



CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION

September 2002.

Publicity Officer: Helen Kenny, 27/1-13 Mackenzie St, Lavender bay NSW 2060 Email: lalkenny@hotmail.com

Tel: 02 9954-040

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Unit History

On 4th June, Bill Rogers attended a meeting of the Australian War Memorial Foundation hoping for the opportunity to lobby the Minister for Vet Affairs, Donna Vale and persuade her to reconsider rejection of our funding application. The Minister, however, failed to attend the meeting and we have now given up hope of assistance from that direction. Fortunately Bill had more success in discussions with the Chairman of the Foundation, Major General Clunies-Ross as a result of which the AWM has indicated in a letter to Bill that it could make their historian Chris Coulthard-Clark (who is of course the prospective author of our history) available on a limited basis to undertake the necessary research. Chris has since estimated that this concession would probably reduce his original expenses claim of \$70,000 by an appreciable amount. (Regarding funds, however, it was made quite clear that they would need to be raised before Chris commenced work and would be best be paid directly to the AWM. Contributions would be tax deductible. "Any overseas travel would require him (Chris) to take leave without pay and would be funded by your Association." (In his original estimate of \$70,000 for research and writing Chris had allowed \$25,000 for overseas travel but such costs are likely to have increased in the meantime.) There are also possible publishing costs.

The next step? Bill Rogers is about to arrange a deputation to the Director of the AWM with the object of setting up the fund and perhaps securing further concessions from him.

The situation in a nutshell is that if the Unit History is to go ahead we have to devise ways and means of raising a considerable sum of money probably well over \$60,000. At its meeting on the 12th

August the executive committee deferred consideration of this question till 14th October. Any constructive suggestions from members would be greatly appreciated!

V.P. Day Ceremony

Having again accepted a very gracious invitation from the State Secretary of the RSL, Frank Hughes and I attended the V.P. Day Ceremony in Martin Place and, on behalf of the Association, laid a wreath on the Cenotaph. The newly elected State President Mr Ken Hall spoke briefly and the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir A.C., at greater length on the sacrifices made by our servicemen and women in helping to achieve this victory so vital to our nation. I have given my opinion previously that insufficient emphasis is placed upon this very important occasion. In recent years I have become aware of another celebration called the Battle for Australia, which took place this year on the 4th September and appears to commemorate specifically Milne Bay and Kokoda. Surely there would be greater public impact if these two were combined.

Mini Reunion Kirribilli Club – 12 November

This is a delightful venue overlooking "our harbour" and will be a totally relaxed and informal occasion. Please be there if you possibly can.

Gordon Gibson - President

67/1-9 Yardley Avenue

WAITARA NSW 2077

Phone 02 9487 3029 Email sueg@optusnet.com.au

oooooooOOOooooooo

HON. SECRETARY'S PAR

Hello everyone – hope you have managed to cope with winter's chills and ills; and now SPRING with its usual violent reversals. Let's hope our desperate country folk get rain soon.

Sadly, I must advise the recent passing of our former treasurer, Norma Keeling (WAAAF), Max McCredie (1 and 6 WU) and Brian Bombell, one of earliest members – all after long illness. The gaps in the Unit's history are widening. They will be missed.

On the home front, Treasurer Bruce is currently out of action and we very much hope his condition is resolved to his benefit. Editor Helen has not been very well but ever cheerful and always helpful to the many who contact her by every means bar ESP (so far!).

History Grant

There has been much discussion and correspondence re this. Chairman Gordon's message tells it all.

At the close of this newsletter there is a tear-off slip. We would appreciate your filling it in and return to me, as indicated. This info will help us greatly.

Mini Re-union: To be held in the Bistro at the Kirribilli Club on Tuesday, 12 November. The Bistro opens from 12 noon until 2:30pm. It is on the lower level but entry is through main reception. We suggest assembly in reception before 12, if possible. We look forward to a good gathering.

DIRECTIONS: Take train to Milson's Point Station, come down in lift, walk to Alfred Street, on western side, cross at lights and turn left into Cliff Street where a signpost points the way to the main entrance in Cliff Street. (Parking is beneath the club in Harbour View Crescent.)

