

CHARITY GOLF DAY AGAIN REACHES \$1 MILLION TARGET

For the second time in three years, the AAP Group Financial Markets Len Evans Annual Charity Golf Event has raised \$1 million for charity.

General Manager, Corporate and Media Services, David Jensen said the success of the event was due in large part to the support provided by the large number of AAP staff who helped to stage it.

"I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of them," he said. "It is very satisfying for everyone involved to see the target of \$1 million achieved for the second time in three years. We of course first hit the million dollar mark in 1992.

"The \$1,003,500 raised this year takes the total which AAP has distributed to charity since it began eight years ago to \$4.7 million.

"There was a very large number of staff involved and it is hard to single out individuals, but special mention must be made of Dawn Willis and Fiona McDonald, who have become the key organisers behind the scenes during the past few years.

"Now we need to come up with some new ideas for 1995, and I would welcome suggestions from any staff member for auction items in particular."

AAP GROUP TO MOVE TO NEW BUILDING IN JANUARY, 1995

The AAP Group's new corporate headquarters will be 14 floors of the World Trade Centre in George Street, Sydney, better known as the Qantas Building.

But as part of the lease agreement, the AAP logo will replace the Qantas name atop the 42-storey building when the company takes up residence there in January next year.

The signing of the agreement to take over the last 12 years of the Qantas lease on the building marks the end of a long search for a new head office for the AAP Group of companies.

Chief Executive Lee Casey said the move to a new corporate headquarters would be a landmark in the development of the AAP Group, and the culmination of many years of planning.

"We have the roof naming rights for the building and the AAP logo will be proudly displayed where the Qantas name now stands out so clearly on the city skyline.

It can be seen as you come across the harbour bridge, for miles at night and from the air.

"Our move there marks another important step in the coming of age of the AAP Group. We will be much more visible, more readily identifiable and, more importantly, our staff will be together in the one building," he said.

Company Secretary and Administration Manager Mick Connolly said that considerable time had been spent checking out the feasibility of building AAP's own office block in York Street in the city but ultimately it had been decided to take the opportunity of leasing in an excellent position in the CBD.

AAP will have floors 2 and 3, 5 to 15 inclusive and floor 17, which will be the executive level. However floors 9 and 10 are fully tenanted by the WTC organisation.



The AAP Group's new corporate headquarters.

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Bangarra Performs for Prince Charles

The dancers of Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia were among a group of Aboriginal artists to meet Prince Charles in Sydney in January.

The Prince met with the group at MSB Bond Store 3 at Walsh Bay, the site of the proposed

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre.

The dancers also performed excerpts from their well received work *Praying Mantis Dreaming* and a controversial piece from *Black River*, which deals with black deaths in custody.

Rob Bryant, General Manager of Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia, spoke to the assembled guests of the need for a secure, long-term venue for the cultural centre.

"The indigenous cultures of our country are a major asset for all people and should be promoted in a proper manner. This recognition, embodied by the proposed cultural centre, is long



Prince Charles is introduced to dancer Sue-Ann Williams by Bangarra General Manager Rob Bryant.

overdue," Mr Bryant said.

In his speech, Prince Charles commended the Bangarra dancers for their energy and style, which blends traditional and modern dance, and expressed hope that the proposed cultural centre would become a reality.

He then viewed an exhibition of Aboriginal art, which featured work by Black Books, Blackfella Films, Boomallie Aboriginal Artists Co-Operative and Bula Bula of Ramingining Arts & Crafts.

AAP has been the major sponsor of Bangarra for the last four years. Bangarra Dance Theatre's new production, *Ninni*, will play at the Enmore Theatre from May 6 - 21.



Prince Charles pictured with the Bangarra dancers.

The Friendly Fax

CASPAR, AAP's main administrative computer system based on a cluster of VAX computers, is now sending faxes.

The new fax-modem facility is initially being applied to purchase orders, according to Group Purchasing and Supply Manager, Jim Haasnoot,

who said the new capability is the first stage of a project aimed to develop a paperless system for the purchasing process.

"Most suppliers and our internal customers expect purchase orders to be sent via fax, mainly to reduce delivery lead time," Jim said. "At AAP, this has meant interruptions to processing, urgent printing and photocopying most computer-printed purchase orders and then manually faxing them.

"Now a purchase order can be faxed directly to the supplier merely by typing 'fax' while inspecting the order on the CASPAR terminal. CASPAR will then draw the fax number from its Supplier File."

Jim said the AAP application was the most sophisticated yet

developed for the new DECfax Mail software package, which is used in conjunction with a Postscript file of the purchase order form and digitalised images of the AAP logo and Jim's password-protected signature.

"Peter Diggins of the CASPAR software team has been responsible for this development, with some help on digitisation from Andrew Marwood of Tech Development."

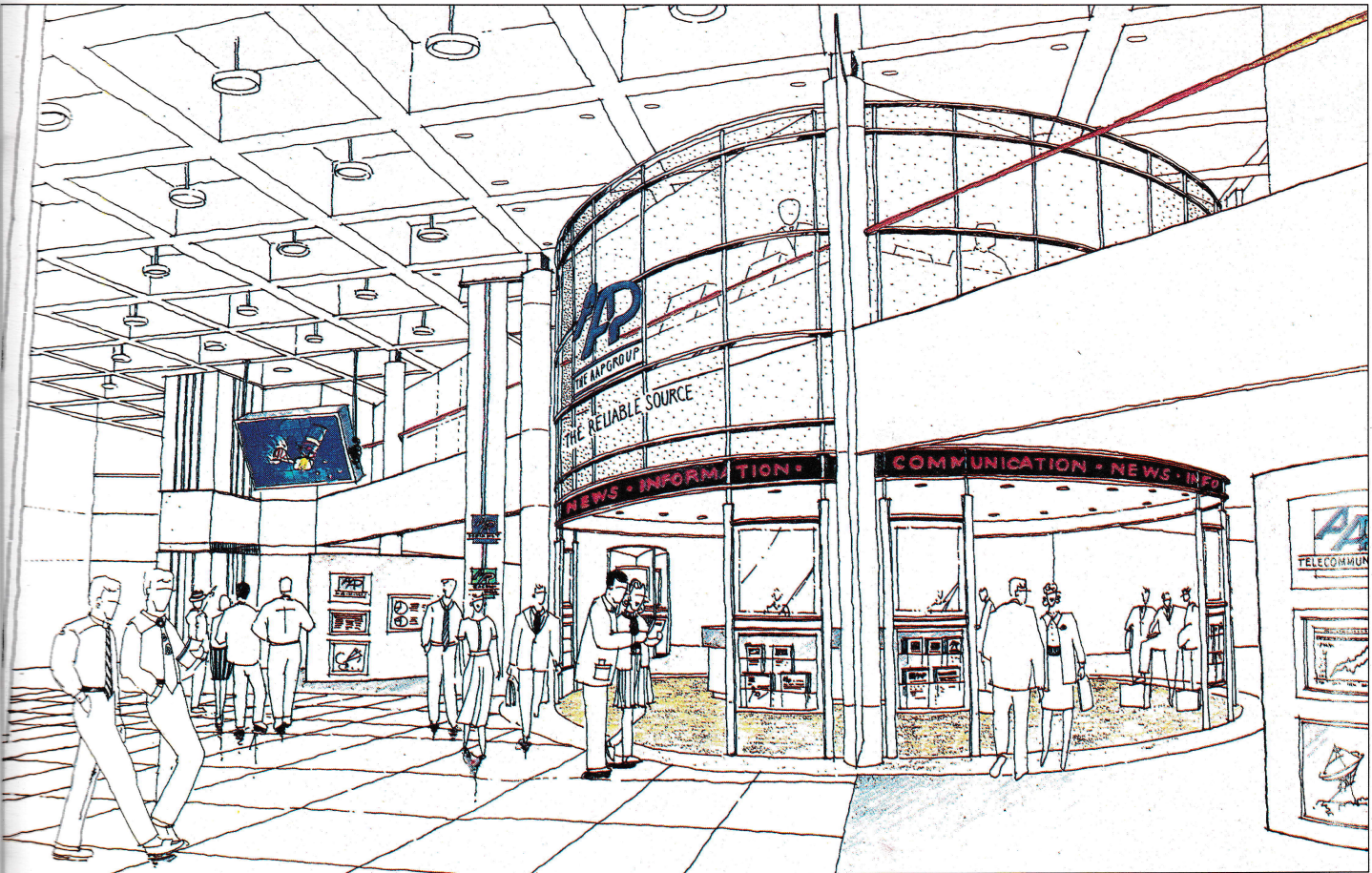
Jim estimates the new procedure will save him and his assistant, Conchita Amparo, considerable time. "AAP raises some 6,000 purchase orders per annum. This is also a step towards 'saving the forests', and part of our overall plan to streamline the purchasing function."

