



T. A. Newman

on

**ABOUT TIME — DAYLIGHT SAVING IN
TASMANIA**

Reprinted with original pagination from

VOLUME 118 OF

THE PAPERS AND PROCEEDINGS OF

The Royal Society of Tasmania

Edited by M. R. Banks and S. J. Smith
and published by the Society

August 1984

Hobart, Tasmania



123502023

A. B. CAUDELL, Government Printer, Tasmania

ENQUIRY
529.7
NEW

ABOUT TIME — DAYLIGHT SAVING IN TASMANIA

by T.A. Newman
Parliamentary Librarian, Hobart, Tasmania

ABSTRACT

NEWMAN, T.A., 1984 (31 viii): About time - daylight saving in Tasmania. *Pap. Proc. R. Soc. Tasm.*, 118: 21-35. ISSN 0080-4703. Library, Parliament House, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

Tasmania pioneered Australia's post-World War Two usage of daylight saving by unilaterally adopting it in the summer of 1967 for a six-month period as an emergency energy saving measure. One irony of this move is that it was in 1967 that the atomic clock was adopted as the world-wide device for the measuring of the fundamental unit of time, the second. Thus Tasmania's use of daylight saving moved it ahead of the rest of Australia, but at the same time it was a step backwards into the solar-mechanical time-keeping era.

Nevertheless, Tasmania has a special connection with the use of daylight. The central focus of this paper examines the history of that connection and places it in an international (as well as a national perspective) by presenting some of the more prominent elements of the wider history of daylight saving generally.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

As is said of God, if time did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it. But then time was invented by people in the first place. For time is a facet of human consciousness, albeit one that we experience both in a physical and a psychological manner. Time is also a facet of the observed environment, in that, we note the alteration of day and night and adjust our lives accordingly. Daylight saving is a perfect example of this adjustment; shift work is another.

The four seasons are also manifestations of time. But for the purposes of this paper it is interesting to recall that it was the Egyptian astronomers who first calculated the solar year at close to 365 days. They, however, could not persuade their rulers of the necessity to account for one extra day in every fourth year. So for nearly two hundred years the Egyptian calendar grew increasingly out of phase with the seasons.¹ [1 - see endnotes].

It was not until 46 BC that Julius Caesar issued a decree instituting the concept that we know today as the 'leap year'. But even under the new Julian Calendar the inter-action of time and the seasons, and especially man's adjustment to them, was quite inaccurate. Maladjustment was the case until the 16th Century when the error was so great that, in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII, following furious debate, radically altered the calendar system to approximate that which we use today. Most interestingly, to correct the seasonal disparities of the old calendar Pope Gregory decreed that for the year 1582, October 4th would be followed by October 15th, thus removing ten days from people's lives. Whilst this had no drastic consequences (except for those that lost their birthdays!) many Protestant countries in Europe refused to follow suit for hundreds of years. England, for example, waited so long that in 1752 when they did change, eleven days had to be lost, and the 2nd September was to be followed by the 14th. A final example of this switching process occurred in Russia in 1918 when Lenin decreed that the 1st February would in fact be the 14th instead. The new government also instituted a period of two-hour daylight saving to help improve the economy following the revolutionary disruptions.

Nevertheless, the Gregorian Calendar was substantially agreed upon. Then, it is claimed, the famous American Benjamin Franklin first thought of the idea of daylight saving

About Time — Daylight Saving in Tasmania

in 1776 during the War of Independence. He did not however document his thoughts until he wrote of them in a whimsical essay in 1784, showing, for example, that daylight saving would conserve tallow, which was then a common means of creating artificial light.

But it was not until the 20th Century that daylight saving was to be seriously advocated, this time in England. Before detailing some of this story it seems appropriate to briefly mention the great deal of effort necessary to effect some standardization of time-keeping.

In England, although it was nearly universally used for navigation, Greenwich Mean Time was not adopted as a common time standard until 1880. Then in 1884 delegates from some 27 nations met in Washington D.C. and agreed to a detailed plan for the standardization of global time. The scheme agreed to was to use an International Dateline, and to institute a time-zone pattern, both of which we still use today. Moreover, at the same time the railmen of the U.S.A. were also successful in gaining for themselves a four-zone time system for the whole of the American continent. This was not, however, officially sanctioned by law until March, 1918.

RISE OF DAYLIGHT SAVING IN THE U.K.

Between 1905 and 1907 William Willet, of the Royal Astrological Society in London, promoted daylight saving for England. He even wrote a pamphlet entitled, "Waste of Daylight", in which he claimed that each person in the U.K. wasted 154 hours of daylight per year. This was calculated because it assumed that most people remained in bed until a given time registered upon their bedside clock, i.e. rarely did they actually lose sleep, merely 'staying-in-bed time'. His idea was to advance the clocks by 80 minutes, in four moves of 20 minutes each during late spring and into summer.

Willet's persistent advocacy gained many converts, perhaps the most famous of whom was the then Home Secretary, Winston Churchill. But it was not until 1908-1909 that a certain Mr Dobson introduced a bill into the House of Commons to adjust the clocks by one hour. Further bills were introduced in 1911, 1912, 1913 and 1914, each of which were the subject of Select Committee investigation.

One segment of the report from one of these investigations captures the essence of its favourable recommendation:

"The apex to which the whole movement converges is leisure after the routine of the day while the sun is still shining, and it is the way in which such leisure may be used by various individuals, that causes the seasonable change proposed by the Daylight Saving Bill to make such an extraordinary appeal to the metropolitan mind."²

However, each and every bill proposed was rejected outright by the British Parliament.

There was also a bill introduced in July 1909 into the Victorian Parliament. This also followed the Willet plan for an 80 minute advance of the clocks, in four 20 minute steps. The Select Committee established to consider the bill concluded that:

"The strongest feature of the principle is, with the clocks once changed, at a time when people would not realize it, life would go on as before."²

Nevertheless, the Committee recommended that only a single hour be altered, and in one step. The bill failed regardless of the favourable report.

