

Radio Installed in Wellington Hospital

Great Prospective Boon to Patients

AS far back as May, 1926, nearly two years ago, with the kind co-operation of Mr. W. Stuart-Wilson, the Amateur Radio Society of Wellington set up a special sub-committee for the purpose of organising a fund for the purchase of an up-to-date broadcast receiving equipment for the patients and nurses of the Wellington General Hospital.

The fact that broadcast listening had proved such a wonderful curative agent in many hospitals in Great Britain, on the Continent, in Canada, the United States and Australia prompted the Wellington Society to make an endeavour to bring this boon to the sufferers in the hospital of the capital city of New Zealand. Medical practitioners were loud in their praise of the beneficial results observed in the various hospitals abroad in which radio equipment was installed. The psychological effect on the patients who listened-in was so marked that hospital after hospital in overseas countries was being equipped with broadcast receiving installations. The diverting of patients' thoughts from their maladies and worries, and the bringing of the great outside world to their bedside, resulted from their being able to lie comfortably in their beds listening to pleasing music and the most important news of the day, not to mention the interesting lectures on varied subjects. There was testimony by hospital medical superintendents far and wide unanimously in favour of listening-in equipments for hospital patients.

CAMPAIGN BEGUN.

All this was so utterly convincing to the Wellington Hospital Radio Fund Committee that they set about their task of collecting the necessary money with a light heart, although they realised that they had to contend with many other appeals to the public generosity. The first committee meetings were presided over by Mr. W. Stuart-Wilson, and the committee comprised Messrs. J. H. Owen (president of the Amateur Radio Society of Wellington), I. M. Levr (active vice-president), W. J. Roche (vice-chairman) and T. H. Megann (committee member). This was the nucleus of

the movement, and although the committee was added to the actual work of conducting the public appeal for contributions, and calling for tenders for the work of installing the equipment in the hospital has been effected by this committee of five. Meetings were held by the committee thrice a week for some months, until the fund had received sufficient impetus, and then weekly and fortnightly meetings sufficed to keep the ball rolling.

EDUCATION NECESSARY

Radio broadcasting was found to be generally a thing of mystery to the man in the street, and a good deal of educational propaganda had to be published to overcome this lack of knowledge. This ignorance hampered the progress of the fund to some extent at first, but gradually the increase in popularity of broadcast listening awakened in the public a realisation of the boon it would prove to hospital patients. Slowly the fund increased, but the steady plodding of the committee and generous help by bands, the radio traders, the ladies of the Labour Political Party, and others, steadily aided in the good work. It was found, however, that as soon as one counter-appeal to the public on behalf of other interests lapsed another one would spring up. Eventually, after nearly two years' unremitting endeavour, the fund committee decided to devote the money in hand to equipping as many wards in the hospital as finances would permit, and then let some other organisation at a later date complete the work. The building of the new hospital block facing Riddiford Street offered an opportunity for installing the necessary wiring neatly within the walls, and, at the suggestion of the medical superintendent, Dr. Wilson, this work was carried out. The tender was let to Messrs. Thos. Ballinger and Co. Unfortunately, however, funds so far collected will not permit of the wards in the new block being connected with headphones and necessary connections for linking them up with the broadcast receiving system now installed. When the public realise the beneficial effect

to the patients in those wards which have been equipped, it may not be long before the whole of the hospital will be served.

TENDERS CALLED.

Towards the end of last year the committee of the radio fund decided to call for tenders for the installation of a broadcast receiving set, necessary headphones, loudspeakers, and wiring for as many wards as possible, including also the nurses' quarters. Intending tenderers were invited to be present at the hospital on an appointed day. Several leading companies were represented at a gathering at the hospital. Those present were handed specifications and were shown over the wards and buildings which were to be equipped. Tenders were next called, and the fund committee engaged the services of Mr. Preston B. Billing, technical lecturer and advisor to the Wellington Radio Society, to aid them in selecting the most acceptable tender. After every detail had been carefully considered the contract was let to the National Electrical and Engineering Co. Ltd.

Some miles of shielded cable had to be run through the various wards, and even heavy posts had to be set up in the hospital grounds to carry the cables across to the nurses' buildings. Wooden blocks neatly dyed-painted were fastened to the walls of the wards to support the 'phones when not in use, and to carry the jacks for plugging in the headphones. A special room was walled off for the receiving set, a powerful up-to-date radio, working off an indoor loop aerial. Junction boxes were installed at certain points, and loudspeakers were placed on brackets in the children's wards and nurses' quarters.

