



CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION

March 2002.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

The year 2001 marked the Centenary of Federation. As a part of the celebration of this event the Commonwealth Government had set up the Their Service Our Heritage Commemorative Grants Program. Following the Annual General Meeting in February, CBICA Inc. formally submitted its application to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for a grant of \$70,000 for the researching and writing of a history of the Australian Contribution to Allied Signals Intelligence in World War 2. To date in spite of all our efforts to gain support for this project from the higher echelons of the Services and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs no response of **any** kind has been received to our application. This is a most unsatisfactory and disappointing situation. Nevertheless we intend to continue our efforts to secure a successful outcome.

The AGM also saw the conferral for the first time of Honorary Life Membership on Jim Williams, Norma Keeling and the late Mike Casey for their outstanding services to the Association. A similar honour was later conferred on Peg Moore in recognition of her late husband Dennis' invaluable work as Publicity Officer.

On 31st March in response to Director Ron Bonighton's generous offer to include CBICA members and their partners in the invitation to an Open Day at the Defence Signals Directorate, 20 of our members journeyed to Canberra where we were given a guided tour of the Directorate followed by refreshments at a sausage sizzle. The whole occasion gave us the opportunity to mingle and chat with current staff and their families and our continuing friendly relations with D.S.D. are much appreciated.

Anzac Day Celebrations blessed as usual with favourable weather were again highly successful. Eighteen were present at the Wreath Laying Ceremony on Anzac Eve whilst there were 34 marchers in the Anzac Day Parade and 54 of us

enjoyed a convivial luncheon at the Mercure Hotel, Lawson City West. Proceedings were strictly informal, but a special welcome was extended to Betty Coombs (USA), Lester and Celia Truex and Bill Rogers (Victoria), Peg and Rob Moore, Mike Casey, Jim Williams and Norma Keeling. Jim Williams spoke briefly to express his thanks for the Life Membership he had received.

At the invitation of the State Council of the RSL, Bruce Bentwitch and I attended the VP Day Ceremony in Martin Place on 15th August, and laid a wreath on the Cenotaph on behalf of the Association. Speeches were delivered by the Governor of NSW Dr Marie Bashir AC and by State President G.E. Priest AM

The Mini Reunion was held on 13th November at the Stockton RSL Club which provided the 22 members and friends who attended with a comfortable venue and an excellent meal. Our thanks are due to Gordon Swinney for attending to all the details including the travel arrangements. Unfortunately Murphy's Law operated for some of us in regard to the latter resulting in a slight curtailment of our time for socialising and chatting. We still made the best of every available minute.

With regard to membership we have at present 196 on our mailing list including 88 in NSW with lesser numbers in other states, 8 overseas members, as well as honorary members and friends of the Association. Inevitably with the lapse of time there are some no longer with us but all things considered our numbers are being maintained very well. We are still acquiring new members, the most recent being Steve Kirsten, James Pattison, Douglas Helleur and Eric Webb to whom a warm welcome is extended.

The historic Brisbane MacArthur Chambers has been held by a number of business developers. However Forrester Commercial Developments Pty Ltd. of Brisbane have acquired a 200 year lease and commenced development of a large number of luxury apartments in the structure. The

MacArthur Memorial Trust has completed plan and design for the eighth floor museum. It is now continuing negotiations with Brisbane City Council to secure a satisfactory lease arrangement including the works needed to bring the site to complete museum requirements. We can thank the excellent members of the Trust for their patience and skill. We owe thanks also to the Queensland Government together with all those who provide generous financial support.

My sincere thanks go to all members of the Executive Committee but special thanks are due to Helen Kenny in whose hands the light of the Newsletter, so far from being turned off, is shining as brightly as ever, Joy Granger who has slipped so unobtrusively yet so efficiently into the Secretary's role and Frank Hughes for his support to the executive in a number of different areas.

Finally I feel I must include the sad list of those who have left us since AGM 2001:-

Bernard Anderson, Ellie Bennetts, Norman Best, Dave Berry, Allan Campbell, Mike Casey, Cec Cousins, Laurina Dale, Pat Gill, Erica Harvey, Earle Heap, Nancy Hurley, Ed Kelson, John Larkin, Nancy Miller, Joyce Sandars, Ann Schneider, Norm Webb, Athol Whyburn, and Stan Winn.

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HON. SECRETARY'S PAR.