The British did introduce daylight saving during the First World War, basically as a response to its use by their enemy, the Germans. Allies such as the Americans and the Australians also introduced some daylight saving, as will be shown below. Naturally, this war-time use of daylight saving was seen as an emergency fuel-saving measure, and thus the members of the House of Commons switched markedly and voted overwhelmingly in its favour, by some 170-2 votes, in fact. Daylight saving was reintroduced and made permanent in 1925 by the Summer Time Act and remained so in the U.K. until 1947. For during the Second World War the British adopted double daylight saving by turning their clocks forward by two hours until 1947 when they reverted to the single hour. This was confirmed by a new Standard Time Act passed in 1968.

T.A. Newman

To close this international segment of the paper it is worth noting that of the many nations using daylight saving it is significant that the U.S.A. has a fixed system. An initial investigation was made in 1919 for a national scheme, but it was not until April 1967 that the Federal government, upon the advice of several Senate Commerce Committee reports (1963-1965) directed that a common period be used throughout America. This was a way to avoid the chaos of the local variations, both between and within parts of the States. The U.S. House of Representatives vote in favour of the national scheme was overwhelming, some 292-93 votes. Moreover, the Uniform Time Act created the eight time zones that replaced the older four zones "established" in the 1880's by the railway men. Finally, to conserve energy President Nixon signed a Bill on 15th December 1973 to put the whole of the U.S.A. onto year-round daylight saving for two years (from 6.1.1974 to 26.10.1976); this plan, however, lapsed and the regular scheme returned.

AUSTRALIAN BACKGROUND

Australia has a connection with time that is often overlooked.³ Lt Cook, as he then was, was instructed to travel to Tahiti to observe the transit of Venus due to take place on 3rd June 1769. He was then to sail on in search of "Terra Australis", the Great South Land. His observations of Venus were designed to assist in the calculation of the distance of the Sun from the Earth (i.e. time and distance based upon the speed of light) and thereby greatly improve astronomical and navigational science.

Cook's first voyage was significantly helped by improved navigational data prepared from earlier lunar calculations. He was thus far better equipped to plot his position accurately - hence the excellence of his cartography. Because of accurate plotting Cook, the British Navy's best navigator, was able to prove that no Great South Land existed, instead he discovered New South Wales, on 20th April 1770.

Time had another connection with Cook. On his second Pacific voyage he was able to plot his position even more accurately, as he had several of the new chronometers on board. In 1714 John Harrison had won a £20 000 prize for developing a clock that would maintain its accuracy on an ocean-going vessel, a clock that would withstand the extremes of temperature and movement as it crossed the Equator and faced howling gales. Cook was able to use a "copy" of Harrison's clock made by Larcum Kendall as his means of plotting the longitudinal position of his vessel, the reckoning of which required the accurate computation of the local time and its comparison with Greenwich Mean Time, using the navigational almanac of lunar calculations to assist. Thus accurate determination of time based on a precise solar observation became inseparable from successful navigation.

AUSTRALIAN STANDARD TIME

The several Australian colonies, as they still were until 1901, based their own time-keeping, especially for their capital cities, on the mean solar day for their area. This, of course, led to many variations, both between the within each colony. Indeed even Hobart and Launceston had different times, and they are practically along the same longitude and only some 200 km apart.

This confusion caused increasing difficulties in Australia, as it did world-wide, following the vast improvements in communication between distant places. For example, the coming of the Overland Telegraph system in Australia in 1872 instantaneously linked Australian capital cities and international locations, yet they still had uncoordinated local times.

Thus at an inter-colonial conference of surveyors held in Melbourne in November 1892, a proposal was agreed to that established an Australian standard time using a three-zone pattern based upon the meridian division, so as to account for the variations in the continental sunrise. The new Australian standard, of course, was also to be based upon a calculation from G.M.T.

Following the support for this proposal from inter-colonial postal conferences during 1894-1895 each State legislature set about enacting legislation to give effect to this

About Time - Daylight Saving in Tasmania

scheme. The Standard Time Acts were passed by each Parliament quite easily. But in typical Australian fashion the introductory dates for the scheme differed across the nation:

Queensland		1st January 1895
New South Wales)	
South Australia)	1st February 1895
Victoria)	
Tasmania		1st September 1895
Western Australia		1st December 1895

As a further complication South Australia amended its Standard Time Act in 1898, so that on 1st May 1899, it moved its clocks forward by one half hour. In future it would be 9½ hours rather than 9 hours ahead of G.M.T. Except for daylight saving there has been no other alteration to the Australian standard time scheme.

TASMANIAN BACKGROUND

During Hobart's early development time setting was a regular problem, especially without a standard time for accuracy, and the Government was forced to purchase a series of public clocks. In 1851 six new clocks were obtained at £600 each to help the citizens set their pocket watches and mantel clocks.⁴ The new clocks were to be placed in church towers around the city and the State.

The differences in time between the various States before 1895 have already been mentioned. It is perhaps appropriate here to touch upon one small element of setting standard time for Hobart. On 21st February 1894, Lt Commander H.E. Purey-Cust (*H.M.S. Dart*) received a written request, via the Rear Admiral, from the Tasmanian Premier, Mr Braddon, dated 20th February, asking him to investigate the difficulty in ascertaining the correct time for the city.

In his report to Parliament,⁵ Purey-Cust mentioned that the main difficulties centred upon the "transit" instruments and the observations taken from the Mt Nelson signal station. The Hobart-based equipment often suffered bad vibration from the trams that passed either side of the observatory, not to mention the variations in temperature that the clocks underwent in an over-exposed location. Despite the availability of an electric signalling device the regular method of time setting was manual because of the frequent failure of the other equipment.

Since 1874, it was from sightings from Mulgrave Battery (now Battery Point), Hobart, that the daily firings of the one o'clock cannon was determined, and shipping advised of the correct time. Purey-Cust noted in his report that:

"... the present means of communicating it [time] to the shipping in port by means of the time bell are quite inadequate and liable to error."

Public time was regulated by the signal station personnel, one of whom dropped a cannon ball from the top of a pole, and when it "appeared" to hit the ground the gun was fired in Hobart. On this Purey-Cust had this to say:

"He actually lets go about 1 second to 1 p.m. and the ball itself drops about half a second past 1 o'clock ... under the circumstances it is absolutely impossible for the man to drop the ball exactly at 1 p.m."

There was little that he could recommend apart from the purchase of better time-keeping equipment and the improved location of it in basement rooms away from the summer sun and winter chill. This interaction between the Navy and the citizenry at least shows a continuation of the Captain Cook tradition.