Sorry for brevity of this par; have been heavily involved in affairs at War Vets too. My good wishes to all.

Joy Granger, 2N RSLVRV
2/5 Endeavour Drive,
NARRABEEN 2101
02 9981 2397

HON TREASURER'S REPORT

On a recent visit to the USA we stopped at Kayenta, Arizona, where the temperature was about 100F. Kayenta is a very modern Navajo town in the Arizona desert, about 250 miles north of Phoenix, population approximately 5000. We had lunch at the Kayenta Burger King, and I was attracted to a wall, which had a display of World War II memorabilia and an article about the Navajo Code Talkers.

I believe Dennis Moore may have written an article about these people in a Newsletter some years ago. Although the Navajo Code Talkers weren't associated with CB the Kayenta article makes interesting reading.

(Bruce brought home a copy of the article, which, it's hoped, will find room in a future newsletter – the September issue being overflowing with news.)

(Our treasurer, unfortunately, has to step down from his post). He writes: "Due to a sudden eye condition I'm unable to carry on as Treasurer. Pending the appointment of a new Treasurer, it is requested that mail previously sent to me should be sent to our President, Gordon Gibson, whose address is given in the newsletter."

Bruce Bentwitch
Hon Treasurer
7 Holly Street
Castle Cove NSW 2069
(02) 9417 1427

(Sorry to hear your news, Bruce, and all good wishes. Thanks for your hard work and co-operation. . H.K.

oooooooOOOooooooo

CBICA's New Internet Web Page

The School of Software Engineering and Data Communications together with the Information Security Research Centre at the Queensland University of Technology will be launching the Association's new web page on the Internet in coming weeks. Members will be advised of the new address once it is known.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to two new members, both from South Australia. The first is **Edward Frederick COOK**, ex RAAF, of 23/1, number 1 Noblet Street Findon, South Australia, 5023. Telephone: 08 8268 5373. Email efcook@senet.com.au.

The second is former AWAS, **Estelle McInnes (nee James)**, of 2 Gum Court, Tranmere, South Australia, 5073. Telephone: 08 8331 0872.

Edward (Ted) Cook was one of the original seven who originated No1 Wireless Unit at Air Force Headquarters in Melbourne in 1941. He writes: “Six of the seven of our small unit were trained at Air Board in Melbourne by Commander Newman of the Royal Navy. We were then posted to Darwin 1941 to simply copy Japanese Morse Code.”

The six, Snow Bradshaw, Clarrie Hermes, Taff Davis, Jim Wilson, Alf Towers and the writer Ted Cook, went by train from Melbourne to Adelaide and Alice Springs by road to Birdum, and from Birdum to Darwin in cattle trucks.

They were transported to the RAAF base, about five miles from Darwin. It was September 1941. Group Captain F.R. Scherger, in charge of the Darwin base, allotted them room on top of the ACH building. They started work immediately, working four hours on, four hours off, copying Japanese morse and transposing it. Periodically, this was sent to RAAF HQ in Melbourne.

“This was prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour,” explains Ted Cook. “We had no back-up from HF/DF stations, nor did we have any back-up from the Air Board.” “After the attack on Pearl Harbour there was a sharp increase in Japanese activity, much of which we missed because of the number of different frequencies being used monitored and the poor performance of the radio equipment provided by the use of AR 7 radios which continually veered off course due to there being no band spreaders fitted to these.”

Soon, the bad conditions, heat, and lack of good food affected Ted. He ended up in Berrimah Hospital with boils in both armpits and a condition called furunculosis. There the doctor who attended him had two assistants. They “held an arm each and then cut into the boils without any kind of anaesthetic.” After three or four days the boils re-

appeared. Ted was very sick. He was transferred to the RAAF Hospital for another operation – this time with a proper anaesthetic. There was rapid improvement and no further trouble.