Many staff will soon be able to consult a supplier/product database on CASPAR and generate a purchase requisition, Jim added. "Without needing a printed copy, the appropriate manager will then authorise the requisition on CASPAR and a purchase order will be raised automatically."

It is also planned to enable CASPAR users to send miscellaneous faxes from within CASPAR's electronic mail facility.



Peter Diggins, Jim Haasnoot and Conchita Amparo.



Artist's impression of the new AAP headquarters' foyer.

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AAP will have its own entrance off the Long Street Plaza on the second floor. This level will feature a display of the AAP Group's products and services, including a video wall, a central reception area and a company museum.

The third floor, which is a mezzanine level, will be the main demonstration area for the various product marketing groups. Editorial will be on the fifth floor, which boasts three balconies.

Mr Connolly said each floor provided about 940 square metres of space.

The World Trade Centre is bounded by George, Lang, Jamison and Grosvenor Streets. Mr Connolly said that it was an island building with plenty of window space on all sides providing excellent natural light.

It was in the Sydney CBD and very close to the financial markets. Just across the road was an entrance to the Wynyard rail station and bus terminus. A short walk away was the Circular Quay ferry wharf and the Harbour Bridge. Some commercial parking was available in the basement.

The building is owned by the Commonwealth Bank Superannuation Fund. After Qantas merged its operations with Australian Airlines last year,

it moved all of its operations to Mascot, near Sydney Airport.

The CBSF is now undertaking a multi-million dollar refurbishment of the building and its services, including the main entrance off George Street and the lifts.

Mr Connolly said AAP had been at 364 Sussex Street for the past 20 years, growing from two floors, which housed the computer room and tenants on one level and editorial and administration on the other, to six floors.

It is also spread over four floors at 88 Pitt Street, plus the Technical Centre at Ross Street, Glebe, and the AAP Communications Services offices at Junction Street, Glebe.

Mr Connolly said it was likely AAP Telecommunications administration, finance, sales and marketing would move to the World Trade Centre but AAPCS would remain at Glebe.

AAP's lease on the Sussex Street building expires on December 31 this year and on the Pitt Street office space three months later.



A typical floor showing the building's spacious interior.

Mike and Louise Make Haste Slowly in Beijing

Husband and wife reporters Mike Osborne and Louise Evans arrived in Beijing early in February to open an AAP bureau. In this report for AAP Today, Mike and Louise say the Chinese capital takes some getting used to after their two years in the London bureau.



Mike Osborne and Louise Evans pictured shortly before leaving Sydney for Beijing.

We've undergone numerous medical examinations and interviews and coped with a mountain of paperwork while drinking copious amounts of China's famous tea.

Opening the AAP bureau in Beijing has been a new experience and reminded us that bureaucracy knows no national bounds! Now, after five weeks in the capital of the world's most populous nation of 1.2 billion people, we feel we are making progress in the city that will be our home for the next four years.

We now have a temporary office in the second bedroom of our residential apartment with a full-time office on promise. The language barrier remains a problem and while we still don't know the Chinese words for frost free or stainless steel, we somehow fudged our way through furnishing the apartment we were granted by the Diplomatic Services Bureau.

However, it was a sight to behold when a three piece couch, fridge/freezer and washing machine were delivered on the back of the same three-wheel push bike.

We're learning to laugh about the fact the locals find us so fascinating that they gather in crowds to watch us buy fruit from the free market stalls. Local beer is good and cheap, the Beijing duck is a treat and life here is never, ever dull.

Our new friends at Xinhua (the official Chinese news agency) have repeatedly come to our rescue, offering much-needed advice and help to cut through red tape and the language barrier to get telephones connected, office space secured and bank accounts opened.

Simple pleasures, like having a work desk delivered, getting the fax machine on-line and devouring a Violet Crumble delivered by Father (Chris Pash) Christmas have kept our morale buoyant. But we live in hope that one day soon we'll wake to find that we've passed this initiation test, that instead of being interior decorators, cleaners, technicians and diplomats, we'll be full-time journalists again.

AAP Bureau Chief Takes to Air Waves

Perth bureau chief Judy Hughes is a popular and easily identifiable member of ABC Radio's Friday morning political discussion panel.

As the only woman on the panel, she provides, some much-needed balance as well as a different voice. "I hold my own, which is something of a feat with a bunch of men discussing politics - and they say women can talk," Judy said.

The program, News Panel, goes to air between 9 and 9.30 a.m. on 6WF. It features morning presenter Richard Utting with three guest journalists discussing the main political issues of the week.

Other panellists include journalists from the Australian Financial Review, The Australian, the West Australian, channels 7 and 9 and from ABC TV news and current affairs programs. "The segment's fairly informal and they like us to express a view," Judy said. "I enjoy doing it.

It's actually a very good promotion for AAP and

helpful in making contacts. A lot of people in the political scene listen to it, and they don't mind telling you what they think of the panel's views."

Judy, 32, arrived in Perth on New Year's Day 1993 and had something of a baptism of fire in her new posting. A state election was called in her first week and the federal election was announced the day after the state poll.

Leaving the office after covering the state coalition's campaign launch, Judy slipped on the newly waxed tiles in the foyer and broke her left wrist.

"I was carted off to hospital in an ambulance, missed the third week of the state election campaign and spent most of the federal campaign as well in plaster.

"It's one way of making a mark I suppose. A number of journalists came up to me and said, 'You must be the girl from AAP.'

"It also helped with some political introductions. Both Carmen Lawrence and Richard Court beelined for me on the election trail saying, 'What have you done?'"

Judy joined AAP from the Geelong Advertiser in 1986. She worked in the Melbourne bureau on state political and industrial rounds before moving to Perth.

Other journalists in the Perth office are Wendy Caccetta, who covers finance, Ross Lewis on sport and Elisia Bennett, who joined the bureau as a general reporter earlier this year.



Judy Hughes in the 6WF studio.

AAP Microwave Licences Leased to Jade Network

The value of microwave licences was emphasised when Chinese Ethnic Television (CET) was taken over by major pay TV player, Australis Media Ltd, immediately after it had signed an agreement for the lease of the AAP Group's five capital city microwave licences.

AAP's five-year agreement with CET/Australis is worth \$4.5 million, with firm prospects for additional revenue from satellite program distribution.

CET's proposed narrowcast service, known as The Jade Network, was scheduled to begin broadcasting on Channel 3 from the first quarter of this year.

Australis, which holds the B licence for satellite pay television with its US partner Lenfest Holdings, says it is still committed to developing a Chinese language network and will begin test marketing the service soon.

The successful leasing of the licences followed 15 months of planning and negotiation by Barney Blundell, Group General Manager, Communications, and Ian Smith, Business and Market Development Manager, Broadcast Services with AAPCS. Glenn Smith, AAPIS Assistant General Manager, Communications, undertook the task of the design and cutover of a replacement service for AAP's existing datafeeds on MDS.

Ian Smith said that CET had planned to uplink Chinese-language programs from Hong Kong and broadcast them around Australia, using AAP's communications centre at Glebe as the transmission point.

AAPCS currently has 6.8 metre dishes in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide and eight metre dishes in Brisbane and Perth, plus microwave transmitters, and will install repeaters and additional dishes for Australis as required.

Because of its MDS expertise, it would service and manage the network and act as consultants to CET/Australis in sourcing equipment from suppliers and arranging the installation and maintenance of MDS antennas and down converters into individual homes, Mr Smith said.

"Our new relationship with Australis opens up the possibility of AAPCS becoming much more deeply involved in pay TV operations, given Australis' plans to use microwave as their main means of delivery," Mr Smith said.

