



CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION December 2006

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PRESIDENT'S PAR

Melbourne Reunion – Tuesday 17th, Wednesday 18th October

The beautiful city of Melbourne belied its reputation for changeable weather, providing us with warm sunny days and cool nights and mornings, ideal for a walk in those lovely parks. It also enhanced its reputation for hospitality and general helpfulness to visiting groups like ours. As a result there were very few problems in finding our way to our buses at Kooyong.

On Tuesday we visited Simpson Barracks, Macleod, where we inspected for some hours the Paymaster's Museum (a first for most of us but most interesting) and later the Signals Museum where we were fascinated as we improved our knowledge of the progress in Army Communications over a long span of years. At lunch we were treated to a full-on Aussie barbie after which no one felt hungry. Our sincere thanks are due to the Director, Major Jim Gordon, and to his staff who were ever ready to give guidance and answer questions.

On Wednesday, our first call was to the CB Unit plaque at the Casuarina tree. It is an understatement to say we were surprised when we saw two immaculately uniformed soldiers standing guard at the tree and rows of chairs set out allowing us to be seated while Robert Brown gave us a very fine and meaningful address. We then stood for the National Anthem to be played and sung followed by the sounding of the Last Post and Reveille – altogether a very impressive ceremony. Then it was up the hill to the Shrine where we were given a guided tour. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Shrine Management and staff for all they did for us.

After this the bus took us to the building (Monterey), where FRUMEL (Fleet Radio Unit, Melbourne) began its operations in 1942.

Joan O'Connor (nee Reilly) who was a WRAN at that time gave us a very interesting account of her experiences in coming to terms with US Naval Officers of Fleet Radio Unit Melbourne. It appears that she began working for, but later with them, and Aussie informality and efficiency prevailed, breaking down male prejudices.

The elegant and exclusive Toorak RSL was the venue for a magnificent luncheon. We were privileged to have Chris Clark as our keynote speaker and were all delighted to hear from him that he expects to complete the writing of the Unit's history in the New Year. The President thanked Bill Rogers very sincerely for his organisational efforts.

Remembrance Day Celebration – Friday 10th November

The change of date was due to the Roseville RSL's highly praiseworthy policy of inviting children from local schools to the commemorative proceedings. It was great to see them involved in delivering the keynote address, laying wreaths, singing the National Anthem and sounding the Last Post and Reveille. Ku-ring-gai Council's part in the celebration took the form of a tree planting, the tree being a seedling of the famous Gallipoli Lone Pine. The ceremony over members adjourned to the restaurant for an informal lunch and a very pleasant end of year chat.

Annual General Meeting – 5th February, 2007

My best wishes to you all for a joyous Christmas and a happy New Year. I hope to see you at the AGM at the Roseville Memorial Club, Monday 5th February, 2007, at 2.00pm.

Gordon Gibson
President
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WAITARA NSW 2007
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HON. TREASURER'S REPORT

Mac Jamieson's mention of the ship Van Der Lyn in our September Newsletter revived memories. As reported in a Newsletter some time ago, a group of CBers boarded the Van Swoll at Brisbane on 13/3/1945 for a northern destination.

Shortly after clearing the Brisbane River the ship encountered heavy seas and sheltered for several days from a cyclone in a bay somewhere in the Whitsunday Islands. We eventually arrived at our destination, Hollandia, about a month after leaving Brisbane. At Hollandia I was having a chat with Flt/Lt Barnard, whom I think was the RAAF Admin. Officer at the big American base. He told me it was thought the Van Swoll had sunk in the cyclone, perhaps a radio blackout. After a few days it was learned the sister ship, the Van Der Lyn, which was returning from New Guinea to Brisbane in ballast had overturned and sunk somewhere in the Coral Sea.

At our November 10 Mini Reunion luncheon at Roseville RSL, Lou Harris recalled he was on the Van Der Lyn at Townsville when the Catalina blew up. Lou also mentioned the ablution facilities – or lack of them – on the ships which prior to the war had been Dutch island cargo vessels. Sleeping quarters were the holds!

I hope members have a very enjoyable Christmas (they seem to come around too quickly) and a healthy New Year.

