

Central Bureau Intelligence Corps Association

NEWSLETTER NO. 3 1990 AUGUST.

A SON AND A DAUGHTER TREAD IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THEIR FATHERS

Past President Michael Casey and his wife Joyce have not long returned from Gallipoli. This is their story.

"Our visit to Gallipoli and the battlefields of the 1914-18 War was certainly not premeditated. Joyce and I both fathers who were at Gallipoli as members of the 13th. Battalion — quite a coincidence as apparently their paths did not cross. However, when in January this year the father of a friend of ours was chosen as one of the original Anzac veterans to travel to Gallipoli and Turkey our interest was rekindled and we decided to join the R.S.L. tour that was being organised to leave Sydney on the 19th. April.

When we arrived in Istanbul via Athens we were immediately impressed by the Turkish people. To a large extent the progress of the twentieth century appears to have passed them by — they do not appear to have a great number of worldly possessions but they seem to be so happy. They showed genuine friendship to us, at all times and were very interested in this large contingent of Australians who had travelled so far in order to remember a day in 1915.

As a country Turkey has common borders (and in many cases, great problems) with their neighbours namely Greece (who is opposing their entry into the Common Market on the grounds that their exports would be of a similar nature) Iran, Iraq, Syria, Bulgaria, and Russia (from which they receive their natural gas).

During the four days spent in Istanbul which soon proved to be not only ancient but also enchanting, we visited the Turkish Military Museum, the Blue Mosque, Saint Sophia Cathedral, the Topkapi Palace, a carpet factory (where we found an Australian as a salesman) and the Bazaar (the ladies all seemed to find the leather shoes and handbags quite irresistible!) Each morning we were awakened by the eerie call for the Moslems to attend prayers and then shortly afterwards could clearly hear their chanting. These experiences gave us an insight into the Turkish way of life and their culture.

On 24th. April we travelled from Istanbul to Canakkale which is on the Asian side of the Dardanelles. This famous stretch of water that we have all heard of over so many years is unbelievably beautiful and peaceful. Whilst travelling across on the vehicular ferry we met for the first time many of the young Australian soldiers who had been specially chosen by their units or regiments to represent their country as members of the colour party, honour guard or band.

We were called at 2 a.m. (heaven forbid !) on Anzac Day. It was quite a cold morning and we all dressed accordingly before leaving our hotel an hour later for the return trip across The Narrows in order to be at Anzac Cove by 4 a.m. When we arrived there at the appointed time approximately 10,000 people had beaten us to the best positions.

Although the actual landing in 1915 commenced at 4.17 this Dawn Service was late in starting as the A.B.C. had difficulty with the lighting and had requested a delay until 6.30 a.m. but the R.S.L. had stipulated that it must commence no later than 5.30. To add to our problems, our group had been designated as the "Official

Choir" and under the hard- working baton of the Duntroon Musical Director we had practised for hours the previous day whilst travelling on the bus from Istanbul until we modestly felt that we were quite good. However with such a large crowd already in position it was impossible for our tour of 170 people to be together and we couldn't even see the Band and so for such a very well-rehearsed choir we were a "dead loss". This large and enthusiastic group of people gave each of the old Diggers a very rousing reception both upon their arrival as well as upon their departure — they were so special and so very happy even though they were reliving their memories.

After the Anzac Cove ceremony we visited Cape Helles, the scene of the British landing — a distance of approximately 16 kms. It was here that the official International Ceremony took place. This was our first insight into the rigid security that surrounded Mrs. Margaret Thatcher who arrived by helicopter from Ankara accompanied by the President of Turkey.

Later in the morning we were privileged guests at the Lone Pine Memorial Service and this was indeed a very moving ceremony. Also it was not nearly as crowded — due no doubt to the fact that it was so hot — at least 80 degrees and remember we had dressed at 2 a.m!

Finally, a small ceremony took place at Johnson's Folly when a member of our group laid a wreath on the grave of his father whom he had never known.

The following day Joyce visited the ancient city of Troy whilst I went back to the Peninsular and saw Cape Helles in greater detail before returning to the Anzac area. We saw such places as shrapnel Gully, Monash Valley, Courtney's Post, The Nek, Chunuk Bair and finally we were able to wander along the beaches at Anzac Cove where it is still possible to find spent cartridges, pieces of shrapnel and other relics.

