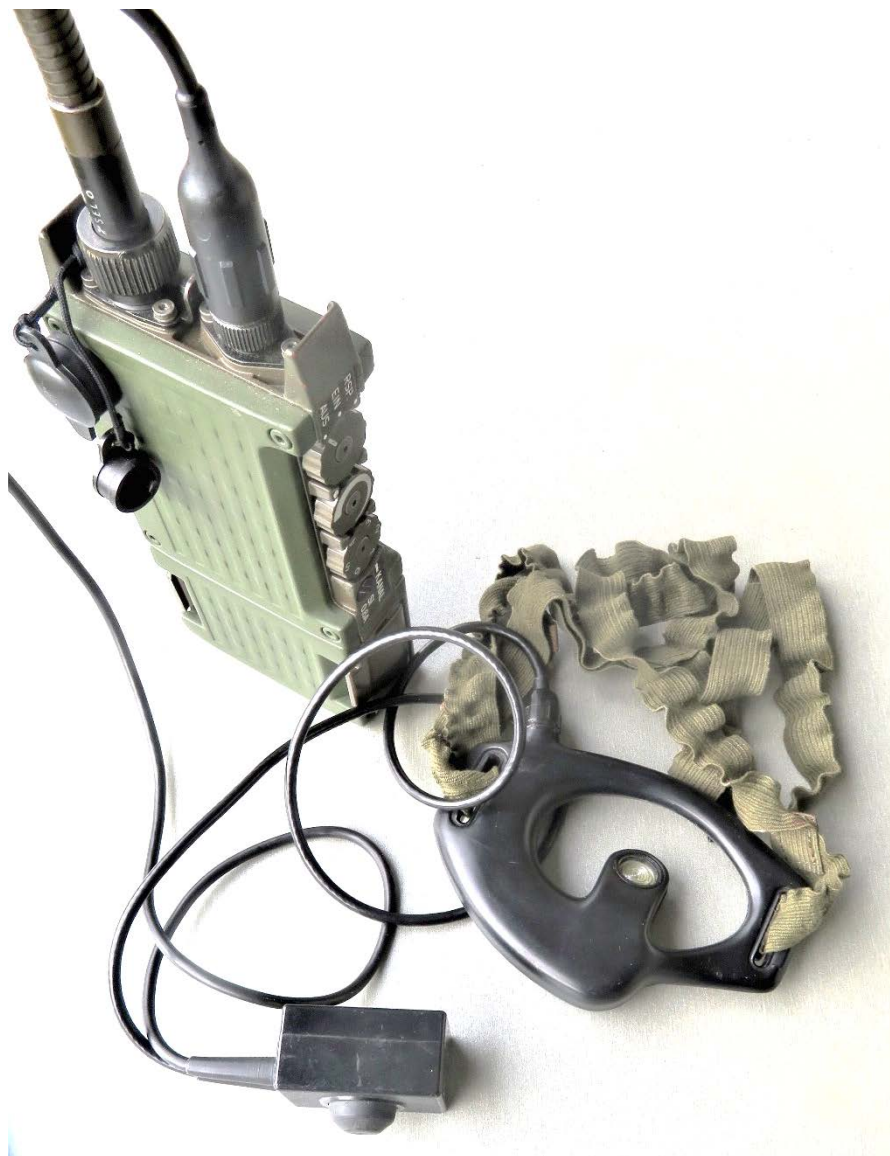


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S.A. GROUP NEWSLETTER



Handsprechfunkgerät SEM 52A

Historical Radio Society of Australia Inc. – S.A. Group

Web Site: www.hrsasa.asn.au

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Forthcoming Meetings (some are tentative)

Sunday 25 th August	Hi-Fi day at St. Cyprians
Sunday 29 th September	Home visit to Warren Lane's.
Sunday 27 th October	"Bush" home meeting and auction
Sunday 24 th November	Auction at St. Cyprians
Sunday 14 th December	Christmas Dinner at the Maid of Auckland
Sunday 19 th January	Sale Day at St. Cyprians
Sunday 23 rd February	Crystal Set display at St Cyprians
Sunday 15 th March	Instructional day
Sunday 29 th March	Auction at St. Cyprians
Sunday 26 th April	Visit to the ETSA Museum to identify their radios.
Sunday 31 st May	One valve or one transistor radio project.
Sunday 28 th June	Visit to the National Military Vehicle Museum at Edinburgh
Sunday 26 th July	AGM and auction.