Bruce Bentwitch
Hon Treasurer
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HON SECRETARY'S PAR

Back on deck again with a run-down on our Melbourne reunion – especially for those who wanted to come but just couldn't. You were missed. Every effort had been made to ensure interesting and enjoyable visits to all venues. The weather was perfect.

Day 1 .. Kooyong to Simpson Barracks. Passengers were Stan & Maureen Baylis, Noni Benn, the Rev. Robert Brown, Alan & Margaret Fookes, Gordon & Sue Gibson, Joyce Grace, Joy Granger, Frank Hughes, Helen Kenny, Diana Parker, Alwyn

Petherbridge, Bill Rogers, Bert & Jean Rushen, Gordon & Peter Swinney, Peg Teague, Ken Trezise.

Firstly the Pay Corps Museum, only small but fascinating. Memorabilia ranged from copy of parchment paybook from Battle of Waterloo (1815), Boer War, WWI and WW2 artefacts, original pay corps nominal rolls from Changi, through to detailed information issued to troops bound for Afghanistan, Iraq and as UN Peacekeepers. Neil, our welcomer and volunteer chef then provided a very good BBQ, enjoyed under shady trees, and liquid refreshment was very welcome as it had become quite warm. Our grateful thanks to Neil who went back to do the washing up! On to the coach headed for Sigs Museum (the Barracks are very extensive and, I noted, also maintains a School of Music).

Major Jim Gordon and his team of volunteers welcomed us to their almost completed new museum. An extraordinary effort had been made to bring in as much as possible in time for our visit. An active Morse key and oscillator were a drawcard for W/T ops whose expertise still existed. I was astounded to see a Kleinschmitt machine which had been part of my work on the London watch, pre-Frogmal and C.B. days. This is a marvellous collection. The volunteers were informative and had their own stories to tell. Facets of communication go back hundreds of years and we have been fortunate to experience its progression, so rapid during WWII and now mind-boggling. I'm sure we all recall our visit to DSD Canberra some years ago. A photo call, thanks to all who gave their time to us so readily, then on to the coach for return to Kooyong.

Day 2 .. Our passengers from day 1 were joined by Geoff Charlesworth, Gordon and Patricia Lewis, Ronnie O'Neill and daughter Sharon, Marie Petherbridge, Jan Rogers. So to the Remembrance Service at the casuarina tree memorial plaque on a lovely morning. Chairs had been set up, an honour guard with sloped arms flanked the tree and a representative from the Shrine welcomed us. The Rev. Robert gave his thoughtful address, the Last Post was sounded and we actually sang all words of the National Anthem. A photo shoot, then up the hill for a guided tour of the refurbished (very good) Museum. A walk through the catacomb-like base, a long climb to the top (lift for fragile visitors) but

worth it, with electronics enabling the sun to be beamed down to the heart of the Shrine. Back to the coach, a short stop at Monterey (Frumel) where former WRAN Joan O'Connor (Reilly) gave her reminiscences from time spent there.

Finally, to Toorak RSL where a well appointed private room had been set up for us and we were joined for lunch by Dr. Chris Clark, Jack Bleakley, Carol and Sandy Hinds, Major Jim Gordon (Simpson Barracks), Geoff Patience, Steve Mason and Dick Thompson (ASWG/Ink Emma Ink). Also present were Gordon and Patricia Lewis. A very pleasant gathering before being seated. President Gordon welcomed all and passed on best wishes to everyone from Doug and Nell Pyle, Brian Lovett, Alan and Pam Langdon, Madge Chidgey and Ailsa Hale. Following grace by Robert Brown, we were served a delicious lunch. Bill Rogers (who had arranged this excellent venue, as well as everything else over the 2 days) pointed out that the bottles on the tables were not for decoration! He was taken at his word. During courses, Chris Clark gave an address. Regretfully, this happy afternoon drew to a close and our coach awaited. So back to digs. Before ending this saga I must thank Noni Benn and Joyce Grace for their help in the collection of monies, ensuring I didn't leave the country with it.