Very little appears to have taken place subsequently for many decades in the history of time-keeping in the State. A witness to the 1915 committee mentioned below, a William Percival Brownell, an ex-politician, said that a "bill was talked about, and I rather think that it was typed, but I am not sure about that." No bill is extant, but then nor do we have Hansard to check his recollection.

T.A. Newman

First World War Usage

Tasmania did, however, take part in the Australia-wide use of daylight saving during the First World War. This was enacted by the Parliament in 1916 by a bill, "to promote the earlier use of daylight for certain months yearly." This bill, to introduce Tasmanian Clock Time, was passed quickly, before it was finally repealed in 1917.

The original proposal to "promote the earlier use of daylight in summer" (Bill No.40) was introduced on 1st July 1915. Its "six-months" scheme came under immediate criticism in the House of Assembly. Indeed, Mr C.R. Howroyd (Bass) claimed that he would only withdraw his opposition to the bill (which he saw as a device to extend overtime) if Mr Giblin would consent to have it remitted to a Select Committee for inquiry and report. With the help of Mr A.T. Marshall (Bass) who noted "that the better use of daylight "... would lead to a saving of expense for artificial light, would benefit the health of the community, [and] would facilitate the military training of our youths",⁶ Mr Giblin was forced to move to establish the Select Committee.

The committee was appointed on 30th September, 1915, with the proviso that it report by 2nd November. Nonetheless, during his second reading speech Giblin touched upon an idea that was to become a central element of all later daylight saving arguments: "Tasmania was peculiarly suited for innovation of this kind, and should lead the way, just as she has done in electoral matters."

He went on to conclude in the somewhat anglophile manner of the day that: "Each new part of the Empire should do something to try to improve our civilization."

The membership of the committee appointed was; Giblin, Barker, Hayes, Howroyd and Marshall. They met on six occasions and interviewed some twenty witnesses. Mr Giblin was appointed the committee's chairman,⁷ and he submitted a draft circular to be sent "to 100 representatives of the chief commercial and industrial interests of the state, including most of the industrial unions." The opening paragraph of the circular listed the claimed advantages of the scheme as:

1. Increased time in daylight for recreation.
2. Saving of cost for artificial light.
3. Daylight for military training without trenching [sic] so much on Saturday afternoon.
4. Less use of licensed houses.
5. General benefit to health on account of greater time spent in the open air, and less time in artificially lighted rooms.

The circular also noted that the failure of the scheme in the U.K., despite its favourable parliamentary report, was probably due to "conditions of labour which do not obtain here." In this respect they were referring to the fact that Tasmania had a fairly high number of workers whose hours were controlled by the Arbitration Court at no more than 48 hours per week. Unions overseas feared that the extra hour would lengthen their day but not increase their pay.

Another section of the circular asked all those receiving it to put the matter of daylight saving before their "societies" and document it for the benefit of the committee, noting especially "what difficulties or disadvantages may result from it."

The bulk of evidence received, the committee noted, was "somewhat remarkable [in] that all but three were in favour of the proposal, and two of the three exceptions thought that the change would be good generally though prejudicial to their particular interests." These were mainly "early" workers such as bakers, and woollen mill managers.

The parliamentary report contains a full transcript of evidence taken by the committee, together with several appendices, i.e. letters received by the committee. This makes the report a valuable source of opinion on daylight saving at this time. It is not, however, proposed to quote extensively from it here. Suffice it to say that discussions were held with members of the Department of Education, with shipping firms, Tramways and Railways officials, as well as "private" persons. The result was patently clear. The scheme was in much favour generally, and indeed Mr A.C. Taylor of the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners

About Time – Daylight Saving in Tasmania

Association and John Henry O'Neill of the Federated Carters and Drivers Union of Australia (Tas. Branch) declared before the committee that their unions had voted unanimously in favour of the scheme.

In the light of this overwhelming show of support for the idea the committee resolved to recommend the favourable consideration of the bill by the Parliament. This was not, however, until after Mr Howroyd had unsuccessfully moved to have the report reject the whole scheme as premature. He lost a division 2-1, his own versus that of Mr Barker and Mr Marshall, and so the report was presented by Mr Hayes on 23rd December 1915 – a little late, but a Christmas present for daylight saving supporters nevertheless!

The report did make one alteration to the bill for it reduced the time period⁸ "by substituting the word 'October' for September because the committee members considered it 'safer' to introduce the change in better weather so that a period of wintery weather would not prejudice the new time at the outset." The main recommendation of the report was:

"... the advantages claimed for the second proposed change ... are well founded, but that the saving in artificial light would not in Tasmania be of great importance, and that the effect on licensed houses is not very material ... The advantages of the additional hour for out-door recreation seems to be very widely and keenly appreciated ... The provision of daylight for military training is a gain [that] ... will be greatly appreciated both from the military point of view, and (in the case of younger boys) from that of the parents."⁸

In the year following the committee's report the Treasurer, N.E. Lewis, introduced a Daylight Saving Bill (No.19) on Wednesday 2nd August 1916, and it passed the House of Assembly, without amendment, on 16th. In the Legislative Council, however, on 19th September, Mr John Hope (Meander) attempted to adjourn the bill indefinitely, but he lost by a vote of 12:4. His companions in opposition being Messrs Bird, Youl and Dean. The bill gained Royal Assent on 22nd September 1916, as Act No.2, Geo.V, 1916.

On 7th August 1917, Frederick Burbury (Franklin) asked the Premier if the government intended to repeal daylight saving, and he received a negative reply.⁹ The government's intention he was told was merely to amend the duration of daylight saving. Thus Burbury introduced his own repeal bill (No.45) on 14th August 1917. Accepting the legislation as timely, the government simply altered it to amend the length of daylight saving and it passed by 12:10 votes on 23rd August.

Following a brief adjournment of the parliament the Legislative Council considered the bill in late September 1917. The passage was not a smooth one, however, for on 25th September a motion to adjourn the bill indefinitely (i.e. to "kill the bill") was moved. This last ditch stand failed and the bill passed and became Act No.8, Geo.V, No.5 (only to be repealed when the war ended by Act No.9, Geo.V, 1919), signed into law on 24th October.