Retiree's Luncheons

Luncheons are held for retirees and those that can escape work at the Buckingham Arms Hotel (for the time being) on the corner of Walkerville Terrace and Northcote Terrace, Gilberton. Meeting time is 1200 for a 1230 luncheon. All members, including those from interstate, are welcome. Forthcoming luncheons are:

Wednesday 11th September 2019
Wednesday 13th November 2019
Wednesday 8th January 2020
Wednesday 11th March 2020
Wednesday 13th May 2020
Wednesday 8th July 2020

Front Cover

By the early 1970s semiconductor technology had matured to such a state that small light weight radios became a practical proposition. There was an Anglo-Australian agreement for Australia to develop a squad radio for use by both countries. AWA and Racal Australia were both contracted to develop a number of feasibility examples. AWA went down the monolithic path and it is doubted whether they ever produced a working model. Racal went down the thick film path and the Weapons Research Establishment (WRE) was sub-contracted to produce the thick films. As I was the only thick film draftsman in the country at that time, and working for WRE, I produced the layouts and the originals for producing the substrates. This Racal examples, known as the AA-49 by Racal and the UK/PRC-349 by the UK Army, did not pass environmental testing and the project was dropped. An UK example is on display in the National Military Vehicle Museum. A somewhat larger British Racal hand-held radio was adopted in the UK as the UK/PRC-349 squad radio.

In West Germany in the first half of the 1970s, *Standard Elektrik Lorenz AG* produced the crystal locked frequency modulated SEM 52A, which produced some 300 mW of transmitter power between 47 and 57 MHz giving a range of some 3 to 5 km, as their squad radio. The main criticism of this set is the ungainly headset, which has a miniature loudspeaker in the centre and uses bone conduction for the microphone. It is not known whether any country, other than West Germany, used this radio.

Editorial

I guess that I am a glutton for punishment, taking on my third term as editor. Although this is my 8th year, I have a long way to catch up with Alistair's 13 years. So why do I commit myself? I do think the Newsletter is important to the Group, not only to those members that do not have e-mail, but as a means of recording the history of the group. Computer geeks will say to use a computer. When I prepared the first Newsletter in July 1991, it was with the luxury of an electric typewriter with an erasing tape to correct errors and all Newsletters, nearly 100, were put into envelopes, stamped and posted. There were virtually no home computers then and at work I was using *Word Perfect* and recording on a 5-inch floppy disc. Try reading work from that period now. Floppy discs had a very short life and I have had hard-drives and USB memory sticks fail. One day *Office* will become obsolete.

We should not forget our Treasurer, John, who tirelessly prints and posts the Newsletter to those without e-mail facilities, keeps the e-mail address list up to date and also e-mails the Newsletters.

My intention is to produce 6 Newsletters some 10 days before the next meeting of the odd months. This Newsletter is to get back into kilter so that we get a Newsletter just before the all-important AGM next July. The photograph on the front cover has returned. A military radio starts the series off, but there will be a wide variety of covers over the year. I have generally used a minimum of 12-point print, so that those that like to print the Newsletter in booklet form, to produce an A5 booklet, will still be able to read it. I will try and produce the Newsletter in multiples of 4 pages to utilise the booklet format. For those that do not have booklet printing capability should find the large print very easy to read. If you are not aware of booklet printing, ask me at a meeting or e-mail a query. The benefits of modern PDF!

The programme for the next 12 months is somewhat tentative as circumstances can change over 12 months. The idea of the *Instruction day* in mid-March is to set up a few tables with members' borrowed test equipment to enable inexperienced members to get their treasured set working and aligned correctly under

experienced instruction. Note the one valve or one transistor radio receiver to be displayed at the May meeting. Don't leave it until the last minute, start thinking about the project now.

There is a large radio collection that the Group may have the privilege of selling, so after evaluation there may be some extra auctions in the near future.

Finally, as editor, I will not be writing technical articles. Should you have or wish to write technical articles, tit-bits about your days of employment in the radio trade or any other material that you think may be interesting to other members, including wanted and for sale notices, please forward them to me and I will be only too happy to include them.

President's Report

Fellow members, as we start another year with a new Committee, we celebrate the announcement that John & Elizabeth Cox have now been made Life Members of the H.R.S.A.

We your committee, have listened to your feedback and suggestions, especially for activities for the coming year. An exciting program has been designed, such as workshops for those with minimal experience; club projects or builds, such as a crystal set; a one-valve or transistor radio and a working visit/workshop with another group plus our usual regular actions and home visits. The Christmas luncheon will be held this year on Saturday the 14th of December at the Maid of Auckland Hotel. This year the cost will be \$15.00 per person. More will be said about the arrangements at this month's meeting. In the meantime, keep looking at the club's website where the details of the program for the next six months can be found. Go to: www.hrsasa.asn.au and explore the whole site.

