allan Palmer with the advertisement that will so appear on buses all over Australia.

"Regular surveys are conducted to discover where our advertising is most effective."

The company has also opened new offices in Perth and Brisbane and put together a comprehensive Services Guide to enable potential customers and their consultants to compare AAPT services favourably with similar offerings from its competitors.

ASIA-PACIFIC MEDIA FORUM PLANNED

A major conference of Asian, Australian and Pacific media executives will be hosted in Sydney next year by the AAP Group.

General Manager, Corporate and Media Services, David Jensen, said the two-day conference, to be held at the Park Lane Hotel in November, 1994, would be the first in a new series to be held every two years.

"It will reinforce AAP's commitment to the media in Australia and confirm that we take our role and responsibilities as the independent national news

agency very seriously," he said.

"We will provide the forum to bring together the growing media interests in Asia and the Pacific, the most exciting area of the world today.

"The conference will discuss the outlook, the opportunities, the responsibilities and the dangers and drawbacks brought about by the new media technology and the communications explosion in the region.

"It will cover not just the print media but electronic publishing, radio, television and Pay TV."

Mr Jensen said that speakers at the conference would include several prominent international media personalities and senior political figures from Asia, Australia and the Pacific.

There would be a strong media representation from the region with invitations to be issued to all of the main Asian national news agencies and newspaper organisations.

The conference will be an extension of the Australian Editorial Conferences organised by AAP during the 1980s. The first, held in 1985, was to mark the company's 50th anniversary.

No Ribbon at Opening of New AAPCS Building in Glebe

AAP Group Chief Executive Lee Casey officially opened the new AAP Communications Services building in Junction Street Glebe on July 15 – but declined the traditional ribbon cutting ceremony.

Mr Casey said he had vowed never to cut another ribbon after his experience at the official signing of agreements between AAP and Xinhua News Agency in Beijing a few days earlier.

“At a function organised by the Australian Embassy, Xinhua Deputy Editor in Chief, Zhang Jia, and I had to cut a ribbon in front of 300-400 guests,” Mr Casey said. “Standing on either side of us were the Australian Prime Minister and the Chinese Vice Premier.

“The velvet ribbon had to be cut simultaneously, otherwise it meant bad luck. I was having a lot of trouble with the small pair of gold scissors given to me for the task, but Mr Zhang slowed down to my pace and eventually we managed to cut through at the same time.

“Afterwards, Mr Keating leaned over to me and said, ‘You’ll never make it in the tailoring business!’ So I decided to never again cut another ribbon.”



Lee Casey and Terence Nickolls celebrate the opening of the new AAPCS building in Glebe.

The Junction Street building was formerly a hat factory and the head office for Campbells Foods. It was extensively refurbished over three months by AAPCS, who moved in over the weekend of April 17-18.

According to engineer Ernie Blamires, who was



Lee Casey and Zhang Jia of Xinhua cut the official ribbon marking the signing of agreements between the two agencies. They are watched by the Australian Prime Minister and Chinese Vice Premier.

project manager for the move from Ross Street, the transfer of personnel and equipment went very smoothly.

“The difficult part was extending the voice and data communications from Ross Street to be ready on Monday morning in Junction Street, with no break. It was a monumental job but I had marvellous support from a number of people who worked all weekend and it went very well.

“After a few days of settling in everyone was delighted with the new building. There’s more room, more light and new carpet and paint work. There’s very little of the old fashioned partitioning, so it’s airy and open. It’s a much nicer environment,” Ernie said.

At the official opening, which was attended by around 60 AAPCS staff and clients, Mr Casey praised the performance of AAPCS and its Chief Executive Terence Nickolls.



Pictured at the opening were (l-r): Greg Greeley, National Sales Manager, AAPCS, David Jensen, General Manager, Corporate and Media Services, Jeffrey Roll, General Manager Customer Field Services, AAPCS and Paul Peters, Senior Marketing Representative, AAPCS.

1994 Golf Day Art Union On Sale

The prizes are just as impressive as the title in The AAP Group Financial Markets Len Evans Annual Charity Golf Event Art Union 1994.

Valued at more than \$115,000, the prizes include jewellery, antiques, a South Pacific holiday and even an electric golf cart.

First prize is a Land Rover Discovery five door automatic wagon worth \$49,500 donated by Rover Australia Pty Ltd.

The award winning Discovery boasts an all-alloy V8i engine with electronic fuel injection capable of pulling 3500 kilos, and a strong steel box-section chassis which gives both on and off road stability.

Discovery has won a British design award and is the only vehicle to win Overlander magazine’s ‘4WD Of The Year’ award in consecutive years, winning in 1991 and 1992.

Second prize is an antique gold, silver and diamond bracelet from Percy Marks, valued at \$25,000.

Other prizes include a Victorian davenport, a natural gold nugget, sterling silver antiques, wool carpet, a 14 day South Pacific cruise on the Fairstar and a set of golf clubs.

Only 10,000 tickets will be sold at \$50 each, and all AAP staff, with the exception of the promoters, are eligible to enter and win.

Any staff who wish to purchase tickets or would like a book to sell to family and friends should contact Robin Williams on extension 8123.

Proceeds from the Golf Event, which has raised \$3.6 million since 1987, will go to 12 leading Australian charities.

The Art Union will be drawn on February 14 next year.



AAPT Plays Host to Prime Minister for Telecommunications Briefing

For a few hours recently, an otherwise nondescript conference room at AAP Telecommunications headquarters at 30 Ross Street, Sydney, was the focus of more power than probably anywhere else in Australia at that time.

Clustered around the conference table were Prime Minister Paul Keating, Communications Minister David Beddall and the respective heads of the News Ltd and Fairfax media empires, Ken Cowley and Stephen Mulholland.

Add to those luminaries, the various other members of the AAP Information Services (AAPIS) Pty Ltd Board of Directors and political deputies and advisers and the room was fairly bulging with political and corporate muscle.

This meeting of some of the most powerful figures in Australia was prompted by the Prime Minister's desire to get a first-hand briefing on the AAP Group and the progress of the deregulated telecommunications sector through the operations of AAPT.

The briefing, a 20-minute standup presentation by AAPT Chief Executive Barry Wheeler, also served to deliver for the first time a mid-term report to the AAPIS directors on their 51 per cent investment in AAPT.

The Prime Minister and Communications Minister

both stayed on for lunch to continue discussions on telecommunications and general issues with the directors and executives before returning to Canberra for what at that time were pre-Budget sessions.

The exchanges were frank and often forceful and ranged from the prospects for Sydney's Olympic bid to all of the key telecommunications issues.

"We thought we got a very good hearing. Mr Keating took it all in, and made some pertinent comments. Mr Beddall asked several questions," Barry said.

"We told them the local loop – from the handset to the exchange – was a national resource that should be open to everyone on an equal access basis. It should not be regarded as the property of Telecom.

"We also told them there was spectacular growth and development of the market below the national carrier market. It's a highly competitive field. Apart from Telecom and Optus, there are at least a dozen players jostling for market share with AAPT."



AAP Group Chief Executive Lee Casey introduces Prime Minister Paul Keating to AAP Board Members Michael Hoy, Greg Taylor and Warren Beeby.

All members of the AAP Board except Chairman Lyle Turnbull, who was overseas, attended the two-and-a-half hour session on July 23.

They included Michael Hoy, Greg Taylor, Warren Beeby and Keith McDonald. Mr Wheeler also presented AAPT's latest five year plan – Beyond the Australian Carrier Duopoly – to that company's Board of Directors in Washington in late July.

MCI Equities Corporation of the US and Todd Communications (Australia) Limited each hold a 24.5 per cent shareholding in the company.

