

CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION JUNE 2004.

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PRESIDENT'S PAR

Unit History Project Triumph

After more than three years struggling towards the light at the end of a rather long tunnel, I think it can now be confidently stated that we have at last emerged into bright sunshine and can see our way clear to the end of the line. The reason for this sudden optimism: On 13th May we received an email from Chris Clark entitled "Progress Report on CB Project." The following three paragraphs from this report provide us with the most encouraging news ever.

"Despite the distractions involved in leaving the Australian War Memorial to become the RAAF Historian, and being caught up in an office move, I have been tackling a range of matters connected with the project during the past month or so. Foremost among these has been to conclude a formal arrangement with the AWM to cover my involvement with the project. We have just this week reached the point of getting an agreed contract into shape, and I am scheduled to sign it at 10am tomorrow.

The contract engaged me to work on the project for the Memorial, not just to research and write a manuscript but also to arrange for its publication. This last provision gives me the authority to negotiate with the Army to have the book included in its series of history publications, in return for funding for travel costs associated with research - ie visits interstate for interviewing - which is, essentially, a form of grant to the project. Professor David Horner, who edits the Army History Series, advises that inclusion of our book has already been agreed by the Army History Advisory Committee, so I will be proceeding to negotiate a contract which will ensure our manuscript gets into print without the need for further fundraising by the Association.

This afternoon I will be meeting with DSD regarding the collection of historical records, which it holds on CB, and have been given to understand that arrangements are in hand to give me ready access to these records. This is a major coup, not just because I suspect the project would be impossible to do properly whilever significant categories of records like this remain inaccessible, but also because it will enable me to better utilise the time I intend to spend in Washington by ensuring I don't waste time duplicating material already available here in Australia. Invaluable assistance in achieving this outcome has been provided by Arthur Skimin, who will actually be accompanying me on this afternoon's expedition."

An update from Chris received on 20th May has added to the good news by confirming that "the contract with the Australian War Memorial was wrapped up last week" and adding that the Army History Unit has agreed to contribute \$5000 to the project in the form of travel assistance within Australia.

"This means they will meet the costs associated with an oral interview program, taking in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, and we can probably get more if it seems essential to get to other places for the benefit of the project."

Chris has also been advised that the Army History Unit will be in a position to sign a contract to cover publication of the book by 1st July. Summing up,

- Chris says; "The benefit to the Association is that
- a) we have a publisher (Oxford University Press) guaranteed;
 - b) neither the Association nor the AWM has to worry about finding funds to subsidise publication;
 - c) we effectively have funds to cover project expenses.

All in all we are in pretty good shape."

I THINK WE CAN ALL DRINK TO THAT!

Old Mates

The names of three ex-CBers Chris Clark has been interviewing lately rang a gong immediately with me in spite of not having seen or heard from them for nigh on sixty years.

They are retired diplomat Harold Marshall and (I presume) retired academics Ted Stone and Allan Holland. Greeting and salutations to you gentlemen, and may I express the sincere hope that you will make appropriate use of the membership applications you received from our Secretary, Joy Granger.

Gordon Gibson
President
67/1-9 Yardley Ave
WAITARA NSW 2077
Phone (02) 9487 3029
Email suegibson@phichron.com

HON. TREASURER'S REPORT

How many remember the 12 British Army servicemen who arrived in Brisbane in 1944 – all conversant with the Japanese language?

I first met Hugh Melinsky when he arrived up north at No. 2 Wireless Unit dressed in the British Army summer uniform including shorts which were known as "Bombay bloomers." Today, 60 years later, such shorts are all the fashion! Hugh, or should I say Canon M.A. Hugh Melinsky, recently retired from Norwich Cathedral, England, advised me of a reunion that seven of the 12 were holding. Unfortunately Michael Webster – whose name rings a bell – lives in Paris and could not attend. His place was taken by Alan Stripp* the historian. The others attending the reunion were: Peter Hall, Donald Fletcher, Barry Smallman, Brian Warmington and Bennie Polack.

I hope those names bring back memories for some of our members.

Membership subscriptions

While we thank members who have paid subs in advance, some members have not paid the 2004 sub. While a few have not paid for 2003. (The subscription now is \$15 annually). Receipts for

subs are normally included with the quarterly Newsletter. I ask members to check their records and let me have a remittance in due course.

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Some members are now in nursing homes while others are not enjoying the best of health. Let us hope they are much better.