"This fits well with AAPCS' strategy to become the leading systems integrator for the pay television industry."



The new AAP Communications Services sales team. Pictured (l-r) are Technical Supervisor Roy Cullum, National Sales and Marketing Manager Peter Firth, General Manager Jeffrey Roll, State Manager Victoria Colin Akers, State Manager Queensland Rob Usenich, State Manager Western Australia Eddie O'Brien and New South Wales Sales Manager Trevor Tyne.

Under the contract, AAP has to convert all its news and information services that were being delivered via MDS to Telecom data lines by March 31 to free up the microwave network for delivery of the CET/Australis Chinese ethnic television service.

Glenn Smith said the new delivery system, called NewsStream, provides the same feature functionality as MDS with an aggregation of eight news services from Editorial's Baudrunner computer system.

NewsStream packetises the services on a priority basis, compresses the data and transmits this as a 2400bps stream to all subscriber sites units using AAP's existing trunk communications facilities and local distribution by Telecom's DMS system.

The PC-based receiver units decompress the data and support output of up to 10 individual services at each site.

All operational programming and diagnostic functions on each receiver are remotely managed from Systems Control at Sussex Street.

Glenn said NewsStream was the first step in the planned development of a system to provide all of AAP's text and graphics services via a common data feed.

AAPCS Wins High Praise from Clients

National Sales and Marketing Manager Peter Firth has received letters from two major clients praising the quality of its staff and management services.

Bruce Hall, Chief Manager, Communications Services with the Commonwealth Bank, said a great deal of what the bank had achieved in his area would not have been possible without the support of key vendor companies such as AAP Communications Services.

"Your company has made a major contribution through the provision of specialist expertise and project management services on our national program for new branch telecommunications infrastructure," he said.

"All aspects have been handled in a professional and efficient manner, which is testimonial to the quality of your staff and company philosophy.

"We look forward to a growing relationship with AAP Communications Services and wish you and your team every success in 1994."

Peter Warren, Computer Services Manager with CSR Readymix, said AAPCS had been chosen after an exhaustive selection process as their preferred supplier of network services and equipment against several major Australian communications companies.

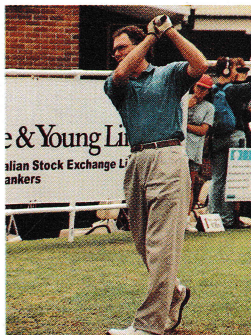
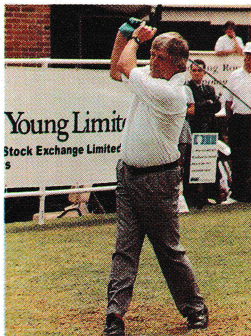
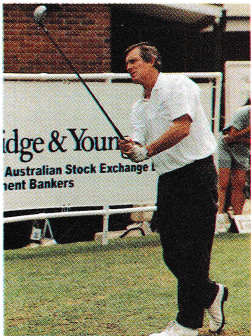
"We have been delighted with the professionalism, adaptability and responsiveness of AAP during an association which has involved financial justification, planning, implementation and ongoing support of both metropolitan and country sites and have recommended their acceptance by the Group.

"CSR Readymix SA have now contracted AAP to provide network services revolving around a mission critical application and the other regions are expected to follow suit.

"We have in fact been so impressed with AAP's performance that we have now awarded them our hardware and PC software maintenance agreements.

"In summary, AAP Communications began simply as a supplier but we now considered to be a valuable partner in our efforts to improve productivity and competitive edge and CSR Readymix are looking forward to a long term, mutually beneficial association."

CHARITY GOLF DAY SETS NEW RECORDS



The contrasting styles (above) as the celebrity group hits off. Pictured top to bottom are John Hewson, Michael Parkinson, Greg Chappel, and David Jensen. Mary Parkinson seems pleased with her form (right). AAP staffers pictured at the dinner (far right) are (standing) Carol Williamson, Robin Williams, Karen Fornito, Lynley Dewhurst, Dawn Willis and (seated) Joan Nielson, Shona Tannock, Fiona McDonald and Judith Haupt.

The AAP Group's financial markets golf event has achieved the remarkable feat of raising \$1 million for charity for the second time in three years.

David Jensen, General Manager, Media and Corporate Services, said, "The amount raised was well up on last year's \$786,000 and seems to indicate that recovery is well underway in the nation's financial heartland."

"We were greatly encouraged by the response to the day from the financial community and the companies associated with it. We had some 250 companies supporting the event this year and a record attendance of nearly 600 at the dinner."

Proceeds from the AAP Group Financial Markets Len Evans Charity Golf Event – to give it its full name – totalled \$1,003,500, which will be distributed among 12 leading Australian charities.

It was the second time the event has topped the \$1 million mark, the first being in 1992.

Highlight of the day was the auction of 14 items at a black tie dinner at The Regent Sydney for a record \$463,500.

The remainder of the money raised came from an art union, corporate sponsorships and the golf tournament and dinner charges.

Top price paid at the auction was \$50,000 for a collection of 220 dozen bottles of Australia's finest wines organised by the Winemakers Federation of Australia.

Next highest was \$44,000 for an uncut sheet of 45 of the new polymer \$10 notes, donated by the Reserve Bank of Australia.



Several specially packaged travel items, which included first class air fares, luxury accommodation and tickets to events such as Wimbledon, the US Masters and British Open golf tournaments, also sold for sums of up to \$42,000.

Several of the smaller auction items also proved popular with buyers with 11 gold nuggets with an Argyle diamond inset selling for \$3,500 each.

Ten imperials of Henschke's Hill of Grace sold for \$4,000 each and the fleece of five pure bred Merino rams, to be made into fashion garments by Adele Weiss, sold for between \$5,500 and \$7,000 each.

The event, which is now in its eighth year, has distributed a total of \$4.7 million to charity groups from the proceeds of the day. When it was first held in 1987, the total raised was only \$130,000. In the second year it raised \$135,000, then \$325,000 in 1989. In 1990, the total increased to \$573,000 and in 1991 to \$700,000.

Participants in the day are drawn from Australia's major banks, the Equities, Options, Futures, bond and foreign exchange markets and associated companies including airlines, hotels, brokers, computer and communications companies and insurance, legal and accounting firms.

Reserve Bank Governor Bernie Fraser, who is also Chairman of the Financial Markets Foundation for Children, said he was absolutely delighted by the result.

"It was marvellous to reach the \$1 million target, and of course we were delighted by the amount raised by the \$10 notes, which exceeded our expectations.

"We are particularly pleased because the Financial Markets Foundation for Children will share in this great result."



BENEFITING CHARITIES

| Charity | Amount |
|---|--------------------|
| Financial Markets Foundation For Children | \$250,000 |
| Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame | \$100,000 |
| Sunnyfield Association | \$100,000 |
| St Vincent's Hospital Bone Marrow Transplant Unit | \$100,000 |
| Multiple Sclerosis Society | \$75,000 |
| Odyssey House McGrath Foundation | \$75,000 |
| Garvan Institute | \$50,000 |
| Joseph Varga School | \$50,000 |
| Paralympic Federation | \$50,000 |
| Arthritis Foundation | \$50,000 |
| Kidney Foundation | \$50,000 |
| Make-a-Wish Foundation | \$50,000 |
| TOTAL: | \$1,000,000 |

WITH SECOND ONE MILLION DOLLAR RESULT



Chief Executive Lee Casey, Dawn Willis, Len Evans, Ross Whowell, Greg Holland and David Jensen point to the total raised by the event.



Macquarie Bank's Paul Robertson (left) paid \$7000 for this merino fleece which was shorn onstage. Paul is pictured with his wife Lenore and Kathe and Bernie Fraser. Mr Fraser is Governor of the Reserve Bank and Chairman of the Financial Markets Foundation for Children.