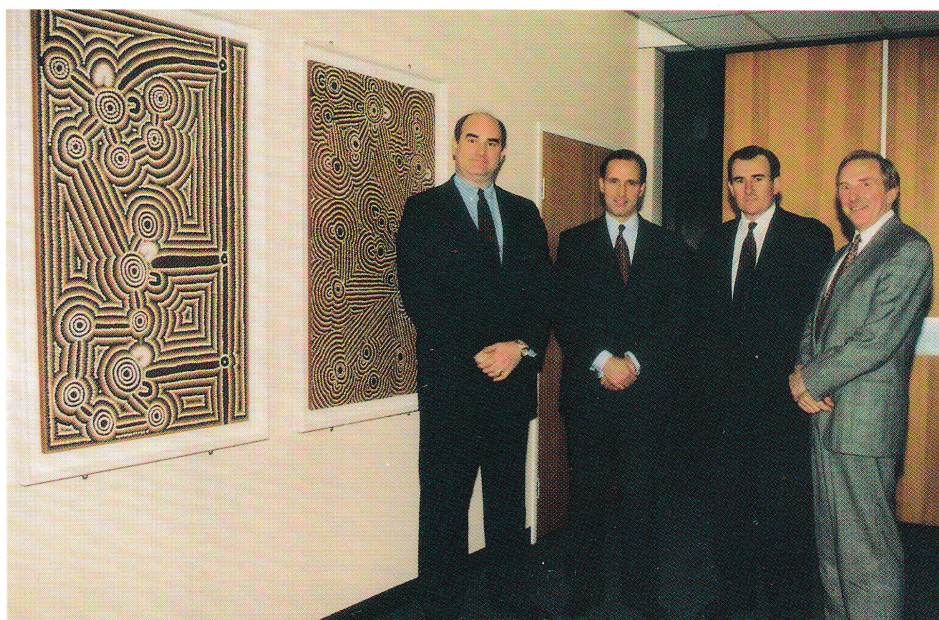
It is the third in a series of rolling five year plans, which are updated annually because the industry is so dynamic and the outlook and opportunities change so dramatically in the course of a year.

Barry said the plan maps out the future in terms of market share, strategy, products, technologies and the geographical areas of major interest.

"It is a blueprint for the future in fine detail, canvassing all the options, our intentions and the mechanics of actually achieving our aims," he said.

AAPT continues to grow rapidly and now has more than 1,000 customers. New sales records have been set in each of the past three months.

* The conference room, Barry says, is a little less nondescript these days. Unofficially, it's now been identified for booking purposes as "The Paul Keating Room."



AAPT Director Network Services, Oscie Brown with Prime Minister, Paul Keating, AAPT National Marketing Manager Allan Palmer and AAP Group Chief Executive Lee Casey.

Network Services Poised For New Era Expansion

Computer and communications networking is entering a new era and AAP Communications Services is ideally placed to take advantage of it, according to Peter Firth, National Business Manager, Customer Field Services.

"The future for networking is virtually unlimited, and with the already dynamic market undergoing a shake-out, AAPCS is ideally positioned to increase its market share and revenue growth."

The Network Services division, set up a year ago, designs, supplies, installs, integrates and maintains complete networking solutions for corporations over both local and wide areas.

"We see ourselves as an internetworking systems integrator, providing end user to end user connections," Mr Firth said. "Our goal is to be the leading provider of networking solutions in Australia."

Network Services can already point to considerable success, with a client list which includes AMP, Westpac, QLD and NSW TAFE colleges and the Commonwealth Bank.

Peter said Network Services had concentrated on forming strong relationships with the industry's leading hardware and software suppliers.

"We've formed strategic alliances with Compaq, IBM, Zenith and Samsung and are certified, authorised repairers of their products. What that means is that we can supply, install and integrate all of their products as well as undertake repair work," he said.

"We've also developed strategic alliances with Comtech, Synoptics and Retix. We're authorised value-added resellers of Lotus Notes and Novell, and we're systems integrators and installers for AT&T Systimax and Krone.

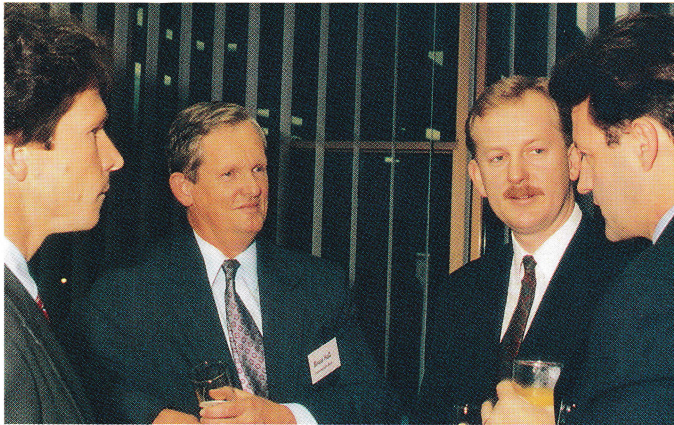
"They provide us with direct technical assistance, joint marketing programs, product support and enhanced account management.

"Our clients are some of the biggest companies in Australia, and they expect to have efficient, first

rate networking solutions. With our established relationships, we're able to give them just that."

An example, he says, is their experience with Colby Engineering.

"We started off with a maintenance contract for Colby's hardware and software, but that role has



(L-R): AAPCS clients Gary Samuels and Bruce Hall of the Commonwealth Bank with Peter Firth and Trevor Tyne, Sales Manager, AAPCS Customer Field Services.

grown to include consultation on a regular basis, as well as upgrading, installation and generally helping them improve the performance of their equipment."

Matt Groves, Colby Engineering's Information Systems Manager, said Network Services not only looks after his company's computer network of 120 users but plays a role in planning for Colby's future requirements.

"The difficulty in this industry is that there are so many new products coming out all the time, and to find someone who can sift through that, and know what will work for us, is pretty rare. It makes sense for AAP to know our business."

Peter believes the range of products and services offered by the AAP Group is an important factor in his division's success.

"From a telecommunications and information perspective I don't know of another company in Australia that can offer the range of services and products that AAP can provide under one roof.

"AAP's heritage as a news and information provider has given us a unique starting point from which to become a leading communications provider. We've been providing networks for over 20 years, initially through our involvement in installing and maintaining trading room systems, then voice, video, data and satellite networks.

"We have a customer base that has grown with us – the finance, education and mining markets in particular – and there is great potential for growth within the state and federal governments."

Independent observers agree that AAP has a bright future. Corporate giants like IBM, DEC, Hewlett-Packard and Fujitsu "are likely to be matched, even superseded, by other companies operating in software and services, including Microsoft, Novell, Andersen Consulting and AAP," Business Review Weekly observed in June.

Adds Peter, "Our biggest challenge is to communicate our capabilities to the market. "I believe we have the right mix of skills and attributes to be a major player. To be able to bring all the things AAP is capable of to the table through one sales channel is a very powerful advantage."

HK-Aust Video Press Conference

Journalists in AAP Communications Services offices in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra were linked with Hong Kong via videoconferencing for a press conference on July 28.

The press conference was held by Mr Robert Mitro of PictureTel Corporation to announce new PC and other low cost videoconferencing products.

Mr Mitro said that videoconferencing had come of age as a strategic business tool. The quality, flexibility and portability of videoconferencing systems had increased dramatically, enabling people to hold video meetings virtually anywhere.

An example was a new product which enables the transmission of video pictures via the standard IBM-compatible personal computer. The PictureTel LIVE PCS 100 will be available in Australia in October/November at a cost of around \$12,000.

Mr Mitro said the cost of using videoconferencing equipment is also being reduced, and is now roughly equivalent to twice the cost of a standard phone call and is much cheaper than a mobile phone.

Just Deserts For Lucy

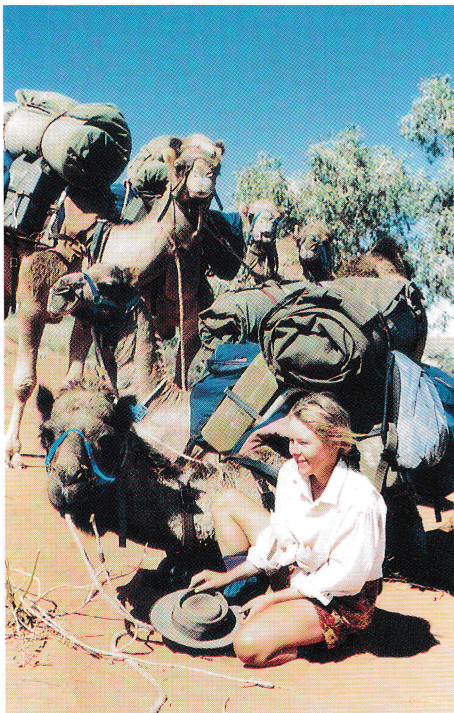
“It was an extraordinary experience, to plunge into something so different, to let go of all you know. Your subconscious starts to take over and you feel as though you’re living in a waking dream. Really strange things come into your mind, things from childhood, voices, laughter. At one point I thought I was going mad.”

