

SIGINT REUNION IN BRISBANE

10 - 11 August 1996.

A nostalgic homecoming! That is what Combined Reunion No. 8 could be for many of our members. Brisbane was the hub of Central Bureau activity for much of World War II. Many of us spent a lot of time in the Brisbane area, whether with Central Bureau itself, in a Wireless Unit, in an Army Sigint unit or in one of the other sigint linked outfits. This is a chance to revisit some of the sites—and if you are not a Queenslander to see for yourself just how much Brisbane has changed since the days when the City gave the impression that it was ready for a shooting war on its doorstep. Remember the air raid shelters in the City streets? Helen Kenny outlined the planned reunion programme in the March Newsletter. Now those plans can be confirmed.

ACCOMMODATION.

We have arranged for the Hamilton Motor Inn, 422 Kingsford Smith Drive, Hamilton 4007, to be the base for our out-of town participants. The phone number is (07) 3268 5411.

If you have not already done so **please make your own personal accommodation booking now** directly with the Hamilton Motor Inn and tell them you are with the Central Bureau group.

The tariff is \$73 for a twin (2-bed) room.

We suggest you book for the nights of 9, 10 & 11 August. The motel has a restaurant. If our members fill the Hamilton Motor Inn you will be referred to the nearby Riverview Motel with access to the Hamilton Motor Inn restaurant.

ACTIVITY A. Saturday 10th August. 10.30 am.

After breakfast make your way to the AMP Building, now known as MacArthur's Chambers, at Edward Street, cnr Queen, Brisbane and plan to arrive there at 10.30.

Allan Campbell has arranged for us to view the site of General MacArthur's office on the 8th floor. Allan, with the help of the Australian - American Association has worked over many years to establish on the 8th. floor a collection of interesting memorabilia. He will be at the door to show us in; he promises.

ACTIVITY B. Saturday 10th August. 12.00 noon.

The Queensland RAAF Wireless Units Association are holding their annual reunion luncheon and we will be joining them in the Harp Room of the Irish Club at 175 Elizabeth Street, Brisbane. The Club is operated by the QIA (Queensland Irish Association), and listed so in the phone book.

Lunch will cost \$18 per person payable in advance to Secretary Norma Keeling.

ACTIVITY C. Saturday 10th August. 3.15 pm.

After lunch we will tell you how to proceed to the old Hamilton Fire Station where some of our members spent much of their war service. The address is 77 Kitchener Road, Ascot. Leonie Fox will be our escort when we visit the Fire Station (which has been reborn as part of a Queensland TAFE Campus) Ms. Fox works at the Hamilton Centre as Adult Literary Co-ordinator.

CB

Number 2, 1996
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**Central
Bureau
Intelligence
Corps
Association
Inc.**

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ACTIVITY D. Saturday 10th. August. About 3.45 pm
It is but a short walk from the Fire Station to that icon
of Sigint in the South West Pacific in WWII., 21
Henry Street, Ascot. Mr. Joe Look, the present owner,
will be with us for lunch at the Irish Club and will be
with us as we tread the ground where only those with
special passes could tread in the War years.

Saturday evening is "free time". You could live it up in
Brisbane or have an early night.

ACTIVITY E. Sunday 11th. August. Assemble at
9.15am.

Join your colleagues as we lay a wreath at the
Australian - American Memorial in the riverside
parkland close to historic Newstead House, Newstead.
Time of the wreath-laying is 9.30am.

ACTIVITY F. Sunday 11th. August. 10.30am.

CBICA Inc. has chartered the cruise boat, ADAI
PRINCESS. It will be waiting for us at the Breakfast
Creek ramp which is close to the wreath laying site. We
will cruise leisurely on the Brisbane River and have
lunch and drinks on board. This will be an opportunity
to talk with some members of the Australian American
Association, some WU Association members and some
ex RAF people with sigint backgrounds who will be
cruising with us. The cruise lasts until about 3.30 pm
What we can't tell you right now is how much each of
us will have to pay to join the cruise. It depends on the
numbers. Higher numbers on the cruise will mean less
cost for each individual. We did some unscientific
sample surveys of members in Sydney and our
associates in Queensland and we are confident that we
will have sufficient numbers to make the cost
reasonable. If, however, we don't receive enough
bookings to make the cost per member reasonable we
will cancel the cruise.