Ted Cook’s account continues: “On February 19, 1942, Darwin was bombed by the same group which devastated Pearl Harbour. The night before the bombing a spate of Japanese morse on almost all frequencies seemed to indicate that we were about to get our share. As we had no way of getting bearings on their whereabouts there was little we could do. However, about three or four nights after we were bombed a temporary signals office was set up just outside the airfield to accommodate the ordinary signals office staff and we were allotted two places to carry on with our intercepts. They all had access to transmitters. I was on a frequency, which I noticed was also a frequency used by the Japanese as well as Melbourne.

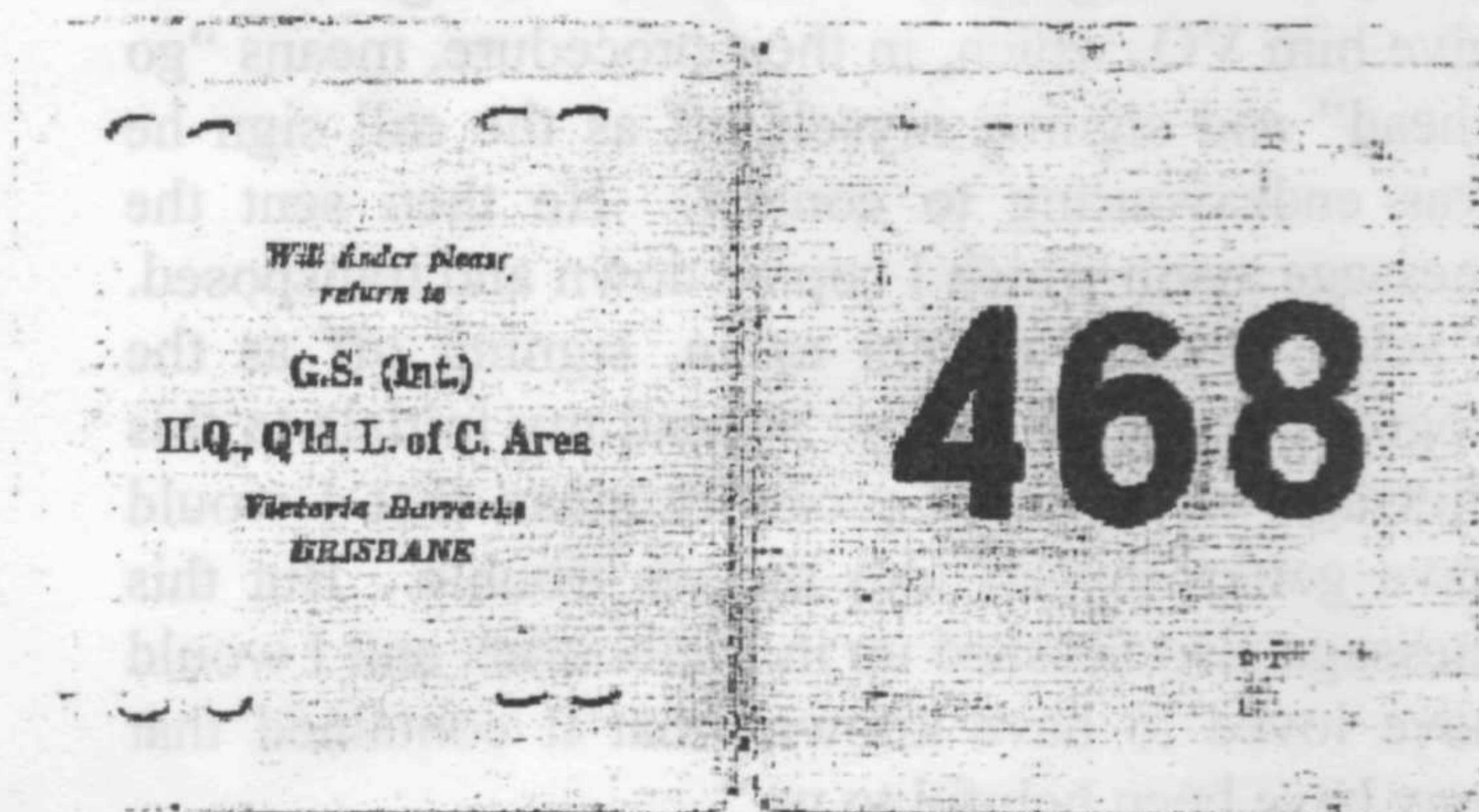
I monitored a naval Japanese station calling another and he seemed to be upset that he could not contact who ever he was trying to get. After calling for a great time and getting no answer, I thought I would give him VO, which, in their procedure, means “go ahead” and signing myself off as the call sign he was endeavouring to contact. He then sent the message again which I copied down and transposed. I acknowledged receipt again, signing off as the bogus receiver. I did not append my initials to this message, as it would probably mean that I would have gotten myself into serious trouble. But this message also finished up in Melbourne, and I would have loved to have known what it contained that may have been helpful to us.”

