

NEWSLETTER

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NOVEMBER, 1988

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Another Newsletter to keep us all in touch.

Firstly, we report on the Barbecue on the 13th November. Once again, Gordon and Sue Gibson extended a warm welcome to us and it was a great occasion. Those attending were Bruce BENTWITCH, Norma and Syd CAREY, Meg and Len CARRIGG, Joyce and Mike CASEY, Flora and Alf DAVIS with their friends Joan and Albert Aaron, Florence and Bill ESTEP, Norma KEELING and daughter Jacquie, Helen KENNY, Betty and Noel LANGBY, Lach and Noni McNAUGHT, Molly and Reg MURPHY, Sheila Gregory and Jim WILLIAMS, Stan and Marion WINN.

Dean Gibson was his usual helpful self with the steak and sausage cooking, and Katie helped also in looking after us. Altogether a splendid day, with fine weather, and the garden a picture. Our thanks to the Gibson family.

Those who apologised for not coming included Jack BENNETT, Daisy BOBIN, Madeline and Ron CHIDGEY, Ray EDDOLLS, Joyce GRACE, John LAIRD, Alan LANGDON, Joy LINNANE, Margaret McCAFFERTY, Les McCLEAN, Dennis MOORE, John SHOEBRIDGE, Arthur SIMS, Roy WARD, Athol WHYBURN, and our Vice President Allan OSBORNE who, sadly for us, has moved to Queensland.

President Mike Casey 'said a few words' and we observed a minute's silence to remember our friend Percy Pledger who died on the 8th June. During the afternoon, after discussion with members, the Executive Committee withdrew for a meeting. Two important decisions were made.

A new venue for next year's ANZAC DAY REUNION LUNCH has been booked - the Hotel Lawson in Ultimo. We have been meeting for many years at the Phillip's Foote Restaurant, a very popular restaurant in the very popular Rocks area. We have had great times there but at the Lawson we will have a room to ourselves and our Secretary advises that we will have comfortable upholstered chairs, carpeted floor, room to move, car parking space. Details in next Newsletter.

REUNIONS, past and future. We have our regular reunions in Sydney in April and November, and on May 1st we had our "Special" at 21 Henry Street. Also, some of our Melbourne members were able to entertain the American visitors in April.

Now we feel it is time to try and arrange a reunion to be held in MELBOURNE next year. Gordon Gibson has written to our Victorian members to see if they think this is desirable and feasible. We would plan to forego our November Barbecue in Sydney, to be in Melbourne during the weekend of November 11th and 12th. This would enable a wreath laying at the Shrine on Remembrance Day (Saturday), to be followed by a barbecue or picnic on the Saturday or Sunday.

This is a preliminary advice only and we will be glad to have your comments and an indication of whether you would anticipate attendance. We hope the idea will appeal to our Adelaide ex-CB-ers, as well as those in the country areas of Victoria, and in the A.C.T., Queensland and New South Wales.

Please write to Gordon Gibson at 7 Lindsay Close, Pymble, 2073, to air your views.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. Monday, 13th February, 1989, Sydney. Details to follow.

Dates for your 1989 diary:

February 13th

A.G.M. Sydney

April 24th

Wreath laying, Cenotaph, Sydney

25th

March, Reunion, Sydney

November 11, 12

Reunion, Melbourne (Tentative)



**PERCY PLEDGER.** Many of you will remember Percy at C.B. He was conscientious and capable, a humorist, and a picture of sartorial elegance in his Army uniform! His violin was never far from his side.

His wife, Marjorie, was a fine pianist. She suffered a stroke which left her unable to play any more, and Percy cared for her for many years. After Marjorie's death, he lived alone for some years.

Percy travelled from Melbourne for many of our reunions in Sydney, and Anzac Day last year was his final visit with us. We will miss him.

At his funeral, Lester Truex represented his C.B. colleagues, and kindly arranged for a floral tribute and for the insertion of a notice from ex-CB-ers in the Melbourne press. Mac Maroney sent the following, extracted from a local paper. Our thanks to both Lester and Mac.



*The late Percy Pledger*

### **PERCY PLEDGER - VIOLINIST**

Born in London in 1910, Percy Pledger migrated to Australia with his parents in 1923 and it was in Surrey Hills that they made their home. Recently, Percy passed away, but in the intervening 65 years, which saw him become a very talented violinist, teacher and entrepreneur, he remained a resident of Surrey Hills.

After leaving school, Percy worked at Allan's Music House, becoming their Chief Accountant, but more importantly, had the opportunity to meet many celebrated musicians.

Being somewhat reticent by nature, and desiring no publicity, he encouraged many people, and was involved in a number of musical ensembles. He was a permanent member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra until his retirement in 1980, but continued to teach and play with the MSO on special occasions.

During the Barbecue reunion, our Roving Reporter was able to obtain interviews with four of the fellows - Reg Murphy, Bruce Bentwitch, Len Carrigg and Jim Williams. She soon realised that she was dealing with four of a kind - they were all RAAF W/T operators who came into the Wireless Unit scene in 1943 and 1944, and were shortly on their way, via various W.U.'s, and methods of transport, to P.N.G. and the Philippines. They related a few scary tales of close encounters with the enemy, some of which may be hilarious in the telling but not in the experiencing. These interviews prompted a review of the numbers at the Barbecue - 7 RAAF W.U., 3 Aust. Army, 2 AWAS, 2 WAAAF, 1 U.S. Army.