Sydney journalist Lucy Palmer has a special affinity for the Australian desert, and as one who believes in embracing life’s challenges, it is a place she has come to know well over the last few years.

A veteran of an 800 km trek across the Simpson Desert in 1991, Lucy recently surpassed that feat with a gruelling 900 km walk across the Great Sandy Desert, from Lake Mackay on the WA/NT border to the coastal town of Broome.

The trip commemorated the crossing by Colonel Peter Warburton in 1873 and was the first expedition to be officially endorsed by the Royal Geographic Society of Australasia since 1939.

“It was very obvious there had been virtually no one through that area since Colonel Warburton’s expedition, apart from Aborigines and a few oil companies exploring there,” Lucy said. “You



Lucy developed an affection for the camels and dubbed her favourite ‘Ronnie’.



Finding a shady spot for a break in the Great Sandy Desert was not always easy.

could feel the complete lack of any human involvement.”

The trek began on June 6, and 40 days later the six who managed to complete it walked wearily into Broome. Their major sponsor was the Australian Army, while AAP helped sponsor Lucy’s participation.

The trek took Lucy and fellow walkers Captain Wesley Aird and Major Martin Laffey a year to plan, starting with the search for a cameleer who could supply the 15 camels the group, originally numbering eight, would require.

“It was an incredibly intricate process working out our requirements,” Lucy said. “The number of camels is related to how much each camel can carry, which is related to how much food and water each person consumes each day.

“Everything had to be geared to the camels and their needs, because we were reliant on them to transport our food and equipment but also because they could potentially be quite dangerous. They’d been wild and had only been trained up to a point.”

The group had just a week with the camels before setting off. “I was quite fearful of them at first. I was against taking a couple of them as I thought they’d be too dangerous.”

Lucy’s reservations were well founded. One member of the group, Corporal Anthony

McKenzie, had to be evacuated on the first day because of a severe camel bite to his arm. Camel bites and kicks became the norm for the first couple of weeks of the trek.

Although Corporal McKenzie rejoined the expedition, his bad luck continued when a slipped disc necessitated his second evacuation. Another soldier, Gunner Anthony Brennan, also had to abandon the walk due to severe dehydration.

“The sight of him lying on his swag, attached to a saline drip which was hanging off an upright spade, made everyone realise how dangerous the adventure really was,” Lucy said.

The camels were a constant source of entertainment and frustration. Along the way one gave birth, another had to be shot because of illness and two ran away, taking the trees they were tethered to with them. Despite the problems, Lucy came to love the “extraordinary creatures”, and christened her favourite Ronnie.

Each day in the desert began at 5 am, with the party setting off at 7 am and walking until 5 pm, covering around 25 km. They would stop each hour and a half for 10 minutes, with half an hour for lunch.

A compass and satellite navigation system kept them on course, and they were supported by a five-member back-up crew which attempted to stay within eight hours driving distance.

The daily chores were shared evenly between the three men and three women. "In the evenings we'd try to find a good place to camp, somewhere with not too much scrub. We'd unsaddle, and then do various jobs like find firewood, cook, tend the camels, start the fire," Lucy said.

"It was freezing at night. I know that because some mornings I had ice on my swag. During the day it was about 35 in the shade. The walking was relentless, there were times when I just wanted days off to read or take photos or look around.

"You have to give yourself encouragement, to be your own best friend, to keep yourself on an even keel, because it's very easy to go off the wall. At one point I thought I could smell fish and chips!"

According to Lucy the extreme conditions, physical stress and lack of privacy led to some tensions within the group.

"It definitely brought out the best and worst in human nature. The most common negative emotion was anger, together with frustration and exhaustion. There were a few personal clashes."

The strains also took a physical toll, with Lucy suffering from severe diarrhoea and having to undergo surgery in Broome Hospital at the end of the journey.

But she is adamant the positive aspects of the journey outweighed any negatives, and she is keen to undertake another desert trek, although next time in a smaller party of two or three.

"I look back now and I think, we walked 900 km through country we didn't know, with people we didn't know, and I'm amazed. We had to live moment to moment. It was an act of faith really. We had to have faith in each other, and faith that everything would be okay.

"It gave me a chance to see life in a truer light – it forces you to look at yourself and do things you wouldn't normally have to do. It makes you realise you can always go further than you think.

"I wouldn't have missed it for anything, but it's no holiday. It's the kind of thing you do because you know you'll be richer for it in the end.

"I hope it inspires other people to do something out of the ordinary, because one thing I've learned is that everyone is really very ordinary. Some just want to get a bit more out of life, even if it's only once."

Xinhua Officials Visit AAP



AAP senior executives met with Xinhua President Mr Guo Chaoren and Xinhua executives during their recent visit to Australia.

The President of China's Xinhua News Agency, Mr Guo Chaoren, and two of his top executives spent four days in Australia in August observing AAP operations first hand.

Mr Guo was invited to Australia by Chief Executive Lee Casey in June, when Mr Casey was in Beijing to sign official agreements between the two agencies.

Under these agreements, AAP and Xinhua will jointly explore the sale and distribution of news and information throughout the Asia Pacific region.

"The visit by Mr Guo further enhanced the developing relationship between Xinhua and AAP, and gave Xinhua executives the opportunity to see for themselves the diversity of the AAP Group," Mr Casey said.

"Mr Guo recognises that Australia is an important part of the Asia Pacific region and he is very keen to develop an association with AAP, which is



Chris Pash and Finance Editor Ian Pemberton discuss the planned China services.

committed to increased coverage and presence in the region, as is Xinhua."

Mr Guo is not only President of Xinhua but a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and has just been elected President of the International Organisation of Asian News Agencies.

Together with Xinhua executives Lin Chuan, Deputy Director, Photo Department and Yang Li Min, Foreign Affairs Department, Mr Guo spent four days in Sydney and Canberra.

They were accompanied by Wang Fa'en, Senior Correspondent in Australia. Their visit included tours of the AAP Telecommunications and AAP Communications Services buildings, and Mr Guo took part in a videoconferencing session with Robin Strathdee, Director Media Marketing, in Melbourne.

The visit to Canberra included dinner at Parliament House with senior government officials and politicians from the government and opposition.

"Our discussions included communications policy, trade and foreign relations," Mr Casey said.

"From the viewpoint of Australia's increased commitment to the Asia Pacific region and the part AAP and Xinhua will play in that, the talks were very beneficial."

As part of AAP's commitment to an increased presence in China and the Asia Pacific, Editor in Charge Chris Pash recently represented AAP at the Australia China Forum in Beijing, in a delegation led by Trade Minister Peter Cook.

Scholarship Named After Legend in Sydney Journalism

Jim Macdougall, one of Australia's best known journalists after whom the Cathay Pacific scholarship is named, says it reminds him of his own first trip overseas in 1925.

It was to London – a journey of six weeks by sea.

Jim was a cadet on the Melbourne Herald when Managing Director Keith (later Sir Keith) Murdoch told him he would be going there for two years to work in Fleet Street.

“Romantically known as the Street of Ink, Fleet Street was the journalists’ Mecca,” Jim says.

“Its sombre pavements became the gossip mart for the famous writers, cartoonists and foreign correspondents home on leave or ‘reporting in’ from some hazardous overseas assignment.

“To a young cadet from faraway Australia, they appeared like supernatural beings.”

Jim, who was awarded the OBE in 1969 and the CBE in 1974 for services to journalism, said he hopes the Cathay Pacific scholarship will open a window to the world and its beckoning horizons for other young journalists. “My days in Fleet Street set me on the path to a wonderful career – a life of interest, excitement, adventure, memorable personal contacts and professional reward,” he said.

In a career spanning 70 years, Jim was for 30 years a daily columnist in Sydney, 15 of those years with The Sun, six with Frank Packer’s Daily Telegraph



Jim Macdougall who chose the scholarship winner, at his home in Lindfield.

and nine with Rupert Murdoch’s Daily Mirror.

His columns are best remembered for their warmth and for the unerring accuracy of his crystal

ball, which predicted great political, industrial and social events.

In the days after his retirement from daily journalism at the end of 1974, Ken Landell-Jones, Chairman of Fortune Advertising (Aust), suggested that Jim should use his vast reservoir of personal contacts and write a weekly commercial column for Cathay Pacific Airways.

The paper chosen was The Australian. Rupert Murdoch agreed to it appearing on the prestige page 3 – and in editorial type. The column was unique.