To complete our activities for the year, a group of us attended the always moving Remembrance Ceremony at the Roseville Memorial Club (where we hold our meetings) followed by lunch. Those present were Gordon Gibson, Bruce Bentwitch, David and Noeline Hansen, Noni Benn, Peg Teague, Keith Carolan, Lou Harris, Alan and Pam Langdon, Helen Kenny and self.

I wish you all PEACE.

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HISTORIAN'S REPORT

The Association's reunion in Melbourne in October proved to be great opportunity for me to meet up with members and receive some valuable offerings of private photos relevant to the CB history. I had

already been sent letters containing photographs from several other members, so that there is now a reasonable smattering of illustrations for the book. My thanks to all those who responded to my appeal for assistance.

Asked to be after-lunch speaker on the Wednesday of the reunion trip, I decided to talk about the shooting down of Admiral Yamamoto in March 1943 as an informative case study of the useful role of sigint, and its pitfalls in terms of compromising an irreplaceable source of reliable intelligence. I also mentioned the likelihood that this successful American air ambush of a major Japanese commander in the field was probably the inspiration for a similar Australian attempt to shoot down the commander of the Japanese 18th Army, Lt-Gen Hatazo Adachi, just six months later as his aircraft was expected to overfly Karkar Island off New Guinea. As we know, Adachi survived the war because no aircraft showed up on the specified date and time, but (as with Yamamoto) the temptation was obviously there to act on information obtained from sigint even if it risked a vastly more important operation.

The writing of the book is proceeding and I am still hopeful of delivering a complete first draft to the Association for comment early in 2007.

Dr Chris Clark

RAAF Historian

CBICA MEMORIAL SERVICE

At the CBICA Memorial Service on October 18, the Reverend Robert Brown, CBer and author, stood in the shade of the Central Bureau tree, speaking words that went to the hearts of his hearers. This is what he said:

"A small memorial service at the Central Bureau tree." Why a tree? This is manifestly less substantial than a monolith, but it is the best we can do to perpetuate the memory of our WW2 units and those who served in them. In its silent way, this tree speaks to us. It is of a species whose life is long but still limited. Up till now, we have tended to reflect on distant past events. Now we are becoming increasingly aware that our own lives are much closer to their end than to their beginning.

Samuel Johnson, wrote in a letter to the libertine Boswell just 229 years and one month ago tomorrow, "*Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.*" Although we do not

expect our demise to be quite so dramatic or, we hope, quite so soon, the point is not lost. Since we last met here, we have honoured the lives and comradeship of 53 of our late members.

After John Stumm's recent death, his family recovered from his computer the files on CB personnel and sent this material on a CD so that our records will continue to be as complete as possible.

With our sensible view of the value of history, we have welcomed the appointment of Chris Clark, and the publication of Ian Pfennigwerth's biography of Eric Nave. While the book is not intended to be a "how to" one, it gives a valuable insight into the integrity, attitudes and skills that qualify any person to fulfil the functions we probably shall always remember. It mentions incidentally some conflicting personalities and some bureaucratic problems. Where there are human beings there are always problems. Didn't we take advantage of the mistakes of our adversaries when someone forgot to change a code, or the page, row and column in a cipher book, or when documents that should have been burned by a retreating army were left for our forces to find and for us to peruse – despite the mouldy smell of the fragile paper?

Australia still has a significant place in overall Allied signals intelligence organisation, a place we all had a part, however small we may have considered it, in securing through doing the best we knew how.

Central Bureau is not forgotten at home. At a function in the Naval and Military Club in Melbourne to farewell Peter Cosgrove, it was opportune, in the reception line, to mention Central Bureau. The retiring CDF responded to the comment without hesitation. Our place in history is not as spectacular as Gallipoli or Kokoda, but we know that secretly it was of immeasurable help in turning back the aggressor. When a number of us visited DSD on an open day in 1995, we, because we were deemed still to have security clearance, were admitted to a large room full of desktop computers with very young looking operators. In fact, they appeared almost as young as we were in 1939-45. We are an effective link between the days of field telephones with cables laid often under fire, laboriously tapped-out and intercepted Morse, and the technology of the present day, which promises to be superseded in our lifetime.