Chris Ratcliff

Vale – Bill Verrall

12 August 1935 to 14 July 2019

Bill was born in Angaston in the South Australian Barossa Valley, where his father was the schoolteacher at the Light's Pass Primary School.

At his funeral service, Bill's younger brother Franklin explained that Bill was given his first wireless, a crystal set kit, around his fifth birthday. In one of his pieces in Radio Waves, Bill mentions his making of the crystal set as being when he was a couple of years older. But it certainly set the scene for his hobby of radio for the rest of his quite long life.

This was the first point Franklin made in



Figure 2: Bill Verrall, from Bill's Funeral Liturgy

telling us of Bill's life. Explaining that with VK5WV and his 10 metre tower in the backyard at his Flinders Park home in Adelaide his hobby was pretty hard to miss.

There was no doubt about Bill's age in a photo taken at the age of four. At the time the photo was taken Bill would not stop crying until he was allowed to hold a small brass clock in his hands before being photographed. Clocks were evidently an enthusiasm from an even younger age than radios.

He was educated in Adelaide, while, as was customary with country teachers in those years, his father moved around teaching at various schools on the periphery of the Adelaide area.

As a teenager Bill excelled as a brilliant pianist, and nearly accepted a scholarship to the Adelaide Conservatorium, but turned his back on performance when his piano teacher was killed in a motor-cycle accident. Fortunately, a love of music and particularly jazz, never left him, and proved a further interest throughout his life.

After finishing school Bill won a position as a trainee clerk at the Weapons Research Establishment at Salisbury, where he continued for the rest of his 40-year working career, including some time spent at Woomera. As a sideline to his clerical career, a high-speed driving course at Mallala resulted in him becoming the designated driver in addition to his clerical work.

He married the love of his life (My Joan) in 1957. They never managed to have any children. Their home was established at Flinders Park, where Bill lived right up to his death. When he was turning 80, just after Joan passed away, he ordered a deep blue 420hp Mustang. When it arrived 18 months later age had taken hold, and he had to rely on his brother and his sister Rosemary to drive him around. During his final year Rosemary brought him along to a couple of our HRSA SA Group meetings, and the blue Mustang was quite a feature in the church parking lot although I did not realise it belonged to Bill.

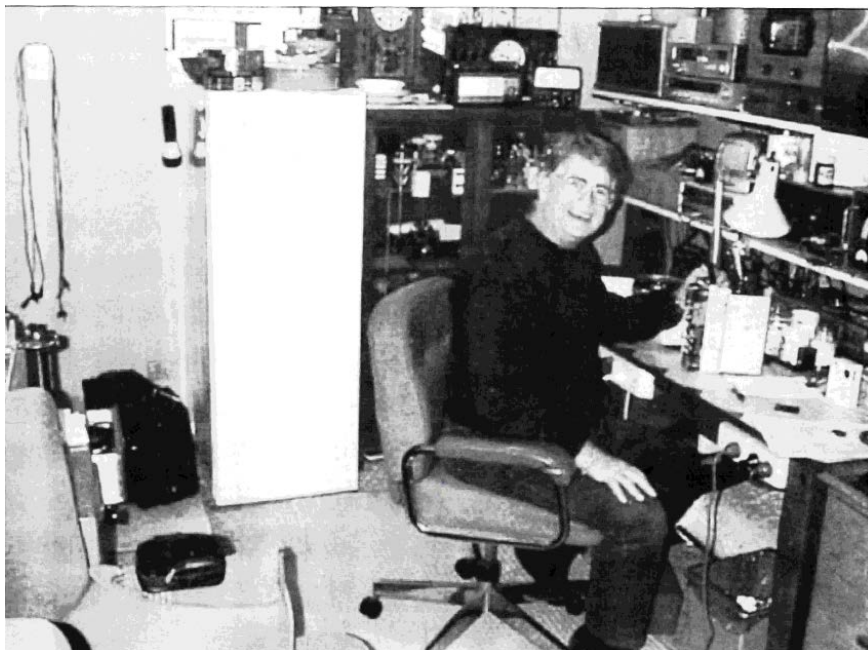


Figure 1: Radio Men and their sheds. Bill Verrall. By Tony Maher, Radio Waves, No 90, October 2004, page 19

From October 1995 through to April 2005 Bill was a regular contributor to Radio Waves. He began with a letter to the editor in October 1995 pointing out that for him post-war sets were of just as much interest as pre-war radios. He backed this up with pieces outlining restoration techniques in the next two editions, and then moving on to describing various sets in his collection.

