



CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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DECEMBER 1992

CANBERRA SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 1992

The War Memorial

In the atrium of The Australian War Memorial signals intelligence veterans of World War II were subdued. They gathered in somewhat formal ranks around the memorial stone flanked on two sides by sombre stone walls and arched galleries and on the third by respectful guests and local and international tourists who were visiting this Australian National Shrine. And further away, towards that remarkable domed tower, the focal point of the Memorial building, stood bugler Stephen Carter from the Royal Military College. The sky above was brilliant blue.

"Let us read Psalm 46." The voice of Association member Allan Langdon reverberates clearly and reaches every person in that sacred place. "God is our refuge and strength and ever present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place where the most high dwells. God is within her: she will not fall. God will help her at break of day. Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall: he lifts his voice, the earth melts; the Lord Almighty is with us: the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come and see the works of the Lord; what desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth, he breaks the bow and shatters the spear: he burns the shields with fires. Know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth. Lord almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress.

We meet today, on this remembrance Sunday. We will on Remembrance Day, on Wednesday, mark the day with a motto 'Lest we forget'. Lest we forget those who made possible our present freedom to gather in a ceremony of this kind.

I had discussions recently with a friend of mine in hospital who has begun to doubt whether in fact it was all worthwhile. Whether we had any right to fight. We have no right unless that right is being taken away from us by aggression which itself involves the course of taking life. It is in that context where freedom depends upon defence that I think we stand. For the cause and the purpose must be peace and not war.

We will remember the records of those who have worked and fought with us. We are grateful for Geoff Ballard and Jack Bleakley in our own units for having recorded recently much of what took place within this Central Bureau Intelligence Unit.

When we remember that record we are reminded that Psalm 44 begins, 'We have heard with our ears, O God our Father has told us it is in their days, in days long ago.. It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arms bring victory. It was your right hand, your arm and the might of your faith; for you loved them.

We remember therefore with gratitude those who gave their lives in the wars of the past; but our danger is to omit any reference to the ultimate justification of right: the

goal of peace and the source of that spirit which makes for peace and reconciliation.

Remember your Creator in the days of your youth! the Scriptures remind us. Those of us who qualify with senior citizen card status must still remember our Creator, for the example of age, as I see it, is a central part of the life of any community. I believe that there has been a change in attitude to the wisdom of age in recent years, having gone through an era when nobody wanted to listen. Our task is to make sure that what we bear witness to is worth the cause. We are therefore reminded that what we remember today is the sacrifice of those who stood for something that this community still needs today. It needs faith, it needs vision, it needs sacrifice and determination."

His appearance, uniform and general bearing trigger recollections of the most stern and forbidding Regimental Sergeant Major, or Warrant Officer Discipline, you have ever encountered. He is immaculate.. It is beyond doubt that one stentorian bark or penetrating glare would wither a private or L.A.C. And yet, within an instant he becomes a symbol of respect and kindness, of tenderness and solicitude when he takes President Jim Williams by the arm at the appropriate moment and assists him up the few steps to the Memorial stone. He stands by Jim as Jim places the wreath and recites the ode.

The notes of Stephen Carter's bugle fill the Shrine with the clearest and purest tones of the Last Post and Reveille that are ever likely to be heard.

Only those souls whose past lives have drained them of all emotion are completely dry eyed.

We are still very thoughtful as Memorial staff guide us through the displays within the Memorial building. What started as a collection of World War I memorabilia in Sydney to remind all Australians of the war to end all war has exploded to become a demonstration of the futility of that hope. Represented now is the South African War, World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict, the Malaysian troubles, Vietnam and the Gulf War. Will it never end?

CANBERRA SATURDAY 7 NOVEMBER 1992.

CANBERRA HOUSE.

It was built in 1913 or thereabouts, to house the first administrator of the brand new Australian Capital Territory and reflects the aspirations of those early federalists-----very solid and very British. Now Canberra House comes within the ambit of the Australian National University. Its grounds are spacious; the lawns are lush and green in spite of the canopy of shady trees. Through those trees visitors

may catch glimpses, across the tip of the Acton peninsular', of the magnificent Lake Burley Griffin. On this tranquil Saturday the yachts drift by with sails limp.

Trestle tables with crisp white and green table cloths foreshadow a barbecue with some class and indeed it was. All in all a very very pleasant occasion for the Sigint veterans and their guests who travelled to Canberra House for the beginning of the reunion weekend.