“Because of the well-known people named, illuminated by little-known aspects of their lives and achievements, the column gave Cathay Pacific a special warmth and personality,” he said.

Jim, now in his late 80s, is bright and articulate, full of good humour and great recall of events and

famous people who were so much a part of his life.

On his return to Melbourne from London in 1927, Jim, at Keith Murdoch’s suggestion, shared a flat with C.J. Dennis, who was already in Australia’s anthology of verse with The Sentimental Bloke, and who wrote a page one column in the Herald – in colloquial verse.

Jim was asked by Murdoch to help discourage “Den” from his heavy drinking.

“It worked reasonably well except when the great writers and cartoonists from Sydney’s Bulletin were visiting Melbourne and the nights went wild,” Jim recalls.

“Den wore a melancholy air with nothing to suggest the great well of romanticism that flowed from his heart – and pen.”

Jim has visited, holidayed or worked in 80 countries, and says the spirit of adventure he felt on that first trip to London has never left him.

Returning there with his young wife, Olive, in 1932, Jim cycled from London to the Balkans, where he worked briefly on the South Slav Herald, the only English-language paper in the Balkans.

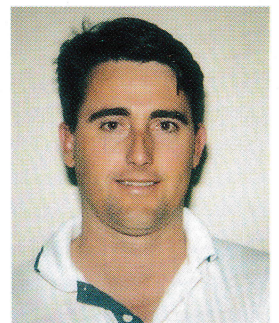
In Vienna, Jim met and was the guest of Franz Lehar, who composed the music for “the greatest and most richly rewarding operetta ever” – The Merry Widow.

“At Lehar’s Schikeneder Castle overlooking the Danube, Franz told me that but for a toothache the operetta as we know it might never have been written.

“He had had a professional falling-out with the Merry Widow’s librettist Leo Stein,” Jim said.

“The original score had been uninspiring and the Director of Vienna’s Theater am der Wien, where The Merry Widow was to have its premiere in 1905, pleaded with Lehar to write new music.

“Franz Lehar had given a defiant, No.’ And then the toothache, and in the middle of the night, to distract from the pain, he composed the theme for the Merry Widow Waltz, Vilja and I’m Going To Maxims.”



Simon Evans

Winning Entry was “Good Journalism”

The winner of the inaugural Jim Macdougall Scholarship is Simon Evans of the Adelaide bureau for his feature story on the Ivan Polyukhovich war crimes trial.

Editor in Chief Peter Brown selected four finalists from the 10 entries submitted and these were passed on to Jim Macdougall to select the scholarship winner. Jim praised the quality of the entries and said all four had submitted stories of great community interest.

“However, I have chosen Simon Evans of Adelaide for the sensitive way in which he handled a very emotive story.

“He captured with a rather fascinating dispassion the atmosphere on Polyukhovich’s last day in court and, near the end of the story, leaving unanswered the story of the Serniki ghetto.

“It was good journalism.”

Simon, 29, joined AAP two years ago from The Advertiser, where he had covered politics and also

worked in their Melbourne bureau. “I was very pleased to hear I had won,” he said. “Obviously it will be a good learning experience.”

Cathay Pacific has provided the annual scholarship to enable a young AAP journalist to spend a month working overseas in recognition of the work done by Jim Macdougall in helping establish the airline in Australia.

Peter Brown said all stories submitted were of a high standard and he hoped the unsuccessful entrants would try again next year.

“It’s very comforting to be reminded that we have so many talented cadets and young journalists on the staff,” he said. “This scholarship provides a tremendous opportunity for them to broaden their experience.

“We are developing a full program for Simon, which will involve temporary assignment to at least one other news organisation in London as well as assignments to cover a wide range of stories.”

In the third of our series on members of the AAP Executive Committee, we profile Graeme Lex Connolly, 62, Group Company Secretary and Administration Manager.

Company Secretary has Unique Perspective on AAP's Rapid Growth over Past 20 Years

Graeme Connolly, better known to all as Mick, has a unique perspective on the modern development of AAP, sitting close to the two Chief Executives who have fashioned the directions and dramatic growth of the company over the past 20 years.

He also provides a bridge with its past as its longest serving employee at 32 years, starting out when AAP was only a small editorial operation as a desk editor and foreign correspondent.

He was Assistant to the General Manager, Duncan Hooper (the preposition "to" was very important, he recalls) from 1973, and as Administration Manager since 1983 and also Company Secretary since 1986, he has filled a similar role throughout the Casey years.

It's a privileged position that has provided him with fascinating insights into how the company has developed, of its senior executives, and of the media giants who have sat on its Board of Directors.

The corporate requirements of AAP have developed considerably, from four companies when he took over as Company Secretary to seven today operating as the AAP Group – the three main operational companies and four holding and service companies.

"Much of it is a common sense following of procedures but at the same time the responsibilities and penalties have become very onerous and we have to ensure our companies comply fully with all legal requirements," he said.

The advent of American and New Zealand participation on the Board of AAP Telecommunications is another very welcome development in the AAP Group, Mick says, bringing a new expertise to the exciting communications field.

His administration role involves staff policies, industrial relations, superannuation, overall administration procedures affecting the group and responsibility for the Human Resources Department headed by Neil Hope.

"Once we started expanding rapidly, I knew we needed a top HR person," he said. "Under Neil we have set up a structure and procedures the group hasn't had before. It is a truism but a good

one that a company's staff is its greatest asset. Ours is a cosmopolitan staff further enhanced in the last couple of years by the arrival of American secondees for the AAPT joint venture."

The three AAP operating companies – AAPIS, AAP Telecommunications and AAP Communications Services – now employ in excess of 760 permanent staff and scores of casuals.

One of Mick's major new roles is as Chairman of the Building Committee, a tight-knit group consisting of Financial Controller Neil Aveling, General Manager Group Communications Barney Blundell, Group State Manager for Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, Robin Strathdee and Graeme Mercer, Group Building and Facilities Manager.

A site has been chosen for the AAP Group's new 13-storey headquarters and drawings have gone to Sydney City Council.

Provided the financial feasibility of the project can be established and the building construction details settled the proposal will go to the Board for approval.

"The proposed building site is on the main train and bus routes, on the fringe of the CBD."

The company will continue to operate its big technical centre at Glebe.

Mick was born in New Zealand of Australian parents, and grew up in Wellington, but has long considered himself an Australian and has a passport and citizenship card to prove it.

After nine years in the parliamentary press gallery in Wellington, Mick decided it was time to try his hand in Australia, and armed with a letter of introduction to the then NZPA liaison editor Bruce Hewitt landed an interview with News Editor Lyall Rowe and a job as a B grade journalist.

AAP then had only a relatively small Australian news desk marrying together tapes coming in from its London and New York offices. A few months later Mick was posted to join the team in the Big Apple.

In the meantime, his fiancée had joined him

from NZ and he and Diana, a schoolteacher, were married in Toorak. They managed a four-day honeymoon by combining two days leave generously donated by Mr Rowe with the weekend.

"We drove down the beautiful Lorne coast in an extraordinary box-like vehicle just then storming on to Australian roads – the Mini," he said.

New York and London took turns in their different time zones in filing a combined world news wire to Melbourne via telegraphic cable. The file



Mick Connolly at his Sussex Street office.

was made up from the services of Reuters, Associated Press, United Press International, the Press Association and stories from the major London and New York newspapers.

"London was the big overseas posting with about 15 journalists while New York had four, with Norman MacSwan as Editor."

The NY "cast" started up when London closed down and in an era of fragile and highly expensive communications, the main personal contact between offices was via cryptic and often enigmatic messages sent at the urgent rate.

"When an outage occurred, Melbourne would cable saying 'OUT 134'. The NY operator would rewind the tape to message 134 and repeat all subsequent messages until 'IN 158' arrived, signalling that the transmission was once again being picked up in Australia," Mick said.

"The outages could last for hours and it was always tricky working out which cycle of repeats Melbourne was getting when they sent the 'IN'.

“The early '60s were great days in New York,” Mick recalls. “Kennedy had been elected, Khrushchev was belting the United Nations desk with his shoe and the Cuban missile crisis was quietly raising goosebumps on all inhabitants of the prime target, New York, including the Connollys.

“Flower power was starting to bloom and there were the first stirrings of the black civil rights movement.”

The Connollys produced an American-born daughter, who was to be followed by three Australian-born sons, including Adam, a third-generation journalist now working with News Ltd in the Canberra Press Gallery.