Communication, which will always be an interest of ours, has developed out of sight. We would agree with Ian Pfennigwerth in the epilogue to his book: "We know that immense technological sophistication is now applied to the collection of intelligence, but this had its origins in the steady development of technical means that were employed in providing Eric Nave and his colleagues with the material they needed to work on. We also know that enormous quantities of computer power and expertise are now routinely devoted to cryptanalysis by most countries (*everybody's doing it*), but we need to be reminded that the successful codebreaking assault on Japanese military ambitions started with individuals wielding pencils and using intuition and good sense."

Today we express our thanks for the opportunity to serve in a great cause, and for the fact that we are alive to celebrate it. We also solemnly remember the colleagues who served with us, and honour the memory of those who have passed on.

Is it significant that, in these days of rampant materialism, commemorations take the form of a religious service? Is this because in everyone living there is at the very least a vague sense of God?

To some He may be "out there", to others known by faith. Some may be able to articulate relationship with Him. To some He is a still, small voice.

In any case, in these few minutes we seem to be saying that life and world affairs are too big, too menacing and too uncertain for us. We need help to make sense out of the confusion and maintain some degree of that inner peace so many people talk about but far fewer appear to experience.

There is a word of good sense about this in the Bible in the Book of Proverbs (24:5,6): *Wisdom prevails over strength, knowledge over brute force; for wars are won by skilful strategy, and victory is the fruit of detailed planning.*

Silent remembrance and a prayer.

DSD, founded on April 1, 1947 as DSB, turns 60 this year. Central Bureau was its precursor. Ten years ago CBers were invited to DSD's fiftieth birthday party. Now, we're invited to the sixtieth. Tentative date for the event in Canberra is March 30. More information will follow in the March Mini-Newsletter, which comes out early that month.

Kay Currie, of DSD, rang President Gordon Gibson to invite him – and CBers – to the party. She'll let us know what is planned.

VALE

Betty McMillan Chessell (nee Tough), died on September 13, 2006, aged 84. This photograph, taken in 1945 when she was a young Lieutenant with 11 Aust Cipher Section in the garage at 21 Henry Street, is how many will remember her

She was 23 then, and this was the year of her marriage to Tom Chessell, a RAAF Officer.

Betty McMillan Chessell

15 April 1922 - 13 September 2006



Their son Bruce, who delivered the eulogy for his mother at "the celebration of a life well lived", tried, at this ceremony to do justice in her life in a very few minutes.

Betty, born on April 16, 1922, was the third child of Osborne and Francis Tough, of Brunswick, Victoria. Her father was a successful merchant, and even in depression time was able to ensure that his family was financially secure. The Toughs had a two-storied home, a live-in housekeeper, vintage cars and a beach house at Chelsea. These staunch Presbyterians helped others – providing meals, odd jobs, and provisions to those in need.

Betty, after attending the selective University High School, chose to become a beautician, first having to qualify as a hairdresser. War broke out when she was 17. She continued her apprenticeship, volunteered as an air raid warden, and helped serve in the YMCA canteen.

One day she made tea for Tom Chessell, a trainee-carpenter in the RAAF. Betty thought him quite old – he was 25, and she was just out of school. He was with a mate of the same age. The Tough family was to offer them weekend accommodation and some home cooking.

Before Tom left for the Middle East, he asked Betty to write to him. "That canteen meeting was very fortunate for me," said their son, Bruce. "They must have been better scribes than we are today because the power of Tom's pen eventually won her heart." Betty enlisted in the AWAS when 20 ½, and after rookie camp at Belcham was posted to the cipher office in Melbourne then to Central Bureau. There she was involved with signals, codes, information obtained by Z Special Force, with messages to America, and Bletchley Park, among other places.

[She kept silent about this work for 30 years, just saying she was in signals. Only in the mid-eighties when they were in England did Tom find out. Betty saw a signpost to Bletchley Park, and turned into the site. "The caretakers greeted Bet like royalty," said Bruce.]

Betty loved the cipher work, and was made a lieutenant. She and Tom married in Sydney in 1945 when he returned from the Middle East, and was then a RAAF officer. They honeymooned at the old Surfers Paradise hotel, and began their love affair with what is now the Gold Coast 60 years ago.