To help your Executive to plan with some assurance we
ask you to send to Treasurer Norma a deposit of \$10 on
your cruise booking by 21st June and to pay the
balance on the day.

ACTIVITY G. Sunday 11th. August 6.30pm.

The Restaurant at the Hamilton Motor Inn will be
opened for our exclusive use on Sunday night for our
farewell cocktail party —as Helen says so that we
can say auld lang syne/au revoir/ until next time. The
menu we have chosen costs \$18 each (drinks aren't
counted in this.) The finger food ranges from savoury
vol-au-vents to mini -quiches and spring rolls, seafood
bites sandwiches, meatballs in savoury sauce. Lots of
variety.

Please complete the sheet enclosed with the
Newsletter to let us know that you will be joining in
the reunion and specifically which activities you will
be attending. The sheet and your money should be
sent to Treasurer, Norma Keeling, 7/11 Kiora Road,
MIRANDA 2228 by 21st. June, 1996.

ANZAC EVE 1996.

"It is hard to define just what it is about Anzac Eve at
the Cenotaph that makes it such a moving and evocative
ceremony." So wrote Madeline Chidgey last year. In a
similar vein, I scrabble around to find words to
adequately describe the scene at the Sydney Cenotaph on
Anzac Eve. There is darkness, shadow, light, soft
colour, flashlight with momentary harsh white brilliance,
figures in random movement and figures moving with
military precision, a mournful bugle and stirring band
music as well as the background noise of a large
commercial city in action which tends to ignore the
happenings in Martin Place. But beyond all of this there
is that indescribable mystical quality.

Next to me in the ranks drawn up facing the monument
was a young lady who stepped forward from the
Australian Intelligence Association team and skilfully
recited the ode. We agreed that there was something
afout at these ceremonies which defied description. She
said that she had experienced the feeling at many dawn
services she had shared with her father. A few minutes
later someone mentioned that this representative of
young Australia was the great niece of Lance Corporal
A. Jacka, MC and Bar, who won a Victoria Cross as a
member of the 14th. Battalion in W.W. I

Mr. Michael Casey, President C.B.I.C.A. Inc, placed
the wreath on behalf of our members. Students of the
Pittwater House School showed dedication and pride as
they demonstrated parade ground skills in music and
marching.

Your CBICA colleagues who participated in the
ceremony and could tell you more are:

**Norman Allen Madeline Chidgey Frank Hughes
Norma Keeling Helen Kenny Dennis Moore Diana
Parker Bill Rogers & John Shoebridge. Mrs
Hughes and Mrs Rogers were welcome supporters.**

ANZAC DAY 1996.

The A.B.C.'s television producer told us, some months
ago, that this year his team would have a boom camera
which would swing out across to the left side George
Street and give CBICA some good coverage in the
telecast of the Sydney march. As our contingent strode
along George Street in perfect step with the beat of the
Intelligence veteran's own special Pittwater House band
we could see that boom camera covering our every move

and perhaps we performed just a little bit better for the camera. Anyway, everyone seemed to enjoy the march. The crowds were big and enthusiastic and the weather almost perfect. Of course, the Sydney viewers at home and the marchers who had set their video recorders, didn't see any of this wonderful performance by the CB people. In those critical moments when we passed under the camera there were technical problems. Sydney viewers were treated to a few minutes of live coverage of the Anzac Day march in Melbourne. After we had passed by the ABC resumed live coverage of the Sydney march

Lester Truex is determined not to let serious physical impairment preclude his participation in life. He journeyed up from Melbourne, planning to wave us off as the March started and to see his colleagues later at the Lawson. Even Lester has to accept that, for him, marching is not now a good idea. But participate in the March he did; with a former Premier of New South Wales, Sir Eric Willis, and senior A.I.A people he was invited to ride at the head of the Intelligence group in a military vehicle. After the March, and on the way to the Lawson, a courteous and curious child sitting opposite Lester in a mono-rail carriage was focussed on Lester's snowy white hair and his array of exotic ribbons. "Were you in the war, Mister?" "Indeed I was!" replied Lester, "three of them."