Mick returned to Australia in 1964 when the New York office closed down after the opening of the Compac cable linking London and New York to Sydney meant the end of sunspot outages and microwave link breakdowns.

AAP also “followed the cable” by moving head office from Melbourne to Sydney and the London office staff was cut back to about four journalists.

“The Sydney newsroom burgeoned with banks of clattering teleprinters and tape transmitters plus an electric push-button switching panel.” Mick said.

“But the reams of tape remained on all incoming and outgoing services, piles of it to be transmitted or discarded.

“We had some great operators, one of the best being Joyce Colbran, who could keep an interminable ‘loop’ going - punching impeccable copy at 60 wpm, only five or 10 words ahead of the tape inexorably transmitting at her left elbow.”

The central position on the main news desk, where copy was selected from the world news wires now flowing directly into Sydney, was known as the Slot.

From there the Slotman, or senior editor on duty, controlled newsroom operations including the Taspress service to Tasmania, the wire to New Zealand and the Shippress service which went out via Morse Code to ships at sea, as well as the main wire to Australian newspapers and subscribers.

“Shippress was copyright and only those shipping lines paying for it were entitled to pluck the material out of the air, though we suspect it was frequently pirated.

“The story goes that one day the captain of a Greek ship called at the AAP office and asked if more Greek news could be carried on the service. As a non-payer, he was briskly ushered out.”

A peculiarity of the newsroom in the early 1960s was its “flying fox,” a small metal basket on a taut



Mick Connolly at the Tuckerman Ravine, in the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire during a recent holiday in the US.

wire that carried messages from one end of the long room to the other.

“It worked well until one evening the wire snapped with a fine, high-pitched ziiiiinnng as it snaked back along the newsroom at high speed above head level, causing consternation among journalists and operators. No more flying fox. Terry Stayte, one of the Editors in Charge, has vivid memories of the incident to this day.”

In 1965, Mick was assigned to Vietnam as the second AAP correspondent with the Australian 1st Battalion, replacing Alan Ramsey, now a Canberra political commentator.

Mick’s tour of duty ended after about three months when he was hit by “friendly fire” one night when the battalion was on patrol. A lump of mortar shrapnel lodged in his right leg. He was choppered out and spent two weeks in the US Field Hospital at Bien Hoa.

His other enduring memory of Vietnam is the funeral of Warrant Officer Kevin “Dasher” Wheatley in Saigon, where he heard of Wheatley’s heroism in staying behind with a wounded comrade in the battlefield knowing full well he was going to his death.

“Wheatley was revered among the Australian troops, being part larrikin and a superb soldier. I saw a grizzled sergeant in the tent line at Bien Hoa crying as he heard the news of his death.”

Mick filed the first details of his heroism. Later Wheatley was awarded a posthumous VC, which was recently sold at auction by his widow for \$150,000. It was purchased by the RSL and is now on display at the National War Memorial in Canberra.

Mick’s third overseas posting was to London as Chief Correspondent in the early 1970s.

“They were interesting days as the European Common Market got underway and interesting days also with teleprinter operators,” he said.

“One on holidays in India sent a cable saying, ‘Have been bitten by mad dog,’ and requesting two weeks sick leave (granted), and another was arrested and held overnight for questioning following the IRA bombings of the Old Bailey, New Scotland Yard and other London sites.

“He was bailed out in the morning by the Chief Correspondent who wished him to be freed so he could open the wire to Australia.”

On his return to Sydney late in 1973, Mick became Assistant to the General Manager, Duncan Hooper, who had made considerable advances in developing AAP from the simple operation of providing overseas news to member newspapers to one gathering and distributing Australian general news, covering Federal Parliament and providing a world news picture service.

Hooper also started the scripted news service for radio and television stations, followed by an audio service, the special service for regional dailies as the regional press associations were merged with AAP, the lottery service and the comprehensive sports service.

In the early 1970s, AAP Reuters Economic Services was established to market the Reuter financial services in Australia and to develop domestic AAP financial services.

“While those developments were significant and really started AAP on its present growth, Duncan Hooper wouldn’t recognise the AAP that has emerged under Lee Casey.

“Lee took the company into new data services, starting with Formguide, then on other roads leading into the success of the two communications companies.

“The last 10 years have seen the company become a Group, with three main arms – editorial, AAP RES and communications – whereas in the past it was editorial and RES. Its development has been outstanding.

“AAP is unique in its ability to provide news, information and communications and the potential is great.”

Mick believes AAP is now in a wonderful position with everything going for it on the communications side and so many great services. “Once the economy turns up a bit then we are away.”

Mick says he has enjoyed his time at AAP tremendously. “The times have been varied and never dull as throughout my 32 years AAP has

Ron Checks The Evidence

Recently retired Supreme Court reporter Ron Good examines a lava outcrop on top of the Eldefel volcano on the island of Heimaey off the south coast of Iceland. Pictured in the background is the small town where 400 houses were destroyed



when the volcano erupted in 1973. A new island has also been created nearby by a more recent volcanic explosion.

Ron spent 18 days in July on a four-wheel drive expedition around Iceland, which he describes as the most exciting country in the world to study volcanoes and the phenomena associated with them.

It is fascinating because the separating mid-ocean edges of the tectonic plates come to the surface in Iceland, which is literally being pulled apart by volcanic eruptions. The second picture shows one of the rifts caused near Lake Myvatn in northern Iceland during an eruption in 1984.

One of the interesting stops on his journey was Geysir, the site of the world's first known geyser, from which all others, with a slight change of spelling, have taken their name. Geysir, in south-

west Iceland, is known from the 8th century when the Vikings first settled in Iceland. According to reports it reached a height of more than 100 metres. It has now subsided to a pool of boiling water, but there are many other active geysers nearby.



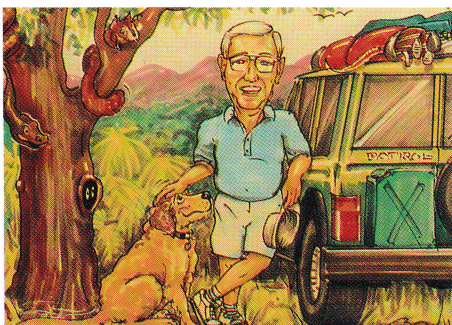
been evolving – sometimes a few steps back but always going on and up.

“I enjoyed my time as a journalist but never regretted moving over to the management side – and the journalistic ability to type and write shorthand has been useful as Company Secretary.”

Mick is famed for his shorthand, for which he thanks his father, Brian, a Queenslander, who worked on several Australian newspapers until he migrated to New Zealand, where he became a Managing Editor.

“When I finished high school and expressed a desire to follow him into journalism he sent me off for a whole year to learn shorthand and typing.

“It was marvellous for parliamentary and court reporting. Employers should insist on all journalists reaching a speed of at least 120 words a minute. A tape recorder can't match shorthand for that quick quote.” Mick achieved a certified speed of 170 words a minute – “but I wouldn't like to sit an exam now!”



This caricature of Mick Connolly with his favourite things was given to him by his family for a recent birthday.

Mick also served as Computer Services Manager and Editorial Manager before taking on his present tasks.

In his earlier years, he hired many staff members, some of whom are senior AAP figures today. One hiring was Hazel Sproule, as a “lottery girl” taking down the numbers as they were drawn from the NSW Lotteries barrel 23 years ago. Hazel went on to become chief editorial secretary for many years and now is secretary to Mick himself.

“Definitely one of my better hirings,” he says.

“Hazel is a great secretary and a quiet smoother of troubled waters, as many staffers know.”

And after so long with the company, and in so many senior roles, the anecdotes are almost endless.

He was chairman of the AAP Credit Union, a short-lived venture in the mid-1970s, which was amalgamated with the Broadway Credit Union, then mainly comprised of Fairfax staff.

The catalyst for the merger was a staff member who took out a loan of several hundred dollars and disappeared overseas never to be seen again. “We were insured but with our tiny staff, we decided we did not need to be in that business.”

Mick has also been instrumental in storing a lot of old AAP services equipment to be housed in a museum in the new building.

It includes parts of VITAC, which was Australia's first computerised news editing system, the picturegram phototape unit, the Shippress morse code transmitter, teleprinters and a goodly

collection of photographs.

AAP company secretaries are traditionally long lived and Mick is only the third since the company was founded in 1935. The first was Watkin Wynne who served until 1956. Brian Carr, who was also Chief Accountant, held the job from then until his retirement in 1986.