PRELIMINARY TRIAL.

Last Saturday evening, at the invitation of Mr. D. G. Wales, radio engineer for the contractors, members of the committee of the Hospital Radio Fund attended the hospital on the occasion of an unofficial working demonstration of the installation. A special kiddies' bedtime session was put on for the little ones in the children's wards, and many scores of male and

female patients in the adult wards also listened in. The test was most encouraging, although the final balancing of the various circuits had not been completed. Mr. R. Heaton Wear, of the National Co.'s staff has designed and supervised the wiring throughout the installation. The official function in connection with the commencement of the daily operation of the installation will take place at an early date.

The Radio Fund Committee acknowledge their appreciation of the kindly interest and assistance of Dr. Wilson, medical superintendent of the hospital.

SPECIAL CHILDREN'S HOUR.

IN introducing the uncles and aunts at the opening of the special hour for hospital children, a very novel procedure was followed. Uncle Sandy's versifying talent has become well known, and he turned his gift to good purpose for the occasion, as the following verses indicate:—

(Aunt Dot Speaks).

Here's Uncle Sandy, rhymers bold,
Who makes the birthday rhymes,
And mostly does as he is told,
Except at times, at times.

(Uncle Sandy Speaks).

I'm Uncle Sandy, poet or
Just say a rhyme crude,
I versify the birthdays for,
New Zealand's bonny brood.

(Uncle Sandy Speaks).

Here's Uncle Jasper, much adored
By children far and near,
His mind is always amply stored,
With things they hold most dear.

(Uncle Jasper Speaks).

I'm Uncle Jasper—not alone,
For here's my doggy Spot.
We work before the microphone
And spar with Aunt Dot.

(Uncle Sandy Speaks).

I'd introduce and bravely speak
Of Uncle Ernest kind,
But he's away this merry week,
Though present to our mind.

(Aunt Dot Speaks).

Now Uncle Ernest isn't here,
But I shall speak his part,
To all the children he's a dear,
He's got the kindest heart.

(Uncle Sandy Speaks).

Here's Aunt Dot, our clever chief,
Among us stands alone,
Programmes arranged to our relief,
Before the microphone.

(Aunt Dot Speaks).

I'm Aunt Dot of 2YA,
On the official staff,
I make the children bright and gay,
To think, to dream, to laugh.

(Uncle Sandy Speaks).

Here's Aunt Gwen, who plays and tells
Her fairy tales so fair,
And as her music ebbs and swells,
'Tis wafted through the air.

(Aunt Gwen Speaks).

I'm Aunt Gwen, who cannot sing,
But I can play quite well,
And fairy stories I can bring
And all their magic tell.

(Uncle Sandy Speaks).

Now, Uncle Toby makes his bow,
Across the Radio,
And says to all the children now,
Hullo, hullo, hullo.

(Uncle Toby Speaks).

Yes Toby's here, the funny man,
As Monty better known,
But now the little children can
Claim Monty for their own.

(Uncle Sandy Speaks).

Now, Uncle Jeff, it's up to you:
You're last but not the least,
Tell all the children through the blue
Of "Beauty and the Beast."

(Uncle Jeff Speaks).

I'm good old Jeff, still rattling round,
I haven't gone to rest,
But now my occupation's found,
I'll give you of my best.

UNCLE SANDY,

2YA, Wellington.

On Shortwave

BETTER RECEPTION NOW

THE HOWLING NUISANCE

Mr. F. W. Sellens (Northland) writes:—

The slogan of "Don't do it" applies to the short-wave listeners, now that there are more on the job. Several times during the past week or two there was some squealing, especially on Sunday afternoon, on 2XAF, just before they closed down, when their volume was fairly good. For best reception it is necessary to keep just below this stage, otherwise, beside spoiling other listeners' enjoyment, the operator is not getting the best out of his set.

Now that we are back to standard time, it is possible to hear more of 5SW's morning test; nor is it necessary to stay up so late for their evening transmission, which starts at 12 p.m., New Zealand time. The morning programme during the past week has been as follows:—6.30 a.m.: Big Ben; "London calling." Then a lecturette till about 6.45 a.m. This is followed by piano duets till 7 a.m., when another lecturette is given. At 7.15 a.m. (7.45 p.m. in London) the evening programme starts with orchestral music. The volume by this time is getting weak, and I have to leave home. With the shorter days it should be possible to hear the greater part of London's evening programme.

