

Friends of CRC

Les Amis du CRC

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Jan 2013 Newsletter

NEXT MEETING

Thursday 31st Jan 1.00 pm in the auditorium.

Join us for an optional cash lunch in the cafeteria at about noon.

STATUS OF THE CRC IMAGE COLLECTION 1950-2012

**Presented by
John Brebner**

**Sponsored by the Friends of the Communication Research
Centre**

**Thursday, Jan 31, 2013
Commencing at 1:00 PM in the CRC Auditorium**

Illustrated by photographs selected from the more than 200,000 images in the sixty-two year collection of DRB/DRTE/CRC photographs. John, a CRC staff photographer for 32 years, will describe the formation of the photographic collection located at Shirley's Bay.

Starting in 1949, a record was made of most of the research projects and social events at the expanding campus complex. Data entry began in 1988, and digital images were added, starting in 1995. A user friendly browser for CRC employees was begun in 2000 and expanded to include an interface to permit access to the digital images.

John will describe briefly the problems in dealing with such a unique collection, and show how it's possible for anyone to digitize negatives quickly and professionally with a minimum of equipment. The future of the collection will be discussed. All Friends of CRC, and their spouses and friends and employees at the Shirley's Bay site, including DRDC, CSA and military personnel, are cordially invited.

FRIENDS OF CRC EXECUTIVE 2012 - 2013

BASKIN, Hazel	<u>Assist with social</u>
BILLOWES, Colin	<u>Newsletter editor</u>
BREBNER, John	<u>President and Friends of CRC Archivist</u>
CARON, Bernard	
COLE, Colette	<u>Social</u>
FINES, Ross	<u>Program (Shared)</u>
GILBERT, John	<u>Program (Shared)</u>
JELLY, Doris	<u>History</u>
KENNEDY, Andre	<u>Badges</u>
REED, Neville	<u>Secretary</u>
REEKIE, Hugh	<u>IEEE & IET Liaison</u>
ROSS, Donald B.	<u>Snail mailouts</u>
SAWTELL, Jim	<u>Annual Reports</u>
SHLIEN, Seymour	<u>Membership list and Electronic mail to members</u>

I AM OBLIGED TO ED DUCHARME FOR THE FOLLOWING NEWS

ORDER OF CANADA AWARD

Background

In the late 1950's and in the 1960's, DRTE had an on-going contract arrangement with Cossor Electronics in Halifax, NS. This was a branch plant of the Cossor company in the U.K. During that period, Dennis Covill was a senior engineer at Cossor and was involved in several projects with DRTE.

During this period at DRTE, measuring the ionospheric layers was a major project. In the early 1950's, and before, an LG-17 Sounder was used and it became obsolete. Cossor was approached to design and build what became known as "the Cossor Portable Sounder". Dr. Irvine Paghis and Dr. Eldon Warren were in charge of that project. The Cossor sounder was very successful and was installed at all of the ionospheric stations that were operated in Canada as part of the global network of ionospheric stations. Many were also purchased and used in the USA.

In the late 1950's and early 1960's, a group headed by Dr. George Jull engaged Cossor and Dennis Covill to do some work for DRTE.

Dennis Covill continued working for Cossor Electronics and, in 1969, he left Cossor to start his own company, Nautel, in Hackett's Cove, NS. It was interesting to follow the growth of Nautel in the various technical journals.

In early 2012, with the permission of Dennis Covill, a Nomination for Dennis to be awarded the Order of Canada was prepared and submitted to the Governor General. Then, on December 31, 2012, this award was announced in a press release from the Governor General.

Below is a press release from Nautel.



NAUTEL PRESS RELEASE

January 3, 2013

Nautel Founder Dennis Covill Honored with Order of Canada Award

One of the highest awards in the country presented to founder of innovative Nova Scotia company.