“When I retire, I'll climb into my four-wheel drive the next day and drive round Australia for six months,” Mick says.

As a warmup, he has planned a trip to Fraser Island and Cape York after this year's “wet”.

Mick is passionate about jazz as well as classical music and opera and has extensive record and CD collections. “In the past 10 years I have become much more interested in opera since I have been able to go more often,” he said.

His love of jazz was nurtured in New York basements and the bars on 42nd Street and on visits to New Orleans in the '60s.

Mick, who was once a keen golfer but has given the game away in recent years, plans to get back to it in retirement. He also wants to enlarge his home workshop and hopefully his wood working skills at the same time.

Another unusual treat he has planned for himself is frequent visits to the law courts.

“I will go to the courts and listen to the cases. That is where humanity is, where the real life dramas are played out. You don't get that appreciation from the papers these days.”

Sydney University Literature Awards Sponsored by AAP

It was a case of déjà vu for the winners of the AAP-sponsored prizes for poetry and prose in the 1993 University of Sydney Union Annual Literature Competition.

Arthur Spyrou, whose 'Ode to Sadness' was judged best poem, also won the poetry prize last year, while Helena Ifeka, who won the prose section with her short story 'The Deer Under Her Skin' and was a runner-up in the poetry section, also won third prize for poetry last year.

Arthur and Helena were each presented with cheques for \$1,000 by David Jensen, General Manager Corporate and Media Services, on August 30.

Mr Jensen said AAP was delighted to encourage the development of talent through its sponsorship of the awards.

From next year, AAP will increase its sponsorship of the event, which will then be known as The AAP Group University of Sydney Union Annual Literature Prize. The extra money will go towards providing prizes for the runners-up as well as the winners.

Judging the competition was award-winning poet and author Robert Adamson, who is himself a past winner of its poetry prize.

Mr Adamson, who read each of the 400 entries several times, said the winning pieces were outstanding and showed great imagination and invention.

"Arthur's poem and Helena's story combine passion, imagination and intelligence – the ingredients needed to create great poetry and prose," Mr Adamson said.

He encouraged all entrants to continue writing, but to be more critical of their work.

"To create great poetry and prose it's very important to look carefully at your own work, and be self-critical if you want to improve."

Arthur Spyrou said his winning poem 'Ode to Sadness' was inspired by, and a reply to, Chilean poet Pablo Neruda's poem of the same name.

Arthur, a fourth year Arts/Law student, is working towards publishing a book of his own poetry, and his translations of the work of Greek poet Yanniss Ritson will be published in December.

Arthur was very appreciative of the \$1,000 cheque. "It's great because it feels like I've really

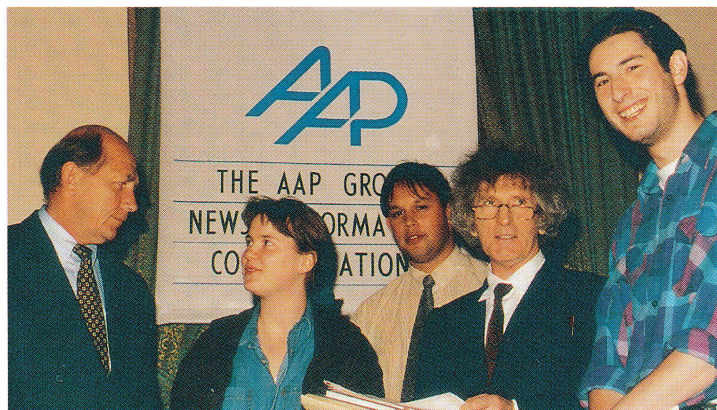
won something. I'm going to put it towards my trip to Paris at the end of the year."

Helena Ifeka, who is in her third year of a double major in English Literature, was particularly pleased to have her work recognised by Robert Adamson.

Her short story 'The Deer Under Her Skin'

won the prose section, and her poem 'C.S. Artan: A Prose Poem' was equal runner-up.

"I really respect Robert as a poet, so it's very affirming and very encouraging to hear him say such generous things about my work," Helena said.



David Jensen with prose winner Helena Ifeka, University of Sydney Union President Rahul Sen, judge Robert Adamson and poetry winner Arthur Spyrou.

Helena plans to treat herself with her prize money, which totalled \$1,500.

Helena and Arthur join a respected list of past winners of the competition, who include poet John Tranter, playwright Michael Gow and author Frank Moorhouse.

Ode to Sadness

God knows from where it came who knew it first and how, down the ploughshare to the heart, first female blood. I saw it change its mind a thousand times and it was no surprise – Its heavy burden made it pause, it paused, an apple, it paused, a soft-voiced parish priest, it paused, a wandering dog, it paused beside my sweetheart and her eyes were distanced by intolerable glass, it paused, the letterbox, sadness arrived like news. 'Sadness is here', the letters said, 'Sadness', some mainstream newspapers. Others with estimable

editors were saying things like 'doulour', 'cri de coeur'. One sensitive public servant of rank said, 'broken heart'. An ancient schoolmaster had prepared for 'woe' a lifetime, but was caught in thought. Each had an elegy that day and my friend Fujiwara said to me in the smile of a ragged crow, 'I think back to the days before I loved her, when I seemed to have no trouble at all'. For me it came as no surprise. The flying Dutchman of the windy heart arrived, an indecisive butterfly.

A coloured one for me, one for my sweetheart, one for the vagrant dog, one for each person in the neighbourhood. A thousand thousand coloured butterflies, some large and tailored like an ancient map, others small painted fingernails. Where did they come from? They just appeared sailing around the bend in our road, sad, colourful confetti, rosepetal snow, and riding on the ghostly fragrances of cinnamon and lavender, the flying Dutchman's ship of candy came sailing along our street. It was just such a day.

Gorilla Tactics Unchecked In Competitive Jungle

The Australian telecommunications industry is on the path to a cosy duopoly unless the government ensures basic equalities between competing players, according to AAP Telecommunications Chief Operating Officer Larry Williams.

Mr Williams, speaking at an ATUG (Australian Telecommunications Users Group) conference in Queensland earlier this month, warned that rather than levelling the playing field, the Department of Transport & Communications, AUSTEL and ATUG may be "paving the road to hell with good intentions".

He said the three bodies should be more aggressively promoting the cause of consumers and the transition to free and open competition, adding that Australia could learn from the US telecommunications industry's experience of successfully moving from a monopoly to a deregulated market.

"We must all remember emerging competition is delicate and without the proper restraints, monopolies and cartels will form. We learned that the hard way in the US and subsequently set up very strong anti-trust laws many years ago."

In his speech Mr Williams likened Telecom to a gorilla, whose position of strength was being protected by bodies such as AUSTEL, the Australian Telecommunications Authority.



AAPT Chief Operating Officer Larry Williams.

"I am reminded of the rather old joke that goes, 'Where does a 1,000 pound gorilla sleep?' The answer is, anywhere he wants to.

"The apparent fear of reprisal that seems to be causing AUSTEL to be a distant observer instead of an active regulator, has allowed the gorilla the freedom in the Australian market to use predatory and discriminatory pricing, bundling of services, non cost-justified price reductions, and threats of market reprisal in the name of competition.

"If this is AUSTEL's definition of competition then we are all, including Optus, in for a very rocky ride indeed."

Mr Williams said Australia should learn from the US experience of deregulation, which he said worked because of strong regulatory bodies which ensured a level playing field was maintained, and anti-trust laws which gave competitors a legal option to combat anti-competitive practices.

"The resounding cry in the industry is that AUSTEL is taking too low key a role in supervising the deregulation process. This has put AUSTEL in the position of passive observer rather than active regulator and allowed the gorilla uninterrupted domain of the Australian market.

"If this is because AUSTEL does not have strong enough powers then it is up to the government to give it more teeth – the sooner the better."

Mr Williams said Telecom had been allowed to act in a predatory and discriminatory fashion in the market, unfairly undermining the position of AAPT.

"We, like Optus, have made a commitment to Australia and are here for the long haul. We can only survive and flourish with the help of a sympathetic sponsor, who 'keeps the bastards honest'.

"Competition in its embryonic stages has to be cultivated and protected with impartiality and action.

"An unbridled Telecom still has the potential to throw all the other players out of the ring."