Whilst all this was going on, one old Digger achieved a lifelong ambition. He announced that he wasn't leaving until he once more went up to the very top of "Plugge's Plateau " which overlooks Anzac Cove. This is one of the areas that was scaled by the Australians in 1915 and even now there is only a very narrow path up to the top. When eight of the young Australian soldiers mentioned earlier heard about his wish they found a stretcher and in two groups of four managed to take him up. It took them two hours each way to carry him the distance.

It is our firm belief that Anzac Day should always be retained in its present form as it was on this day in 1915 that our military history really commenced and every war memorial in Australia was built to commemorate those who lost their lives in this campaign.

Michael Casey.

THE YAMOMOTO STORY

Allan Marsland was spending a quiet Sunday morning at home in Mitchelton, Queensland browsing through his Brisbane Sunday Mail — it was Sunday June 10 to be precise—and there it was, a rivetting headline enough to widen the eyes and capture the attention of most ex C.B. or W.U. persons. " AUDACIOUS AUSSIE BROKE SECRET CODE ". For the sake of truth in reporting it has to be acknowledged that the article first captured the attention of Allan's sister and she pointed it out to Allan. So Allan read on and this is the gist of what he read.

L.A.C. Ivo Riley, RAAF, after being scrubbed from flight training in 1942, became a member of the Army's Special Wireless Group which " eavesdropped " on Japanese radio transmissions. Just before he died in 1978 he revealed to University student Nancy Yeates that while in Darwin he copied traffic from a Japanese agent named Yak located in Afghanistan, sent to an operator called Togo in Japan. All messages went to an American Intelligence Unit for decoding.

One night Yak sent a strange group of code letters. Togo did'nt acknowledge. Ivo then transmitted to Yak using Togo's secret identifier saying that he didn't have the new code books and requested that the message be

sent in the old code.

In due course Dirk Hurtzhog was on shift when Yak came on using the old code and it appears that he repeated the message. Of course the American experts compared the two messages and broke the new code. Riley thought that the message he copied was the itinerary for that famous Yamomoto flight.

According to the Sunday Mail article the Australian Army declined an offer for Riley and Hurtzhog to be decorated. It seems that Riley accepted his obligations imposed by the official secrets document he signed at war's end and sat on the story for thirty years. He decided to tell Nancy "only because he was dying and it probably no longer mattered.

The writer for the Sunday Mail concedes that the account raised unanswered questions, contradicted published history and lacked details and dates but points out that Riley had nothing to gain personally from his story because he asked that it not be made public until after his death.

C.B.I.C.A. member, Allan, comments that he is forced to the conclusion that his education as a Kana operator had been sadly neglected and that had it not been maybe many of the Intelligence Staff both at Central Bureau and at the various Wireless Units would not have been needed. Naturally the article was the subject of discussion between Allan and some of his W.U. colleagues in Brisbane. Says Allan, "None of them including Perce Howard, one of the originals, had ever heard of Ivo Riley."

C B AND RAAF WIRELESS UNITS. COMBINED REUNION NUMBER TWO.

In May it seemed such a long way off but now the big event for 1990 is only a few weeks away. Centennial Park and Sydney Harbour in springtime will provide the background for another one of those very special occasions when CB and WU people can get together to reminisce about the forties. The good times and the bad which we all experienced may be chewed over once again by people who know what you are talking about and what's more have some understanding of what it felt like to live life in those far off times.

On the other hand if you prefer to bring your years of experience to bear on the events of to-day's world and the problems which the nineties are presenting you will surely find some expert opinions on current affairs. But if all you want is a really good relaxing outing in the best City in the world come along anyway-----put your name on the form which accompanies the Newsletter and send it to Secretary Gordon. Just don't leave it too long or the opportunity may be lost forever. If Gordon receives the form by the end of September he will be able to ensure that the ferry will be waiting for us, that there will be plenty of food and drink and of course the weather will be perfect.

PEOPLE

It is sad to record the deaths of three members, MARG HENDERSON, ELIZABETH RADBURN and PETER HASTINGS.

Jean Hicks from Sapphire in Queensland has reported the death sometime in May, in Coraki of Marg Henderson (nee Piggott). Marg was a wireless telegraphy operator in the CB organisation. She and her late husband George, who died in 1988, were two of that very small group of people who found their partners in marriage among colleagues on the same shifts at 21 Henry Street. Back in 1985 Marg wrote to CBICA a nostalgic letter about revisiting number 21 with George. "We left there in 1945 after they dropped the bomb and here we were back there with eight children and eighteen grandchildren walking in a place that hadn't changed much at all." It seems that Marg did indeed have a very full life and condolences are extended to her family.