Hackett's Cove, Nova Scotia -- Nautel founder Dennis Covill was recognized recently appointed this week as a Member of the Order of Canada. The Order of Canada, one of the country's highest civilian honors, was established in 1967 (during Canada's centennial year) to "recognize a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to community and service to the nation." Over the last 45 years, around 5,000 people from all sectors of Canadian society have been invested into the Order. Mr. Covill was recognized for his contribution to engineering and science.

A pioneer in the transmitter industry, Covill founded Nautel Limited in 1969 to design and build solid state navigational beacons, using technologies that at the time were revolutionary. Existing transmission technologies in the 1960's were primarily tube-based, requiring large footprints and extensive cooling systems. Designs brought to the market by Mr. Covill and his team introduced much smaller footprints, capabilities for redundancy, hot-swapping of modules, and other technologies now considered "basic" to the transmitter industry. Nautel later expanded its business to develop AM and FM transmitters for radio, and is now considered one of the world's leading companies in the field. Covill served as Nautel's president for many years, but felt that his true calling was in the engineering side of the business, designing unique solutions for navigational beacons and broadcast transmission needs.

Covill leveraged a relatively small investment of \$35,000 into a company that has become a major player in the RF transmission business. The company recently expanded into the television transmission industry. In addition to the company's worldwide broadcast transmitter sales, Nautel is also involved in the aerospace industry, providing RF generators for plasma-driven space vehicles. Nautel also manufactures transmitters for NOAA's weather radio system, and stays true to its original roots, creating new technologies for navigational beacons that are used around the world for maritime and other industries.

“Dennis Covill is a true pioneer in RF engineering and the transmitter business, and we are deeply honored to be associated with him,” said Peter Conlon, Nautel President and CEO. “He set in motion a company that has amazing values, both in terms of quality and in its philosophy of daily operations. Although he has now retired from Nautel, his values live on in our designs and the way we conduct our business. His receipt of the Order of Canada membership is richly deserved.”

About Nautel

Nautel has emerged as one of the world’s largest manufacturers of broadcast transmitters. With more than 12,000 transmitters deployed in over 177 countries since 1970, Nautel continues to lead the way in providing valuable new solutions for digital broadcasting and other applications.

FROM THE SOCIAL SIDE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who attended our Christmas luncheon on December 13th. A total of 34 were present and by the feedback I received everyone enjoyed it. We are planning a Spring luncheon sometime in April and will advise you as soon as a date is selected.

Colette Cole



EDITOR'S CORNER

Telecommunications has come a long way since most of us started our careers back in the good old tube days. I would be the first to admit that I don't understand a lot of the things that are going on these days. I do not even own a cell phone, but who needs one when one only has to turn to a nearby stranger who will usually willingly lend you theirs.

But these amazing developments leave me with a very uneasy feeling that their benefits are by no means all positive. I see people, usually young, who seem to have a cell phone clapped to their ear most of the time – what on earth are they talking about? I see the language being corrupted on a massive scale because of Twitter which seems to be resulting in widespread abuse and misuse of words and grammar. I see a new generation evolving who are unable to write unambiguous and lucid text as evidenced by the Microsoft error messages, not one of which I have ever understood. I see a widespread lack of interest in precision and correct word usage as evidenced by the large number of technical errors in many of the documentaries being produced for television today. All this culminates in a general attitude that it is the receivers responsibility to understand the message and the senders seem to have abrogating their responsibility to send lucid and unambiguous text.

Clearly we are on an irreversible slide to somewhere which I don't think I will like. I try to do my bit by sending corrections to TV program producers and the like but I notice that most of them hide away and make it very difficult to contact them. It is clear that much of the commentary written for technical TV documentaries is written by people with absolutely no knowledge of technology or science whatsoever and they don't bother to have it checked. Thus one is told of a power of so many volts and many other similar technical absurdities. Problem is that nobody seems to care – but we should because we are partly to blame.

Glad I got that off my chest and I encourage you all to protest all such errors as the opportunity occurs.

*Colin Billowes
Editor*