PCJJ comes in very well now each morning till just after 6 a.m., when they close down.

RPM on 70 metres is not nearly so good as it was on 60.

On Saturday afternoon, March 3, KDKA were "off the air" before I tuned in. 2XAD were in good form, being fair speaker strength, with two of audio. The "Palmolive—keep that schoolgirl complexion" people were providing the musical items. Every announcement was the "Palmolive Orchestra," "Palmolive Quartet," etc. The last item was "Land of Hope and Glory," by the whole party and orchestra, which was received very good. They signed off at 11.2 p.m., Eastern standard time. Later on 2NG, on about 33 metres, was carrying out his usual word test: "Write down diameter," "Write down picnic," etc. RPM was on 70 metres in the evening.

2AB, Wanganui, and 1AK, Auckland, were heard on Sunday morning. KDKA closed down about 2.30 p.m. before their volume was strong enough to enjoy.

2XAF, on 32.4 metres, were relaying music from the Rainbow room of the Albany Hotel, New York, till 4.30 p.m., New Zealand time. 2AQ, Tahiti, was also heard during the evening.

About 6 a.m. on Monday morning orchestral music and talk was heard on about 33 metres. It was too weak to get a call, but was probably 2NM (Marcuse). 3LO on 32 metres started at 6 a.m. with their weekly short-wave test. As usual, they were received at splendid volume and modulation.

RPM during the evening was good, but not as strong as they used to be.

At 5.40 a.m. on Tuesday morning a foreign station on about 37 metres was heard. Talk was too weak to get the call.

Big Ben was heard at 6.30 a.m. through 5SW. Mr. —, dramatic critic, spoke after the call—"London calling"—was given. Piano duets followed the talk.

Our Mail Bag

"Carping Suggestions."

R.M.O. (Auckland): The remarks in the last "Record" re above call for some comment. On behalf of a number of valve set owners I would like to state we do not envy Wellington its 5000-watt station, as we find it quite difficult enough to cut out 1YA as it is, and I venture to say the majority of Auckland listeners (including crystal set owners) are satisfied with the local power. When it comes to programmes

RPM was the only station heard during the evening.

PCJJ was tuned in at 5.10 a.m. on Wednesday morning, and was received at fair speaker volume till 6.35 a.m. The next transmission was announced as on Thursday, March 8, from 14—19, G.M.T.

5SW and 2XAD were heard having their usual talk, reports of reception were read. Reception was not quite as good as usual, signals being weaker, but clear enough. From 6.30 a.m. Big Ben, talks, piano duets, and orchestral selections were heard till 7.20, when I closed down.

5SW was again heard at midnight for a few minutes, at better volume than in the morning, but not so strong as I expected.

Early on Thursday morning 2XG on 24.5 metres this time was heard on his usual "write down." This is the first time I have heard him during the early morning—about 5.45 a.m. This station works on various wavelengths. One Sunday afternoon I heard him sign off on one wave and came across him later on much higher up.

A station on about 36 metres was heard, but too faint to get a call sign. At 6.30 a.m. 5SW was again heard quite well, with the usual Big Ben, etc.

RPM and a station on about 84 metres putting on musical items and talk, asking for reports to be sent to —, Christchurch, were heard. The latter station was very weak and not steady; the wave was swinging all the time.

On Friday morning PCJJ was held from 5.15 a.m. till 6.38 a.m., when they signed off. The last item was the Dutch National Anthem sung by a choir. This was followed by the announcement that their next transmission would be on Saturday, March 10, 14—17, G.M.T. Big Ben was heard at 6.30 a.m., followed by a lecturette, piano duets, another lecturette, and orchestral items.

At midnight, 5SW was listened to for a few moments; after Big Ben chiming the half-hour some organ music was broadcast. On Saturday morning the usual talk between England and America was heard. In reading a report from 5SW, he said it was "scrappy" because they often altered the circuit and made adjustments while listening. "Of course we are not talking for the fun of the thing, but to make improvements." During their talk, 5SW mentioned that their loudspeaker was within three feet of the microphone.