World War Two Usage

Germany was already using daylight saving when the Second World War broke out and the U.S.A. adopted it from 9th February 1942 until 30th September 1945. Australia thus soon followed its allies and reintroduced the scheme, and, as was recalled by Senator Kenneth Anderson (N.S.W.) in 1963, its use was "... based on the war effort and not any concern for the individual."¹⁰

The Federal Government under Menzies had passed the National Security Act in 1939 and therefore obtained, with qualified Opposition (Australian Labor Party, A.L.P.) support, far reaching war-time powers. Amongst these powers was the right to promulgate regulations on everything from apples, coal and tea, to sheep and the hours of employment. Thus by virtue of the National Security (supplementary) Regulations (Statutory Rule No.28 and No.323a), of 1941, the government introduced daylight saving for all of Australia. It was to be known as "Summer Time", and the important clause of the regulations read as follows:

T.A. Newman

"(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in any law of the Commonwealth or of any State or Territory, from the hour of two o'clock in the morning of the first day of January, 1942, until the hour of two o'clock in the morning of the last Sunday in March, 1942, summer time shall, in respect of each State and Territory, be one hour in advance of standard time."

However, to save confusion in the armed forces standard time was not to be affected for the "purposes of astronomy, meteorology or navigation". And so the regulation stood until September 1942, it was slightly amended by No.393 of 1942.

When the A.L.P. entered government after the collapse of the United Australia Party, the daylight saving scheme was endorsed wholeheartedly. Indeed, John Curtin, the new Prime Minister, is quoted as having said that daylight saving had saved at least 10 000 tons of coal. However, the various State governments at the Premiers' Conferences were soon putting pressure upon Curtin to alter or abandon daylight saving as it was seen as "inconvenient". For example, the Victorian Premier was recorded as saying that 61 of the 71 shires in his State were opposed to daylight saving.¹² Curtin however simply asked the Premiers to put their complaints into written form. But Premier Playford (South Australia), noting that Western Australia had not joined in the 1943 usage, successfully moved at the August 1944 Premiers' Conference in Canberra that daylight saving not be introduced for the summer of 1944-45. It was not, and standard time was used for the balance of the emergency regulation period.

John Steer : Daylight Saving Advocate

Because of his great significance to the subsequent history of daylight saving, a brief biographical sketch of Mr John Steer is appropriate.¹³ He was born John Leslie Steer on 30th January 1919, at Franklin in southern Tasmania, and worked as a bank officer until the outbreak of the Second World War. During the conflict Steer served in the 2/8 Field Regiment, and tragically lost a leg at El Alamein.

This disability did not deter Steer from re-entering society in an active manner. He originally returned to banking in 1950, and followed this with a period as company representative until 1961. Moreover, Steer continued his associations with sporting bodies, for example, he was to become tournament manager for the Northern Tasmanian Lawn Tennis Association.

Following an unsuccessful attempt to become a member of Parliament in August 1948, Steer's political career, as a member of the Liberal Party, commenced in 1950, when he became a Member of the House of Assembly for Bass in northern Tasmania, where he lived most of his later years. However, his representation of this electorate was not unbroken, for he lost an election in November 1961. After this loss he attempted to gain election for other parliamentary seats, particularly the Legislative Council seat of Cornwall near Launceston. He was finally re-elected as Member for Bass in May 1964, and remained so until his death on 10th October 1968.

Steer's First Attempts

Mr Steer's first bill in late November 1957 aimed to advance the clocks by one hour from the second Sunday in October to the second Sunday in March. The bill was destined to fail, however, from the moment that the Premier, Robert Cosgrove (A.L.P.) chose to describe it as impractical unless implemented on a national basis. Thus the Parliamentary Labor Party voted "en masse" against the bill.

When submitting his bill, however, Steer had said that:
 "... it would not cost anybody anything, but it would save money; it would not require the creation of a new government department, nor would it require a horde of civil servants to run it."¹⁴
 Steer managed to gain the support of only two Liberal M.H.A.'s, Messrs Strutt and Townley, and echoing the two-centuries-long debate to gain a "leap year" day, he said that he hoped

About Time - Daylight Saving in Tasmania

"... his bill would live to fight another day, for it was only the first shot in his campaign to get the scheme introduced."¹⁵

Almost a year later, Mr Steer re-introduced his bill, but this time it failed without even going to a vote in the Chamber. This was because the government had again declared that all its members would vote "en bloc" against it. Steer did find another, and we shall see, valuable friend and ally in Mr W.C. Hodgman (then a Liberal M.H.A. for Denison, later President of the Legislative Council). For during the initial stages of the Bill, Mr Hodgman noted that "farmers were not supposed to be clock watchers", so why should they oppose daylight saving.¹⁶

Apart from Steer's own suggestion that "daylight saving would add five hours more leisure time to the workingman's week", the most telling point came when the Premier E.E. Reece (A.L.P.) said that of all the correspondence that he had received on the scheme none of it had been favourable to it. The obverse of this course was pointed out by Mr Townley, when he labelled the letter writers as a "vocal minority" and concluded that "the only thing he could see against daylight saving was that it meant a shorter period of sleep for owls!"

The third shot of Steer's campaign, or perhaps more accurately his crusade, took place in November 1959; but it too missed the target. He was able, nevertheless, to gain a small victory when the matter was declared a "non-party" issue in the House of Assembly, thus allowing a free vote with no pressure from the Party Whips on how each member might wish to vote. Even this gain was not sufficient, for on Thursday 19th November, the defeat of the bill was sealed by a vote of 17:11. The 11 supporters being made up of seven of Steer's Liberal colleagues, Mr Wedd an Independent, and two government members. On the other hand, four Liberal party members joined the government against the bill, and Mr McLoughlin (A.L.P.) suggested that it was a suitable topic for a referendum.