A small band of A.W.A.S., W.A.C.s and W.A.A.A.F.s together saw war service in a fire station building at Ascot Park. Their photograph appears on page 86 of S.I.S. Record. AWAS Elizabeth (Bunny) Radburn called it the "old fire house". Two of her associates from those days, Eve Scott and Rita Balin have reported that Elizabeth died in May at New Farm. Bunny first became aware of CBICA when she attended the ceremony at Henry Street in 1988 and joined immediately afterwards. She enjoyed that day especially her reunion with old friends. It is understood that most close family predeceased her.

Peter Dunstan Hastings died on 7 August at Fairy Bower where he had lived for many years. The Prime Minister described Peter as "one of Australia's most experienced and distinguished Journalists." To the extent that the work of Central Bureau has been reported upon in the popular press perhaps it can be said that Peter Hastings was in a position to provide the more authoritative accounts. The Sydney Morning Herald, where he was once associate editor, on 9 August carried many glowing tributes to Peter from national and international figures. Ex P.M. Gough Whitlam attended Peter's funeral. Our Association was represented by Gordon Gibson and Ron Tabley who conveyed our sympathy to Peter's wife and his two sons.

ROY WARD says that June was for him an extraordinary month; extraordinary indeed for any mortal.

* On World Red Cross Day he was awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Australian Red Cross Society.

* Soon after Cambridge (Eng) made him an award

for services to journalism and the community called the International Order Of Merit (I.O.M.)

* To quote Roy "Then there was the Commonwealth Games Federation, the ruling body of Commonwealth Games that gave a Commendation for Exceptional Services."

* The Bowls Association also presented a Commendation "for Promotion of Lawn Bowls for Twenty Five Years".

* The Australian Government recognised Roy's services to the Victorian Parliament, to sport and to the community by awarding the O.A.M..

C.B.I.C.A. congratulates Roy on his awards for such wide ranging community service.

The Queens Birthday Honours List for 1990 also included the name of Association member Reverend Canon Allan Arthur LANGDON. Canon Langdon earned his A.M. for services to education, particularly christian education. Congratulations to Allan on behalf of C.B. colleagues.

President JIM WILLIAMS is destined for a spell in Prince Henry Hospital. With Jim's indomitable spirit and our good wishes a speedy recovery seems assured. On the basis of Bob Hawkes experience Jim has nothing to worry about.

EXECUTIVE NEWS.

From the President's Desk.

I can only make an interim report at this stage as we are more or less in between pertinent events.

Our banner party was at Martin Place on 15 August (V.P. day) and I placed a wreath on the Cenotaph on behalf of our Association.

Secretary Gordon Gibson advises replies are gradually coming in for our Nov. 10-11 activities. However, I do exhort you to send in your replies as soon as possible as we are committed to various costs. We would certainly appreciate your intentions by September. Lets hope we are blessed with good weather.

On a personal note I can report that I will be hospitalised for a short period in August for a minor operation.

Jim Williams.

The Honorary Secretary.

The late Captain Don Inglis (affectionately known to "I" staff in the field as "Happy D" because of his perpetually rather less than genial expression) used to send his reports to Central Bureau in Brisbane over the initials

I.G. which stood for "Inglis's Guesses". Now as a trained intelligence officer, Captain Inglis could reasonably have been expected to find himself in a position where he was obliged to resort to crystal gazing to be able to forecast the the movements of those cagy Japs. Your humble Honorary Secretary, however, neither as astute nor as gifted as Don would much prefer to have things made easy for him by receiving written notification of your intention to attend the Second Annual Combined Reunion in Sydney on Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th November 1990. In case you have mislaid the form which you were asked to complete and return to me as early as possible, a new one is enclosed with this newsletter.

I know that many of you are fully intending to attend this Reunion and make it at least as big a success as our initial one in Melbourne last year. As the functions are still some months away you are probably not aware of any need for urgency but in this case your Executive Committee must make a number of financial commitments in advance and will be unable to do so without your support. So would you please give this matter your immediate consideration? Complete and return the form enclosed or drop me a line if for some reason you cannot make a firm decision at this stage.

A cordial welcome to the Association is extended to the new members listed:-

Allan NORTON

Joyce STEAD (Associate Member)

Nancy JOHNSON (nee REICHELT)

Earle HEAP (a welcome return)

Gordon Gibson

The Honorary Treasurer.

