

San Francisco Bids Good-bye to Manual

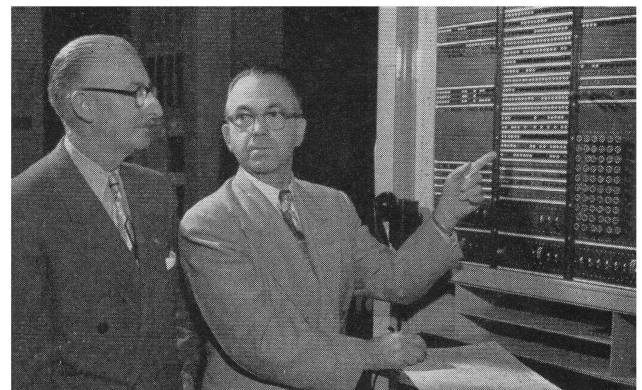


Cutover veteran is John Murphy, plant operating assistant. He was dispatcher at the first San Francisco dial cutover, and worked on practically every other dial conversion in the city from 1935 to 1949. He's showing how the cutover instant is signaled to switchmen waiting to pull the blocking tools. Ready in the foreground is Switchman B. D. Zirkle.

IT was 1916. Western Electric advertised a toaster that made "Crisp Brown Toast. No fire — no smudge — no odor." "Sunny Jim" Rolph was the Mayor of San Francisco, and Pacific Telephone had just opened another central office in Randolph Building out in the Excelsior district.

The picture above shows Randolph as it looked soon after completion, some 37 years ago. A hint of the times is seen in the two cars parked alongside—we would guess them to be a Model T and a Dodge. The not too numerous autos shared the streets with a lot of horse-drawn vehicles.

(Continued on page 41)



Crossbar dial equipment as new as transistors took over for Juniper 6 local operators, who sometimes worked by gas lights when commercial power failed. Chief Switchman O. P. Schaefer shows features of terminating trouble indicator to J. E. McKean, also a chief switchman.



Last local operators in San Francisco put away their headsets for good September 6. Once, more than 350 operators worked in the "old" Randolph Building. On conversion day, the Juniper 6 traffic force totaled 30. Here, Chief Operator Anna Bernhard and Norman Brooks, district traffic superintendent, review the list of operators who are transferring to other San Francisco traffic offices.

San Francisco Bids Good-bye to Manual

(Continued from page 14)

Today, it is the “old” Randolph Building when you talk about the three-story red brick structure at 35 Russia Ave. The switchboards look high and old-fashioned, and mighty lonesome. Overhead are big, yellow gaslights—stand-bys in case commercial power failed. Once, in the years between 1916 and 1947, there were 27,000 telephones served from this central office, and the prefix “Randolph” was as familiar a name as Market Street to San Franciscans. The Randolph prefix was discontinued in 1947. Then, on September 6, 1953, the old Randolph Building’s career as a central office closed with the conversion to dial of San Francisco’s last manual exchange, Juniper 6.

There was no cutover fanfare. Just the steady hum of dial tone for the 2,700 telephones concerned when switchmen yanked strings of cutover tools at old Randolph and at the nearby Juniper Building, location of the new No. 1 crossbar dial equipment.

It was a lot different at San Francisco’s first dial conversion, 24 years ago. Photographers and a host of telephone officials—including General Traffic Manager M. R. Sullivan—were present at the ceremony when Ordway went dial on March 23, 1929. The Northern California and Nevada general manager, J. H. Corcoran, pulled the first cutover tools. The president of the San Francisco Motor Car Dealers’ Association made the first dial call in San Francisco to the president of the Polk-Larkin Van Ness Improvement Association. The Pacific Telephone Magazine called it a “history-making event.”

So, too, was the conversion this September 6 that closed San Francisco’s last manual exchange.



Look Alike Places—This is Independence Hall, in Philadelphia. The picture on page 23 was taken from the top floor of our 430 Bush Street Building in San Francisco. The look-alike building is that of The Home Insurance Company, at California and Kearney Streets. A view of the northern part of the city and the Bay can be seen in background.

Answers to Puzzle on Page 9— What’s Wrong with This Picture?

1. Running on stairs.
2. Purse searching.
3. Inattention (looking back up the stairs).
4. Calling to another employee below.
5. Flimsy shoes.
6. Stubbing toe in barefoot sandal.
7. Wearing headset.
8. Dragging headset cord.
9. Pocket caught on handrail.
10. Failing to keep to right of stairway.
11. Two or more abreast.
12. Smoking on stairway.
13. Flicking ashes over bannister.
14. Cigaret package carelessly discarded.
15. Not watching steps when ascending or descending.