His ribbons include the symbols of Presidential citations for work in W.W. II and in the Korean War. He deserved to ride in the March.

The brotherly banner carrying duo from last year, Brian and Bruce, was split this time. Long time bearer Bruce Lovett, the younger of the team was the one to have heart problems late last year so he was advised to stay home and take it easy. Elder brother, Brian carried on the tradition.

Reg. Murphy marched in a battered and bruised condition but didn't make it to the Lawson. Not too long ago he was being a good samaritan at a public function and somehow tumbled over the rows of seats rather than walk along them—that's what his explanation sounded like in the noise of the pre-march gathering.

The Marchers.

Norm Allen Ivan Auprince Noni Benn Bruce Bentwich Syd Carey Keith Carolan Michael Casey Madeline Chidgey Bill Clarke Syd Cooper Cec Cousins Bert de Mars Eric Fleming Dave Geyer Gordon Gibson (no, not the one in the U.K.) Ailsa Hale Dave Hansen Lou Harris Stan King Helen Kenny John Laird Noel Langby Gordon Lewis Brian Lovett Dennis Moore Reg Murphy Allan Norton Roy Perry Gordon Peters Keith Phillips Bill Rogers John Shoebridge Gordon Swinney Ron Tabley Jack Thorpe Lester Truex.
(if a name is missed apologies are tendered.)

Treasurer Norma Keeling was there at the Lawson when we arrived. She did what good treasurers do and collected the cash. Sadly Norma's high technology knee is not up to the rigour of the March.

In very pleasant and comfortable surroundings in our own CB space, with p.a. facilities, we enjoyed a surprising variety of good food and a convenient drink service. Whether the long climb up the steps to board the mono-rail is the best way to go after a long march is not clear. These comments are recorded in the interests of objective reporting without any desire to take a pro or a con position in the up-coming Lawson v/s Phillip's Foote debate.

People is what our reunions are all about. If only we could report on all of the information which was exchanged. But there is one story I can tell. Bill Rogers travelled up from Melbourne to march this year. He does so every five or so years. He is a mate of Frank Hughes. Bill and Frank worked together in Central Bureau as decoders; or on cyphers or one of those kinds of secret tasks. One day, at San Miguel or thereabouts, Col. Sandford told young Bill, aged about 19 to take a jeep and a mate and drive out to the airfield. His was not to reason or question so he did as he was told. Two piper cub aircraft landed. One carried General Berryman and the other, Brigadier Rogers, the Australian Army's Director of Military Intelligence. While Col. Sandford and the other C.B. Officers were being duly deferential in this exalted company, young Bill and his mate (perhaps it was Frank Hughes,) not recognising the brass, secreted themselves behind the jeep to have a smoke, probably a Camel or a Chesterfield or maybe a Lucky Strike. Bill didn't know that he was there, not by accident but by careful military planning, for a surprise meeting with his Brigadier father and when enticed out from behind the jeep, cigarette in hand, there was embarrassment all round. After service in W.W. I Rogers senior obviously had a successful military career in W.W.II. Rogers junior didn't do too badly either. He left Central Bureau and the Army, studied law at University, worked for B.H.P. and Woodside Burmah and is the current Chancellor, Monash University.

Bill's wife, Jan, recalls a description relayed to her at a time past, of Bill disembarking from a water craft, somewhere north of the equator, with full military pack on back, in water deeper than he expected. Somehow I can't reconcile that image of Bill with that of a Chancellor ceremonially gowned in those gaudy University robes presiding over a graduation ceremony. Lester Truex was thinking about the people who were Sigint veterans in USA. He called upon the veterans in Ultimo, NSW to drink a toast to their wartime partners in Melbourne, Florida as they assembled for the SIS reunion on 3&4 May. Our people at the Lawson responded enthusiastically.

SIS REUNION IN MELBOURNE, FLORIDA.