(Ted Cook has other wartime experiences to relate and we hope to print them later. Until Peter Dunn and Peggy Moore started to talk to him by computer, he had no idea of CBICA’s existence, and did not know that there were Wireless Unit Associations. When he visited the Australian War Museum last year, he was “amazed to learn that nothing was known about 1 Wireless Unit” by the staff he spoke to there. Peggy Moore recalls that her late husband Dennis, Alwyn Petherbridge and Col Brackley had Ted Cook as their instructor in a class at Henry Street).

Estelle McInnes (James) will be well remembered by AWAS who were with 11 Aust. Cipher Section in the garage at 21 Henry Street, and who were in camp at Chermside. Estelle was one who had not heard of CBICA until we traced her when the Queensland Government was distributing certificates to women who had served with CB, ASWG and WAAAF Sigint.

This South Australian trained at the first Cipher School at Ivanhoe, Victoria, and worked in the Adelaide cipher office before going north to Brisbane (St. Lucia), then to 21 Henry Street where she was sworn in on 17/2/44, staying until the war ended. During those years she became a shift leader and writes now, "How young we all were!" Estelle, a legal secretary by profession, found the work at CB more interesting than anything else she has ever done.

She particularly remembers translations of Japanese messages, which were addressed "To the Son of Heaven," (the Emperor), and then to the Japanese General in the field.



Estelle's pass to 21 Henry Street

oooooooooooooooo

VALE

Norma Keeling (nee Scarfe) 1915-2002.

Norma Dorothy Alice Scarfe was born at Ilford, England, in 1915 and came to Australia with her parents that year. She was of the generation that lived through two wars and a depression – enduring those times of hardship with courage and humour.

Before the war she worked with a ship's chandler in Sydney, but joined the WAAAF after war's outbreak. She was sent to Brisbane, to CB, where it seems that she worked in the Park on the punch-card machine.

In 1948, a few years after the war, Norma married former RAAF serviceman Ernie Keeling. Their home was built on the steep banks of the Woronora River south of Sydney – then an isolated area of spectacular beauty. It could be reached only by boat, and this was difficult sometimes with changes of tide and shifting sandbanks. There was no electricity – only lamplight. But Norma spoke of her home with pleasure, and of that bush life. In this atmosphere her children Dale and Jackie spent their first years.

A change came in 1965 when the family, including stepdaughter Claire, moved to Fiji. Norma's stay there was not long. Ernie became ill, necessitating return to Australia, where he died in 1968.

Norma had a long widowhood. She was always busy, raising her family, and helping others, driving the blind, working for the Christian Blind Mission, teaching conversational English to migrants.

In 1984 she joined CBICA, after hearing of CB on an Anzac Day radio commentary. There was no sitting back for Norma. Soon she was Treasurer, and a most efficient one. She lived for many years at Miranda, moving at last to a Katoomba nursing home, close to her daughter.

Norma died in August, and family, friends and CBers attended the service on August 23, conducted by Alan Langdon, at the West Chapel, Woronora.

Madeline Chidgey's words were read to the gathering by President Gordon Gibson before he made his own speech. Madeline wrote: "Mateship is not exclusive to the male and there is an enduring bond between all ex-servicewomen regardless of their sphere of service. We girls have valued Norma's friendship and we will always remember

her devotion to the job, her cheery smile, her sense of humour but especially her friendship.”