Hello everyone - hope you entered 2002 in reasonably good health; our sympathies to those toughing it out.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 4 February and the executive team is: President - Gordon Gibson, Vice-Presidents - John Shoebridge and Frank Hughes, Hon. Treasurer - Bruce Bentwitch, Publicity Officer - Helen Kenny, Hon. Secretary - Yours truly, Committee - Gordon Swinney, Les McClean, Allan Norton.

In brief:

Following the Treasurer's report, and in order to economise, it was decided to remove the Association from incorporated structure, eliminating the need for alarmingly rising public

risk insurance. Treasurer Bruce advised that the RSL has overall insurance cover for the Anzac Day march, so we don't need it.

Do try to keep your Subs up to date, printing costs for the Newsletters are heavy.

The History - nil response whatever from DVA or the body dealing out grants. Other moves are afoot and we'll keep you informed.

Frank Hughes' latest advice from the MacArthur Memorial Trust is that the Trustees are now in a position to approach corporations for donations.

All details re Anzac Eve and Day arrangements are at the back of this bulletin. We look forward to seeing as many as possible of you at the march, or at the reunion lunch to follow; always a good chat-fest and excellent smorgasbord.

For your interest:-

Don Robinson, Peter Tankard, Helen and I attended Stan Winn's Memorial Service at Dee Why - a moving occasion; one eulogy being given in sign language [with Stan's sister reading] for the benefit of the profoundly deaf present, with whom Stan had been closely associated.

Via Ink Emma Ink [June 2000] I send thanks to Bill Schleusener for his Commemorative item on the Mt. Lamington disaster in 1951. I lost good friends amongst the thousands who died that day, and the little paradise of Higaturu vanished.

In closing, our thoughts go to the families of members we lost during the last 12 months. Incredibly, even at this stage, we welcome new members, some of whom we hope to see on Anzac Day.

Until next time, keep the flame alive.

Joy Granger,
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NARRABEEN NSW 2101.
[02] 9981-2397.

HON TREASURER'S REPORT.

A few years ago the then Executive of CBICA was concerned that our participation in the Sydney Anzac Day march could result in an occurrence where by a liability claim could be instituted by a member of the public against us.

It was decided to take out a Public Liability Insurance Policy to cover the march and any other important events. At the same time it was necessary to incorporate with the appropriate Government Authority.

The cost of such insurance has increased over the years, particularly recently as widely publicised.

Upon making enquiries we have been informed the RSL has a policy covering all participants in the Sydney March, which means we do not need separate cover. We have now cancelled our insurance policy as well as incorporation.

With these and other savings, we decided at the AGM to maintain subscriptions at existing levels this year but review the situation towards the end of the year.

As a number of members have not paid this year's subs [perhaps awaiting the above decision] I look forward to receipt of your remittance ASAP.

When sending subs a number of members who are not enjoying the best of health look forward to the Newsletter which keeps them in touch with the Association.

One such is Gordon Gibson (the RAAF one from Port Macquarie) who is recovering from a stroke and hopes to be with us on 25th April.

My dentist recently told me the origin of "Oh, he is getting a bit long in the tooth!". With advancing years our gums recede thus exposing more of the teeth - hence the saying. [This cannot apply to those with false teeth, and of course, never to women!].

All the best,
Bruce Bentwitch,
Hon. Treasurer,
7 Holly Street,
Castle Cove NSW 2069
[02] 9417-1427.

THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF CENTRAL BUREAU.

In April, 2002, we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Central Bureau - an organisation which made a decisive contribution to the Allies' victory in the Pacific War.

Since the bombing of Pearl Harbour in December, 1941, the Japanese downward thrust towards the South Pacific area had proceeded with alarming speed to the point where an invasion of Australia by Japanese forces was a distinct possibility.

It was against this solemn background that a Signals Intelligence organisation, named Central Bureau, was established in Melbourne in April, 1942. This followed immediately after General Douglas MacArthur had arrived in Australia from the Philippines and set up his HQ in Melbourne in March, 1942. His Chief Signals Officer, Maj-Gen Spencer B. Akin, who had long been involved in Signals Intelligence and was well aware of its potential, was a prime mover in getting the organisation established. This was to be a joint U.S. - Australian organisation.