CANBERRA SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 1992.

AINSLIE FOOTBALL CLUB.

The new Director of the Defence Signals Directorate, Mr Gary R. Marshall, now based in Canberra told us he felt so young in the company of the veterans at our reunion luncheon. Which is not to say that the D.S.D. is in the hands of youth. Indeed the Director is probably older than our leaders were back in the forties---its just that now World War II vets are very senior citizens.

It was a pleasant surprise to find that some alert Executive members were able to arrange to have the leader of modern day Central Bureau as a guest speaker. Gary Marshall said that the Sigint business hadn't changed as much as we might think. There are even ongo-

ing discussions about the value of morse code in communications. In spite of other high tech communications systems high frequency radio is still a significant part of D.S.D. operations. (As it was in our day).

Those old intercept operators present were impressed by the description of modern operators, who sit in the comfort of a marvellous new building in Canberra and operate receivers in the most appropriate locations in unnamed Australian sites entirely by remote control. Rather than being frustrated by the vagaries of variable ionospheric reflection DSD operators, from the comfort of an office chair, swap from one receiving site to another as conditions change and the signal "footprint" moves. Gary was reluctant to talk about satellite operations.

With a budget of (more zeros than you would believe) DSD is very important to Australia. "It is still without doubt our Number One intelligence collection organisation," said the Director. "The end of the cold war has not made any difference to DSD operations---- basically we were never working against the Soviets".

Having whetted our appetites about the new high tech multi-million dollar DSD building Gary presented to President Jim a framed photograph of just that building. All we need now is our own club house in which to hang the picture.

Very graciously the Director left the way open for C.B.I.C.A. to visit DSD at some future time.

Geoff Ballard (author of 'On Ultra Active Service') brought to our gathering the warmest greetings from the British Sigint Association and also from the emerging Cryptologic Association. Geoff had just returned to Australia after attending a Sigint reunion in the U.K. and a Symposium in the U.S.A.

The theme of the UK reunion did seem to be an appeal for funds to preserve for posterity the original Bletchley Park building.. This was the birth place and the first home for British Sigint and where perhaps the war was really won. Geoff presented to our President a book about Bletchley Park and the plans for its renovation.

There was laughter when Geoff described security measures State-side including security for toilet visits. The symposium was billed as a memorial to ex C.B.er Bob Farley whose death was recorded by John Walsh in a recent Newsletter. The cryptologists are interested in recording the history of World War II cryptology. Ex C.B. man Richard Grodin was a speaker. Joe Richards also attended.

Geoff introduced a video film about Bletchley Park made by the B.P. Trust. It covered the plans for the property to become a National Memorial. The film highlighted the fact that successes at the Park

allowed the Allies to access the most secret of the German battle plans. The irony was that because the Germans felt that their codes were impregnable they refused to accept that they had been broken, even though they must have had evidence to the contrary.

There was an impromptu collection of funds at our luncheon to be forwarded to the Bletchley Park Trust. Members who wish to make a contribution may send money to Treasurer Norma Keeling to be included with the money already collected.

EXECUTIVE NEWS.

From the President's Desk.

I am quite sure that all of our members who were in attendance at the Canberra reunion would rate it an outstanding success----perhaps the best we've had. Gordon Gibson, our worthy Secretary had to "re-arrange" some difficult matters in the early booking stages, but as I would expect he overcame these problems with his usual dexterity.

The visit to the Australian War Memorial was indeed a proud occasion for me. The laying of the wreath and the bugler from Duntroon Military College playing the Last Post was a moving period to say the least. Our long time

member Canon Alan Langdon was kind enough to deliver a short sermon during the ceremony---thank you Alan. Although I've visited the Memorial on many occasions it never appears to diminish in its historic interest. I have been to war museums in the U.K., Europe, USA, Canada and South Africa, but I believe ours to be the best of them all.

Our Ainslie Football Club Function was a most pleasing afternoon, made more entertaining with the presence of Gary Marshall, the New Director of Defence Signals Directorate (DSD). He presented the Association with a framed photograph of their new building in Canberra. All staff from the DSD have been transferred from Melbourne. Tim James, the former director, who arranged our 1989 visit to DSD has recently retired. I wrote a letter of thanks on behalf of the Association to Gary in November.