AAPT Brisbane and Perth Openings

In response to the Queensland and Western Australian business communities' demands for their long distance telephone services AAP Telecommunications has expanded its administrative and technical facilities in Brisbane and Perth.

Brisbane's new premises and upgraded switching facilities were officially opened by AAPT Chief Operating Officer Larry Williams in August.

AAPT opened its first non-capital city office and exchange switch on the Gold Coast in February as part of a commitment to servicing Australia's fastest growing region.

In his remarks to the assembled Brisbane business telecommunications users and industry groups at the opening, Mr Williams said the expansion of AAPT's Brisbane facility was one more example of AAPT's focus on south-east Queensland.

According to AAPT National Sales Manager Tony Fleming, that focus is being welcomed by local businesses.

"We've been overwhelmed by the response from the Queensland business community," Mr Fleming said.

"During the past 12 months we have captured a large share of the Brisbane and Gold Coast business market, which has led to a massive increase in long distance and overseas traffic for AAPT in the region."

The new and improved AAPT office in Perth was officially opened on September 9, by Larry Williams and John Stuckey, National Sales Manager for General Business.

"Just a few short months ago there were many who said that WA was a very unique market and that it would be extremely difficult to get the same level of sales there as in other Australian capital cities," said Mr Williams.

"That notion has been trampled mercilessly by Sales Manager Miriam Sutherland and her team. Perth has blossomed into one of the fastest growing branches and it is this superior sales effort that has led to this recent expansion.

"Although Technical Manager Craig Marshall and his organisation have had their hands full keeping up with the improved level of sales, they continue to deliver superior service and support to the growing Perth customer base.

"Being so far away from the Head Office has its difficulties but the spirit of the Perth AAPT staff can be felt, even across the Nullabor."

Human Resources in the '90s Has Staff Interests at Heart

The Human Resources Department may be a staff member's first and last contact with AAP, but that is only a small part of its modern role.

That role has changed substantially over recent years, along with its name from what was previously known as the Personnel Department.

AAP's most important resource is its staff – staff costs constituting the Group's largest single operating cost – Group Manager HR Neil Hope said.

"We have to look after people's well being and development. What we're about is developing staff to their optimum level of efficiency and performance and providing an environment that allows this to happen.

"We operate with an open door policy at all times."

Neil says that a proliferation of employment-based legislation now requires companies to comply with a myriad of regulations and reporting obligations in their dealings with staff, not only in industrial matters but in their day to day operations as well.

"Our emphasis has shifted from purely control, direction and record keeping to a more holistic developmental approach where the emphasis is on optimisation of individual skills and talent."

Neil's department supports and provides a service to all departments and divisions within the AAP Group on the full range of staff issues, from absence counselling to workers compensation, and everything in between.

Workplace problems and disputes tend to be unique within departments and the HR role, says Neil, is to assist in identifying the real issues and recommending and implementing appropriate remedial action.

"It is a matter of adopting a counselling role and directing the problem back into the departmental environment, which is where it should be resolved."

The department members are required to keep abreast of a plethora of information in relation to current laws, practices and procedures, emanating from numerous professional and legal information services to which HR subscribes.

"There is a hell of a lot of reading to be done, none of which I would call recreational reading," Neil said.

He is assisted by a staff of six – Training Manager Linda Ward, Personnel Officer Nicola Stokes, Employment Officer Rob Makin, Secretary Caroline Speerin and Graeme Mercer and John Iacumin in the Property and Facilities Management area.

Nikki meets and greets new staffers, usually on their first day, to explain the complex issues of superannuation, payroll procedures and AAP Group rules and regulations. She is usually the point of contact for line supervisors and managers on day to day staff matters and administers the HR computer system. Nikki

Rob Makin, who once ran his own recruitment consultancy, joined HR two-and-a-half years ago. In that time he has employed nearly 450 staff, reflecting the Group's rapid growth. Rob also wrestles with the problem of maintaining ever changing organisation charts and works with line managers in developing job descriptions.

Caroline Speerin is the newest member of the team. "Being our only support person that also makes Caroline the most indispensable," Neil said.

The other arm of HR, Property and Facilities Management, is headed by Graeme Mercer, assisted by John Iacumin who is Building Supervisor at the Glebe technical centre and



The Human Resources team (l-r): Graeme Mercer, Rob Makin, Caroline Speerin, Neil Hope, Nikki Stokes and John Iacumin.

is leaving soon to further her career in the personnel field with a major retail chain.

Orientation courses for new staff, organised by Linda Ward, are held every quarter to give staff an overview of the AAP Group and its activities, the roles of various departments and how they relate to others in the group.

"It is very easy to forget if you are located at Glebe, Pitt Street or interstate that you are part of a group and we think it helps if people know more about the company as a whole."

In addition the training function includes in house courses on subjects such as general supervision, leadership, team building, project management, time management and many more. These are published in quarterly training programs.

is responsible for maintaining the company's buildings, lease arrangements and office layouts as well as security and safety. Graeme is a member of the new head office building committee, which is making full use of his AutoCad designing skills.

Neil joined AAP in December, 1985, and reports to Group Administration Manager Mick Connolly.

He says it was quite a culture shock for him coming out of a manufacturing environment, where he was Personnel Superintendent at Arnott's Homebush, to the office-oriented AAP.

HR's general administration of staff matters is wide ranging – "but in all instances, its principal objectives are fairness and consistency while keeping in mind corporate objectives," Neil said.

AAP Pair the Top Racing Tipsters in Melbourne

Racing does pay if you have the keen judgment of AAP Melbourne racing writer Robert Windmill.

Robert, 34, was clearly Melbourne's top horse racing tipster for the season just ended, winning not only the annual prize, but two other tipping contests as well.

He collected \$1,000 as the Cadbury Schweppes Tipster of the 1992-93 season, a further \$750 for sharing the Spring Carnival tipping honours with Ron Taylor of Truth, and picked up \$250 for tipping the 10/1 winner of the Australian Guineas.

The major award is based on a \$1 win investment on the selections of racing writers appearing in the major Melbourne racing formguides, including those in the Age, Herald Sun, Best Bets, Sporting Globe, Winning Post, Truth and The Australian.

Robert tipped 137.5 winners from 606 races and showed a profit of \$35.15 for the season.

He was the only tipster to finish in the black and was some \$60 ahead of Craig Brennan of Best Bets (-\$24.40) and Stephen Moran of the Sunday Age (-\$26.62).

AAP's Melbourne racing editor Mark Ryan finished fifth (-\$48.55) but had the highest strike rate of 23.15 per cent, with 157.5 winners from 681 races, just ahead of Windmill with 22.6 per cent and Taylor 22.07 per cent.

Robert is at the track three days a fortnight covering meetings and also attends early morning trackwork during the major carnivals. He writes potted form comment on an average of two meetings each week, which provides the basic knowledge for his tips.

"But I also do a bit of form at home," he says. "I study the in-running and finish photos and the stewards' reports."

All in the line of duty of course. Robert says he does not bet on a regular basis.

"I had a pretty freakish Spring carnival with tipping. That set up the win. My longest priced winner was Regal Adam at 20/1. But I was unlucky twice with a horse called Golden Spring, that could have given me a much bigger win.

"The first time I tipped it, it ran second at 40/1 and next start when I tipped it again, it finished second at 20/1."

Hoofnote: Robert is allergic to horses – a

misfortune he shares with leading trainer Bart Cummings.

"If I touch a horse or even get too close to anyone who has been with horses, the allergy flares up," he said. "It's much worse for Bart of course. He's in constant contact with horses.

"I've consulted him on the problem and the only way he can control it is to take a Teldane tablet every day. I've resisted doing that, but I always take my eye drops with me to the races.



Robert Windmill pictured at Moonee Valley wearing his Cox Plate tie.

"Early morning trackwork is when it's worst. I have to get my interviews done as quickly as possible."

Robert said that though some of the symptoms are similar to hayfever, it is a quite separate allergy.

"In the worst bout I had, I lost all sensation down one side of my face for more than 12 hours. I've had my eyes close up and they get very itchy. It's only come on since I became a racing writer."

Donated Typewriters A Key to the Workforce

Students at St Mary's College in Western Samoa have been improving their typing skills over the past few months on typewriters donated by AAP.

Twelve Olympia Carina portable typewriters were donated to the college following an approach from the Sisters of Charity, who said the typewriters were needed to help young students prepare for the workforce.