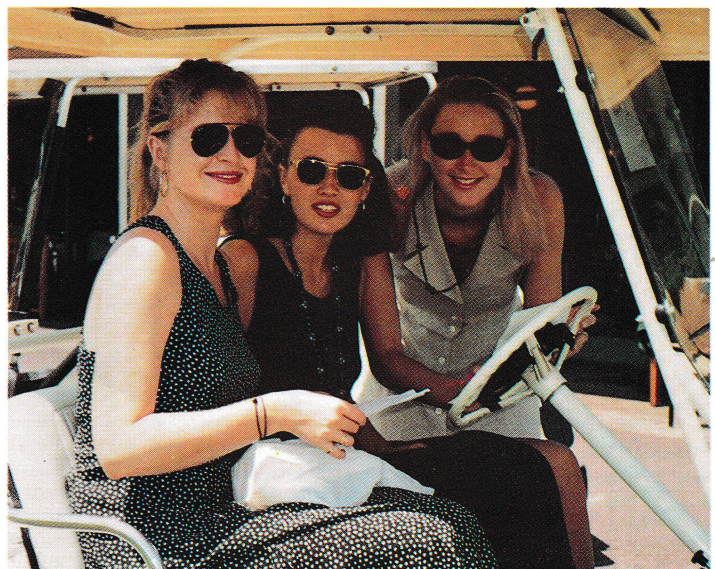
Jerianne Verhille stationed at the par 3 sixth hole.



George Pardon and Bill Bowen at the 10th tee.



Judith Cumming and Caroline Speerin tally up the golfers' scores.



Pictured at the Melbourne golf day are (left to right) Gabby van Meurs, Anita Ful'on and Lisa Marsh.

Melbourne's first financial markets golf day at the Peninsula course produced a runaway winner in J. P. Morgan Vice President Michael Wood with 42 points. Runner up was Geoff Forster of CS First Boston with 35 points.

The switch from its traditional home at The National proved popular with the players. Most described it as a difficult but very fair test of golf, and easier to cope with than the slick, undulating greens at the former course. Weather conditions were ideal with temperatures around the 30 degree mark but a fleet of well-stocked drinks carts managed to keep dehydration at bay.

First prize in the Melbourne golf day, restricted to 100 players drawn from AAP Reuters Economic Services clients and staff, is a trip to Sydney with accommodation provided at the Regent Hotel to play in the Pennant Hills golf tournament. Michael's individual score in Sydney was 36 points.

John Edward Lowing, 46, General Manager Financial Markets Services, has been a member of the AAP Group Executive Committee since 1983.

Opportunities Will Open Up for Staff as AAP's Future Unfolds Says GM Financial Markets Services

It seems clear, in retrospect, that John Lowing's destiny with AAP has been mapped out ever since he replied to an advertisement in an English newspaper nearly 25 years ago.

It led to him being hired by Reuters on behalf of AAP for his engineering expertise at the tender age of 21 to help set up a joint economic services operation in Australia.

He has been closely involved with the development of AAP Reuters Economic Services ever since, and four years ago was appointed General Manager, Financial Markets Services.

He now has the task of guiding that division through some of its most challenging times and to develop new markets for its products and new products for its market.

Competition has emerged from several quarters, he says, and the structure of the markets and the demands these have placed on information providers have changed the game dramatically.

John, who takes pride in driving himself at least as hard as anyone who works for him and he is known for being a perfectionist, an enthusiast and a realist, says the AAP RES role has been a challenge that he's enjoyed.

"It was something I had always had a leaning towards. It had an intellectual fascination for me from early technical involvement with the service, and I was pleased when it provided the opportunity which took me in the right direction from a career point of view."

John was recruited to AAP because of his background in what was then leading edge technology - time division multiplexing.

When he arrived in Sydney in 1969, he worked on the Stockmaster and Videomaster systems, the first electronic information systems carrying real time trading data from Australia's major stock exchanges.

"I was recruited by Reuters on behalf of AAP when they were setting up the AAP Reuters Economic Services operation in Australia," he said. "Wally Parr was then the Manager, Phil Meens was recruited at the same time as me and Barney Blundell and Alistair Craig were also involved."

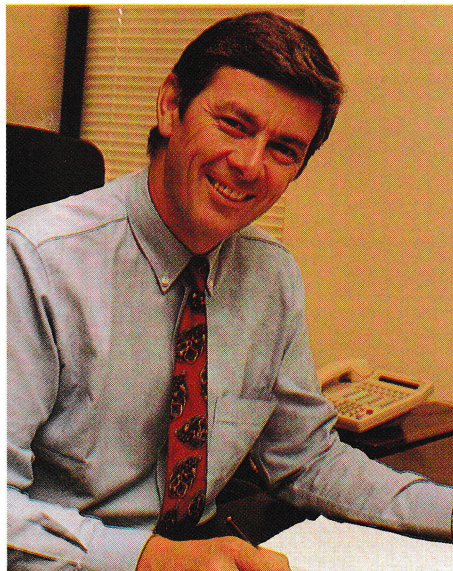
John said he saw the newspaper ad the day after he and his wife to be, Jeannie, had decided that an engineering career in the UK was somewhat limited.

"We'd decided to travel for a couple of years and have some fun before we settled down with a mortgage and children.

"I applied right away and got the job. I was earning 15 pounds a week and Reuters offered me 30 pounds. Then they said, "Is that enough?" I was too dumbfounded at the time to ask for more.

"We came out for two years, which has turned out to be a very long couple of years. Twenty-four years later we are still here."

John was working at the time as a junior engineer with the Plessey Company in Bournemouth, England, having completed a diploma in



John Lowing tackles the paperwork in his Sussex St office.

electronic and computer engineering.

He is a chartered (professional) engineer and a member of the Institute of Electronic and Electrical Engineers (IIEE).

During his six years with Plessey, he was trained in all aspects of the company's technical and production operations and in his final two years there worked on the design and development of data transmission terminals and time division multiplexing communications equipment.

Though he has had a wide range of duties with AAP, John says he has always been connected in some way with the financial services.

His current favourite product is the AMQ, or AAP Market Quotations system, developed entirely

within the company, and which he sees as having significant international potential.

"I am very pleased with this product. It really is leading edge technology stuff and will stand us in good stead and provide us with the security and the ability to compete independently in the future," he said. "We will also be looking to sell it elsewhere."

John said that for him, one of the most amazing things about AAP was what it has been able to achieve with the resources it had available.

"It may not be obvious to many, but we have achieved remarkable things," he said. "We've had no access to outside funding. All the money used for development has come from our own earnings. The economic services have provided most of the funding that has been ploughed back into our development efforts. Without that revenue, none of the other things would have been possible, including AAP Telecommunications."

John has reported directly to Chief Executive Lee Casey for 11 years - first as Manager, Technical Services, from 1983-85, then as Assistant General Manager and Head of Product and Market Development Group from 1985-89, and as General Manager, Corporate Policy, Planning and Development, from 1989 to 1991.

For much of this time, he has been heavily involved in the direction of the company's long medium term market strategies and development of new products and services.

This has included identification of possible new areas of diversification and business opportunities relating to new markets, strategic planning and product system design.

John said that while he's had few real holidays back in the UK since arriving here, his career has provided him with the opportunity for regular business trips there and to Asia and the United States.

These have included travel for training courses, conferences, business negotiations and market research.

One that he remembers well was the five-week Advanced Management Program he undertook at the University of Hawaii in 1992. "Whilst this was a good experience," he said, "in retrospect, it covered too broad a range of subjects from marketing to behavioural science and the culture of corporations. In some areas it was a bit vague and esoteric and at the end of the day was non-

assessable.”

He would prefer to see AAP work out its own program for senior management staff and speaks highly of the Mt Eliza courses which are assessable and where the performance of executives is assessed by their seniors, peers and the people who work for them.

“In this day and age, we have to have that kind of accountability and the level of quality that comes with it,” John said, “and we need to prepare our talented up and comers for future leadership roles in the AAP Group in the future.

“These days our customer service and support has to be at the highest possible level; it has become a real differentiator in our market - more so than price to much of our client base. We have to change our approach as a company. We are seeing more and more competition across all aspects of our business and we have to change our attitudes to meet the changes. It is starting to happen, but I’d like to see it accelerated. We have to bring all staff to the same level of awareness.

“Our customer base and the markets are changing rapidly and we have to pick the trends and adapt to them. This is also where technology is so vital. You have to pick the right technology and be ready to move with it, often quite rapidly.

“Information is a commodity and it’s become much more accessible in recent times. Companies can get their hands on a range of information sources and startup with capital resources much less than a few years ago. The barriers to entry have been reduced, making it easier for new players to come into the business.”