The luncheon at Old Canberra House Grounds was exceptionally good to say the least. A magnificent setting in perfect weather.

The Vietnam Memorial is certainly an imposing structure and a fitting tribute to those Australians who served in that conflict. Do we have something similar to our boys who distinguished themselves in Korea and the Maylayasian/Indonesian campaigns?

On Friday 4 December I represented our Association at the 85th Anniversary of the Australian In-

telligence Corps---- the venue was the Randwick Rugby Club. (a hallowed place for the "Galloping Greens" supporters). Bill Robinson (who incidentally was with us in Canberra) is the new President. Sheila and I were privileged to be seated at the President's table. Keith Stringfellow is now a Patron of A.I.A. along with Eric Willis. There were several speakers of high military rank who looked so young. Or is it because we're getting so old!

I have heard from Allan Osborne that Bob Bevan is still seriously ill. We wish him God's help during his trying moments.

My especial thanks to the Executive, all of whom have performed their allotted tasks with enthusiasm and excellence. By the way, thanks to V.P. Mike Casey for suggesting Canberra as our '92 November venue.

My Xmas and New Year greetings to you all.

Fraternally,

Jim Williams.

Hon. Secretary's Par.

Since the Bicentennial in Brisbane in 1988 there have really been five Combined Reunions, each of them a great success but I think I would have to say that the recent one in Canberra has proved the most successful of all. The weather gods

smiled on us all week-end, the luncheon venues at Old Canberra House and Ainslie Football Club could not have been more congenial, the wreath laying at the Cenotaph was a dignified and moving ceremony and the tour guides at the War Museum held everyone's attention throughout the inspections. Our thanks are due to all those concerned but we owe a special debt of gratitude to members Alan Langdon and Geoff Ballard and to Gary Marshall (Director of the Defence Signals Directorate) for their Addresses, each so appropriate in its own way. A high standard has been set to which we must aspire in Melbourne in 1993. All that aside, however, the best thing of all was the warm spirit of friendliness that pervaded every aspect of this reunion.

While statistics are not all that important, I suppose, it still gives me great satisfaction to report membership numbers are now approaching two hundred. Since last Newsletter we have gained eight new members: Don Dunn of Drumoyne in Sydney, Geoff Padman of Minnamurra, NSW, Herb Gielis of Epping in Sydney, Margaret Peters (nee Guest) of Ballina NSW, Ken Brown of Budgewoi, NSW, Fred Frank, Yarralumla, ACT, Eric Saxon, North Buderim, Qld, and Jack Bleakley of Balwyn, Vic. (who, of course, as the author of "The Eavesdroppers" needs no introduction.) Once again a warm welcome and be seeing you I hope next Anzac Day.

All the best to you all for 1993!

Gordon Gibson
Hon. Secretary
Phone (02) 449 9450

THE TREASURER'S MESSAGE.

With great difficulty from a Sutherland Hospital bed, prone on my back with paper and pencil above my head, I'm writing my usual bit for Dennis, you see I'm not being let off. Firstly what a terrific reunion, we the Committee, want to thank those who attended for without members' support all our work would have been in vain. I do hope all returned home safely and are now looking forward to our next reunion, possibly in Melbourne.

Thanks to all the folk who donated to the Bletchley Park fund and to Betty Chessell with her ice bucket idea, have received a few donations since by post. You will read about Bletchley Park in another part of this Newsletter.

As my members mail is at home sorry I can't respond but as usual I hope those on the sick list are improving.

My usual philosophical ending;

"There are three kinds of people;

Those who make things happen,

Those who watch things happen,

and Those who don't know what the hell is happening."

Norma Keeling.

PEOPLE.



Wireless Units Association. At one time he was also a member of C.B.I.C.A. Merv was a WU identity and did the hard slog as a D/F Operator in those tough early days up north. Many of our colleagues in Brisbane attended his funeral.

These people participated in that happy Canberra weekend.