It just happened that Betty Chessell was in America so she arranged to be in Melbourne, Florida on 2,3,4 May, at an hotel on the Atlantic Ocean beachfront. She was welcomed by CB member John Larkin and his wife, Barbara, who had organised the SIS Reunion. This is Betty's report.

"The hotel had provided a hospitality room which John set up as a gathering centre. There were photo albums, scrap books etc. and books written about Sigint including the two by our CB members, Geoff. Ballard and Jack Bleakley.

On Friday evening a reception was held with a sit down dinner after which the forty-five attendees were able to 'circulate'. Joe Richard proudly wore his Surfers Paradise Surf Life-saving Club blazer.

Saturday morning required an early start and on to the bus which took us to the Kennedy Space Center (No. That is not another of my typing mistakes—that is how it is spelt on the wall of the main building and I have a photo to prove it.) The visit was an eye opening experience for me and no doubt others in the group as well. The immensity of the whole complex and everything associated with it is astounding.

Back to the hotel by mid-afternoon and all assembled again before dinner for a group photo, Joe this time resplendent in his complete W.O. uniform. (Some of us saw him wearing this when he and other members of SIS joined us for our Bi-centenary celebrations in 1988). Proceedings began appropriately with a few words and a minutes silence to remember and honour those no longer with us. Later Ellis Atchison gave an excellent talk about the work he and his comrades carried out in the Pacific Islands.

I was asked to speak about how I came to be involved with Central Bureau and the work done by the A.W.A.S. in the garage in the back yard of #21.

Although I had not received official sanction owing to my last minute decision to attend the reunion, I knew that our President and members of CB would want me to pass on warm greetings and good wishes to all present for a happy gathering. It was also a good opportunity to tell them about our reunion to be held in Brisbane in August.

John Larkin read an extremely interesting letter he had received from Keith Payne reflecting on the job done by Sigint people during the war years.

At the conclusion of the formalities a number of the members who had been at CB came and spoke to me asking about Henry Street, Ascot Park, Brisbane, Surfers Paradise, Coolangatta etc., etc. All spoke highly of the warm reception they received from the residents of

Ascot and Hamilton when they were billeted in the homes of those people. There was an added touch of the Australian connection with the attendance of three of the war brides - Elsie Jones (nee Washington) ex WAAAF CB, Betty Coombs and Elsie Richard.

There was such a wonderful feeling of comradeship that I felt that I was amongst old friends.

On Sunday morning Charlotte and Charlie Girhard drove me to the bus depot so that I could catch up with my original schedule. They sent special wishes to Geoff. Ballard - Charlie was groomsman at Geoff's wedding in 1942.

For me those few days were truly wonderful.

BETTY CHESSELL."

HON. SECRETARY'S PAR.

Anzac Day is well behind us and the Brisbane Combined Reunion in August is close ahead. (Very close. We order/request/plead with you to fill in the form sent with this Newsletter so that we'll know if you're coming or not. Our Brisbane colleagues are making great plans for us. Don't let them down.) But ...briefly Anzac Day impressions. Bands, flags, banners the cenotaph, Norman Allen acting as RSM, keeping us in line. Thoughts were of missing friends, some no longer on earth, and of others well and truly on earth, but unable to attend because of illness, distance or circumstance.

Many had written explanations on the forms they sent in. Col. McDermid. out on the land at Merrygoen, NSW, was enduring drought. He'd like news of old associates in 7 WU. Phil Dynes (who called me "Friz" a name derived from my maiden name, Frizell, by which I'm still known to old friends) was heading for hospital treatment. During the war he was with CB then went to Z Force; Doug Pyle, a former Typex mechanic in the Henry Street garage remembers night shift and the girls singing "Mairzy Doats" between messages. The song, he says brings back "fond memories". Illness prevented Joy Grainger and Joy Grace from coming. Get better for Brisbane, please.

Marion and Stan Winn couldn't get there, but sent best wishes. Alan Marsland, who has a heart condition regrets being unable to attend reunions. Distance prevented Joyce Sandars from coming. She, too, sent wishes to us for a memorable day. Such wishes also came from Ray Bradley who unfortunately is resigning. Our greetings to you, Ray.