As far as the Australian forces were concerned, discussions had already taken place to establish such an organisation arising out of the experience of No. 4 Australian Special Wireless Section as a result of its operations in the Middle East. On the troopship "Orcades", returning to Australia in early March, 1942, with the Section on board, senior Australian Signals and Intelligence Officers had held discussions as to the future shape of Signals Intelligence in Australia. As a result, a "blue print" for such an organisation in Australia had been prepared.

Later, following discussions between the appropriate U.S. and Australian authorities, and reviewing the resources available, it was decided to establish two organisations, as follows:-

AN INTERCEPT ORGANISATION, known as the Australian Special Wireless Group [ASWG] to operate at Bonegilla, near Wodonga, Victoria. This organisation was responsible for the recruiting and training of intercept operators and the provision of Intercept Sections and Detachments in the field. Capt. J.W. Ryan was appointed C.O., and Lieut. A. Henry his 2 I/C.

A RESEARCH AND CONTROL CENTRE, known as Central Bureau, was to be established as a combined Australian Army, R.A.A.F. and U.S. Army organisation.

It was set up at "Cranleigh", a two-storey, ivy-clad mansion in Domain Rd., South Yarra in Melbourne. Its function was to research and decode Army and Air intercept traffic and to carry out its work in close co-operation with the Signals Intelligence centres in the UK, USA and India.

Maj-Gen. S.B. Akin, U.S. Chief Signals Officer, was appointed Director of Central Bureau, and each of the three Services in the organisation was represented by its Commanding Officer and their technical assistants, and these constituted a Committee which determined Central Bureau policy.

The three CO's were - Col. J. Sherr, US Army; Capt. A.W. Sandford, AIF, and Fl/Lt H.R. Booth, RAAF. Following the tragic death of Col Sherr in an air accident, Col. H.S. Doud became CO of the US component, and he, in turn, was succeeded by Col. A. Sinkov. The American contingent of Central Bureau became known as SIS - Signals Intelligence Service.

Both Intercept organisations and Central Bureau underwent huge expansion, the AIF, RAAF and US Sigs establishing numerous Field Sections which were to operate in Northern Australia, New Guinea and the Philippines.

Central Bureau was joined by numbers of British, Canadian and New Zealand members, the total staff numbering more than 2,000.

The operations of Central Bureau and its Field Sections made a significant contribution to final victory - a contribution which, according to the Head of U.S. Intelligence, "cut two years off the war".

Geoffrey Ballard.

{The writer, who served with No. 4 Australian Special Wireless Section in Greece and Crete, is a "foundation member" of Central Bureau, and author of "On ULTRA Active Service". His service with CB took him to Darwin, New Guinea and the Philippines. In the last two places he was Sigint Liaison Officer at General MacArthur's HQ.}

THE ROLLCALL PROJECT.

For members new to CBICA - and a reminder to those with years of membership - this is an attempt to write a Nominal Roll of the Allied servicepeople involved in Sigint activities in Australia, New Guinea and the Philippines during WW2.

It is a sad reflection on the Australian units that no lists of members were compiled by the AIF, AWAS, WAAAF and RAAF. The notable exception was a list of 6 WU members issued by its Adjutant shortly before the unit left San Miguel. Fortunately the US SIS list contains all serving in the Ascot complex early in 1945.

At the Melbourne Combined Reunion of November 2000 we were told of Commonwealth Funds available to finance a professionally written History of Central Bureau. Nothing has come of it and nothing will. If a history is written it will be done by us.

Those who served are more important than whatever can be written about the function and operations of such a complex multi-national assembly. In real terms the detachment cook contributed far more than did Abe Sinkov, Mic Sandford or Roy Booth. He was not as good a cook as the mothers of those who complained about his cooking - nor did he have their kitchens or ingredients. He kept the Intercept operators, the Don R and the RAP Corporal alive and so did many others.

The "Official" figures claim Central Bureau had 4339 members and these figures are quoted without question by the many writers on the subject. Rollcall has 2948 and, if the 915 field operators belonging to the 4 US SRI companies could be found, would balance the US contribution. It has 174 more AIF and AWAS than the official list but only 717 RAAF, RAF, and WAAAF, compared with the official claim of 1573. Clearly, the official figures are "rubbery".

The most questionable discrepancy is the official claim of 1115 RAAF field operators. Reliable figures on message interception show that the 915 members of 4 SRI Companies intercepted many more messages than did the combined AIF Wireless sections and the 6 RAAF Wireless units. 1

Canadian SW Group, formed late in the war as a completely self-supporting unit far from home, had 338 members. 6 WU lists 308 members and comprised many transferred from the other 5 WU's, so their numbers would be much less.