After the war they bought land at Palm Beach, NSW, and built a house, working on the building

together. The house had a 180 degree ocean view, but no power, no phone, no neighbours. Soon there were two children, Ian and Bruce, who ran on the beach and swam in the rock pools.

Tom loved rowing. After winning King's Cups in 1950 and 1951, he represented Australia at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics. Bet went with him. Athletes and rowers were true unpaid amateurs then. The Olympic Village was open to visitors. No drug searches.

The winning of the bronze medal in the men's eights changed their lives, gave them many contacts, opened many doors.

Back in Australia they moved from Palm Beach to St. Ives, then to Drummoyne. The boys went to Newington College where Tom was senior rowing coach. Then in 1975 the Chessells moved to Chevron Island, which lies between Southport and Surfers. Windows of their home overlooked the river, where rowers moved on the water.

Betty was active in many organisations – AWAS, Ex-Servicewomen's Association, Army Signals, Z Special Unit, CBICA, the MacArthur Memorial, Probus, U3A, Wildlife Preservation. Name it.

A great organiser, she was also a great traveller. She attended SIS conferences in America and visited many continents. Tom died in 1992 and three years later came the tragic death of her son Ian, a pilot.

"Betty soldiered on," said Bruce, "a true test of her stoic character and pride." It seemed to him that her original name Tough, that had provoked schoolyard brawls, had made her a stronger person.

Bruce became an Army Officer. One of his proudest moments was when he received his Army Commission at the Scheyville graduation ball and knelt while Betty put the pips onto each epaulette.

Cancer took Betty in the end. She fought it to the last. Lines from a poem "A Life" by Michael Leunig were read. They ended: *"Worn in, bashed in, cried in, and the great thing ...A lived in life can be happily died in."*

CBICA sends condolences to all her family.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Noeline and Dave Hansen appear on a pamphlet for Sydney buses, headed “Safe Travel for Seniors on Buses.” They are photographed showing the right and wrong ways to travel – most important when falls can cause so much harm and pain. Among the tips are: Use handrail and watch step while boarding the bus; take the nearest seat to the front door; hold on while seated (here’s Noeline doing the right thing, staying alert, and Noeline, bad example, dozing off); exit by the front door – but don’t move until the bus has stopped. Let all bus travellers follow their example.

In the September Newsletter, **Mac Jamieson** wrote that he was the only one left of the four interceptors who sailed with General Akin in frigate PCE848 for the Philippines. They were Mac, Stan King, John Moon and Ron Sims. Now for a happy correction. **Don Robinson** rang Newsletter and Mac to say that **John Moon** survives and lives in Gordon, NSW.

A call to John Moon brought the answer that he’s still around, but had a big heart operation recently, from which he’s recovering. Aged 18 when he joined 1 Wireless Unit – later 6 Wireless Unit – in 1942, he recalls how PCE848 was right at the front of the convoy – “with more than 600 ships the greatest fleet that ever sailed.” Before leaving Hollandia he trained at Point Cook, then served at Townsville, Port Moresby, Nadzab and Biak. In the Philippines he was at Leyte and Tacloban – one of the Australian “Foreign Legion” who received a letter of appreciation from General Akin. He was discharged from the RAAF on his 21st birthday – coincidentally the day on which we rang him, November 21. He’s now 82. Happy birthday again.

For those with internet access go to www.australiansatwar.filmarchive.gov.au, then hit search, type in window john moon, click in. There you’ll find his wartime story.

TEENAGERS – NOW AND THEN

At the Remembrance Day service in the park next to the Roseville Memorial Club, schoolchildren outnumbered ex-servicemen and women. They came from public, private, denominational and non-denominational schools to lay wreaths – or books

for the club – at the memorial – a great stone boulder.

Pip Marston and **Sam Rix**, school captains from Killara High, took turns to speak. They were “lucky” they said to be 18, to be sitting for exams, to be looking to the future, to getting their P-plates. “Lucky” they stressed, to be living in a free country, thanking those who went to war at 18 to defend Australia. At the ceremony **Deborah Fargher**, another Killara High pupil – played the Last Post and Reveille on the trumpet. We thank all children present for their dignity and behaviour.