John said that AAP’s user base had become much more sophisticated in their use of technology and the company had to keep up with them.

“We have to get away from the notion of just supporting terminals and the information that goes on them.

“Now it is a matter of how that information is accessed, presented and how quickly and easily it can be assimilated. Our users need to know immediately what it means - they don’t want to have to work it out. The range of information available has also become a factor.

“With AMQ for example, we are abreast, if not ahead, of similar developments almost anywhere else in the world. We are pioneering this sort of service to our clients and this brings its own difficulties because we are sometimes in uncharted territory. The technology we use now to deliver our services is vastly different and is totally PC software based.”

John said AAP would need to be able to provide integrated solutions to meet individual needs because that was now what its clients wanted.

“In the process, it is vital that we train, and

constantly retrain, our entire support staff particularly our field technicians and client liaison executives, who do an extremely important job for us as front line people.”

From a modest start only three years ago, there are now more than 1200 AMQ terminals in the financial marketplace, and the number is growing rapidly. “We have lots of plans and ideas for our product range which adds to the rough picture.”

To illustrate his point about the need for change, John said there’s an old quote which holds that ‘If you always do what you’ve always done, you will



Jeannie & John Lowing relaxing at home.

always get what you’ve always got.”

“That quote still holds true,” he said, “particularly in the context of quality and therefore competitiveness. To stay competitive one needs to change constantly the way one does things to improve products, levels of quality and productivity to increase sales opportunities, customer satisfaction and margins to stay on top.

“If one continues to do things the way they have always been done then improvement in these areas of output cannot be achieved, and as a result relative competitiveness declines as others improve.

“Some might argue that technology drives change, but I disagree. I believe it is people. Technology is the facilitator or enabler to change, but it doesn’t matter what the technology is, if there is not a real or even perceived benefit then at the end of the day people won’t change.

“People drive the technology and provide the ideas and the impetus which bring about technological advances.

“As Albert Einstein said, ‘Imagination is far more important than knowledge.’ You can buy knowledge, but you can’t buy imagination.

“What’s the good of a lot of knowledge if you haven’t got the imagination to use it profitably?”

John, who is strongly built 1.93 metres and puts his weight at 88.0 kg said he believes in regular

exercise but is not a fanatic. “I do it to keep my weight under control and my cardio vascular system in shape,” he said.

Even a serious crash during his early morning bike ride two days before Christmas last year, which left him unconscious for half an hour and required major plastic surgery to repair a smashed cheekbone, has not daunted him.

It’s only left him frustrated at not being able to get back to his former levels of activity and fitness for several months, “but I’ll be out again as soon as I’m able.”

He used to cycle 20 km every weekday morning, setting out around 6 am “and as far as a couple of hours would take me on weekends.”

He’d only taken up cycling in October after recurring back injuries forced him to give up running, which he had enjoyed every morning for many years.

“It used to set me up for the day,” he said. “I’d take the dogs along with me - we have two large ones - and we’d run for miles, usually with me ahead I might add.” At his only serious attempt at the City to Surf, in 1989, he completed the course in under an hour.

John crashed off his bicycle as he turned into a corner going downhill only 400 metres from his house.

A cycle helmet saved him from more serious injury.

His other sporting interests are golf, which he plays off a handicap of 15 as a member at Monash, and motorsport,

which he now enjoys mainly as support crew for his son.

“When Mark started racing go karts, I realised that to set the vehicle up properly, you needed feedback from the driver,” he said.

“I didn’t always understand what he was trying to tell me, so that gave me the excuse to buy one for myself too. I broke a collarbone early in my go-karting career, but I went back to driving them as soon as that healed.

“Eventually, I realised that you couldn’t look after two karts properly at the one meeting, and as it was equally clear that Mark had more potential, I stepped back into a support role, much to the relief of my wife Jeannie.”

Mark went on to win the NSW junior title at age 16 and finished second at the Australian Championships the same year.

Now aged 19, and an apprentice electrician, he has graduated to Formula Ford racing with ambitions to drive at Bathurst or overseas.

John’s daughter Rebecca, 17, is equally passionate about her dancing, especially ballet, and constantly pirouettes about the house, he says.

Her ballet training also comes in handy with the washing up, he added, because First Position (feet turned out horizontally) allows her to stand very close to the sink.

Continued from page 9

Rebecca enjoys all forms of dancing and is part of a regional schools dance ensemble and also has ambitions to go on to bigger things. She is also a very good choreographer.

John said that opportunities will open up for quite a lot of people as AAP's future unfolds.

"These opportunities will come about as a result of AAP's capacity and vision and the confidence it has to pursue opportunities and to make them happen. We will need good people to be implementors of these opportunities and be our future leaders.

"One of our strengths that is not widely enough recognised is our vision and the fact we have the guts and confidence to go with it.

"Lee Casey has shown the way here, but there is a synergy between Lee and his senior executives.

"I was ready to go years ago when I thought the company would remain stagnant as a news agency but my view changed when I realised soon after Lee arrived he wanted to make AAP something else – bigger and more diverse, and successful as a truly commercial organisation, as opposed to the non-profit co-operative it used to be.

"There are also a few other visionaries around. I have some things I would like to see done, projects which relate to the business of news and information."

John said that in some ways the challenges and change that AAP may have to confront over the next 12-18 months will be of untold benefit to the company and its staff.

"It will give us the opportunity to do new things and develop more rapidly in certain areas where we have been constrained in the past. It will also force us to make concerted efforts to implement alternatives," he said.

John likes to compare the various division of the AAP Group to commando units, opposed in many instances to army regiments. "We need to be fleet of foot and strike quickly in response to opportunities," he said. "That has been one of the reasons for the success of AAPT."

Returning to Einstein's theory, he said AAP was fortunate in having both knowledge and imagination in abundance.

"We have many challengers in the supply of information in the financial markets, but we think we know the business better than anyone else.

"We have years of accumulated expertise and we are well respected in the market place, and we're also going to be more innovative than anyone else out there.

"I believe the company has made significant strides – it hasn't been an easy road and with continued guts, determination and the confidence we have in our own abilities the future is very exciting and promising."

Press Gallery Project Sparks Recollections

AAP has donated \$10,000 towards restoration of part of the press gallery around the House of Representatives chamber in Old Parliament House – as it is now officially known.

This includes the AAP and ABC offices, the Prime Minister's press office and the offices of several major newspapers.

Chairman of the OPH Redevelopment Committee Doug McClelland said it had

put up a proposal for the complete restoration of the building over six years at a total cost of \$56 million.

The project would be completed in time for the centenary of federation and for the influx of tourists that the year 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney will bring, he said.

Plans include use of the members dining room for Heads of State dinners and for it to be leased to companies for their annual meetings and other functions.

News Ltd and the Fairfax Group have also donated \$10,000 each towards the press gallery project, which will include exhibitions showing the typical office set up and the way technology used to report the news has changed over the years.

Former AAP Canberra bureau chiefs recalled more stringent times when they agreed that it was more money than had been spent on the gallery during all their working years there.

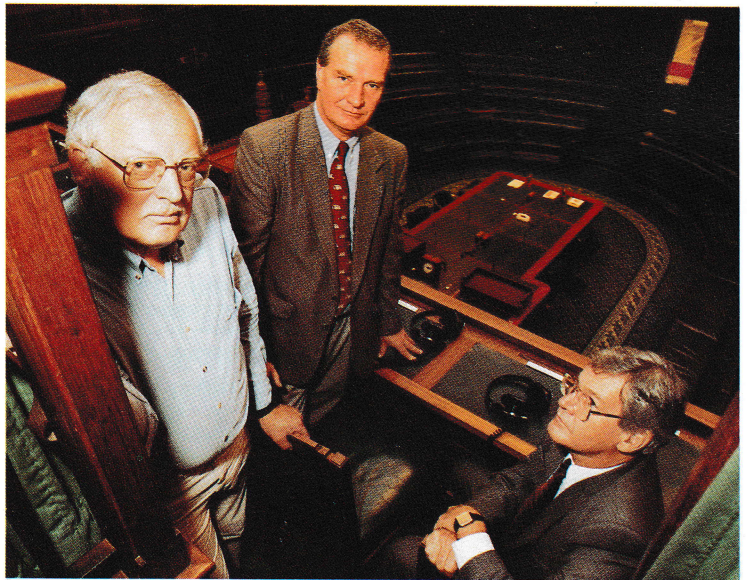
David Barnett, the first AAP bureau chief in Canberra from 1971 to 1975, said that one of his first battles had been to secure the two rooms which AAP occupied until the move to the new Parliament House in 1988.

