

Central Bureau Intelligence Corps Association

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1987

Our Annual General Meeting was held on the 9th February, with 15 members present. It was good to see Bob Burnside after an extended bout of ill-health, and also a pleasure to see Bob Bevan who came all the way from Pacific Palms to attend. Both were founders of the Association.

President Michael Casey reported on the year's activities and thanked the Committee members for their efforts. Treasurer Norma Keeling reported a balance of funds at 31st December, 1986 of \$746.10. Officers elected are as follows:

President	Michael Casey
Vice Presidents	Allan Osborne, Jim Williams
Secretary	Gordon Gibson
Treasurer	Norma Keeling
Publicity Officer	Madeline Chidgey
Executive Committee	Nonie McNaught, Dennis Moore, Aub Roberts.

Ron Chidgey was appointed Auditor for 1987.

NEW MEMBERS: A warm welcome to Connie CARPENTER, Buderim, Qld; Judy (ROE) & Tony CARSON, Manly, N.S.W.; Bert RUSHEN, Burwood, Victoria; Molly (LUSK) & Peter COLLESS, Woodridge, Qld; Charles STEPHENS, Port Macquarie, N.S.W. Connie, Molly, Peter and Charles were with the Wireless Units; Judy with the AWAS & Tony with British Army; Bert with Australian Army.

The Queensland Wireless Unit Association has been very active over the years and enjoys successful reunions, and we are very pleased that Alf BOBIN has introduced so many into our Association. I personally found it a real pleasure to meet Daisy and Alf last Anzac Day, having heard so much about them. It was an effort for Alf to march with Daisy but he managed it perfectly. As we go to press, they are spending a few days on the Gold Coast before returning home to Gympie after Alf's long stay in hospital. We send you both our very good wishes.

We reported in May last that Peter COLLESS (now an Association member) had lost a leg, but not his cheery spirit. Now we are sorry to report that his other leg was amputated on 23rd December. We hope, Peter, that you get on famously with your latest model legs, and send best wishes from us all as you and Molly cope with this new situation.

Change of mailing address: Rita (Taylor) Balin - now P.O. Box 409, Fortitude Valley, Qld, 4006.

At the AGM, the possibility was discussed of borrowing a video camera (VHS) In order to film our part of the March and the Reunion -- does anyone have one? It would be especially appreciated for the 1988 March now that the situation regarding same has changed somewhat. In view of the intended visit of S.I.S. personnel from the U.S. for our Bi-Centenary, and their wish to be in Sydney for the 1988 March, our President Michael Casey has written to Joe Richard of S.I.S.-C.B. inviting all members to join us in the March and at the Reunion afterwards.

It was decided that the Executive Committee would co-opt interested others to help prepare plans for the big occasion. More news next Newsletter!

The A.S.W.G. Association in Melbourne produces a remarkable Newsletter called "Ink Emma Ink" to which some of our members subscribe, having been Wireless Operators with the Army W/T Sections before coming to C.B. We feel sure that Steve Mason, Editor of IMI, will be happy for us to pass on two items here from the November issue.

Firstly, from Geoff BALLARD:

"The 'history' is still progressing and the end is in sight - hopefully next year!

You will remember that my original intention was to write the story of A.S.W.G., C.B. and the Sections from my own perspective and knowledge. However, the horizon has grown wider and wider as a result of the wonderful fund of information sent in by you members - experiences, anecdotes, poems, humorous incidents, etc., etc. It then appeared logical to tell the whole of the 'sigint' story, within the limits allowed, as it had never been told in Australia before.

Thus, to the original information was added material from 're-visits' which I was fortunate enough to make to Israel (Palestine), Egypt, Greece, Crete, (Lebanon was omitted!) and much of Australia, including Darwin, where many of our 'sites' were explored, locals contacted, changes noted, etc., etc.

Another huge fund of information became available in late 1984 when I attended the U.S. SIS Reunion in Florida, and later visited the U.S. National Archives in Washington where I was overwhelmed by the sheer mass of material freely offered to me.

Thus the project has advanced from a rather limited perspective to a 'sky's the limit' view, but the original basis remains, i.e. not a regimental history, but the activities of real PEOPLE against a background of our operations, as far as they can be written about.

In including the information supplied by members in the 'History', an important point has been brought to my notice. Because of the secrecy of the past, some relatives and friends of our members may be surprised, even shocked, to learn that we were involved in this work. Accordingly, if anyone who has supplied me with information does not want their name to appear in the narrative (assuming it is published), would they please let me know. My address is 22 Prospect Road, Rosanna, Vic., 3084. If you are happy for your name to appear, then there is no need to write.

On to page 742! Cheers! Geoff Ballard."

We hope you have an enthusiastic publisher, Geoff, as we are sure that your book will be a favourite with all of us, and we eagerly await its arrival.

Secondly, last year Stewart SOUTHAM, FASA, CPA, was made a life member of the Australian Society of Accountants. IMI reports:

"Stewart's wide ranging commitment and involvement in Society activities also include service on the Executive, Investigation, Consultative, Careers Guidance, Education and Membership Policy, and Disciplinary Committees.