Gordon's speech began with an explanation of CB's wartime role, and its achievements in SIGINT, which saved many allied lives and reputedly shortened the war. He then went on: "Like many of us, Norma may well have been a rather small cog in a huge organisation with worldwide ramifications. On the other hand she may have filled a more important role. I really cannot say. It was like that in CB where the secrecy was such that the right hand did not know what the left hand was doing. Whatever Norma's war time duties may have been I am certain from my knowledge of her character acquired after the war that she would have carried them out with the utmost efficiency and dedication.

"The strict security regulations, which continued after the war, will explain why the CBICA was not formed until 1975. Since then members have been joining from time to time over the years as they have learned in various ways of the existence of the Association. Norma in fact did not actually become a member until 1984, but immediately played an active part. During her long term as the Association's Treasurer, Norma was scrupulous in every detail of her records and payments."

"At every one of our functions Norma would be seated at a table by the door with a list of those who had paid and receipt book ready for those who had not. At committee meetings she would quickly lower the boom on any suggestion of extravagant expenditure. In our Newsletters Norma's paragraph was always devoted to establishing kind and friendly rapport with members far and wide in Australia and overseas. These paragraphs always ended with a little wise saying that bespoke Norma's lovely character."

"Looking back at one of the past Newsletters this is what I found: *"You came into this world crying, everyone rejoiced. (Live your life so when you leave you will rejoice and everyone will cry)".*"

vale

Norma



Sadly I write this verse to-day,
Our dear friend Norma has passed away,
Ex W.A.A.A.F. Scarfe, our Norma Keeling,
How do we express our deepest feeling?
Memories flood back of the job well done,
C.B.er's Treasurer, she had a long run.
Her letters, so cheery, always something of note
And we missed her column, with its apt little quote.
There was always her smile for all to see,
No matter how bad things seemed to be,
She always had a kindly word and oft a little jest,
Made you feel good, she was one of the best.
Though we've known her but a few short years
We'll remember her kindness and shed a few tears.
We'll miss her sadly but are glad we knew
This gracious lady, we say good-bye to you.

Brian Lovett

ooooooooOOOoooooooo

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS (Part 1)

John Stumm

I completed 1st year medicine and had my 19th birthday in November 1941. The attack on Pearl Harbour convinced me that I could be more useful as a soldier and on 22 January 1942 I enlisted in the AIF and was posted to 11 Infantry Training Battalion at Southport. Two weeks later I contracted Meningococcal Meningitis and spent the next 10 months drifting in and out of comas, hospitals and convalescent camps. In December I fronted a Medical Board and was given the choice of a discharge or of remaining as a B2 soldier. I chose to stay and was posted to 21 Henry Street in early January 1943. There was no camp accommodation for members. Each was paid an allowance and told to find lodgings. I stayed at my old college at Kangaroo Point. I bought an ancient Indian Chief motorbike and the tiny monthly petrol ration got me to Ascot most days.

CB had moved to Brisbane in September 1942 and was still small enough to be accommodated in the Henry Street buildings. On the ground floor Abe

Sinkov had a room, which may have been shared with Cdr Eric Nave. Mic Sandford and Roy Booth shared another as did Captains SRI (Pappy) Clarke who commanded the Traffic Analysis section and Don Inglis. Stan Winn fitted in somewhere and the Traffic Analysis staff filled a room to the left of the main entrance. Eddie Kelson ruled the Orderly Room with Sergeants Aub. Richardson (Quartermaster and Transport) and Percy Pledger – a violinist in the real world and, among others, Cpl Winn Roberts who later became a competent actor or Shakespeare, proper films and soapies.

Upstairs was occupied by about 40 US Army men and some others. Colonel Hugh Erskine, Lt. Lester Truex, Prof Room and Major Webb were sometimes seen on the stairway but strict segregation of all departments and talk about what went on where was forbidden.