"It was the best sited office in the whole gallery," he said, because it opened directly on to the House of Representatives press gallery overlooking the chamber and was next door to the Prime Minister's press office.

"Working conditions were shocking," he said. "I solved the problem of providing enough working space by building benches around the walls. I called them (the journalists rather than the space) my work units. They didn't like that very much."

AAP's two small rooms later accommodated a permanent staff of 14, which swelled during sitting weeks, with extra journalists from Sydney and casual teleprinter operators, to as many as 20.

"When I arrived there was linoleum on the floor,"



Former Canberra bureau chiefs David Barnett, Bruce Jones and Les Murphy at the press benches above the old House of Representatives chamber.

David said. His request to the then General Manager Duncan Hooper for carpet met with a shipment of gold carpet taken up from the floor of the Wynyard House offices after AAP's move to Sussex Street.

"The carpet layer didn't know what to make of that lot," David said. "But there was enough left over to use at a farmhouse I had as well."

David also recalls the feeling familiar to most bureau chiefs thrown in at the deep end in Canberra.

"There were all these journo's who'd been there for years, knew everyone, pretended to know everything and walked around with these mysterious smiles on their silly faces. I decided that the only way to combat them was for the AAP bureau to be super efficient." And that, we all agreed, has been AAP's *modus operandi* ever since.

David Barnett was succeeded by David Jensen from 1975-1980, Les Murphy from 1980-82, Bruce Jones from 1982-87, Don Woolford from 1987 to 1993 and Tony Vermeer, since September, 1993. Mick Connolly and Bruce Hewitt (now retired) also had brief stints heading the operation.

Bruce Jones, who has spent the last 24 years in the press gallery apart from a two-year posting as AAP's London bureau chief, says that while he enjoyed his time as an agency man – "has a romantic ring to it, doesn't it" – agency people did it hard.

"I ended my time with AAP as I started, working my backside off, writing nightleads about an Opposition in disarray, a possible leadership challenge, alleged ministerial misbehaviour, election speculation, etc." Not a lot's changed.

A quick tour of the Prime Minister's suite and the Cabinet Room also revealed a detail not previously discovered by the press gallery – the bidet in the PM's ensuite.

It was installed, we were told, by Gough Whitlam and first used by the then Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

New Minister Makes AAPT His First Stop

Communications Minister Michael Lee spent the New Year hiatus coming to grips with his new portfolio, and his first official function in the new role was a visit to the Sydney headquarters of AAP Telecommunications.

The Minister spent an afternoon at the Glebe offices early in January for talks with the company's senior executives on AAPT's role in the liberalised telecommunications marketplace and the contribution made by service providers generally.

Accompanied by close advisers and the new head of the Department of Communications in Canberra, Neville Stevens, Mr Lee heard presentations by Chief Executive Barry Wheeler and Director of Network Services Oscie Brown.

While new to telecommunications, the Minister is no stranger to the wider field of communications and the media. Two years ago he figured prominently as Chairman of the high-profile and intimately reported House of Representatives Select Committee on the Print Media.

A graduate of the University of New South Wales with a First Class Honours degree in Electrical Engineering, he also served on a Parliamentary Committee investigating telecommunications interceptions.

"All of which should hold him in good stead to deal with the swag of AAPT issues likely to hit his desk in the near future," Barry Wheeler said.

"Incidentally, by our reckoning, Mr Lee is the seventh Minister to hold the portfolio since 1990."



Communications Minister Michael Lee with AAPT Chief Executive Barry Wheeler.

CSO Entertains at Government House

The Canberra Symphony Orchestra recently serenaded Canberrans in the gardens of Government House and AAP, as a sponsor of the orchestra, took the opportunity to invite special guests to enjoy the afternoon's music.

Around 6,000 people gathered to enjoy the program of light classical music. Guest artists included young Australian conductor Andrew Greene and soprano Karen Sourry.

"The CSO really added to the grace of Government House that afternoon," ACT Group Manager Peter Monaghan said. "We had a number of clients and other important guests who



Soprano Karen Sourry in full voice during the Canberra Symphony Orchestra Prom Concert in the gardens of Government House. AAP entertained guests from the marquee in the background.

were delighted to be there and enjoy the concert."

The CSO is the only capital city symphony orchestra which is not financed by the ABC. The AAP Group has been proud to sponsor the orchestra for the last two years.

Good Sports at the Corporate Games

The 1994 Australian Corporate Games were held recently and AAP fielded 69 athletes in nine sports - golf, netball, road running, softball, soccer, squash, tennis, touch football and triathlon.

Events centred around Darling Harbour, Wentworth Park and The Domain, with squash played in North Sydney and golf at Concord.

While AAP didn't reach the finals in any events, our team came fifth overall in its division. The best individual result was achieved by Bruce Montgomerie who came fifth in the men's 40+ singles tennis. The men's soccer team and golfer Graeme Finley both came in sixth, while the women's soccer team came second - though there were only two teams in their division.

AAP participants scored highly on the enjoyment meter though, with some event organisers commenting on the good spirits and sportsmanship of the AAP players. This contrasted with some teams which appeared to take their sport as seriously as their business.

"One of the teams we played in the softball was clearly not there for fun and chose to debate



The AAP men's soccer team (standing, from left): David Camm, Jody Phillips, Scott Frain, Tom Jones, Iain Atkins and Andrew Meagher and (seated) Joel Brzeski, Angelo Tilocca, Numan Ersan, Ramsin Shamon, Derek Morgan and Fedele Galluzzo.

every decision the umpire made," said AAPT's Neil Adamson.

"The difference in approach between us and another team was clear in the pre-match build up. The other team discussed field placements and game plans while the AAPT side coolly finished cigarettes, traded good-natured insults and drained stubbies!"

Nevertheless, AAPT lost the game by just one run. "A good time was had by all," said Neil, "and there's always next year!"

Keen sportsman and women should note that AAP will again be fielding a team in the City to Surf in August, so get those running shoes out and start training. Group Corporate and Public Affairs will give staff details closer to the event.

Fast Masters

The Finance Department is about to boast two Masters degrees, in the form of Senior Financial Accountant Silas Suen and Asset & Management Accountant Karen Lee.

Silas is due to complete his degree shortly while Karen completed hers in 1992. Both majored in Finance and Treasury Management, and both will have achieved their Masters six months early.

Silas and Karen are originally from Hong Kong, where they obtained their initial accounting qualifications. Karen's employers there included Hewlett Packard, while Silas spent three years at the Hong Kong Hilton and 10 years at the famous Hong Kong Jockey Club.

"I must say I never won anything while I worked there. Maybe it was just my luck but the so-called tips never worked."

Silas moved here with his wife Lily in 1986, attracted by images of Australia as a clean, green environment with friendly people. So far, he says, it's lived up to his expectations.

After two years with Jones Lang Wootton he joined AAP in 1988 and embarked on his MBA degree in 1991 through the University of Technology,

Sydney, taking just three and a half years to finish instead of the usual four.

"Completing an MBA was always one of my ambitions in life. Apart from broadening your knowledge, it gives you more confidence and as it's very relevant to my work I felt it would help me do my job better.

"The subjects I've covered comprise a balanced mix of both the technical and personal management aspects and are immediately applicable to my work, so work and study have supplemented each other quite well.

"It's been a lot of work, it's very demanding. You have to spend time in the evenings and on weekends on projects and meetings. It did drive my wife a bit

around the bend. But I really appreciate the fact that she's been so supportive. I couldn't have done it without her."

Karen too had support from her husband Peter, as well as encouragement from AAP for her degree, which she took through the University of New South Wales and completed in just 18 months.