PHIL & ISLAY DYNES AUB ROBERTS GEOFF BALLARD BRUCE BENTWICH SUE & GORDON GIBSON ALLAN DAVIS EILEEN DONNAN NORMAKEEELING HEATHER & BRIAN LOVATT PEGGY & DENNIS MOORE GEOFF & JOY DAY CORAL & SANDY HINDS PHYLLIS & GORDON SWINNEY BRUCE LOVATT JOYCE SANDARS JACK BLEAKLEY JOYCE & MICK CASEY GWEN & GEOFF CHARLESWORTH SYD CAREY ALF & FLORA DAVIS JAN & ALBERT AARON NOLA & IVAN AUPRINCE PAT & ALAN LANGDON IRMA & JACK BENNETT BILL ROBIN-

MERV. STINSON died on 3 September 1992. He was Brisbane based and a foundation member of the RAAF

SON JOHN WOOD MARY SAXBY LIZ DEVLIN DAVE GEYER LORRAINE & IAN BUCKINGHAM ROMA HODSDON FRANCES BARGALLIE MARIA DREW PAULA BONDY DIANA SEYMOUR SALLY CLOUGH LES MC.CLEAN LUDMILLA & JOHN DAVIES JOHN LAIRD BETTY CHESSELL DOUG PYLE GWEN & GEOFF PADMAN ISABELLE & DON DUNN EUNICE, ALF & STEVE JENKIN LAUREL AMBLER LIBBY BELL JILL & LES DOWNER GORDON WILSON JIM WILLIAMS SHIELA GREGORY VIC LEDERER JACK REEVE JACK ILES KAY & LESTER TRUEX FRANK HUGHES MAC & AUDREY MARONEY R & W BURNS J & C MORRISON FRED FRANK.

ALAN FRASER of Hendra is looking for war-time friend G. WITTY, once residing in Glenelg, South Australia. If Mr. Witty wants to be contacted by Alan and someone knows his whereabouts, Newsletter can put them in touch.

JACK ILES was a reunion participant with an ASWG past who had become remote from the sigint world until the Canberra weekend. Jack Ryan who was a sigint pioneer and leader in the Middle East had army number 19521. Jack beat him by one with number 19520. Jack Iles, Jack Ryan and Mick Sandford were war-time colleagues. Only Jack Iles lives on.

New member KEN BROWN remembers six hour shifts at 2 WU. in Darwin coding Kana messages on Type X and passing them to RAAF Command in Brisbane on a teleprinter link. To relieve boredom he "talked" to the WAAF operators during dog watches. Ken's uncle, Jack Brown was mentioned in Jeannie Gunn's book 'We of the Never Never'. He died of thirst in the Tanami desert. Ken himself became District Commissioner of Western Province, P.N.G.

FRANK HUGHES chose the green fields of the Acton Peninsular to involve some C.B.I.C.A. members in the sharing of some of his history. After C.B. days Frank was involved with war criminals. In a legal way, of course. Perhaps some people who viewed his scrapbook were stirred by his photographs. For example one stark shot displayed the former commander of the P.O.W. camp at Changi still hanging by the neck, moments after execution on a purpose built gallows.

The images of GEOFF BALLARD, JIM WILLIAMS, GORDON WILSON GORDON GIBSON and VIC LEDERER dominated page three of the Canberra Times on 9 November. Our wreath laying ceremony captured about half a column of page three text.

MADELINE CHIDGEY has spent some time in hospital recently and after a long recovery period is looking forward to reaping the benefits of modern surgery.

NORMA KEELING was stretched of to hospital a few weeks ago. The ambulance blokes weren't enthusiastic about the four flights of stairs down from Norma's top floor unit. Newsletter is delighted to report that on 14 December she climbed back up every step, unaided, to her front door.

BETTY CHESSELL is responsible for telling this story during the Canberra weekend. The young pretty AWAS driver had an early morning start for her assignment to drive a senior U.S. Army officer. The day dragged out with no opportunity for the driver to leave the car. On the way to Parramatta the urge to stop near some screening bush could not be put off. In 194? there probably was some bush. She stopped, apologised to her passenger, returned to the car with further apologies directed to the back seat. On arrival at Parramatta she stopped, opened the rear door with military bearing to reveal an empty seat. The mists of time have shrouded the fate of that youthful AWAS. and we don't know whether the American brass ever did find Parramatta.

EAVESDROPPING IN THE NINETEEN NINETIES.

Eavesdropping on your enemy's conversations and interpreting the purloined information, as we used to do, is neither a relic of the olden days nor out of date. It is just so much more sophisticated now with

its reliance upon the marvels of modern electronics.

Australian commerce and industry is alleged to be suffering as a result of sophisticated electronic eavesdropping by its rivals. This was the topic of an exchange between the ABC's Canberra correspondent, Paul Lyneham and 2BL's Andrew Ollie on 2BL on 13 October.