W.C. Hodgman's Bills

As noted above Mr Steer was not in the Parliament for the three-year period 1961-1964. Thus it was his friend and ally W.C. Hodgman (by then an Independent Liberal in the Assembly), who introduced on 14th November 1962, his own daylight saving bill. But because of the early Prorogation of the parliament the bill lapsed on 22nd November 1962. Undaunted, and breaking the regularity of a November introduction of the daylight saving bills, Mr Hodgman introduced his second bill on 7th March 1963. During this debate only three M.H.A.'s spoke on the subject: Mr Hodgman naturally was in favour, and Messrs Bramich (Liberal) and Le Fevre (Labor) in opposition. Despite the defeat of the bill it is interesting to note that Mr Hodgman is reported to have said:

"In view of the results of opinion polls over the years he challenged the Premier to hold a referendum. In answer to the challenge, Mr Reece said outside the parliament that the government had no intention of holding a referendum. It was parliament's place to make a decision on the bill."¹⁷

Steer Continues His Crusade

John Steer re-entered parliament in 1964 and introduced yet another unsuccessful bill, his personal fourth and the seventh in the campaign. In fact, in September 1964 Steer's fifth bill suffered an even worse fate than the others, for he was the sole speaker. But he was undaunted and his next bill fared better when it was introduced a year later on 24th November 1965, for it at least gained the support of eight Liberals and three Labor members, i.e. 11 votes, only failing by 8 (19:11). This was so because in a surprise move the government, for the second time it must be recalled, allowed a free vote on the issue. During this debate Steer was reported to have claimed (in what is an echo of Willet) that 95% of Tasmanians slept through at least two hours of daylight each morning. But it was Mr Costello (Labor) who was to call for Tasmania to pioneer Steer's scheme. He went on to suggest that "... it was time Tasmania gave the lead to the Commonwealth".¹⁸ However even this 1965 victory was not to be sustained, for in early December 1966, Steer's next bill lapsed because of the lack of any other speakers. It must have been a bitter blow after the apparent success of 1965. However, matters were soon to be reversed.

T.A. Newman

1967 Drought and Power Emergency

Whilst Steer's campaign did not last two centuries as had the "leap year" saga, his battle was valiant nevertheless. It was, however, to be circumstances beyond the control of anyone that produced dividends from his perseverance. In 1967, Tasmania was in the grip of one of its most severe droughts. In the light of the significance of this to the daylight saving scheme, a brief background to the drought is presented here.

In May 1967, *The Mercury* reported that the island was the driest since records had been collected in 1843. Indeed in places only 30% of the average rainfall for the period fell from January to April. Water storage dropped alarmingly, down eventually to less than 20% of capacity. Thus power rationing, which had been used in 1951 (i.e. 25% to all customers), 1955, and again in 1963 (i.e. 15% to industry) was being mooted. Mr Alan Knight, Chief Commissioner of the Hydro-Electric Commission (H.E.C.) warned of a possible 20% cut to industry commencing in October 1967.

Then in early August *The Mercury* (Monday 7th) carried the heading "Save Daylight - Move to Offset H.E.C. Power Cut", and quoted businessmen who felt that the likely saving would be between 2-6% in power consumption. They claimed for example, that it would result in a reduction of lighting for streets and bridges. Mr Bethune even went public the next day, Tuesday 8th, saying that daylight saving "will make a measurable contribution to reducing the normal power consumption."¹⁹

On this day and after discussions with the H.E.C., Cabinet voted to introduce daylight saving, and the press reports show that this decision was accepted by the Retail Traders' Association unanimously. The H.E.C., in a knee-jerk reaction, stated its fear that a loss of revenue would result from a reduction in use. And by 22nd September, Mr Knight is reported as saying that whilst daylight saving may produce a saving, it "may save less than 1%". A New Zealand car-ferry, the "*Hinemoa*", was brought to Tasmania to act as an off-shore power generator, and the H.E.C. was forced to make a decision to build an oil-fired power station at Bell Bay, where another steam turbine ship, the "*George H. Evans*" was already moored.

Steer Succeeds

This emergency caused the Labor government to suspend the normal rules of parliamentary procedure so that Mr Steer, a Liberal, could introduce a bill (No.47) on 22nd August, and have it passed the next day. The debate for Mr Steer must have been a dream, and he noted that "it was a very painless way of saving power." The Legislative Council received the bill on 12th September (the 164th anniversary of the landing by Lt Bowen in Tasmania) and passed it immediately, although with amendments. The main amendment being that King Island was to be excluded from the scheme because its economy was more closely tied to that of the mainland than that of Tasmania. The Hon. J.R. Orchard (Launceston) also tried twice to have the bill amended by deleting first the idea that the clocks be advanced, and second that its title be dropped; both of these last ditch attempts failed. Thus the bill went forward to the Governor for Royal Assent, which it gained on 22nd September, and became Act No.33 of 1967. Its preamble was quite specific and declared that it was:

"An Act to promote the greater use of daylight in certain months of the years 1967 and 1968, in order to reduce the usage of electric power during the present shortage"

Permanent Daylight Saving

The emergency, of course, ended in both legislative and power rationing terms. Then in May 1968, after returning from an interstate trip promoting daylight saving, Mr Steer was again given permission to introduce a bill (No.26) for permanent use of the scheme. A significant point of interest is that far from lacking a seconder there were 14 other speakers on the bill from both sides of the parliament. From the press reports we can detect that the bill passed readily through the House of Assembly, but that a deadlock developed between the two houses of parliament before the bill could become law.

About Time - Daylight Saving In Tasmania

The House of Assembly finished with the bill on 28th May 1968, but the Council was to make certain amendments to it that the Assembly would not accept, although it would accept a change in name from "Tasmanian Clock" to "Tasmanian Summer" Time. The Assembly would not reduce its plan for five months to only four months, nor would it accept that a further trial period be undertaken.

The Councillors representing rural electorates were not sympathetic to the scheme. For example, Mr Lloyd Carins (South Esk) claimed that only some 30% of the island's population favoured the idea. His colleague Mr Michael Hodgman (Huon), however, suggested that 85% would be more in the vicinity of public support. Nonetheless, on 13th June 1968, with the aid of a vote of 9:6 votes Mr Carins gained the establishment of a Select Committee to review the bill. The membership of the committee was: Mr Carins, together with Messrs Hodgman, Lowrie, Best and Orchard.

Mr Carins was elected chairman when the committee met briefly on 13th June 1968. The committee's work then went on to include some seventeen meetings held in Hobart, Launceston, Deloraine, Devonport and Burnie, and heard some two hundred witnesses, ten times as many as in 1915.