A new face in our ranks was Kath Burns. Although she had never served with CB, permission was granted for her to join us. She is the widow of William Warnock Burns. He died in February this year, aged 71, and she asked if she could march in his memory. Bill Burns had been ill for many years, and could never march himself. He served as a cipher assistant with the RAAF in New

Guinea and the Philippines. The march went well. One spectator leapt into our ranks and shouted "Jenny Craig would be proud of you". Jenny Craig, I fear, would have no reason to be proud of me.

I'll leave description of the Lawson to others, but must say that it was most comfortable, and that the smorgasbord was excellent, with great platters of oysters and prawns, hot dishes and even sushi—to which a few Japanese tourists were helping themselves, mingling with the CB queue.

But now for talk of Brisbane.

Getting there. Please make your own arrangements with airlines or travel agents, so that you can reach Brisbane by Friday, August 9. Bruce Bentwich and John Shoebridge asked Ansett, and I asked Qantas about airfares. Extraordinarily, the cost of a Veteran's Group flight would be more than an individual's flight. Some of us have made \$199 return bookings from Sydney. It is confusing. You must book by so & so, stay over a Saturday and pay by so & so..... No, you'll have to find out for yourselves what's offering and there are all sorts of differences. Good luck to you. Perhaps buses are simpler.

As for trains, check with Countrylink. Those with pensions can cross the border and go right into Roma Street on the one fare. Seniors' card holders reach the border, then pay extra. A good train leaves Sydney at 4.24 pm daily, reaching Brisbane Transit at 6.00am. That's the XPT. Sleepers cost more. (Personally, I'd prefer to go up by ship, but I didn't ask about that. Imagine coming straight to Hamilton Docks, as in the old days.)

Air Terminal to Hamilton Motor Inn. If you reach Brisbane by air, it's recommended that you - and your friends - share a taxi to the motel. It will cost about \$10. There is an air bus, but it stops at fewer places than in Sydney, and this would mean going right into town, then getting back.

The **Hamilton Motor Inn** is ready for us. Please book yourselves in with Denis Burt, the Manager on (07) 3268-5411. He has been tremendously co-operative and wants to hear from our members as soon as possible. **LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU HAVE BOOKED.**

We look forward to seeing many members in Brisbane. By now I feel that I know Reg. Harris, Mac. Jamieson, Al Jenkin, Allan Campbell who is President of the General Douglas MacArthur Memorial and other correspondents whom I've never met. Let's hope all goes well and that the reunion is as good as it promises to be.

Helen Kenny

Hon. Secretary, 27/1-13 Mackenzie St.,

Lavender Bay. 2060

02 9954-0940.

THE TREASURER'S COLUMN.

I hope not a long column as Dennis has a great deal of interesting material to include in the Newsletter with all the details of our forthcoming re-union in August.

Before answering my members' mail thought you might like to know I had a card from Gordon & Sue posted from the Peak District of Derbyshire where they say the scenery is so beautiful & since their Ireland tour they've been taking day trips in the car stopping wherever they want and walking a lot. London is their next stop & then on to Yorkshire & Scotland. They send their best regards to all the C.B.ers.

So sorry you have thoughts of saying with C.B. or not, Wynne (Christmas) because of your problem but will certainly understand if you decide to resign. I do hope you are keeping to doctor's orders, Bruce (Lovett) & feeling the benefit & thanks for your 2 page letter, glad to read Brian will be attending the re-union; was sorry to miss him on Anzac Day. We all had a great time. Thanks Joyce (Sandars) for the stamps & your letter, yes, there is just something close that we service women have when we meet up again. How easy it is to have a fall Jean (Hicks) when the years are slipping by, I fell when I was on my Albury trip & about to take a photo fortunately no damage to my knee only to my dignity, do hope your muscles are now working. I'm glad to receive any type of stamps Gordon (Gibson of Pt Macquarie) & can sympathise with your wife re her knee problem, I too had an arthroscopy in May as my knee isn't 100% after 12 months am now finding pain less but the bending is much about the same but I am glad I had the initial operation & have accepted the situation & can live with it. Your sub. on receipt 926 covers you for 1997. Was so interested in your letter Eve (Scott) re the marriages of C.B.ites & to know Bob & Elsie Jones reached their golden wedding. Elsie (Washington) & I worked together in Hut 20 with Lester Truex, do you remember her pal Mavis Stewart? I immediately rang John (or Jack?) Shoebridge & we had a good laugh over the whole thing, (*can we share the joke? Ed.*). Hope you received his letter & that he sent you a photo of himself. See you in Brisbane. Your Anzac Day festivity at Canberra sounded most interesting, Fred (Frank) your enclosed cheque covered you for 1997. Glad to receive your very newsy letter Geoff (Patience) & to read of all your doings, I wonder how you'll enjoy retired life ??? Your receipt No. 950 attached shows you are in credit up to & including 1999, you surely need a treasurer to look after your money matters.