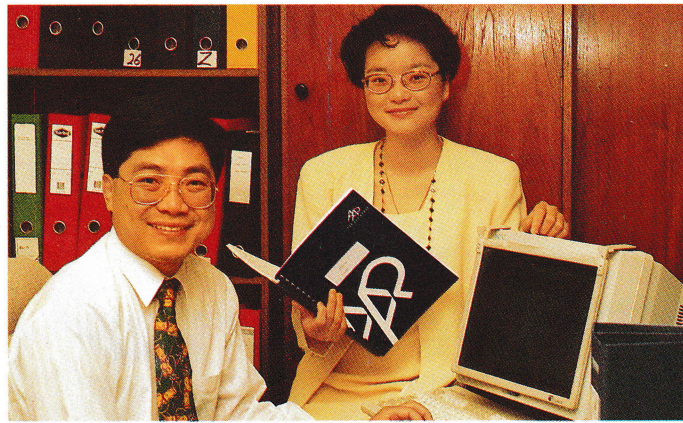
"I had some exemptions, so it should've taken two years but I managed to complete it in three semesters, or 18 months.

"Treasury and finance functions are becoming more important and sophisticated, and I wanted to keep abreast of the developments in the market," Karen said.

"At AAP I look after all the leasing and my course was directly related to that. It gave me more knowledge of the Australian market, and of other types of finance."

Karen migrated to Australia in early 1987, prompted by the agreement between Britain and China to hand Hong Kong back to the mainland in 1997. Two weeks later she joined AAP. Seven years later, she is very much at home in Sydney.

"Peter has his own business here and my parents are migrating soon. We're unlikely to go back, even though China seems more open now - AAP is even doing business with them!"



The Finance Department's Silas Suen and Karen Lee.

Phone Discounts Now Available To All AAP Staff

All AAP employees can now join the AAP Telecommunications Employee Plan, which gives discounts on long distance and international telephone calls.

The plan has been modelled on AAPT's Vista product, which makes longer duration STD and IDD calls more economical during peak, off-peak and economy periods. According to Product Manager Neil Adamson, membership of the plan can result in substantial savings.

"On average, calls using the AAPT network will be 20 per cent cheaper than Telecom STD rates and 15 per cent cheaper than Telecom IDD rates. The Employee Plan is also cheaper than Optus in most cases."

AAPT commercial rates have been substantially reduced to provide a better deal for members of the AAPT Employee Plan, and a flag fall of 10 cents has been introduced, which is comparable to Optus and cheaper than Telecom.

Specially established destination groupings offer further discounts. These include Sydney to the

Gold Coast, Adelaide to Darwin, Perth to Hobart, Melbourne to Adelaide and Brisbane to Newcastle. A full list of special destinations and costings is available from AAPT.

"Access to the AAPT network is generally available from all current AAPT service zones, although residential areas serviced by older Telecom exchanges may not be able to accommodate the AAPT service," added Neil. "Anyone who requires a list of marginal access areas can phone me on 1802."

To make a call using the AAPT network, simply dial '1414' prior to dialling the STD or IDD number, once you have been registered on the network.

Those interested in joining the AAPT Employee Plan will need to complete an application form which is available from Kerry Ann Meredith on 1075.

For other enquiries about the Employee Plan, contact Neil Adamson on 1802.

| DISTANCE | AAPT | OPTUS | TELECOM | SAVING OPTUS | SAVING TELECOM |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|
| 100km to 165km | \$0.60 (Economy) | \$0.73 (Economy) | \$0.79 (Economy) | 18% | 24% |
| | \$0.90 (Off Peak) | \$1.15 (Off Peak) | \$1.23 (Off Peak) | 22% | 27% |
| | \$1.33 (Peak) | \$1.69 (Peak) | \$1.79 (Peak) | 22% | 26% |
| 165km to 745km | \$0.65 (Economy) | \$0.73 (Economy) | \$0.81 (Economy) | 11% | 19% |
| | \$1.00 (Off Peak) | \$1.15 (Off Peak) | \$1.27 (Off Peak) | 13% | 21% |
| | \$1.45 (Peak) | \$1.69 (Peak) | \$1.85 (Peak) | 14% | 22% |
| 745km+ | \$0.80 (Economy) | \$0.94 (Economy) | \$1.00 (Economy) | 15% | 20% |
| | \$1.40 (Off Peak) | \$1.66 (Off Peak) | \$1.79 (Off Peak) | 16% | 22% |
| | \$2.05 (Peak) | \$2.44 (Peak) | \$2.62 (Peak) | 16% | 22% |

Kerrie's Triple Treat

In the Year of the Family, there is increasing community debate about just what constitutes a family unit in Australia in 1994. To some, a family consisting of two parents of the same sex is a contradiction in terms, but homosexual couples who have or want to have children are increasingly demanding recognition as a family unit.

Kerrie Bray, Supervisor of AAP's Engineering Department, is one who is redefining the concept of family.

Kerrie and her partner of three years, Sue, became the proud parents of triplets born four weeks premature on January 6: Jaime Lee, Jordon Elizabeth and Sam Tyler. While Sue is their biological mother, Kerrie is playing just as close a parenting role, taking an equal share of the considerable care the three require.

"We make up 18 bottles twice a day, and go through 30 to 36 nappies a day – it's a lot of work," Kerrie said. "We've decided to operate in separate shifts – Sue's got to get her rest."

Kerrie, 29, and Sue, 36, had been keen to have a baby for some time, but were shocked to discover, six weeks into Sue's pregnancy, just how big their family would become.

"I was stunned when I found out Sue was having triplets, it left me speechless and anyone who knows me knows that is quite an event," Kerrie said.

"We had already bought a pram, and a few other things singularly, and suddenly we had to think in terms of threes. Instead of getting three dozen cloth nappies, for example, you have to get nine dozen.

"We were lucky though, we won \$1000 worth of baby stuff from Baby Co in a competition with 2WS, which was fantastic. We picked up a lot of things cheaply at garage sales too, and my mum just kept making clothes!

"When they were born, we got a lot of things given to us by manufacturers like Sterling Winthrop, Milton and Johnson & Johnson, such as tins of formula and other products. It really came in handy, because you don't get any help from the government unless you have quads."

Kerrie admits to feeling some trepidation about telling her work colleagues of her impending parenthood.

"Before the birth it was a bit hard to explain, and I thought they would be negative, but I've had a

lot of support, especially from my managers and from Linda Ward in Personnel. I only heard of one negative comment from a colleague.

"The reaction of our neighbours has been excellent, especially for Campbelltown! And the hospital staff were absolutely fantastic. Sue was in hospital for 12 weeks and they were brilliant from day one. They made sure they got me to the hospital on time for the births, they treated us like royalty."

Kerrie believes the response she and Sue have had reflects a positive change in the wider community towards homosexual couples having children, even though, despite her relationship with Sue and the babies, she has no legal claim as a parent or guardian.



Kerrie Bray with triplets (l-r) Sam, Jaime Lee and Jordon

"People's attitudes are definitely changing towards single sex couples. We can function as a family just like anyone else. I know people who've grown up in families where one parent is an alcoholic, or abusive, or not even there. Who's to judge who?"

Kerrie and Sue plan to explain their relationship to Jaime, Jordon and Sam when the triplets are old enough. "We'll play it by ear. We're not flaunting our relationship but we're not living in a closet. We'll explain it to them as they get older, and tell them that not everyone will approve or understand."

A more immediate dilemma is what the children will call Kerrie, once they are old enough to talk. "Sue's mum, and kids only have one mum. I don't want to be an aunt. I think it'll be whatever the kids call me first."



Pat Herety and Peder Kastengren at the Octel training

Voice Mail Now Includes Fax

A training session for AAP Communications Services' Octel sales team on the latest release of software for the voice messaging system was held at North Ryde in early February.

Conducted by Cindi Rhodes and Janice Hulse from Octel Corporation in the United States, the training session familiarised staff with the considerable benefits of the new software, which allows users to receive fax messages into their mail boxes.

According to AAPCS National Sales and Marketing Manager Peter Firth, the software release is part of Communications Services' continued commitment to providing clients with state of the art technology.

"AAPCS is committed to providing business networking solutions and is still the market leader in voice messaging systems. The release of Octel's latest software will ensure that our product stays at the head of the market," Peter said.

The benefits of the new software are considerable and include increased security and convenience.