The committee was subjected to a wide range of opinion for and against the scheme from such groups as the Archery Society of Tasmania, Devonport Tennis Club and the Education Department. They in turn questioned all witnesses concerning their views on the duration of the scheme. As their report notes, "The most cogent arguments advanced by supporters of daylight saving legislation lie in the fields of leisure and recreation." Such comments having arisen from evidence given by many sporting organisations, the National Fitness Council and St Johns Park Hospital. "In summary", the committee reported, "it became clear from evidence considered that the greatest argument to support daylight saving is the organisation of time for the benefit of man."²¹

However, in presenting a fair and balanced report they did note the adverse opinions of many agricultural industries, and, for example, those of the cinema industry, especially the reduced patronage of drive-in theatres, said to have been some 31% down in 1967-68. They also presented, *inter alia*, a summary of disadvantages of daylight saving submitted in evidence:

"General effect on primary producers, their wives and families:

1. The necessity to rise in darkness over a longer period.
2. A longer working day.
3. Considerable inconvenience to mothers of school children who travel by bus.
4. Difficulty in settling over-tired children in daylight in warm rooms.
5. Housewives in many cases obliged to prepare two evening meals.
6. Family as a whole feel the strain of long hours.
7. Over-tiredness affected efficiency.
8. Social activities and meetings inconvenienced."²²

Nevertheless, after having noted that the "period of daylight saving in 1967-68 has indicated little economic benefit to the state", the committee determined that permanent daylight saving was more favoured in the urban than in the rural sectors of society. Therefore, their major recommendation, which was based upon a resolution moved by Mr Hodgman, was as follows:

- "(1) That daylight saving be introduced for a further trial period of two years from the first Sunday in November to the first Sunday in March."

The Council on 17th September, communicated its resolutions to the House of Assembly. Mr K. Lyons totally agreed with all the Council's amendments, but the Assembly "felt it to be its duty to disagree for the following reasons" which were compiled by Messrs Neilson (A.L.P.), and Mather and Young (Liberal).

- "(1) Because the amendments would create a substantial imbalance between the number of days on which Daylight Saving would operate before and after the longest day of the year.
- (2) Because the period incorporated in the bill from the second Sunday to a second Sunday is more convenient and less likely to create public confusion than the period proposed by the Amendment.

T.A. Newman

- (3) Because there is evidence of strong public preference for the period of Daylight Saving (originally) proposed in the Bill.
- (4) Because there is no need for a time limit on the operation of the Bill..."

The Legislative Council's reaction to this message was to establish a reasons committee of its own, and after a brief twenty minute suspension of the sitting, Messrs Carins, Best and Lowrie reported their deliberations to the Council. Thus the Council sent a further message to the Assembly stating that all its amendments were acceptable to a majority of the Tasmanian people and therefore stood. They would also "allow daylight saving during the recognised period of Summer and would cause the least inconvenience to the community and school children."

Naturally, the Assembly's position had not changed in this short time, and thus it called for a conference of managers; i.e. four members from each chamber meeting in secret in an attempt to reach a compromise. These managers, namely, Carins, Lowrie, Best and Fenton for the Council, and Neilson, Cashion, Mather and Young for the Assembly, met on 19th September. After nearly two hours of discussion they could not alter the resolve of either chamber, except that the Council take its amendments into further consideration, which it did.

Despite an attempt by Mrs P. Benjamin (A.L.P., Hobart) to have the Council relax its views, the final message to the Assembly read in part:

"... while the Council accepts the idea of Daylight Saving it finds that the Assembly ignores the effects of it upon the rural community, and besides, the Council's amendment was *not* an impractical suggestion."²³

The Assembly decided to accept the amendment leading to a further two-year trial period but would not relax its original plan for five months of daylight saving. It is a point of interest here to note that *The Mercury* reported that Mr R. Mather (Liberal, Denison) was handling the Bill on Mr Steer's behalf because he was ill at the time - he was to die in October of that year. The Council, as a whole, were able to compromise on an additional two weeks to the duration of the scheme. This was not without a division being required, with Mr Carins, McFie, Bisdee, Gregory, Best and Fenton being defeated in a 10:6 vote.

When this decision reached it, the Assembly was still in a mood to stand firm for five months, but in order that no further delay would put the coming summer usage of daylight saving in jeopardy the Assembly accepted the two weeks offered by the Council. In the words of Mr Mather, this was done "with considerable regret" and because "I think they [the people] would want it for four and a half months rather than not have it at all."²⁴ The bill passed this final stage on the voices without a division being required, it gained the Royal Assent on 15th October, and became Act No. 42/1968. Thus the Tasmanian public, including those on King Island, were either to enjoy or endure a further period of daylight saving.

In September 1969, the recently elected Premier Angus Bethune (Liberal) went public saying that he thought that overall the benefits of daylight saving outweighed the inconvenience and therefore, he thought that it was "here to stay". Moreover, he felt that it was approved by the overwhelming majority of Tasmanians, not to mention tourists, and that any argument for a referendum was rejected as unnecessarily expensive.²⁵

While he was Acting Premier, Mr Lyons, the Deputy Premier and sole Centre Party member in the coalition government, introduced the second reading of the daylight saving bill on 4th June 1970. This bill was to establish the permanency of the scheme, and it is interesting to note that once more over a dozen speakers took part in the debate. When the Legislative Council debated the bill, however, *The Mercury* reported that an "onslaught" against it was led by Mr Lloyd Carins and backed by Mr L. Bisdee (Monmouth) and Mr Charles Fenton (Russell).

An attempt by Mr Carins, during what was a nine hour debate, to institute yet another two year trial failed by 8:6 votes, and so the daylight savings scheme was enacted for a permanent four and one half month annual period. The bill actually gained Royal Assent on 30th June 1970, and became Act No. 20/1970.