As Hugh Melinsky mentioned, the youngest members, if not 80, are not far off that mark, so we are not doing too badly.

Bruce Bentwitch
Hon. Treasurer
7 Holly Street
CASTLE COVE NSW 2069
Phone (02) 9417 1427

* (See "The Thirteenth Man" p. 3.)

HON. SECRETARY'S PAR

So, once again, Anzac Day has come and gone. A chilly start, then a glorious autumn day. Our numbers had dwindled but the spirit was still there. Our banner-bearers were Rob Moore (for Dennis) and Phil Gibson (Gordon's son). With Gordon Gibson leading, we were: Ivan Auprince, Noni Benn, Kath Burns, Keith Carolan, G. Richard Gibson, Joyce Grace, Joy Granger, David Hansen, Frank Hughes, Jacqui Keeling (for Norma), Bob Leonard, Brian and Bruce Lovett, Les McClean, Doug McNally, Alan Norton, Roy Perry, Doug Pyle, Bill Rogers, John Shoebridge, Peg Teague and Eric Webb.

The enormous crowd seemed even more enthusiastic. A good cuppa at Hyde Park, thence to the Mercure for an excellent lunch, happily enjoyed by those present who were: Stan and Maureen Bayliss, Noni Benn and Hope Creary, Bruce Bentwitch and Faye Gilinsky, Col and Mark Brackley, Kath Burns, Keith, Joan and Dianne Carolan, Joyce Casey (who managed three return trips on the monorail before being sorted out), Gordon and Sue Gibson, G. Richard Gibson, Joy Granger, Frank Hughes, Jacqui Keeling, Helen Kenny, Margaret McCafferty and daughter, Margaret, Les McClean, Doug McNally, Rob Moore, Alan and Katie Norton, Roy and Mrs. Perry, Doug and Nell Pyle, Bill and Jan Rogers, John Shoebridge, Peg Teague, Eric and Eve Webb.

Apologies and messages of remembrance were received from Joy Linnane, Syd Cooper, Keith Phillips, Bob Leonard (not well), Stan King (now in nursing home), Reg Murphy (in nursing home with Molly), Eve Scott, Norm Allen, Lou Harris, Madge Chidgey, Diana Parker, Phil Dynes, Peggy Moore, Coral and Sandy Hinds (celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary next year), Alan and Pam Langdon (on pastoral duties spread over 70 km.), Hugh Melinsky, also Bill Estep (with blessings to all) and Ailsa Hale.

We missed familiar faces and send best wishes to those who are not well; also to our far-flung members who maintain interest in the Association's activities.

At about 6 pm on 25 February, this area received brief heavy rain not enough to register but it did remind us of what it looked like. Let's hope our desperate farmers are recipients soon. An item on Newsradio stated that glaciers on the Matterhorn (there for yonks) are melting. Scientists concerned, which must be an understatement.

Enough of despond – hope remains. My warm regards to you all and thanks for the 'phone calls and letters.

Joy Granger, warVets
2/5 Endeavour Drive
NARRABEEN NSW 2101
Phone (02) 9981 2397

THE THIRTEENTH MAN

Alan Stripp, who went to the Cambridge reunion with Hugh Melinsky and the others mentioned in Bruce's column, thought during the war that he would be Australia-bound.

Instead, he became thirteenth man, and was left in Britain when the 12 with whom he had trained flew off to Brisbane and CB.

Stripp, the youngest of the group, was sent to Bletchley Park, then to WEC (the Wireless Experimental Centre) in Delhi, and finally to Abbottabad, close to the Khyber Pass and Afghanistan. There he studied Farsi, the main language of Afghanistan and Iran.

Early in 1943 Stripp was a first year Cambridge Classics student. In wartime Cambridge he did part-time fire watching and also belonged to the Senior Training Corps. That spring his college tutor said that an Army officer would be coming to interview students. Something to do with language. Would Stripp be interested?

The interviewer came and put unusual questions. Which languages had Stripp studied? Latin, Greek, French, a little German. Did he play chess? What about music? Crossword puzzles?

Stripp told his inquisitor that he was familiar with these subjects, that he liked crosswords, that his father – a mathematics teacher – sometimes set crosswords for "The Listener". He mentioned that he played the tuba, sang madrigals, and at Trinity was in the chapel choir. The thought came to mind that he might be conscripted into a military band.

Not so. After two months came a letter informing him that he was to do a six-month-course at Bedford, that he would be found lodgings, and would be paid five pounds a week as a civilian.