There were two exceptions, however. In an early piece he tells how his family bought a Philips 6501, purchased at the local Barossa radio shop about Christmas 1937, trading in their Cossor Melodymaker. Finally, in Radio

Waves in April 2005 he tells how he persuaded a fellow HRSA member to part from his Melodymaker allowing Bill to tell how he then had a sample of the first radio he could remember. The Cossor was a kit set sold without a circuit, and able to be assembled in 90 minutes. It makes an interesting story.

The Radio Waves contributions continued for almost 10 years, and over this time Bill appears in the Radio Waves index about 27 times. Maybe calling it a “regular” contribution is something of an understatement; “prolific” seems more to the point.

His writing found a great balance between telling of his own personal experience in acquiring a given radio, telling its story, and something about its manufacture, before moving on to a technical description and his experience in restoring it.

We learn that he joined HRSA in 1991, and quite a few SA Group members can fail to relate to his story about the regular auctions held each year at Antony (Tony) Bell’s house. Bill describes how the items for sale were lined up on tables in Tony’s carport, and those arriving on time had seats close to the action under the roof and a chance to look at the various items for sale. Occasionally an October night can be cold and windy, and outer darkness is an appropriate description how close any latecomers could get to the action. Bill had difficulty locating the right address and arriving late had to stand in the dark by the entrance, with no chance beforehand of looking at what was being offered for sale. He needed to shout to make the auctioneer hear his bid. That is except for a rather sorry set where after quite some coaxing from Tony, it ended up with Bill making the sole bid, sight unseen. Still, it made a great story for Radio Waves.

It was in 2008 that I discovered the HRSA and joined, so I missed meeting Bill in these earlier years. I was however fortunate in having contact via Rosemary and ensuring she was able to bring him along to a few recent meetings. I am very happy to attempt to do justice to Bill’s story, and to wish Rosemary, Franklin and the rest of Bill’s family our sympathy and condolences on the occasion of his passing.

John Crawford

Thank you John Crawford for this great eulogy. Ed.

And from Miles

Adelaide Audio Electronics Fair 2019

Miles Essery 0412 932 995

I am organising an audio electronic fair for the Sunday 6th Oct at the Hungarian Club at 82 Osmond Tce Norwood.

I am doing this – to try and get accessory items and equipment that we are looking for out of peoples’ cupboards and sheds. They are not turning up on gumtree or any other sites. Big items turn up but not the small bits and pieces.

And also because I need a way to sell off excess items and equipment that I have accumulated over the years. My shed is full and needs to be cleared for the next batch of equipment to come in.

I am looking for members who would like to help-out and or have a table to sell off their equipment.

I would also like to have a club display from those members who are into audio – classic speakers, kit and commercial amplifiers.

Entry will be \$5.00, Tables \$20 and will be open to the general public.

Advertising via Facebook, Stereonet and Gumtree.

Committee Meetings

The tentative dates for the committee meetings are given, not that you are expected to attend, but if you have anything that you wish to have discussed by the committee. The dates are 31st October, 23rd January, 19th March and 24th May.

For Sale:

RADIO AND HOBBIES

I have Lee Paltridge's collection of Radio & Hobbies magazines for sale. He purchased it from an advertisement in Radio Waves for \$200. The whole set of R&H covers 312 edition, and Lee's collection includes 240 of these with a few duplicates. Most of the missing copies are in the last five years from April 1959 the final copy in March 1965. I note that a recent bundle of one year's R&H sold at our auction for over \$10, so I hope someone might offer a reasonable price. If you are interested, please call or email me.

John Crawford. 8344 4978
johncraw@internode.on.net.

For Sale

LEE PALTRIDGE'S STEREO AMPLIFIER SYSTEM

As part of Lee Paltridge's collection of radios we felt it would be a shame if we were to break up his stereo valve amplifier system. Hopefully an HRSA SA Group member might be interested to purchase the system as a whole.

There are two valve amplifiers for stereo output, with a Pioneer turntable, FM tuner and CD player. As Lee's health failed, apparently a very useful extra was the remote control allowing him to make adjustments without leaving his chair.

Lee's best friend, Peter Holland has offered to answer any questions as to exactly what might be included.

You can contact Peter on 8271 0048, or via email at pholland@senet.com.au



Figure 3. Lee Paltridge's stereo system.

Photo Gallery



Above Left – In recognition of their Golden Anniversary, John and Elizabeth Cox cut their cake Photo: Ed.

Above Right – A part of the crowd at the AGM. Photo – Victor Besz.



Above – A part of the crowd at the auction following the AGM.

Right – The crowd inspecting goods prior to the auction

Below - Some of the items ready for auctioning.

Photos – Victor Besz