History should be accurate. That's why the profile of Allan Norton [September Newsletter] is so valuable. His list of 51 Kana operators of 1 WU in 1942 contained 9 completely new names and gave more info about many others. It compares well with Don Laidlaw's estimate of the strength of the AIF 51 Wireless Service in 1943.

So put on your thinking caps and produce as much as you can. Do not hold back because you are not certain about names or functions. Rollcall records the source of all its material and can check new material.

Send your info to - John Stumm, E20/61 Explorer Drive, ALBANY CREEK 4035 -or- by Email to 'jonstumm@gil.com.au' -or- to Helen Kenny, 27/1-13 Mackenzie St., Lavender Bay NSW 2060.

IN BRIEF.

President Gordon Gibson was watching the ABC Programme, "Dimensions in Time" on February 25, when up came scenes of the old AMP Building Brisbane, and shots of that room on the eighth floor where General Douglas MacArthur had his headquarters. The documentary spoke of plans for a museum there, showed shots of MacArthur talking to world leaders Churchill and Roosevelt, and said that from this spot the South West Pacific Campaign was planned. The Executive Officer of the General Douglas MacArthur Brisbane Memorial Trust, Lt. Col. John P. Dwyer, AM also spoke of the museum.

Since Allan Campbell arranged for Cbers to visit this room in 1996, there has been interminable discussion and changes of plans about the building and this office. Almost six years ago, when we had our visit, the nonagenarian Allan Campbell had on display his collection of photographs, manuscripts and memorabilia dating back to the war years when he worked there in Intelligence. In 1996, the General's chair stood at the end of a long table. Gordon Gibson says that in the documentary the room looks gutted [possibly for alterations] and that the furniture has gone.

Sadly, Allan Campbell has gone too, [his obituary appears elsewhere in this issue]. He worked tirelessly for the museum, but did not live to see it. Posthumously, we thank him for his efforts. Frank Hughes has arranged to buy a copy of this documentary, and if all goes well we hope to show it at the Sydney Anzac Day reunion.

It will be on disc, not video, because, as someone put it: "The life of a video is about that of a modern marriage - not much more than 10 years".

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When Don Laidlaw generously sent us copies of his book, "Anecdotes of a Japanese Translator", he said we could distribute it - free - to interested Cbers. The response was immediate. All copies went. He has just sent some more. [If you want a copy of "Anecdotes" let Helen Kenny know]. Memories were certainly stirred.

Ray Inches, ex RAAF, recalled Don Laidlaw at Coomalie Creek, and Don's tent mate, Ian Paton. Other people brought to mind for Ray were Captain Dodd, Lieutenant Litchfield, and Flt/Lieutenant George Reveille, RAAF O/C there.

Fred Smith, of Halliday's Point, NSW, was another "Anecdotes" reader, who said that his draft from Dubbo became clerks in an Ascot Park hut, under Major Erskine "a very nice man". [Major Hugh Erskine, an American, was in charge of H Branch, the Translation Section.

The author, Don Laidlaw, has just let us know that he's accepted an invitation from Hugh Melinsky, in Norwich, England, to stay with him, then to attend a reunion lunch in Cambridge on May 15. Melinsky, now a retired Canon of Norwich Cathedral, was one of the 12 young linguists from Oxford and Cambridge who came out to CB in 1944 after having done a quick course in military Japanese. Don Laidlaw and his wife, Peg, hope to make the trip, and Don looks forward to meeting the seven survivors of the original 12. Hugh Melinsky says Barry Smallman and Mike Webster plan to come. Mike Webster lives in Paris with his American wife, and Barry's home is in Benenden, Kent.

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Doug Pyle, of Bolwarra Heights, NSW must be thanked for helping to fill in the gaps in our

collection of Newsletters. He's sent Helen Kenny a list of what he holds and has posted copies of circulars dealing with our first reunion on October 18, 1974 at the Kensington War Memorial Club. Also enclosed were plans for the first AGM, and details of those who went to Anzac Day functions in the days when Bob Burnside was president. Joy Grace, too, sent in a missing Newsletter.

It's interesting to look back at these. Marion [Manson] Winn started the December, 1976, Circular or Newsletter with these words:

"Dear Girls and Fellows, It really is a bit difficult to know whether to address us as Dear Ex CB-ers or -ites, Dear Friends Near and Far, Dear Guys and Gals, Dear International Mob, or some other way, so for want of a brighter suggestion, Girls and Fellows will do for this time".