I was posted to the sorting section of traffic analysis. Here members identified the places of origin and destination of each message. The treated material then went to the Analysts who drew conclusions based on the volumes and types exchanged by the Japanese forces. Each location was represented by a 3 or 4 digit number and the Japs changed their code at intervals. There was an unofficial contest between CB and the Pentagon to solve each new code and we often won. The skill of many kana interceptors who could recognise the key style of individual Japs helped greatly. At that time 51 and 55 AIF Wireless Sections, 1 WU and advance elements of 126 SRIC were the only interceptors. It's hard to estimate the numbers in the section. Many were temporarily posted to field units as "I" staff and only a core of AWAS, WACS and crocks remained at Henry Street. Central Bureau numbers grew rapidly and soon the demountable huts erected in Ascot Park accommodated most of the unit.

Late in 1944 a Medical Board upgraded me to A1 and I became eligible for the move to Hollandia. Our section went by Martin Mariner flying boat early in January 1945. It was disturbing to see a crewmember with fire extinguisher standing on the wing each time the motors started. We lunched in Cairns, spent a night at Murray Barracks in Moresby, refuelled at Madang and landed on Lake Sentani just below the plateau on which our camp was. We had been cargo rather than passengers,

sharing the hold with our office furniture and seated on our packs. TO BE CONTINUED.

THE ACADEMIC CODE BREAKERS

The University of Sydney Gazette for September 2002 is an important issue, celebrating the 150th anniversary of that University's inauguration. The Gazette, published twice yearly, goes out to about 80,000 graduates.

One might expect that the cover would show, perhaps, Blacket's magnificent Great Hall, or "*Grads and undergrads and Fellows, / Gorgeous Profs in reds and yellows.*" Something like that. Far from it.

The cover shows a letter, a Most Secret message, a photograph of a man in a plain, civilian suit, and, at the top of the page, these words: "Academics at War – Sydney's Second World War code breakers." Professor Dale Trendall is the man on the cover. Turn to the contents page. Then read: "Secret wartime documents, such as this Japanese diplomatic message decrypted by Professor of Greek, Dale Trendall, are shedding light on the vital military intelligence work carried out by a group of Sydney academics. Richard North writes about the maths and classics scholars whose code breaking skills made a huge contribution to the war effort."

The story is based upon research done by mathematicians, Associate Professor John Mack (former chair of the Academic Board), Sydney Alumnus Dr Peter Donovan of UNSW, and Canberra researcher and code breaker, David Sissons.

CBers will recognise familiar faces in these pages. Don Robinson is pictured with John Mack and Peter Donovan in the Nicholson Museum. It was here, in 1942, that Professor Trendall asked Robinson if he would consider doing some mysterious "other work", not telling him what it would be, but swearing him to secrecy.

Robinson, who, at this time, had interrupted his studies to join an Artillery unit, consented, went away and said nothing.

Only after some months did an order come "out of the blue" telling him to report to Central Bureau, Brisbane. There he found himself in traffic analysis, which, as he told the Gazette, "involves discovering

everything you can from enemy messages without being able to read them.”

Also shown in the Gazette is a wartime photograph, captioned: “A civilian among soldiers... T. G. Room with fellow Hut 9 staff at Central Bureau in Brisbane.”

T. G. Room was Professor of Mathematics at the University of Sydney. That institution’s links with Intelligence “stretched back to the end of the First World War and the seemingly innocuous decision to establish a lectureship in Oriental Studies at the University.”

Later, with an annual grant from the Department of Defence, cadets at the Royal Military College learnt Japanese, and the first Professor of Oriental Studies, Iles Murdoch, made annual visits to Japan, reporting back to Intelligence.

War broke out again in 1939. The first few months were the “phoney war” when the world waited to see what Hitler would do. The University then had about 4 000 students. (It has 4 000 staff now). We were British subjects and Australian citizens. When the bells of the War Memorial Carillon sounded, playing “God Save the King”, (the National Anthem) people stood to attention.

Old professors, in rusty gowns, paced the Quad. Professor F. A. Todd of Latin is said to have admonished a student who lounged in the sun, and did not stand: “I’ll remember this at exam time.”