There were 35 on the course, including two girls. The chief instructor was the redoubtable Oswald Tuck, a retired Naval captain, who "had taught himself Japanese nearly 40 years before and was now in his element teaching it to others."

Tuck's students worked hard at the Japanese language and script. (Stripp's book shows a sample of an elegant copybook text – brush work of Hugh Melinsky.) They also made friendships which have lasted to this day.

In February 1944, 13 of this group were called up for the Army Intelligence Corps. The young men were somewhat surprised when "bully boys" drilled them in weaponry, bellowed unintelligible order, and had them doing everything at the double.

Much to the astonishment of the instructor corporal his charges overnight were promoted to be Warrant Officers Class 2, and 12 flew at what seemed a moment's notice to Brisbane to become code breakers for CB there and in the islands.

(Alan Stripp, the thirteenth man, returned to Cambridge after the war to read Japanese and

Chinese. He worked for the British Council in Portugal and Indonesia, and after retirement lectured at Cambridge on British Intelligence.

He became an historian. His book "Code Breaker in the Far East: How Britain cracked Japanese top secret military codes," was first published in 1989 and came out as an Oxford University Press paperback in 1996 (ISBN)-19-2853163. It is not only informative but entertaining as is "Codebreakers: The Inside Story of Bletchley Park"- (OUP paperback reissued 2001.)

Alan Stripp and the late Sir Harry Hinsley took many years to compile the latter book, which came out first in 1992. Here, 30 men and women of Bletchley Park tell their stories. Some were brilliant, others were "slaves", doing the hackwork, which contributed to the whole result.

[Facts for this article were drawn from the abovementioned books.]

IN BRIEF

Robert H. Jones of 1235 Highland Avenue, S Bldg 5-F, Unit 601, Clearwater, FL 33756-4391, USA, writes: "My wife and I were with CB/SIS in Brisbane from 1943-1945. My wife, Elsie M. Washington was with the WAAAF, number 105326. I was in the US Army, number 36656296. I recently spoke to Joseph Richard and he informed me that there may be some information available from CBICA that covered our work in World War II. Elsie worked for Lester Truex, and I was in the IBM section. Please send any information. Thanking you in advance"

CBICA has written to Robert and Elsie, sending information and also the last Newsletter. If you worked with Elsie or Robert you might get in touch with them. You could also let Newsletter know.

Wendy Clarke Nobby's widow, has just returned from France and England, where she stayed at Gloucester with Jack Lane and his wife, Coula. Jack, a CB member, served with Nobby at Inopacan in the Philippines.

While at the Lanes' home, she met Geoff Miller, who came over on a flying visit from Canada. His father, the late Flying Officer Warren Miller, served with Jack and Nobby. Like Nobby, Wendy is a Japanese linguist by profession. Before he died, Nobby was translating a book by the Japanese poet and writer, Ueda Akinari (1734-1809). Wendy is completing this book of autobiographical jottings and reflections.

Out of the past and out of the blue came a phone call from Evelyn (French) Ansell. I hadn't seen her since 1945 when we shared a fibro hut at Chermerside and worked as cipher operators at CB.

After the war Evelyn lived in Melbourne and Adelaide, then qualified as a nursing sister at the Brisbane General Hospital. She also worked in a legal office for a decade.

Widowed since 1980, she had one child, a son, who died in an accident several years ago. She lives in a retirement village, Lindsay Gardens, A36/35 Lindsay Rd, Buderim, Queensland, 4556. Phone (07) 5445 5267.

Evelyn's sight is deteriorating, and reading is hard for her now, but in our long talk she sounded unchanged in voice and good humour. Evelyn has just applied to join CBICA. H.K.

EMBROIDERED HISTORY

During the war a WAAAF at General MacArthur's headquarters in Brisbane bought a fine tablecloth, took it in to the Edward Street building, and asked if those who worked there would sign it.

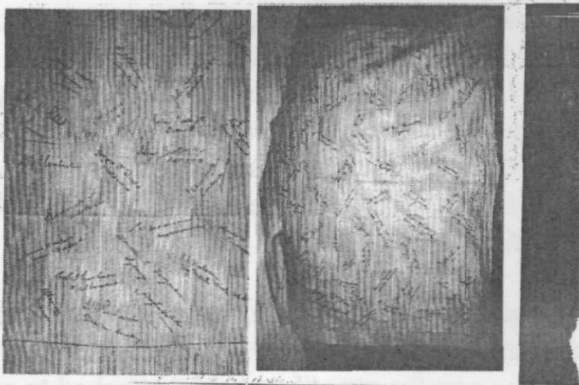
Many agreed, including General MacArthur. In her off duty hours the WAAAF, a skilled needleworker, used different coloured threads with which to embroider the signatures.