We seem to have stuck with 'CBers', but it could have been Sheilas and Blokes, or Lads and Lasses. How the language changes ... even the Sigint vocabulary.

VALE

Allan Campbell, AM, OBE, OMRI and Patron of CBICA, died last December, aged 97. Just a few weeks before his death he sent Newsletter a batch of interesting cuttings from his archives, and talked of the Battle of Brisbane in which he became involved in the riot between Australians and US Servicemen - earning a broken collarbone when a bottle, aimed at the Police Commissioner with whom he was walking, hit him instead.

This RAAF officer, who worked with CB in MacArthur's headquarters between postings to the Pacific Islands, assisted the General in trying to improve relationships between the US and Australian troops. He founded the Australian-American Association, headed Campbell Advertising, and "was known as Mr Entertainment after running the South Brisbane dance venue Trocadero", to quote the Courier-Mail obituary. Allan Campbell became the first president of the General Douglas MacArthur Brisbane Memorial Trust, and from wartime built up and preserved historic photographs and archives.

The Premier of Queensland, Peter Beattie, MP, recognised this when he launched the MacArthur Museum Appeal at Parliament House, Brisbane, on August 2, 2001.

Describing how Allan held a photograph of General MacArthur and Emperor Hirohito, signed by both, on the day of surrender, Premier Beattie described how the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, asked for it. He went on: "But Allan Campbell would not give the photo to Canberra. He said the war was virtually won out of Brisbane and the photo belonged in Brisbane. It has taken almost 60 years but at last this rare and priceless photograph will find a proper home. We all owe a debt to Allan Campbell."

Campbell liked organising, and was renowned for it. For 46 years he worked on the Anzac Day Commemoration Committee, was a Queensland Red Cross President, was dubbed "Mr Warana" because he ran the Warana Festival from 1961 to 1978, was consul-general for Bolivia, and for years headed the Clan Campbell Association.

His wife Margaret told the Courier-Mail that Allan worked in his city office for two days a week until the month before his death. She said "There was no-one more kind and he never gave up on any job he was given. It's hard. I'm rather like a ship without a rudder now".

CBers who went to Brisbane in 1996 when Allan Campbell arranged for archives to be displayed in General MacArthur's old eighth floor ex AMP Office, will remember this courteous and distinguished man. Our sympathy goes to his family.

F.H. & H.K.

[Newsletter will run the items sent by Allan Campbell in coming issues.]

VALE : STANLEY PEARSON WINN - 1917 - 2002

Stan Winn, always known to his Signals unit mates as "Sugar Pip", was one of the indelible characters of his Unit. In the various campaigns in the Middle East, back in Australia, and finally in the Philippines, Stan exuded cheerfulness - he was always a "good mate".

Stan was born in Mosman, Sydney, in 1917, the eldest of a family of four sons and two daughters. The family moved to Roseville, then Wahroonga, then Neutral Bay.

After leaving school, Stan worked for a while at Winn's Store in Oxford St., one of the "Winn's Big Friendly Stores" founded by Stan's grandfather.

With a strong Christian background, Stan attended the Croydon Missionary and Bible College. With missionary work in mind, he then went to the U.K. to do a course in Tropical Medicine. However, with the threat of war, he soon returned home to enlist in the AIF, originally in 9th Div. Signals, and finally in 4 Australian Special Wireless Section.

Stan served in the campaigns in Greece, Crete and Syria, and then came pleasant leave periods in Lebanon and Palestine.

As a result of my friendship with Stan, I was privileged to meet some special friends of his who lived in Jerusalem. Stan and I stayed with these friends, and enjoyed great hospitality as well as attendance at the unforgettable Christmas Midnight Service at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

On the Unit's return to Australia - and the war with Japan, Stan joined Central Bureau in Melbourne, remaining with it on its transfer to Brisbane and finally to the Philippines. Stan was involved at various levels of Signals Intelligence duties and got his Commission during this time.

Most important of all, it was at Central Bureau that Stan met Marion Manson, a highly qualified Secretary and Typist, and they later married.

After the war, Stan worked in the drapery business again. He and Marion lived with Stan's family at Neutral Bay for a time while building their home at Killara.

It was during this period that their two sons, Trevor and Ken were born.