Thanks to those who have already sent in their monies for our November Reunion ---- please keep it rolling ---- time is drawing nearer and so much preparation has to be done. Looking forward to seeing a big roll up. Also to the members for donations I have received since the last newsletter, thanks a million.

Margaret McCafferty is overseas and looking forward to catching up with the McCafferty clan in Ireland. We all wish her a safe and speedy trip home.

I'm off to Brisbane in September to join the "Battle of Britain" celebrations and as the luncheon on the Saturday is being held at Eagle Farm Racecourse will call in at 21 Henry St. ----- what memories that place and its surroundings (the Park) bring back !

If anyone would like to ring me to have a chat I'd be delighted. I'll be staying with friends at Corinda from the 12th to 24th, the phone number being 379-2519.

Another little "think again" verse:-

Anger is one letter short of danger.

Norma Keeling.

15 AUGUST 1990.

Ex-service types, many in full regalia, gathered at the Cenotaph on Victory Pacific Day. There were more than last year. They braved the cold and the rain and were relieved when the sun came out shortly before the ceremony started at 11am. It did not seem that many of the "general public" were involved. Indeed, given the ex-service population of Sydney only a very small percentage of that group attended. The speakers remembered those who gave their lives in the service of their country. Prayers were said. Hymns and anthems were sung. We listened to the last post, recited the Ode and then were restored by a trumpeted Reveille. Perhaps more than in previous years we listened to the prayers for peace. Somehow the days of war forty five years ago were much, much closer to us. For just hours before some hundreds of young Australian sailors said tearful farewells not far away from where we were gathered and headed off to face a very war-like situation. Most of the people around the Cenotaph could relate very well to those sailors and what they must have been feeling.

President Jim Williams placed a wreath on behalf of C.B.I.C.A.

On Parade.

**Madeline Chidgey Norma Keeling Dennis Moore
Jim Williams.**

If you ask each one of us why we were on parade you might not get any answers and if you did they would probably differ-----but we would agree that we wished there were more members with us at the Cenotaph.

ON "ULTRA" ACTIVE SERVICE.

The Story of Australia's Signal Intelligence Operations during World War II.

by Geoff Ballard.

"Spectrum Publications Pty. Ltd., of Richmond, Melbourne, have expressed considerable interest in publishing our book, and preliminary discussions have already taken place with them.

Further discussions are to be held in the immediate future and a decision is expected by the end of July.

Further developments will be notified in due course."

Geoff Ballard

2 July 1990

RECOLLECTIONS.

First and last but not oldest.

Dear Editor,

Reading Newsletter No. 2 has prompted me to take up the pen to correct what may have been an editor's error in the paragraph about John Walsh whom I remember at 21 Henry St. in 1943. I was at 1W.U. in Townsville in May 1942, having come there from Darwin and I remember the first Adjutant's name as Cliff HATTAM not Adams as reported. He was a jolly, rotund little man from Melbourne.

At rising 70 years of age I cannot enter into the 'oldest survivor' competition but I thought whilst I was writing that I would claim for myself some 'firsts'.

I was on the first Kana Course for RAAF personnel conducted at Victoria Barracks, Melbourne in about July-August 1941. My fellow trainees were 'Taffy' Davis, 'Snow' Bradshaw, Ted Cook, Alf Towers, 'Bing' Crosby, Bob McGhie and Wilson (christian name forgotten). Our instructor was Commander Newman of the RAN and when he had no time for us we had Jap Navy H/Q (call sign BZ6) piped to us on landline from the remote receivers at Mont Park. We used to take it in turns to go out there and tune in the signals to our mates back in the Barracks.

The next first I claim is that, following that training, all of us except McGhie and Crosby, went off to Darwin in September 1941 to set up the first RAAF operational intercept unit. Imagine it, six of us and no officers ! We had a room in the A.C.H. building at RAAF Base Darwin. I was in Darwin last year and visited the old building by courtesy of the C.O..

I must say that I didn't regret leaving Darwin in early May 1942 but a bit mortified to arrive in Townsville on the day of the first air raid there. It was a pretty tame affair compared with Darwin.

And now my next claim is a 'last' rather than a 'first'. When I returned from Labuan to Brisbane in September 1945 I went to what then remained of C.B. The only premises we then had was a house called "Eldernel" on Hamilton Heights, I suppose about a mile from the old Henry St. house. We were there engaged in writing an operational history of C.B. under the direction of Captain T.E.Nave R.N. The late W/C Roy Booth left in about October 1945 and I was the sole remaining RAAF Officer. Not only that but I was the last person of any of the services to remain in the building. Others I remember being there until almost the end were Captain Judy Roe, Cpl. Annette Steele, Cpl. Bob Brown and Cpl. John Hucker.