Apparently Desmond Ball who keeps his ear to the ground to monitor and report upon current intelligence activities, believes that the Australian Defence Department has spent many millions of dollars securing from eavesdroppers its own telephone system. But, says Paul Lyneham, who really cares whether the RAAF is or is not about to take one of its ancient Hercules transports out of moth balls. A not so subtle put down of our defence capabilities. On the other hand he says that we do suffer when the last vestiges of our once important industries are disadvantaged by smart international operators.

Lyneham suggests that what little is left of Australian owned industry is under surveillance by its competitors and predators who use 1990's style electronic eavesdropping techniques. He proposes that taxpayers funds which keep ASIO going would be more effectively used in Australia's interests if ASIO committed some of its resources to helping Australian owned companies to secure themselves against modern intercept operators and the

ravages caused when predators and competitors know their operational secrets.

On a somewhat similar note Peter Robinson, writing in the Sun-Herald on 22 November says its time to say good bye to 007. Given the capabilities of modern technology, including satellite surveillance, electronic espionage and computer hacking at all levels, perhaps the time has come to put the old fashioned "spy-in-the-field" out to pasture, says Peter.

Andrew Ollie may have a special interest in this field. Newsletter believes that his dad may have been an ASWG person in the war years.

NEW MATERIAL ON FRUMEL.

In the last issue mention was made of a new book called "Battle Surface!: Japan's Submarine War Against Australia 1942-1944". It was published last May by Random House. FRUMEL operated out of the Monterey Building in Queen's Road, Melbourne. The author is Sydney journalist, David Jenkins. David wrote an interesting article about some of our home grown codebreakers published in the Sydney Morning Herald on 19 September.

The new book has an extensive section on Captain Eric Nave, including his experiences as a language student in Japan in the early 1920's and his efforts to establish an Australian cryptographic unit

after his return from Singapore in 1940.

It also covers the recruitment of Sydney University "dons" who made such a valued contribution to the work of both FRUMEL and Central Bureau. In what must rank as one of the most timely transfers of academic talent in Australian history, four senior members of the Sydney University teaching staff - the Professor of Greek, Dale Trendall, the Professor of Pure Mathematics, T.G. Room, Dr. A.P. Treweek and Mr. R.J. Lyons - together with half a dozen of their brightest graduates, were moved to Melbourne in 1941-42 to work in secret on Japanese navy and diplomatic signals.

Among the more promising graduates inducted into this work were Eric Barnes, who later became Professor of Mathematics at Adelaide University, John Davies, later Professor of French at Adelaide and Corporal Ronald Bond, later Vice Principal for 18 years at Scotch College, Melbourne. Barnes, Davies and Bond had all been students at Canterbury Boy's High School in Sydney as had several others who were drawn into this work. Dr. Treweek also taught at Canterbury. Your editor also attended Canterbury High School. Let me assure you that there is no hint of any analogy between this group and any of those infamous Cambridge spys.

"Battle Surface" examines the relationship between Captain Nave's group and Lieutenant Rudolph Fa-

bian's team of U.S. Navy codebreakers. It is a high quality production with many maps and colour graphics.

David Jenkins is still working on a longer study of FRUMEL for the Australian National University. He would be most keen to hear from any Association member who has any recollections about contact with FRUMEL. He may be contacted at Room 548, Sydney Morning Herald, PO Box 506, GPO Sydney 2001.



EDITORIAL

Secrecy and morale building techniques; they were the factors that tended to make sigint people a bit insular. Person by person, unit by unit, service by service and nation by nation few of us had any idea of the vast network of people doing the same thing. We were imbued with the importance of our own isolated sphere of activity. We know better now; now that so much of the story is public knowledge.

Apart from Geoff Ballard's book the Australian Special Wireless Groups have had little publicity beyond the pages of "Ink Emma Ink". Newsletter has solicited from Steve Mason and Nev Wintin some material about Army sigint in the Pacific war. We know that the Army was intercepting in the field in the Mediterranean region long before Japan's intentions were believed.

Steve's material is now available for inclusion in 1993 editions of "Newsletter".

The Association's Annual General Meeting will precede the next edition. If you can come please do so and make your contribution to your Association's affairs.

Best wishes to all and very special thanks to everyone who has contributed a word or two (or illustration) to these pages in 1992.

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