In April I had the pleasure of being invited to spend a few days on a 12,000 acre property at Bingara being 2 1/2 hours drive from Tamworth - it was a new

experience for me staying in a typically Australian type homestead outside but modernised inside surrounded by a neat garden, the quietness, the scenery of yellow waving grass with clear blue skies above, scattered trees & distant hills & being amongst cattle, sheep & horses, I had to get used to the dogs not being treated quite like pets but as workers. I do hope I'm invited again

My usual ending:-

You can choose to be a driver or a passenger in the vehicle of life but only the driver gets to pick the direction"

Norma Keeling

CB NEWSLETTER IN CYBERSPACE.

Did you know that whether you live in Batehaven, NSW, or Balwyn, Victoria, or Brisbane, Queensland, or Bakersfield, California, or Bassendean, Western Australia or indeed almost anywhere else in the world with a telephone system, you could be reading an issue of CB Newsletter on your computer screen?. Right now, that is!

If you did that we wouldn't have to use up one thousand sheets of A4 paper carefully collated, stapled folded and stuffed into two hundred envelopes with two hundred individual address labels tediously attached and delivered to Australia Post. That is what your Association consumes now, four times each year to distribute this modest Newsletter. Not really a practice friendly to the environment.

Our behind the scenes Technical Producer, whom we mention sometimes, has been taking us experimentally into the communications future. All you need, to be on the receiving end of the electronic Newsletter, is a home computer connected to the Internet. You log on, tap in on the keyboard <http://www.flex.com.au/~dennis/cb.htm> and there to behold is your own copy of Newsletter to peruse on the screen or to print out yourself if you insist on hard copy. It works; a couple of our members in Queensland and Victoria have tried it already. And you don't have to get cold and wet as you go to the letter box to collect the mail.

But not to worry; my guess is that CBICA Publicity Officers will still be using time honoured methods for producing Newsletter and using Australia Post to distribute it so long as our Newsletter has readers. Most of our members would want to see more obvious multiple benefits before justifying the cost of purchasing a personal computer and connecting to the World Wide Web. You might be surprised, however, to learn just how quickly those benefits are emerging. Even for oldies!.

"NO MEDALS IN THIS UNIT"

The blokes who listened to the Japanese telegraphists in WWII kept their activities to themselves, as they were bound to do, and probably didn't give much thought in those days as to whether anyone else was doing the same thing—listening in to Japanese telegraphy that is.

Doubtful if it occurred to the blokes that the "girls" were rendering the same war service. Member Joy Linnane, in an early Newsletter and in Jack Bleakley's book told us that a small band of WAAAFs were well trained 'eavesdroppers' and assiduously monitored their assigned frequencies.

Now Grandmother Jean Hillier, former Signalwoman in the AWAS, has placed on record the story of the transformation of young Australian ladies into soldiers who listened in to the enemy. Jean was in the first intake of AWAS who became interceptors. "Not only do you not exist but you never will have existed. You will remain for always unknown and unacknowledged.

There will be no awards, no glory. There are no medals in this unit." That was the introduction to which these young ladies were subjected at their first parade.

Jean, with the encouragement of a few of her former 'non-existent' contemporaries, including some of our members, like Steve Mason, Nev. Winton, Margaret Raymond, Basil Fogarty and Norma Smith has now decided that their work should indeed be known and acknowledged.