It is for obvious reasons that the dedication and commitment of a true professional like Stewart Southam should be acknowledged by the conferring of Life Membership."

Congratulations, Stewart.

Since receiving this latest issue of IMI, we have learned of the very sad news that one of the sons of Hillyar and Stewart was killed in a recent car accident, leaving a wife and young family. We extend sympathy to them all in their loss.

In December 1985 we told you that Brian BOMBELL had retired. Well, it was true at the time! Now Brian has returned to the world of the workers, and continues to print our Newsletters as he has done for some time, even in his 'retirement' days. Our thanks again, Brian.

Are those of you who are readers of the Sydney Morning Herald watching out for articles by Peter HASTINGS? Peter writes on Asian and South Pacific affairs and Australian defence matters, and provides much information and food for thought.

Percy PLEDGER has just spent several days in Sydney visiting his brother Stan while he was in hospital.

We are sure you will be interested in Alf Davis's story over the page. Please take note of Alf's request for information.

Stolen from "WAAAF CHAT":

"We are the golden girls of yore,
Who girded loins and went to war.
Innocents abroad were we,
Who hardly knew a bird from bee!

The people frowned and shook their heads.
"No good will come of this", they said,
"What a fearful aberration,
Women in a man's vocation!"

We marched and worked and never quit,
Even when the needles hit.
We weren't called 'Miss', they cut our tresses.
We rarely wore our pretty dresses.

The men looked on and gave us glances,
We even copped a few romances!
Some were fun and some were not,
But through it all we learned a lot!

Emancipation! Liberation!
The women's catch cry of the nation.
We oldies smile, because we know
It happened to us long ago."

Best Wishes to all, especially the sicklisters.

Madeline Chidgey
Publicity Officer

I wished for some extra news to fill this space
and here it is -

Coral and Sandy Hinds from Melbourne
are planning to be in Sydney to march
and reunion with us on Anzac Day, and
will be staying with Joyce Grace.

Eve Scott from Brisbane hopes to be
with us in Sydney also for Anzac Day.
Eve is also planning a visit to Papua
New Guinea and Lae will be a feature
of her trip. If any of us would like
greetings sent to anyone in Lae, Eve
will be happy to be the bearer.

A few words from ALF DAVIS, ex Fl/Lt RAAF

I enlisted in the RAAF in late 1940 but was not called up until April 1941. In 1942 I attended an O.T.C. and was then posted to Bairnsdale as a Trainee Intelligence Officer.

My first operational posting was to a Wireless Unit outside Townsville. Following a move to Port Moresby, we were attached to GHQ, SWPA, under General MacArthur and subsequently moved with him to Nadzab. On 28th May 1944, the day after the initial American landing in Biak Island, I led a small detachment aboard an American ship to set up an operations room there. In October 1944, another small detachment of our personnel boarded an American transport and landed at Leyte, the day after the initial landing. We were subjected to continual air attack, and on our first night there we were hit by a cyclone or hurricane and lost much of our D.F. equipment.

On 8th January 1945, we joined the invasion force which landed in Lingayen Gulf north of Manila, travelling on a small destroyer escort ship, and the convoy was attacked by every remaining Japanese aircraft and submarine in the area. Kamikaze planes fell all around us and we saw a number of American warships hit. We landed at Lingayen Gulf after the fleet bombarded the shore area for some hours. Even under fire, we were able to continue operations at all times.

After moving to San Miguel with GHQ, I heard of the American push to save from destruction Santa Tomas Prison Camp where all civilian internees were held, and I was the first Australian to enter the camp and talk to the Australian internees.

A few days later we moved to Manila where fierce fighting was still taking place in the walled city of Intramuros. All bridges across the Pasag River had been blown up but the Americans had erected one Bailey Bridge. It was there that we really caught up with the American Infantry. Later, I was ordered to make arrangements for our next mission, which was a landing in Japan, but I was allowed a brief visit home and was home when the atomic bombs were dropped and the war ended.

It is interesting to note that Brig. Gen. Akin, of the U.S. Army S.I.S., under whose control we worked, had a tremendous faith in the work of the wireless units, and we saw a lot of him in the field.

Members of our forward detachments have been referred to often as "the forgotten men" (the phrase in Bob Burnside's profile in the May Newsletter is "the legion of the lost!"), illustrated by the fact that official records make no mention of our forward detachments but only of the movement of our basic unit.

(A not uneventful career with CB! Ed.)

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Calling Wireless Unit personnel who served north of Australia:

Alf is finding that the Department of Defence is lacking information concerning the forward movements mentioned above which were all made with the Americans aboard American ships.

He would like to hear from any of you who can recall ships' names, etc. etc. etc. Alf's address is 1 Holly Street, Castle Cove, N.S.W. 2069; telephone (02) 407 1432.

Dennis Moore recalls being on the "Panama Express" from Hollandia to Tacloban, Leyte (for Tolosa Village).

Please delve into your memories and contact Alf if you can assist.