According to the Principal of St Mary's, Sister Losalia Mulipola, the college's existing typewriters were obsolete and damaged through years of use and the effects of cyclones Val and Ofa. The college could not afford to have them repaired.

Spring Racing Carnival Party

Racing Services hosted a successful cocktail party with Victoria's Spring Racing Carnival committee as part of the Sydney launch of this year's big racing events in Melbourne.

Some of the big names in NSW racing along with Sydney racing journalists attended the party at the Boulevard Hotel on August 24.

Pictured below, left to right are Ken Page, Marketing Manager for the NSW TAB, Ken Boman, AAP's Racing Services Manager, Lady Sonia McMahon and Craig Nugent, the AJC's Betting Operations and Development Manager.

Other guests included John Rouse, Chief Executive of the AJC, and racing personalities Ken Callander, Les Young, John Walsh of 2KY and Maggie Beers and Annette Allison of the Spring Racing Carnival committee.

The Spring Carnival this year extends from October 9 to November 21.

AAP will launch the 10th anniversary issue of its racing annual Class Racehorses of Australia and New Zealand at the Cox Plate meeting at Moonee



Sister Losalia said the new typewriters were a welcome addition to the school and were being put to good use.



"We have set the typewriters up in our typing room and the girls are greatly benefiting from the use of them, enabling them to be well prepared for their typing exam.

"We are most grateful to AAP for this valuable gift."

Birdie Beats the Boys

Margaret Woods has made AAP golfing history by becoming the first woman to win an AAP Social Golf Club tournament.

Margaret put in a stunning performance at Fairfield on July 11 to win with 48 points.

"It was my day," Margaret said. "They call it a 'birthday round' and that day was my birthday!"

Margaret, who works for American Re-Insurance, says she decided to take up golf to help her make and maintain business contacts, because "the insurance industry revolves around golf."



She started playing about two years ago with husband Peter, Product Development Manager for AAP RES. "I thrashed him like anything," Margaret said of her win, "but he was very supportive. Most of the men took it pretty well but some were obviously a bit upset.

"I played off the same tees as the men, there was no advantage, so it was really good to beat some of the people who win all the time.

"I was the only women playing that day, and I'm often the only woman out there. It would be great to see more women taking part."

Margaret's handicap is now down from 42 to 36, in line with her recent improvement in form. There's no secret to her success, however. "I just hit it as far as I can."



Brendon's Fancy Footwork

Brendon Prout, Federal Account Manager with AAP Telecommunications Canberra, couldn't pass up the chance to have his photograph taken with Canberra Raiders stars Mal Meninga and Laurie Daley.

The opportunity arose at the National Press Club in July when Optus and Telecom CEOs Bob Mansfield and Frank Blount spoke on deregulation in the Australian telecommunications industry.

"One observer likened them to chained bears who were chock full of tranquilizers," Brendon said of the event. "Afterwards I couldn't resist the



chance to get a photo with Mal and Laurie, especially as they are both doing advertisements for Telecom!"

Brendon (left), is pictured with Mal, Laurie and Frank Blount.

Footy Tipping Kicks On For Another Year

Melbourne's popular Footy Tipping Contest has paid handsome dividends for its two major prize winners.

Shaun Doyle of AAP RES won \$324.50 for the most points in the second half of the season and Mike Hedge of Editorial collected \$275 for the highest tally over the first 11 weeks.

The contest is run by Melbourne office administrator Pat Byrne over the 22 weeks of the AFL's home and away rounds.

This year the competition attracted 58 players, most of them from Melbourne, but there were also entries from Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

The entry fee is only \$1 a week, or \$22 for the

season, and apart from the two major prizes, there are weekly dividends, which have ranged between \$13 and \$75.

Three people – Carey Jack, Robin Strathee and Justin Brasier – correctly tipped all seven results in the round twice each during the season. Fifteen others got all seven right once during the season.

Melbourne editorial secretary Daphne Drew also won \$60 by correctly tipping the winning margin in the State of Origin final in mid-season when South Australia beat Victoria by 12 points.

The final competition now underway is \$2 in on the results of the seven matches in the finals series when footy fever reaches its peak in the southern capital.

Marie Bows Out After 23 Years

Some old faces and current faces got together on Wednesday September 1 to bid farewell to Marie Tolley who leaves AAP after being connected with the company for 23 years.

Marie was unaware that her old friends Robert Laybutt from Sydney, June Mullins, Reno Capanna, Pat Lawrence, Amelia Gibson, Loredana Di Michele, Bev Duncombe and Cherry Klavins (most of whom have left the company) would be coming in and she broke down and cried when they walked in to the office one after the other.

The lunch was at the Banks Hotel and the oldies were joined by many of the present staff who heard

a lot of stories of the old days. It was a day of "do you remember when" and "do you remember who".

Marie trained as a teleprinter operator in the Women's Royal Australia Army Corp. She started work with AAP, Sydney, in 1970. In 1973 she transferred to Melbourne and left to increase her family in 1974. In December 1976 she rejoined the Melbourne staff and has worked both full time and as a casual in the Melbourne office ever since.

The highlight of her working career was being selected to work at the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, which was a few weeks of very solid work punctuated with a lot of fun and where some very good friendships were born.

Staffers Run Up A Thirst in the City To Surf

An AAP team of more than 40 were among the 40,000-odd Sydneysiders braving overcast skies and intermittent rain on Sunday August 8 for the 1993 City to Surf.

It was the first time rain had fallen in the event's 23 year history, but many a runner and walker was glad of its cooling effects after puffing and sweating their way up Heartbreak Hill.

The race was won by Andrew Lloyd in just 40.29 minutes. Martin Finnis, AAP's fastest entrant,

of 143 last year), Ann Holland (wife of Corporate and Public Affairs Group Manager Greg Holland) on 111.26, Bruce Montgomerie on 113 and Rosemary Bridge on 114. Rosemary was another who improved on last year's time, beating it by six minutes.

Gary Morris, who finished 13 minutes faster than last year on 101.17, believes he's got a few years to go before his times start sliding the other way. Gary's children, 15-year-old Peta and 11-year-old Matthew, also did well on times of 115 and 82 minutes respectively.



The 'Back of the Pack' club included these AAP team members, some of whom forced their way to the front.



The AAP Team looking confident before the big race.

ran a very respectable 70.12, just missing out on his goal of cracking the 70 minute barrier. At least Martin can take consolation from the fact that he ran a similar time to former marathon champion Robert de Castella.

Also clocking excellent times were Brad Weier on 72.49, Raymond Lo on 72.53, Richard Crampin on 74.33, Max Gerlach on 78, Iain Atkins on 79.12 and Jerianne Verhille on 79. It was the second City to Surf for Jerianne, whose goal was 75 minutes, but an unavoidable comfort stop along the way just kept her from reaching it!

Max Gerlach was very happy with his time, as last year he broke down before Heartbreak Hill. This year he made sure he did some training, and said the great atmosphere, roadside music and cool weather helped him along.

Other good times were achieved by Marjan Mitrovski on 87.47, Derek Hazell on 93.42, Tom Butler on 101.59 (a big improvement on his time

Pitt Street secretaries Lynley Dewhurst, Elizabeth Maguire and Claudia Hlais helped bring up the rear with a time of 175 minutes, and confessed to stopping for Mars Bars along the way. They missed the cut off point for medallions by 15 minutes and their time was slower than Elizabeth's 157 minutes in 1992, but they've vowed to improve next year and are even talking about training!

Runners and walkers alike gratefully collapsed in the Ocean View Restaurant of the Bondi Diggers after the race, to be revived by great food and service and the odd cooling ale.

AAP had taken the restaurant over for the day, offering staff, family and friends the chance to watch the runners come home and ease their weary bones in comfort, and in some cases even start planning how to better their time in next year's City to Surf.

Melbourne Market Has A Ball

Two hundred of the Melbourne financial market's movers and shakers turned up at a Toorak nightclub on July 9 to celebrate the AAP Reuters End of Financial Year Ball.

According to AAP RES Sales Executive Kimberley Cole, the night was a great success, raising \$2500 for benefiting charity The Financial Markets Foundation for Children.

"We were very happy with the result, especially considering that with the market contracting, it's getting harder each year to get people along.

"Everyone here gets involved in selling tickets, it's a group effort. I think this year was one of the best. We had a great band and everyone enjoyed themselves. It was a really good night."

Kimberley (clockwise from rear) is pictured below at the ball with Adam Clarke, Alison Williams and Guy Bignell.