Jean Hillier has written and published a book called "No Medals In This Unit". Not only does it reveal the training and the work of female soldiers who listened to the Japanese military machine, it also offers an insight into the way in which a grandmother of the 1990's recalls her youthful years spent in the 1940's. The book is available from the author at "Chark Farm" Box 73 Mundulla, South Australia, at \$ 15.00 post free to ex members of ASWG and & \$ 17.00 per copy otherwise. It is planned that the work be more fully reviewed in a future issue of Newsletter. Readers' reviews are welcomed.

SIGNALS INTELLIGENCE - THEN and NOW

A Different View. *Contributed by REG. HARRIS.*

The story, on page 5 of the March issue of 'CB', rather suggests that the INTERNET does not know much about the early days of Signals Intelligence. Not having access to Internet, I must perforce make my corrections through 'CB'.

The statement was made "I don't know whether in World War I the primitive spark gap radio telegraphy messages were intercepted." My word they were. It continued "From available records it seems that the first Britishers who intercepted on an organised basis were civilians. My word, they were NOT!"

Clearly Internet has not been told about 40 O.B., the British Royal Navy's intercept and code-breaking service that worked throughout World War I, and which was, in fact, the direct ancestor of the Government Code and Cypher School, then Bletchley Park. I must blame Internet because obviously the Enigma Symposia could not have overlooked 40 O.B.

In August 1914, Britain cut underseas cables that hitherto connected Germany with the rest of the world. Germany then had to rely on communication through neutral countries - or on wireless. France wanted to jam German wireless stations, but Britain prevailed on France to allow them to continue, so that they might be subject to interception.

The British Admiralty set up a unit, a section of the Naval Intelligence Division, and this was, officially, known as NID 25, but more generally to the cognoscente as 40 O.B., because it was housed in Room 40 in the Admiralty Old Building. At the outbreak of war the Director of Naval Education was Sir Alfred Ewing, a most distinguished scientist, who also had a reputation as a solver of cryptics. He was seconded to organise 40 O.B., and he appointed cryptographers. The team rapidly showed itself more than a match for the German General Staff cryptographers. When Captain W.R. Hall (later Admiral Sir Reginald Hall) became Director of Naval Intelligence in October 1914, he realised that the work of 40 O.B. was of tremendous value to the Allies, and he ensured that it should have every facility.

At this same time the Admiralty set up a number of directional stations, at Lowestoft, York, Murcar Lerwick and elsewhere, to locate the sources of enemy wireless signals, and they made no attempt to disguise the use of locational equipment, in order to disguise their cryptography activities - and the German forces, though sometimes suspicious, never did establish that their codes were being broken. 40 O.B. intercepted and deciphered traffic from Zeppelins, U-boats, other warships, diplomatic sources and traffic exchanged with German agents in neutral countries. One of its greatest triumphs was the interception and breaking of the famous Zimmerman message to the German ambassador in Washington, announcing that unrestricted submarine warfare was about to begin. Because this also included

an offer, to be made to the Mexican Government, of considerable American territory after Germany had won the war, if Mexico helped Germany, one direct outcome of the passing by Britain of this decoded message to the American Government was America's entry into W.W I.

By mid-1916, landlines connected 40 O.B. with intercept stations at Hunstanton, Stockton, Leafeld and Hall Street. German call-signs were studied, and enemy wireless station locations and traffic densities became early versions of the valuable tools they were to be in W.W. II. Incidentally, in the work of 40 O.B., the term "pink" was the World War One equivalent of "Ultra".

From this it will be seen that indeed wireless traffic WAS being intercepted, as early as late 1914, and civilians were NOT the first organised intercept service - it was the Royal Navy - the same Royal Navy that had twenty-four hours advance details, from intercepts, of the German fleet it was to encounter in the Dogger Bank action.

More, much more, can be learned from Hugh Hoy's book "40 O.B." But since it was published in 1932, by Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., it is, of course long out of print - but libraries may be able to get it in. Hoy worked in Naval Intelligence. However, Nigel West's "G.C.H.Q." (Coronet Books, Hodder & Stoughton) also has the story in his 1986 study of the secret wireless war from 1900 to 1986. Yes, 1900! For in that year British warships were exchanging signals at sea.