The Chelmsford station was again heard at 6.30 a.m. with their usual programme, Big Ben and "London calling" being stronger than usual.

we surely have the right to criticise, and my first adverse criticism of any broadcasts is that I did not consider the much-boomed Edison night so good as many of the excellent Wellington programmes. The Maori pageant was certainly interesting, but from a musical viewpoint I have heard Maori melodies sung much better by pakehas. With regard to the power of 2YA, I have tried experiments between 9 and 10 p.m. on Mondays for several months past by operating a single control set without changing the volume control on 2YA and 3YA. The result has been that 3YA nearly always comes in as loud as 2YA, and often with greater strength. Would it not be interesting to request listeners to send in the results of similar trials, and if my results are found to be fairly general, the Broadcasting Company might consider exchanging the Wellington plant with Christchurch, when it should have some chance of getting into touch with all parts of New Zealand in daytime in the event of a national crisis. Would it be possible for the lower Christchurch wavelength to account for its greater comparative strength?

Critics "Jolly Hard Up."

N. C. Winstanley (Picton): I note with disgust some of the complaints from listeners, particularly in regard to mistakes in pronunciation. I would like to ask them if it is possible to find anyone perfect in that direction anyway, and if that is all they can find to complain about they are jolly hard up. Perhaps that new receiver they got is not going too well.

In a previous issue of your paper, when replying to correspondence, you invited reports in regard to 2YA's transmissions. Speaking for myself, I get all the good music and entertainment I want from 2YA; mostly it is not only well rendered, but put over by the station well. You have some very fine artists in Wellington, and you put on some very good programmes.

The Stations Compared.

R.C.P. (Ngauruvalia): I am sorry to find, since arriving here, that my old friend 2YA is fading very badly. 3YA also fades, but not as much as 2YA. 1YA, although only about 55 miles away, fades very badly and has a very bad scratchy noise, in fact, it is the worst station on the air. 4YA, which I could hardly get at Trentham, comes in here very nice and clear. But give me 2YA as I had her at Trentham.

Reply to "Cheap Critics" Venom from Auckland.

E. C. Farmer (Mount Albert).—On reading March 2 "Radio Record," I found an article headed "Cheap Critics," which describes Auckland as very dissatisfied with the relays of the "Pageant" and "Edison's" programmes. The Maori pageant was miles ahead of the Edison's, but I think the people in Wellington should know a little about the conditions of 2YA as received here. 2YA is described in Auckland as "the deadly station," on account of its fading peculiarities. There were one or two titles of music which we missed during the "Pageant," and then at times the music fades from anything up to two minutes at very frequent periods. I did not fill in a record of fading some time ago, but on Sunday, February 26, I tuned to 2YA at 8.10

p.m. to 8.50 p.m., and heard 2YA for three minutes only. This was done on a six-valve set capable of getting 2FC. at dusk here seven days a week. I am not condemning the "Pageant," very much vice versa, but we could not follow speeches or anything else. Then the Edison programme is described with "bigotry" in Auckland's Press. I think the "Radio Record" has just overstepped now, as what is worse and more aggravating than missing half an interesting item. Is there any wonder for disfigurement when 1YA could not get 2YA till 8.30 p.m., and remained silent until then?

Now in reference to "cutting out a station" I maintain that if relays cannot be done from the start they should not be attempted. Aucklanders have just cause to complain when things like this occur. Now it gives you the impression that Aucklanders do not like anything from 2YA. I am now speaking on behalf of a good many when I say that the talent is more varied and better than 1YA, generally speaking. As for jealousy, that 2YA is "biggest and best," that is just the question in a nutshell, as it should be "biggest but worst" (up here, anyhow). Aucklanders recognise that scope and capital is limited, but with the power of 2YA we naturally expect to get overhauled in numbers as so many cheap yet efficient sets can be installed at a greater range.

Gilbert and Sullivan.

An Admirer of G. and S.: Being an admirer of your paper, I take a great interest in the correspondent column of it, and notice a lot of comment on "highbrow and lowbrow" music that is played at each station. I think I am right in believing that there was a composer by the name of Sullivan who composed the music for the world-famous operas. Why not some of his works, such as selections from "Yeoman of the Guard," etc. There are six or seven to pick from, and let's have a bit of good English music—light and tuneful, also popular.

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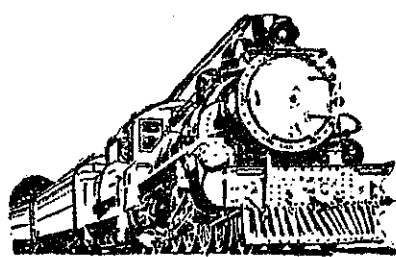
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