I remember having the responsibility of checking the inventory before handing the house over to the owners and I took all the remaining service property by train to

Melbourne and delivered it to G /Cpt R.Cohen, Director of RAAF Intelligence. So I returned to the building from which I had departed some 4 years before! I have never been able to discover what happened to the operational history!

Yours sincerely

Clarrie HERMES.

EDITORIAL

Some points to ponder emerge from the material which came to hand for Newsletter No. 3. The view could be taken that what C.B. and the units under its umbrella did in World War II is now old hat events of long ago forgettable why live in the past it doesn't matter any more we live in a different world now. If indeed one wants some re-assurance that their own war effort was not wasted one might just rely on the words of Colonel Abe Sinkov when he addressed "that" C.B.I.C.A. dinner in Sydney almost exactly six years ago, "So useful was the intelligence supplied by C.B. that General Macarthur's Chief of Intelligence, General Willoughby stated not long after the war ended that signal intelligence had chopped two years off the war in the Pacific".

Perhaps it is too simplistic to accept a more generally held view that the atom bombs which devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought about that rather sudden end which we all remember so clearly. Let's not, however, detract from the excellent C.B. war effort. After all Col. Willoughby said we hastened the war's end.

Whether we like it or not or want it or not "history" of sorts is still being written and published some forty five years or so after the event. The question is, however, whether the image now being created represents reality.

The story of signal intelligence in the war in the Pacific hasn't gone away. When the thirty year embargo expired it appears that the writing and publishing started. Why, just a few weeks ago the Brisbane Sunday Mail said that there was a fair chance that Ivo Riley played a vital role in the downing of Yamomoto. He not only copied Japanese traffic from Afghanistan but also knew whether it was in old or new code. He told university student Nancy Yeates so before he died.

C.B.I.C.A. member Dave Geyer has been reading John Pilger's book "A Secret Country" and told Newsletter about his reference to Defence Signals Directorate, C.B.'s predecessor. Mr. Pilger paints D.S.D. as a sinister organization which spies for the Americans in the Indian Ocean, the South Pacific and South East Asia. He refers

to D.S.D. as "the most secretive Australian Intelligence Organization". He even puts Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge on the same page as D.S.D.. So this is what became of C.B!. C.B. in late 20th. century garb is apparently related to the American National Security Agency according to such an eminent authority as Professor Desmond Ball as quoted by John Pilger.

We await with great expectations Geoff Ballard's book, 'On Ultra Active Service'. At long last an authoritative book about C.B. and its achievements will be published. Although on the other hand Geoff himself tells us that it is not a regimental history but a story about the people of the Sigint Organization against an operational background.

No doubt academic historians would be able to discourse at length about the the relationship between the reliability of records on the one hand and the time interval between the event and its recording on the other. It is arguable that the greater the time interval the more difficult it is to be accurate.

Which brings us to another story in this Newsletter. Our member Mr. Clarrie Hermes A.M. who had a distinguished career in law after leaving the RAAF did indeed write an operational history of Central Bureau under the direction of Captain T.E.Nave R.N. in 1945 — and that is just about as close as you can get in time to the events being recorded. Perhaps a professional historian would say these people were too close to the events to be objective. Nevertheless the history was written while the events were fresh and not subject to distortion by aberrations formed across time. O.K. problem solved: let's read it. The need for strict secrecy has passed. Let us, the participants in the making of this history and any other readers make their own judgements and push aside myths and hearsay and propaganda.

But where is this history? At this time Newsletter doesn't know. Clarrie has never been able to discover what happened to the operational history of C.B.

If C.B.I.C.A. members are sufficiently motivated perhaps our organization could try to find it. Pessimists among us might say we have little chance of finding it and absolutely no chance of getting access to it. We might even adopt a "Pilgeristic" position and conclude that it finished up in a C.I.A. vault. No -- that sounds too imaginative, Sidney Sheldon or Geoffrey Archer stuff!

I think we are entitled to accept that the history does (or did) exist so let's see where it is (or to which place it disappeared).

Dennis Moore

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(A special thought goes out to Bob Bevan who is having quite a battle to cope with a distressing illness.)