They also spent a few years in Adelaide where the boys attended school.

Following retirement, Stan and Marion moved to the War Veterans' Retirement Village at Collaroy. There Stan continued to put his strong Christian faith into practice, especially in aid to an organisation for deaf people, which was established by his parents.

Stan died on 15th January, 2002, Marion having predeceased him by several years.

And so an active life of 84 years ended - with service to Family, Church, Country and Those in Need - freely given.

Geoffrey Ballard.

BLETCHLEY PARK TALK

Back in January, Peter Wescombe, founder of the Bletchley Park Trust, and now a Trustee, gave a talk at the Powerhouse Museum, in Sydney. It was in the evening, the place was packed, but very few CBers could get there. Those who did rated it one of the most interesting lectures they'd ever heard.

It dealt, not just with Bletchley Park, but with the years before the war, back to 1919 when Enigma was invented and "put on an old cast iron Imperial typewriter base."

Peter Wescombe, an Englishman, served "in H.M. Diplomatic Service, Moscow, and at some point was kicked out of Baghdad for undiplomatic activities," we were told.

His talk covered the war years, covered continents, described cable and radio links, and in the clearest possible way explained Sigint achievements of linguists, mathematicians, cryptographers, and the servicemen and women of Britain, Australia, Canada and America.

Matthew Connell, Curator of Computing and Mathematics at the Powerhouse Museum, is arranging for CBICA to be given the recording, transcript and illustrations of the lecture.

We can't set time, date and place yet, but we hope that when we have our next mini-reunion, you'll hear part of the talk replayed, and see the illustrations.

RECOGNITION!



L to R: Joyce Morrison, Nancy (Nelson) Goldsteen, Sybil Brady, Betty (Tough) Chessell, Jean (McLennan) Robertson, Barbara (Gibson) Kitching, Dorothy (Hilleard) Morrow, Margaret (Fullgrave) Raymond, Eve Scott.

Central Bureau hit the headlines recently. Never has there been such publicity. "Ciphers come out from the cold," announced *The Australian*. "Gongs of praise for unsung war heroines," proclaimed the *Courier-Mail*, going rather over the top. Photographs of CB women - taken now and in wartime - appeared in newspapers. There were TV interviews on Channels 2, 7 and 9 [Queensland] and on some interstate programmes. Radio stations competed.

What brought this about? March 8 was International Women's Day, and WIT [Women in Information Technology] marked it by holding "A celebration of Women in Information Security over the last 60 years and into the future." They wanted to recognise the "contribution of women who worked as code breakers and input operations (information security)" at Central Bureau, 21 Henry St., Ascot, pointing out that this was the operations "center" for wartime signals intelligence. Les Smith, lecturer at the School of Data Communications, Queensland University of Technology, asked CBICA to provide the names of members who now lived in Queensland, and for names of any non-members we could remember. We gave him a list. Invitations were sent. Many more would have been had we known where to find people.

Nine accepted - and on March 8 attended a function at the Miegunyah Folk Museum, Bowen Hills, an historic house used for a while in wartime by Z Special Force Commandos. WIT president, Melinda Horton, welcomed them, and about 70 guests joined in the buffet lunch on the veranda. The Hon. Paul Lucas, Minister for Innovation and Information Economy in Queensland spoke, and Betty Chessell responded on behalf of the three ex-WAAAF and six ex-AWAS who were there.

These women, who for years had kept their promise not to reveal what they had done at CB, still found it difficult to divulge past secrets. They had travelled far in time and place to be there - Barbara Kitching coming from Blackall. Now, curious reporters and civilians quizzed them. Photographs, memorabilia and colour patches were on display, as was a mock-up of a TypeX machine.

Professor Bill Caelli, Head of QUT's School of Data Communications, and Les Smith, are keenly interested in CB's history and technology. Suddenly, the State of Queensland is taking a proprietorial interest.

Each ex-servicewoman received a certificate bearing her name. It read "for outstanding achievement in the area of information security* at the Central Bureau during World War II. Then followed the Minister's signature, date and the words, 'Queensland - the Smart State'. A tenth certificate was delivered to Roma [Parratt] Hodsdon, ex-AWAS cipher, who had not been well enough to come. * (Information Security = Sigint)

It was a great day. As Eve Scott, former WAAAF, who worked on the IBM punch-card machine, exclaimed: "Thank you - I'm glad I've lived long enough to get this reward."