The WAAAF is no longer alive, and whereabouts of the tablecloth is unknown, but colour photographs survive to give an historic record. It is to be hoped that the beautifully embroidered cloth will be found and preserved – perhaps at the Australian War Memorial.

Douglas MacArthur signed without giving his rank, as did G. Jones, who was Air Vice Marshal, Chief of Air Staff, RAAF. Clare Stevenson wrote her name and city – Sydney – but did not identify herself as Director, WAAAF.

F.R. Scherger put 1st TAF beside his name. (He was AOC 1st Tactical Air Force). MacArthur's Chief of Staff, Lieut-General Richard Sutherland, set down his rank.

Scattered across the tablecloth are the names of servicemen and women from all over Australia, the USA and Great Britain. They came from London, or just wrote England. Jean Burnett put "Scotland". Virgil Johnson, of Salt Lake City, R. Hudson, of Big Rapids, Mich., shared space on the tablecloth with Colin Gilder, Mosman; Toni Dally Watkins, Queensland, Heather Ferguson, Sydney, and many others. You'll need a magnifying glass to read some of the neat scripts, but nowhere, of course, will you find listed the tasks of those who were not high rankers.



The custom of embroidering signatures was popular in the two world wars. Does the custom prevail and are such souvenirs made now? Newsletter would like to know.

MAJOR-GENERAL AKIN'S REPORT **(PART III and FINAL)**

This summarized report mentions again CB's decoding of intercepted Japanese radio messages and the destruction of 250 Japanese aircraft on the ground at Hollandia.

The landing there followed "deceptive measures" ordered by MacArthur. These measures (presumably dummy messages) confirmed the

Japanese expectation that the landing would be in the Madang-Hansa Bay area. The Japanese had three divisions there awaiting the landing that never came.

General Akin quotes the book "MacArthur 1941-51" by Willoughby and Chamberlin, who wrote: "Material...furnished by a secret organization, the Central Bureau, under the able direction of Spencer Akin, MacArthur's Chief Signal Officer, proved as decisive at Hollandia as the German interception of Russian radio traffic at the Battle of Tannenberg in 1914."

It was early discovered, writes General Akin, "that the enemy's Army Command, (which included the water transport) cryptographic system was a code which would be time consuming and difficult to break. It was realized that its capture would be most desirable."

[The report, written before General Akin's death in 1973, describes how "success came" when Allied advance detachment discovered that the Japanese had abandoned their code-books in a water filled pit. We know now that members of the Australian Ninth Division captured this material at Sio. It was sent immediately to Central Bureau.]

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Major General Akin describes how invaluable were the translated intercepts of enemy messages to the Air Force and Submarine Command. These revealed the enemy's water transport – the convoys, routes and destinations.

Because of such information allied submarines carried out operations against Japanese shipping, preventing fuel from reaching the Japanese Navy, and stopping supplies to factories.

When intercepts showed that Japanese cryptographic personnel were transporting new codes or ciphers to their forces, action by allied submarines or aircraft would follow.

When a Japanese pilot carrying codes sent a message disclosing his itinerary and schedule, Major-General Akin arranged with Air Command "to try and have the pilot and cargo destroyed before reaching his destination."

This mission failed. The pilot, attacked by P-38s, managed to crash land, and to deliver the codes.

On another mission, when a Japanese ship transporting codes was sunk, Allied Naval divers went down to the deck of the ship which had sunk in shallow water and retrieved the codebooks. These also were sent down to CB for repair and use.

In MacArthur's campaign, intercept detachments were attached to the Air Force Command of the Forward Area. Their work was regarded so highly that by personal request of the Third Fleet Commander a detachment was assigned to his flagship, remaining there when command of the Fleet shifted to the Fifth Fleet.

This section of the report does not mention the Philippines or the landing there. It has details of information of security, of the interception of an enemy message, which revealed leakage of information about Allied plans and intentions. This was traced to an Allied information officer who was transmitting information to Allied HQ in Chungking, in an insecure commercial code.

"His exclusion from further sources of information prevented further leaks," wrote Major-General Akin.