Printouts of confidential fax documents can be delayed to a convenient time, while busy fax machines can have calls diverted to a mailbox, to be printed later when the machine is no longer busy. This is particularly useful for those firms with a very busy peak hour, but which do not require a second fax machine for the majority of the time.

Burning Desire to Put Out the Story Matches That to Quell the Fires

While volunteer firefighters tackled the New South Wales bushfire disaster, volunteer journalists were helping to report it.

AAP's army of rostered staff was augmented by a brigade of journalists who pitched in their own time and effort from all points of the compass amid a variety of their own troubles.

Sub-editors cut off from work turned themselves into on-the-spot reporters. Editors filed copy as their own homes were under threat. Holidaying reporters stranded on fire-ravaged freeways got stories through by mobile phone.

Other AAP staff enjoying time off contacted the Sydney newsroom to offer their services.

Canberra reporter Terry O'Connor was returning from a Queensland holiday on the afternoon of Friday, January 7, the day the fires first began to explode after burning all week.

He didn't get as far as Sydney. Terry became trapped in a giant traffic jam after fire closed the F3 freeway to the north.

But he somehow laid his hands on a mobile phone and sent through first hand accounts of how thousands slept in the cars and by the roadside.

Sydney NewsDesk sub-editor Ashley Osmond was another isolated by the fires who filed reports from his home area of Newcastle that night to help keep the show on the road.

His account of the harrowing journey to the office the next day began: "My trip to work normally takes less than two hours, thanks to the wonderful new freeway extension that opened a few weeks ago. Today it took nine hours – the wonderful new freeway was burning."

On the other side of Sydney that Saturday, Editor in Charge Doug Conway was home at Kareela, within a couple of km of the ferocious firestorm that turned Como and Jannali into the worst-hit area in



The view from Kerry-Ann Meredith's Como West balcony on Friday, January 7...

| AAP BUSHFIRE DONATIONS | | | |
|--|----------|----------|-----------------|
| AAP staff donated generously to the Lord Mayor's Bush Fire Appeal Fund, with those donations matched dollar for dollar by the company. | | | |
| The most generous individual donation was \$1,000 by Maurice Maneschi of the Finance Department. | | | |
| | Staff | Company | Total |
| | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| AAP Information Services | 2,692.65 | 2,692.65 | 5,385.30 |
| AAP Communications Services | 1,000.00 | 1,000.00 | 2,000.00 |
| AAP Telecommunications | 1,226.25 | 1,226.25 | <u>2,452.50</u> |
| | | | 9,837.80 |

the state, with some 90 houses destroyed and one woman killed.

Doug's weekend off soon became a weekend on.

He filed spot reports on Saturday night and returned to the heart of the devastation the next morning to file a report which began: "On Friday it was suburbia. On Saturday night it was hell. Today it looked like a lunar landscape."

Soon after the bushfire crisis blew up, Sydney newsroom "fire warden" Warwick Stanley in Sydney Bureau had his staff bolstered by recruits from other desks – Julie Earle from Finance, Joanne Williamson from Broadcast, Rod McGuirk from NewsDesk, Daniel Lane from Sport.

Louise Evans and Mike Osborne, in Sydney en route from London to open AAP's Beijing bureau, swelled the ranks. Morgan

Ogg returned from a central coast holiday to help.

On Saturday Greg Truman from the Sports Desk volunteered for duty. Rosemary Triggs and Peter Lewis came in from days off to boost the Broadcast Desk. Marg McDonald pulled extra overnight duty.

On Sunday Shani Keane stepped off a plane from Bali, saw the bushfires on TV and headed into work. Steve Dettre interrupted his holidays to cover the fires in Sydney's northern suburbs.

None of this, of course, makes mention of the dozens of staff rostered on normal duties throughout the bushfire crisis. To many of them, "normal" meant long hours, intense pressure and an unrelenting workload.

Editor in Chief Peter Brown said the effort by AAP staff in covering the bushfires had been magnificent, earning the admiration of subscribers and colleagues around the country.

Ron Hinds from Sydney Electricity called to put on record his "great appreciation" for the "tremendous cooperation" AAP had given him in disseminating power information. He said he had relied greatly on our news wires to get the information to other media outlets.



The day after – Como West Public School.

Pat Witnesses the Passing of the Pollies in 30 Years at Parliament House

Pat Rawlings, invaluable assistant to a succession of Canberra staff members, completed 30 years with AAP in the Parliament House press gallery last month.

"I started as a casual teleprinter operator on February 25, 1964, the first parliamentary sitting day of that year, and I've been here ever since," she said.

At that time, the AAP Parliamentary Service was provided by journalists seconded from the Sydney Morning Herald, Age, Daily Mirror, Sun and Telegraph newspapers and AAP staffers despatched from Sydney.

"Peter Bowers headed the team when I started and it operated only during the sessions until AAP established a permanent presence in the press gallery in 1971," she said.

"In those days we punched copy blind on to teleprinter tapes for transmission to Sydney. The upgrade to Siemens from the old Sagems was a real bonus as their touch was so much lighter. Then came computers in 1983."

Pat says she's thoroughly enjoyed her time with AAP, despite the chaotic working conditions in the old Parliament House.

Through it all she has managed to remain the same calm, dignified and happy person who was friend and mentor to all and who has hardly seemed to age despite the years of service.

"It has been great to be so involved with the growth of AAP in Canberra," Pat said. The permanent office started with a bureau chief and two journalists, increasing over the years to a head of bureau and 11 journalists.

"I felt a great sense of achievement over the input I was allowed to have in the late 80s planning the present AAP office and actively helping organise the move 'up the hill' to the new Parliament House. Those were extremely busy days.

"I've liked all the people I've worked with. The only sad part is that the staff here have changed so rapidly over the years.

"It must have been good or I wouldn't have stayed all this time," she said.

"I don't know how I am going to handle retirement, even though I want to retire in a couple of years. Maybe I'll have to do a bit of part time to ease out of it.

"I just feel I want a bit more time at home as a housewife before Bernie retires."

Home is now a five acre property at Murrumbateman, a small village outside Canberra and Bernie her husband of 37 years, who took four months away from his job driving buses to build their farmhouse, which they've named Dundry, after the village in Somerset where



Pat is congratulated by David Jensen, General Manager, Corporate and Media Services while Peter Monaghan, Group Manager ACT looks on, at the function celebrating her 30 years with AAP.

her grandmother was born.

Quizzed about the politicians she remembers best, Pat says, "I suppose you get a bit blasé about them. After all, they're just human beings. I always thought Bill Hayden was a good person, though I never met him.

"My favourite was Jim Fraser, the Labor MP for Canberra, who was a good friend of my father.

"We used to see a lot more of the pollies in the old house than we do now."

Pat joined the permanent staff in 1971, first as a teleprinter operator on the night shift, then as secretary cum office manager, social organiser and the rock on which all heads of bureau have depended.

"The best thing that happened in the very early 70s was Gough Whitlam introducing the 11 p.m. adjournment for the House – not that they stick religiously to it," she said.

"Before that, anything between 0030 and 0200 was an early finishing time but many nights were later.

"This was mainly because the journalists went straight to the non-members bar when parliament rose rather than back to the office to file their stories.

"Looking back, I must admit that for me some of the excitement has gone out of getting the story on the wire as computers have made the job so much easier.

"I used to enjoy being an operator when you heard the thunder of many feet as reporters rushed back to their offices and our leader bursting into the room and dictating a few pars to get the story out before anyone else. We were rarely beaten.

"The time Gough Whitlam was sacked is something I will never forget. The shock and urgency of everything happening made it hard to tear yourself away from the office when it was time to go home."



Pat Rawlings relaxes at her property at Murrumbateman.

Pitt Street Christmas Party

The Pitt Street Christmas Party was held on December 17 and staff gathered on the sunny 12th floor balcony to receive their gifts, handed out by a Santa who bore a curious resemblance to a certain Manager of AAP Reuters Economic Services.

The hot sun and cold cheer quickly had everyone relaxed and joining in the Christmas spirit. Craig McIvor played his saxophone. Jacinta Ward and Lisa Tisdell were outstanding as

Santa's helpers, while the most popular gifts proved to be two water pistols, which were given a thorough workout on the day.



Santa with Sonya Goyen.