New Members. We extend a warm welcome to the following new members, most of whom were enrolled as a result of our Bicentennial activities - Sybil Brady (BECK), Jack BENNETT, Ian BUCKINGHAM, Tom HOUNSLOW, Chet LANGE (U.S.A.), Valma MILLER, Geoffrey MILNE, Phyllis McLEOD, Douglas McNALLY, Roma Hodsdon (PARRATT), Elizabeth Bunny RADBURN, Douglas ROSENBERG, Jean Hicks (SINCLAIR), Roy WARD, Heather WILLIAMS.

We will certainly miss Allan OSBORNE as an Executive Member. The Osbornes have moved to Mudgeeraba, Qld, and though we don't like losing a valued Executive Member, we wish them all the very best in their new home. We hope to see Meg and Allan next Anzac Day.



Sincere thanks to all those members and friends who wrote to say how they enjoyed this year's Reunions. The letters were much appreciated. Fern Hammond, from Wisconsin, even wrote a letter to the "Australian", which Bruce Bentwitch was good enough to send us, and it is reprinted below

### Memorable

I AM a member of the "MacArthur's Heroes" tour who visited Australia in late April and early May.

The RSL and former members of the WWII Central Bureau, with whom some of us worked, were very kind and hospitable to us. They made our trip to Australia a memorable one.

All Australians we met, taxi drivers, waitresses etc made us feel welcome. I hope those who visit the States will get the same treatment.

Thank you, Australia.

**FERN HAMMOND**  
Menomonie, Wisconsin

Incidentally, there are a few spare copies of the May Newsletter, if anyone would like to have an extra one. Or maybe some of our new members would like a copy. And I apologise to our Authoress member, EVE SCOTT, for having inadvertently left her name off the list of those who attended the Henry Street "do". Especially when I was not backward in asking for Eve's help, which was generously given.

PETER COLLESS writes that the Queensland W.U.'s had a good Annual Reunion in August. Forty turned up, including FRANK PATRICK, who wished to be remembered to the C.B.-ites. Frank has been partially paralysed by a stroke. He was well known as a W/T Instructor at Central Bureau. Peter has had further leg surgery, which <sup>took</sup> a long time to heal, but thankfully he is now able to get about again. We wish him better health.

And speaking of health matters:

JOHN WALSH expects to have his first cataract operation in Concord before Christmas, with the second one some weeks later. He has been unable to read anything for a long time, and is hopeful of being able to read a little in the New Year. Here's hoping for great success for him. He has just returned from a most enjoyable coach trip to Darwin via the Centre. He sounds very well and cheerful and has settled well into his retirement village life.

BOB BURNSIDE is 'not too bad'. Still has some difficulty getting around, but has good neighbours and friends. His two sons are out of Sydney - one in Canberra and one in Narooma - so Bob is looking forward to a Christmas get-together with his sons, their wives, and the grand children.

FLORENCE ESTEP looks so very well and cheerful, but is having to cope with some Parkinson's and sciatica just now. JOY LINNANE is currently having some tests and we hope the results are favourable.

Our best wishes to all these, and to others who are not so well.

Travellers: Pamela and Alan LANGDON had a wonderful tour - to the U.K. via the Middle East and Europe, and home via the U.S. Max and Nancy HURLEY may still be exploring Australia - we hope it is proving to be a tremendous trip, and we look forward to news on their return.



Some of our ex WAAAF members interstate may not have read that Miss Clare Stevenson, A.M., M.B.E., died on 22nd October, aged 85. Her five years as war time Director of the WAAAF was only a short period in the total service she gave to others. Norma Keeling and Marion Winn attended a Memorial Gathering in the Great Hall of the Sydney University on November 8th, where they learnt of the work of this remarkable lady in the years following her retirement. She is described as "a leader, an achiever and a motivator - she cared and she was a friend".

(If any of our WAAAF members would like a copy of the printed tribute to Miss Stevenson, please let us know and we will forward one to you).

Our May Newsletter contained only a short account of the visit of the Americans to Melbourne. A full account from Lester Truex was received while the Newsletter was being printed and we now enclose this. The event was seven months ago but his report will be of interest to you, and we should all feel thankful to Lester for enduring such a nerve racking time before the real enjoyment commenced!

Lester has since reported that DR. ABE SINKOV was elected a Foundation Member of the new Intelligence Hall of Fame, which was established in 1987 in the U.S. Only nine were selected.

Our President, Michael Casey, sends Season's Greetings and good wishes for the coming year to our members everywhere.

This year has brought lots of happy memories, and once again, our thanks to all who joined in our Bicentennial activities, and by their attendance made it a great year to remember.

Madeline Chidgey  
Publicity Officer

1 Daphne Street,  
Dolans Bay. N.S.W. 2229.  
02 524 8739.