About Time — Daylight Saving in Tasmania

Interstate Usage Affects Tasmania

It is at this stage in the history of daylight saving that the Australian usage returned to the fore. The Tasmanian usage of daylight saving had been noted on the mainland and had indeed been a catalyst, for example, in the establishment of a Daylight Saving Association in New South Wales, which commenced lobbying in 1968. Moreover, in each State parliament, and in the various State communication media daylight saving debates raged much as they had in Tasmania, but not for nearly as long. During a debate in the Australian Senate, Senator K. Anderson, whom we have already quoted produced a photostat copy of an unnamed newspaper dated 10th January 1956 reporting that Robert Menzies had claimed that he had "never understood arguments against daylight saving."²⁶

At a meeting of Chief Secretaries in July 1971, Mr K. Lyons, who had negotiated with the other States, agreed to bring in a bill to enforce the reduction by two weeks in the daylight savings period for Tasmanian Summer Time. This was so that all the eastern States would adopt a common four months period. Moreover, this initial period was to include Queensland and Western Australia. During the debate on the reduction, the Tasmanian government came under fire for being forced to back down by the other States, especially by the larger States of Victoria and New South Wales. The Legislative Council passed the bill for the reduced term on 3rd November 1971, although many M.L.C.'s had stated their distaste for the backdown because Tasmania had pioneered the scheme. The bill gain Royal Assent on 26th November and became No.71/1971.

Because there was a change of government in Tasmania in December 1971, and the A.L.P. returned to power, Mr Neil Batt (A.L.P., Denison) attended the July 1972 meeting of Chief Secretaries. Then in October, the House of Assembly approved, without dissent, a bill (No.65) to adjust the period of daylight saving in Tasmania. In contrast to the lengthy debates of the 1960's, and the "non-debates" earlier still, the Assembly took just fourteen minutes to save the one hour this time for eighteen weeks. This swift compromise, to again conform with the mainland States was nevertheless only reluctantly accepted. Indeed, Max Bingham, the Leader of the Opposition, said that his party's support was "tinged with sadness".²⁷ In the Legislative Council the bill passed without amendment, and it gained Royal Assent on 9th November 1972 as Act No.25/1972.

Speaking on radio on 20th October 1974 the Tasmanian Premier Eric Reece (A.L.P., Wilmot) said that daylight saving had gained nearly universal acceptance, so much so that the first Sunday in October was now a memorable event in each year. He went on to say that daylight saving "brought a new dimension to the leisure hours of the day and early evening". He concluded by suggesting that "perhaps the Australian Government might be prepared to have a look at the question to see what could be done on a national basis..."²⁸

We shall return to the national sphere shortly, but it seems worthy to quote a passage from *The Mercury* editorial of 28th February 1975, to capture the prevailing Tasmanian thoughts on daylight saving:

"Certainly there would be few of the 50,000-odd eastern shore commuters who would not welcome an extra hour of daylight for the drudgery of their evening ordeal in getting from one side of the Derwent to the other." [The Tasman Bridge was partially destroyed when the vessel *Lake Illawarra* collided with it on 5th January 1975.]²⁹

Duration Debate

The Tasmanian Apex Clubs supported the extension of daylight saving from four and a half to five months, but on 21st September 1976 Premier Neilson told the House of Assembly that neither Tasmania nor the rest of the eastern States would be extending the period of daylight saving.

Two years later during February-March 1978, the Tasmanian Tourist Council again advocated an extension of daylight saving for at least six months. They based their stand upon a survey they had conducted of their 500 members which showed that some 44% would prefer, for marketing reasons especially, six months daylight saving, while a further 31% wanted

T.A. Newman

year-round daylight saving, with the remaining 25% opting for the existing four months as sufficient.

Premier Doug Lowe (A.L.P.) felt that he was prepared to take the extension of daylight saving to the next Premier's Conference but that Tasmania "could not go it alone."³¹ Rural groups, especially in northwestern Tasmania sought to block the extension of daylight saving, and also the Returned Servicemen's League wrote to the Minister for Tourism, who was a known advocate of the six months extension, saying "they would rather not have it [daylight saving] but we accept the present situation" and they would be prepared to "fight to prevent it going any further".³² Mr V.L. Kelly of the Tasmanian Farmers' Federation told Premier Lowe that its policy was to oppose the extension of daylight saving, and in fact West Tamar farmers, at a meeting on 21st March 1979, directed their leaders to campaign against daylight saving. For example, the Women's Temperance Union, at its 87th Annual State Conference, came out against the whole idea of daylight saving because it caused the young to stand and wait for school buses in the dark.³³

In March 1980 the Frederick Henry Bay Apex Club promoted and 36 other Apex Clubs circulated some 700 daylight saving petitions which were presented to the State government. The Minister for Tourism, Mr Barnard, was in favour of this action. Moreover, the Minister for Recreation, Mr Holgate, on 4th July, was also presented with a petition from private citizens of Launceston with some 7 000 signatures in favour of daylight saving. However, a counter petition containing 451 signatures was tabled by Mr Cornish (Liberal, Wilmot) on 14th July 1980, from citizens of the northwestern part of the State, a major rural area of Tasmania. They rejected daylight saving because of "the disruption" it [already] "caused to the lives of our children and ourselves."³⁴

Cabinet, at a meeting on 18th February, and at another on 24th February were unable to decide on a common day for commencement and conclusion of daylight saving. Thus Cabinet passed the decision on to the A.L.P. Caucus because in Mr Lowe's words:

"... the more we discussed an extension, the more there seemed to be sensible variations to the period proposed."³⁵

On 4th March, Premier Lowe announced that Caucus had decided to extend daylight saving to commence in the first weekend in October to the last weekend in March 1982.

Once more the Tasmanian Farmers' Federation voiced strong opposition to the extension of daylight saving, with the President Mr J.G. Allwright saying that "Cabinet's decision to extend daylight saving meant increased costs for farmers and problems with obtaining labour", not to mention the problems it caused for mothers and school children.

The bill to achieve this extension was introduced to the Legislative Council by Mr Miller on 19th March 1981, but it was rejected without a vote, after a debate that had lasted just one and a half hours. There had been 13 M.L.C.'s speaking against it.³⁶

The government revived the bill in the House of Assembly on 8th September 1981. In late August the Liberal Party at its State Party Conference, had rejected a motion to oppose daylight saving and instead allowed an open or free vote. The Tasmanian Tourist Council was opposed in its support of daylight saving by, for example, the Dairy Council, while the Queenstown Council planned to write to every M.L.C. advocating rejection of the bill.