Only 21 years had passed since the end of the Great War. Todd had written the words for “Campanarum Canticum”, - the memorial hymn played on the carillon. The Great Bell was called “A. I. F.”

Gordon Gibson, our president, who was a student of Trendall’s and Todd’s remembers the Latin, and repeats one verse in English: “Praise the brave,/Mourn the cherished youth of their Alma Mater/ Who by sacrifice of their blood/ Brought safety to their Fatherland.”

Months passed. Hitler swept across Europe. Britain stood alone, bombed and burning. At lunchtime students gathered in rooms to hear the news (no one then had a portable radio). Russia and Germany were still linked by a pact. Some politically minded students, therefore, termed it an “imperialist war”, and held interminable meetings to decry Britain, praising the U.S.S.R. and world Communism.

Others joined up, and soon lecture rooms and Fisher Library had empty places, and great troopships left harbour taking men – and women – away. There was a feeling of “How can we help?” Some made camouflage netting, joined organisations. Few knew what was happening behind the scenes at the University, but those few did magnificent work.

According to the Gazette, and records from archives, about January 1940 Professor Room and lecturer in mathematics, Richard Lyons “began developing their skills in cryptography while still working at the University.”

Room was 38 then. He would be 100 this year, and the University is honouring him by articles in the Australian Mathematical Society’s Gazette (June and September), and with a lecture by Professor John Mack on the University’s involvement in code breaking in World War II. (This will be on Saturday, October 26, in the Eastern Avenue Lecture Theatre, University of Sydney. The lecture forms part of a seminar of “150 Years of Science at the University of Sydney”. Please check with the University for time.)

With the encouragement of the Army General Staff, Room and Lyons began “looking at coded messages to the Japanese Consul-General supplied by the Cable and Wireless Company.”

Soon a New Zealander, Dale Trendall, the Professor of Greek and world authority on Greek vases, joined them, as did Athanasius Treweek, who lectured in ancient Greek and was a major in the Sydney University Regiment. Early in 1941 Commander Eric Nave visited these mathematicians and linguists. In May 1941 with senior Army and Navy Intelligence officers it was agreed that a section should be set up to break Japanese codes. (Japan and Russia at this stage had not come into the war. When Russia did, how the student politicians changed their tune.)

Professor Room took a crash course in Japanese, in September went to Java and Singapore, to examine British and Dutch Sigint and the electric tabulator machines. At first these academics had worked voluntarily but then received service pay, apart from Professor Room, who remained CB’s only civilian, whose salary was that of a Colonel. After Pearl Harbour Treweek worked with FRUMEL (Fleet Radio Unit Melbourne) and with the diplomatic cipher group, recruiting to this students

and graduates from Sydney. Professor Room went to Central Bureau and Hut 9, which according to the Chief of the Air Staff, “provided innumerable air raid warnings and a constant flow of tactical air intelligence.”

Professor Room also devised codes for coast-watchers. People remember this Englishman as a man who was a Scout leader and bush walker, one who liked the outdoors, one who never discussed his wartime role. A rare photograph of him, taken on a picnic with Lyons and friends, is published in the Mathematical Journal, which he founded. He

became a Fellow of the Royal Society, and was Dean of Science at Sydney University. He died in 1986, and “even his children were unaware of their father’s role as a cryptographer.”

Web address for the University of Sydney Gazette is <http://www.usyd.edu.au/publications/gazette>

The email address is north@media.usyd.edu.au

Mathematical Journal –

<http://www.maths.usyd.edu.au:8000/ww2codes/>

MEMBERSHIP RECORD

FULL NAME :

SPOUSE:

FULL ADDRESS:

..... POST CODE

Telephone:

Email:

SERVICE / UNIT: DATE OF SERVICE

WHERE SERVED: *(As much detail as possible, please. Also anecdotes and recollections. Please attach these to this form)*

When completed, please send to:

Miss J. Granger (Hon Secretary, CBICA)
2/5 Endeavour Drive,
NARRABEEN NSW 2101

PS: Do you have a photo of yourself – alone or in a group? Do send a copy to put with the information. Even faded photos can be enhanced by new technology.