The Vietnam War was being waged when Atkin wrote this report. He wondered whether signal intelligence there was as effective as it should be after changes in organisation and training. Who knows what his comments would be in 2004.

VALE

Albert William Furness Rogers (1923-2004) died in Melbourne on May 1, aged 80. Known to wartime colleagues as Al, Alan and sometimes "Dig", he was born in Uganda where his father, the Rev. Frank Rogers, was an Anglican missionary.

The missionary had served in Uganda in 1914, but returned to Australia towards the end of World War 1. In 1920 he married a Sydney girl, Nellie Furness, who went back to Uganda with him.

Their first child, Al, was born at Mengo Hospital in Iganza, Busoga near Kampala, and the second son, John, was also Uganda-born. The third child,

Dorothy, born in Australia during the 1920s when her parents took a brief vacation, remembers how her brother Al picked up the local Ugandan language, Luganji early. By the time he was six he was correcting his missionary father's sermons!

The family returned to Australia in 1931 during the depression when times were hard for many, including the Rogers. Al went to Malabar State School, and "distinguished himself by becoming the first Malabar student to be admitted to Sydney High School which he attended for five years until 1940. He was dux of his year in 1938 and ...attained a very good standard in English, Latin and Greek."

In 1941 he went to the University of Sydney, studying for an Arts Degree as an evening student.

Trevor Robinson, a good friend of Al Rogers for more than 50 years, spoke at Al's funeral service. His "few remarks" included the quotation given above, and also the account left by Al himself.

"Early in 1942, at the age of 18, I joined the RAAF. While waiting for my papers, I was called up by the CMF ... and spent the next nine months in a desultory fashion in an artillery unit. Later that year the unit, and perforce I, joined the AIF. Owing to the machinations of a Professor of Classics, I was plucked from artillery and transferred to Military Intelligence in Brisbane.

"From there I was sent to Melbourne to work with the aforementioned professor. This was the best year of the war for me. "I was then attached to an RAAF Special Wireless Unit which in turn was attached to the US 5th Air Force. We followed General MacArthur from New Guinea and Dutch New Guinea to the Philippines. I was one of 24 Australians to land at Leyte in 1944.

"After a month's leave in Sydney, I accompanied the same Special Wireless Unit to Borneo. While there I was promoted to sergeant and the war ended, probably in protest."

Nowhere in this account does Al Rogers name the professor, A.D. Trendall, or use the words "Central Bureau," (which appear on his discharge certificate!) The account does not reveal what he did, but Trevor Robinson says it was in the "decryption part" of the interception process.

Another Robinson, CBer Don Robinson (now Bishop Robinson) informed CBICA of Al's death. In his letter he said that Al was "one of four CB Army men who, together with 20 RAAF members of 1 WU, formed Major-General Akin's "Foreign Legionnaires" in the initial landing on Leyte of MacArthur's American force in October 1944. (See Jack Bleakley's 'The Eavesdroppers' Chapter 15 and the photo of the 24 following page 190.)"

Each member of the unit received a copy of the photograph, which bore on the back a handwritten note by General Akin – "In appreciation of your fine work."

(In the photograph, Al Rogers is in the second row, standing immediately behind the second man in the front row. He is grinning broadly, and holds a cigarette in his right hand.)

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After the war he returned to the University and finished his Arts degree with honours in history. In 1949 luck came his way when Professor Trendall, hitherto unnamed, wrote offering him a job at the newly established Defence Signals Branch in Melbourne.

Trevor Robinson writes: "Alan had found his vocation. He worked as a cryptanalyst at DSB (now known more grandly as DSD, the Defence Signals Directorate) from 1949 to 1983. He was a section leader and at one stage was responsible for the computer section." Al Rogers and Trevor first met in 1952, when Trevor was seconded to DSB "in their early years of using computers."

In 1958 when Al married Margaret Alley, a Melbourne University Arts graduate, whom he met at DSB, Trevor was best man. In the mid-60s, Margaret and Al went to England where Al was "DSB's liaison officer to a "sister organization in the UK."

The Rogers were married for just over 40 years, until Margaret's death. In his last years, said Trevor Robinson, Kyren Merritt gave Al great care and affection.