But the delay in introducing the bill meant that the government itself was forced to alter the duration of the period of daylight saving. Because the legislation could not possibly be passed by 23rd September, daylight saving would have to start on the first Sunday in October. On 24th September, the bill did manage to pass in the Assembly, through a free vote by the Liberals in which seven members of that party supported the government. As a result the vote was a 24:8 majority in favour.

On 14th October 1981 the Legislative Council did pass the bill for the extension of daylight saving by a vote of 9:7. They not only shortened the period yet further, but also introduced a "sunset" clause into the bill. Sunset clauses, although the name is well suited to daylight saving bills, in effect meant that the legislation would expire on

About Time – Daylight Saving in Tasmania

the date so inserted, that is, another two year trial period was commenced.³⁷ Instead of the extra six weeks originally planned, only three weeks were gained, and even these would expire in March 1983. By then, according to the theory put forward by Mr Peter Hodgman (M.L.C., Huon) who moved the sunset clause, "facts rather than hypothesis could be produced by opponents of the extension."³⁸ The House of Assembly agreed to these amendments on 21st October 1981, just in time for the season of daylight saving to begin on that coming Sunday morning.

The public realised that the extra hour extended three weeks beyond that operating in the other States and also discovered that their television and radio shows were out of synchronisation, as were airline and postal schedules. These discoveries created personal problems for both public and parliamentarians and militated against the extension for three weeks. Nevertheless the Gray Liberal Government introduced a bill in April 1983 intended to prevent the expiration of the daylight savings extension. It was debated quickly in the Assembly and passed onto the Legislative Council on 3rd May, were more petitions were tabled against the scheme. The intentions of the Legislative Council were soon clear for the tenor of debate was mainly negative.³⁹ Once again the rural lobby had won the day and persuaded the Councillors to defeat the bill; they did so on the 4th May by 8:4 votes. Thus at the time of writing, Tasmania still operates a permanent scheme of daylight saving albeit of a shorter period than that desired by the government.

CONCLUSION

This history of daylight saving in Tasmania has concentrated upon the events surrounding it rather than upon the endless repetition of views for or against the scheme. Such views are numerous and well known, and need not be aired here. It is hoped that this factual approach has been able to capture the slow chronological movement towards daylight saving, from its early associations with war to its widespread use in peace time. Moreover, it is hoped that the setting down of a substantial portion of the Tasmanian history of daylight saving has been of some service in documenting the innovative role that this State has played in the use of daylight saving. On this last point, an editorial from *The Mercury* has an apt comment:

"It took 11 years of frustration, even ridicule, for John Steer's brainchild to become accepted as a worthwhile amenity. And its acceptance by most States was only because Tasmania showed unusual fortitude to pioneer and persevere."⁴⁰

Further quotations might be made from the Bible (see Ecclesiastes ch.3, 1-18) or from any of the authors who have dealt with the theme of time and man (e.g. T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Shakespeare) but space does not permit them. Nevertheless, it seems appropriate to quote a general item that encapsulates the essence of the interaction between time and man. George Kubler, an American art historian, has this to say:

"Time, like mind, is not knowable as such. We know time only indirectly by what happens in it."⁴¹

In other words, it is the use that we make of the "extra" time granted by daylight saving that gives it its best support.

ENDNOTES

1. See Jespersen, J. and Fitz-Randolph, J., 1979: TIME AND CLOCKS FOR THE SPACE AGE. New York, Atheneum: 16-17 & 32-33.
2. Quoted in Report of the Select Committee Upon the Saving of Daylight, Victoria. Parliamentary Paper No.D5, Vol.1, 1909.
3. One of the better analyses of certain aspects of this nexus is Geoffrey Blainey's TYRANNY OF DISTANCE, 1966, Sun Books, Melbourne: 2-15 and passim.
4. See Rosenhain, M., 1972: A land of lots of time ... *Walkabout*, January 1972: 55-57.
5. Both quotations below appear in the report to the Tasmanian Parliament, Parliamentary Paper No.77/1894: 4.
6. The following quotations all appear in *The Mercury's* section on parliamentary affairs 23rd September 1915 and 30th September 1915.
7. See Parliamentary Paper No.55/1915.

T.A. Newman

8. *Ibid.*: ii.
9. Votes and Proceedings of House of Assembly, 7th August 1917.
10. *Senate Debates*, 1963, vol.S24: 39-70.
11. Statutory Rule No.28 and No.323, 1941: 770-771.
12. See Victorian Hansard, 5th October 1971, vol.303: 995.
13. See Bennett, S. & Bennett, B., 1980: BIOGRAPHICAL REGISTER OF THE TASMANIAN PARLIAMENT, 1851-1960, A.N.U., Canberra: 155.
14. *Mercury Reprints*, 22nd November 1957: 53.
15. *Mercury Reprints*, 28th November 1958: 60.
16. *Mercury Reprints*, 28th November 1958: 60.
17. *Ibid.*, 15th March 1963: 32.
18. *Ibid.*, 2nd July 1964: 10
19. *The Mercury*, 8th August 1967: 1.
20. See Newman, T.A., 1977: THE TASMANIAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL: ITS COMMITTEE SYSTEM, 1927-1976. University of Tasmania B.A. (Hons.) thesis: 60-64.
21. Parliamentary Paper No.41/1968.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Votes and Proceedings of Legislative Council: 126.
24. *Mercury Reprints*, 3rd October 1968.
25. *The Mercury*, 26th September 1969 and 5th December 1969.
26. *Senate Debates*,
27. *Mercury Reprints*, 6th October 1972: 28.
28. *The Mercury*, 30th July 1974.
29. *The Mercury*, 28th February 1975.
30. *The Mercury*, 8th March 1978.
31. *Ibid.*, 22nd March 1978.
32. *Advocate*, 23rd March 1978.
33. *The Mercury*, 27th March 1979.
34. *Advocate*, 15th July 1980.
35. *The Mercury*, 25th February 1981.
36. *The Examiner*, 9th March 1981.
37. See Legislative Council Hansard, 1981, Vol.III, No.1: 605-655.
38. *The Mercury*, 15th October 1981.
39. See Legislative Council Hansard, 4th May 1983: 291-326.
40. *The Mercury*, 4th May 1976.
41. Quoted in Brockman, J. & Rosenfeld, E., 1973: REAL TIME, Picador/Pan, London: 69.