The word “teenagers” was not used until after World War II. We were boys, girls, lads, lasses, (sometimes sheilas), juveniles, adolescents. We had no spending power, so advertisers took no notice of us. Besides which, most of us were in uniform, and the only “guy” was Guy Fawkes. “We Missed out on our Teen Years”, is a book by Sharon O’Neill about her mother, Ronnie O’Neill, (nee Drinkwater). Sharon produced this book for her mother’s eightieth birthday, “trowelling” Ronnie’s memories. The book, subtitled “Growing up in rural Australia in the 20s, 30s, and 40s, has a cover showing 19-year-old Ronnie (christened Veronica) in AWAS uniform. “1925 was a good year for Australia,” the book begins. “Radio had begun to take off, Vegemite was being introduced to Australian palates, and Veronica Gladys Drinkwater was born in Maryborough, Queensland.”

Ronnie’s father was a ganger, or railway line maintenance man, a good steady job in depression times. They moved around, to Westwood, to Lawgi, at the end of the line from Rockhampton, then Thangool, then to a suburb of Rockhampton. It’s a family story, well told, with sadness about her brother Ern, who died too young. Ronnie won a scholarship which would take her to high school or commercial college. She chose the latter and excelled.

It was 1943. Rockhampton was crowded with 70,000 GIs. Ronnie, aged 18, joined the AWAS in June, and reported at the Drill Hall before catching the train to Brisbane.

There were three other “new girls” ...Nelly Allen, an Aboriginal girl who came down from Cairns,

and Joyce Kent and Bunny Radburn from Rockhampton.

In Brisbane they were sent to a Stenographers' School, (Ronnie had a shorthand speed of 250 words a minute.) All ended up at Central Bureau. They shared a hut at Chermside. Ronnie worked for a while in the Henry Street garage, then in the fire station at Ascot Park on the key punching machine. Excellent photos show Ronnie with Bunny (another key puncher) and other girls, including Sally Spiers, an American WAC, at lunch in the Park. It wasn't all work. The book shows Ronnie's invitations to dances at some American units. These had big bands (Ronnie loved to jitterbug), but evenings ended at 11.30 when trucks took the girls back to camp.

Central Bureau moved north, leaving the AWAS and WAAAF behind. Ronnie went down to Melbourne to work with FELO. There she met the man whom she was to marry, Geoff O'Neill. They had two daughters, one of whom wrote this book. You can buy it from Sharon O'Neill, 39 Murawa St, Frankston, Vic, 3199 (03) 9766 2836, cost \$15 plus postage.

(Few AWAS have told their stories. I can think of Jean Hillier's "No Medals for this Unit" – she served with ASWG. Sharon O'Neill has told Ronnie's. It's recommended reading for CBers, and perhaps for the teenagers of Roseville.) – H.K.

MELBOURNE MOMENTS

Our reunion was short but it had its memorable moments. The first day began when we gathered near the famous grass tennis courts of Kooyong to board coaches. Each bore "*Bill Rogers' bus*" on a placard inside the windscreen. CBers couldn't go wrong.

This was the start of the best-organised reunion I've ever attended, though, admittedly I've missed some. Thank you, Bill, for this.

Buses drove first to the Simpson Barracks, where guards let us in. At the buildings of the Royal Australian Army Pay Corps Historical Collection, where Major John Phillips is Curator, Neil Brown welcomed us. Then he showed us inside saying that when we came out he'd have the barbecue lunch

ready. We wandered in, taking separate paths among the exhibits. Different things caught our eyes. I saw an Italian flag captured at Bardia, a French Foreign Legion cap from Lebanon, Japanese Navy magazine pouches.

From World War I there were recruiting posters, also a German belt buckle stamped with the words "Gott Mit Uns" (God be with us). (Here came a flashback memory of an uncle who'd served in France and talked of the diggers waving their hands and jeering "We've got mittens too.") On display was the Christmas issue of "Aussie", the "soldiers' magazine." The cover had the map of Australia tilted to look like a face, and a slouch hat on top. "Next year at home," it read.