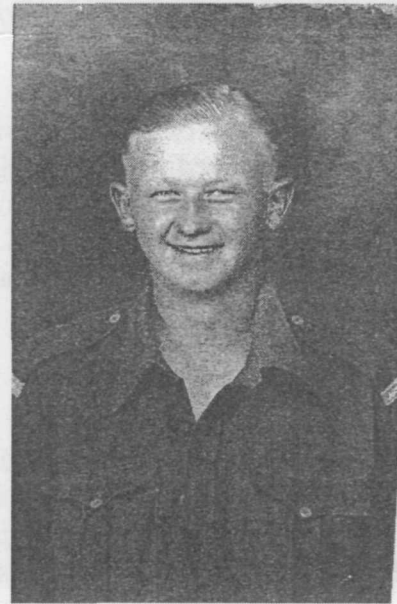
Alan (says Trevor Robinson) was witty, a bit of a scallywag, a truly great original, a man who was

serious, responsible and innovative in his work, but one who brought joy into the lives of many.

His brother John admired Al as a "family member who could hold the fort, was well liked in the community and respected for his ability.

Margaret Rogers, his sister, worked for many years as a nursing sister and midwife in Anglican missions of Papua/New Guinea. At her ~~Lindfield~~ home, she keeps Al's papers and family photographs – some of which she lent to Newsletter. *Hastarmen*

CBICA sends condolences to the family and to Al's old friends.



The Queensland W.U.S. Newsletter of April '04, produced by secretary Mac Jamieson, brings sad news of loss of members.

Mac writes: "Sorry I have to report that our president, Harold Edward Cook, passed away on January 21, 2004 after a long illness. A regular attendee at our reunions at the Irish Club, his thoughtfulness for others and ready wit will long be remembered by us all. Our sympathies go to his wife, Agnes and family."

Another loss was that of Ken McKim of Bolwarra, NSW, whose death took place on March 24, 2004. W.U.S. Queensland extends sympathy to his next of kin. Mac recalls: "During the war, Ken was in a camp with me at Tolosa, Philippines. Our camp

was in a coconut grove by the seaside. Ken and his mate, being good swimmers, decided on the spur of the moment, to swim out to a warship which was anchored nearly half a mile out. They reached the ship safely, and thirstily, and asked for a drink of water. The captain wasn't in a good mood, so he instructed they get the drink and return the same way they came. Two very tired boys finally arrived back in camp!"

New President of W.U.S. is Bruce Cooper who will welcome everyone at the next reunion set for July 10, 2004 at the Queensland Irish Club, Elizabeth Street, Brisbane. The luncheon starts at 12. Please let Mac Jamieson know if you're going. Cost of food and drinks is \$25.00. (Mac's address is 5 Tarbet St, Kenmore, Qld, 4069, phone 07 3378 3905.) Payment is needed by July 8.

The Jamiesons have been on a caravan trip to Victoria, where they stayed with Mick Manestar in Pakenham. The homeward journey went well until a wheel came off the caravan at Narrabri. A day's delay and everything was fixed. "We reached home without further excitement," says Mac.

CAN YOU HELP?

Patsy Pattison of Wodonga, Victoria, is the widow of Jim Pattison, pictured here as a young airman. She hopes that any old friends or colleagues of Jim will write to her, (C/- Newsletter's address).



"Jim never talked about his work during the war," she says, "just about beautiful Brisbane."

Jim, born at Warrnambool, Victoria in 1925, joined up in 1943 with the RAAF, and trained as a telegraphist at Point Cook. After a rookies course at Shepparton in Squad 963, he went to Brisbane, to Central Bureau and 21 Henry Street.

After special training there, he went to the Atherton Tablelands for another course.

What did he do, where did he go after that, and what was his unit? Jim died in December 2003, keeping silent till the last. Vale Jim. If you can help Patsy Pattison, please write to her C/- Helen Kenny, 27/1-13 Mackenzie St, Lavender Bay, NSW. 2060. Helen will pass on any letters or messages, and knows that these will be gratefully received.

STOP PRESS

On Saturday August 7 at Kokoda Barracks, Canungra, the Governor-General Major General Michael Jeffery, AC, CVO, will present a Vice Regal banner to the Australian Intelligence Corps.

Established in 1907, the Australian Intelligence Corps is the most senior Intelligence Corps in the Commonwealth pre-dating both the UK and USA equivalents.

Chris Henderson, secretary of the Australian Intelligence Corps Association, writes that presentation of the Banner is "THE most significant ceremonial event in the Corps' history", and invites current and past members to the ceremony. Those wishing to attend the Banner Parade and dinner

MUST contact Chris Henderson on (07) 55416782