The same article in 'CB' refers to the British Radio Security service, and refers to it in the same breath as its reference to "primitive spark gap wirelesses" I suspect a confusion of time scales here for to the best of my knowledge the Radio Security Service was established by MI5 in 1939 - and its story is told, too, in great detail in Nigel West's "G.C.H.Q."

So I am not accepting the invitation to continue the theme about surfing the Net - merely to correcting the conclusions reached from ...the Symposia? Internet?

Reg Harris.

{ The March story(Then and Now) aimed to demonstrate that if one wants to enquire about the world as it is now, in 1996, —even to enquire about such a specialised topic as the interception of electronic communications,— the Internet is a truly remarkable international information resource. Ed.)

IN BRIEF.

Vet. Affairs has announced a new radio program aimed at improving the lives and health of the veteran community. It is broadcast in all capital cities each Wednesday on the RPH AM band channel. Times vary in each city; eg. Brisbane 9.50 am, Melbourne 10.30am and Sydney 8.35am.

In November last year the **Hamilton Fire Station**, known well to some CB members, received much publicity in Brisbane when a plaque was dedicated. The Clayfield-Toombul Sub-Branch of the RSL initiated the recognition of this site as a location of Central Bureau Allied Intelligence Operations in WW II. The plaque was unveiled by Mr. Alan Jenkin, a most active member of our Association. The "Northern News" (Queensland) reported the event in some detail in its November 30 issue and on December 7 the paper gave Al. almost a full page spread in its 'Local Hero' feature. If anyone doubted Al's hero status his picture certainly displayed the image of a hero.

Graham R. Lobb, our member who lives in Washington, D.C., visited Australia last year and with the help of **Rita Balin** almost previewed, for himself, our August Reunion programme. He, too, visited the **Old Fire Station** and recalled its past as the home of CB's IBM tabulating equipment. Graham also visited 21 Henry Street and recalls working in a hut in the garden, in August 1943, punching tapes of Japanese intercept traffic for retransmission to Arlington Hall, Virginia.

Still in Queensland and on the theme of plaques **Margaret Raymond**, (ex Signalwoman Fullgrabe M., who was one of those young ladies who was told she didn't exist) has reported on the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the "**Shaw Estate**", **Kalinga** as an Historic Signals Site.

Margaret says it was an eerie feeling when, with former colleagues from the ASWG, she "wandered over well kept playing fields eagerly pin pointing where the various huts once stood." They pin pointed the aerial

sites, transmitter room location and the place where the set rooms would have been

Mr. Bill Esdaile, ex ASWG unveiled the plaque in the presence of the Colonel Commandant of Corps of Signals, Queensland.

Eric Fuller, from Orange, or was it his mate Stan Willis also from Orange, has reported that if, as a qualified person, you have applied for a **Philippines Liberation Medal** which has not yet been issued the chances are that it will be issued to you if you turn up at the Office of the Philippines Consul in your Capital City with suitable identification; preferably photo identification such as a Drivers licence. **Brian Lovett** has advised that as far as the Sydney Consulate is concerned the system works by mail. Just send a photo-copy of your license or passport. Newsletter has application forms for people who have not previously applied.

Basil Fogarty had a call from one of his readers who was trying to find out something about his late father, **F/O Gordon Templeton**. He knows his Dad served in Brisbane and the Philippines and received letters from Major General Akin and Lt. Col. J.C.Mullaley. But he would like to know more. Can anyone tell this son more about his father?

The US Coast guard has given up **Morse Code** after nearly a century of monitoring telegraph distress calls. So if you get into distress off the shores of USA you had better not rely on your old morse skills; you will have to catch up with modern technology. **Bernard Anderson** from North Balwyn, read this snippet in the Melbourne Age a couple of months back.

Roy Ward's letter about **Hugh Melinsky** produced some interesting responses which will be reported in the next issue; including one from Canon Melinsky himself directed to Eve Scott !.