Also on view was a letter signed Edward, Prince of Wales, who visited Australia in 1920. He wrote: "Dear Boys and Girls of Australia – I'm not going to say goodbye because I belonged to Australia as to all the British nations. I shall come back. Think of me as your own." In retrospect, such sadness. But lunch was ready – Neil Brown, out in the blazing heat (yes, in Melbourne), had sausages sizzling, salads ready. We took paper plates, grouped wherever there was any shade, and talked. (Thank you, Neil). Nearby was Robert Brown who passed on a wonderful yarn about Captain Eric Nave.

"Remember the guard at the entrance to 21 Henry Street." said Robert. "I'll never forget him saluting Nave as he walked in. Nave returned the salute with his left hand. Why? Because he was holding lollies in his right!" As someone remarked later, "that sounds typically Central Bureau."

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At the lunch our young driver joined us. (We talked of inland Australia), Geoff Charlesworth reminisced about his hitch hike to Japan at war's end, how he and his mate Alan Langdon sought and found (against great odds) the Japanese Christian, Dr Kagawa.

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Lunch finished, we moved on to the Royal Australian Army Corps of Signals Museum. Major Jim Gordon, and Signals Museum helpers Neil Wain (assistant curator), Alan Thomson and Bruce Wishart showed us around. There was no sign that, only the day before, the whole display had been

gathered and put there. We were the first group to go through.

Major Gordon, of the Royal Australian Signals Association, said that the museum was first established here in 1997. We saw early signal equipment, pigeons (not live) used to carry messages in Bougainville, and pieces of a Typex machine – drums, inserts and spindles, but no frame. If only Doug Pyle, CB cipher mechanic, had been able to make the trip. Family reasons prevented this.

Former wireless operators went to the Morse keys. We saw World War I field phones, and – on a model – the uniform of Sig. F. Jamieson, who served with the 39th Militia on the Kokoda Track. Mr Jamieson, 83 now, wore this uniform on 60 Anzac Days, and recently donated it to the museum. (Remember Joe Richard and his uniform?) That was the first day. Buses returned us to Kooyong.

Next day we met again, by the Casuarina Tree. There two former WRANS from FRUMEL joined us for the wreath laying service, and for the visit to the Shrine. One was Joan O'Connor (nee Reilly), who wrote later to Bill Rogers saying she had been a guide at the Shrine since 1990, and that it was an honour and privilege to be at this service. She could not recall a prior happening.

The other WRAN was Helen McIntosh (nee Dunstan), daughter of Acting Corporal William Dunstan, V.C. who won his award at Lone Pine. In World War II, she joined the WRANS in 1942, while her brothers, Bill and Keith chose the A.I.F. and RAAF.

Like Joan O'Connor, she worked in "Monterey", the Queens Road mansion, in the office of Commander Jack Newman, R.A.N., compiling messages, sorting signals, and sending signals to Adelaide River.

Joan O'Connor, after our visit to the Shrine, came with us to the Monterey, which we viewed from the outside. She joined the WRANS in 1943 and worked as a Writer Communicator. In the bus she told us how, by naval custom, the floors of the apartment building were called "decks". She worked at indexing and retrieving.

Neither WRAN was able to stay for the lunch at the Toorak RSL – a Victorian building, single storied, marked only by a discreet brass plate. As Bill Rogers says, and many of us would agree, perhaps we should give some thought to inviting ex-WRANS to join us.

In those few days in Melbourne, I talked to so many – Bert Rushen, Steve Mason of ASWG, Gordon Lewis, who spoke of Rabaul and the war crimes trial. Chris Clark, our historian spoke.

Thank you all again, and for my part it was a pleasure to meet Ronnie O'Neill after many years, and to read the book that Sharon wrote. And I wish more RSLs were like Toorak, with good wine, food, white tablecloths and not a pokie in sight.

ANOTHER BOOK

Doug Pyle's long awaited book "The Ultra Experience" appears on the Christmas publicity of publishers "The War Book Shop".

Joe Richard wrote the introduction to the 120 - page paper back which has the ISBN 1 876439 35 1. The book describes Doug Pyle's war time service with "the secret Central Bureau code – breakers for MacArthur". It may be obtained from "The War Book Shop" 13 Veronica Place, Loftus, NSW 2232 or by emailing www.warbooks.com.au Recommended price is \$30:00

Happy Christmas to CBers, and may we meet again.
H.K.