



CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION DECEMBER 2013

Publicity Officer: Helen Kenny, Room 1, St Paul's Aged Care, 27 Eastern Valley Way, Northbridge, NSW, 2063. Ph: (02) 8405 1051

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2013

Unit History

Our official history, "MacArthur's Secret Bureau" was finally published early in the year and was "officially" reviewed by Robert Brown and Helen Kenny, and I assume that by now you have all done your own personal assessments. I think I would be right in saying that it failed to live up to its intriguing title and that none of us finished the reading thereof in a glow of excitement and pride in our wartime efforts. Perhaps we expected too much and will have to be content with T.E. Lawrence's dictum, which was something to the effect that we would feel satisfaction with our official histories only if we had been allowed to write them ourselves.

Anzac Celebrations 2013

Wreath Laying

On Anzac Eve, eight members and friends of CBICA gathered in Martin Place to join once again with A.I.A. in a brief yet moving service at the Cenotaph.

Anzac Day March

Fifteen CBers took part in the Anzac Day March and received their usual warm welcome from the crowds lining the streets. Once again our thanks are due to banner bearers Rob Moore and Bruce Brackley, who led the marchers, and to the RSL who provided the vehicles for those who rode.

Anzac Day Reunion

There was a near record attendance of fifty six members, relatives and friends at Central Bureau's thirty ninth Annual Reunion held at the Pullman Hotel (formerly Marriott). A special welcome was extended to those who had travelled considerable distances to be with us - from Victoria: Gwen Charlesworth, Alan Fookes, Diana Parker, Bill Rogers and from New South Wales Country: Stan

Baylis, Joy Grace, Jean Harris, Frank Hughes, Jacqui Keeling, Brian Lovett, Pam Langdon, Doug and Nell Pyle.

Remembrance Day 11th November 2013

The following attended the Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Roseville Memorial Club: Bruce Bentwitch, Alan Norton, Ailsa Hale, Noelene Hansen, Helen Kenny, Joy Grace, Lynda Gladstone, Gordon and Sue Gibson, Katy Denis, Dee Johnson and Ravenswood schoolgirl Samantha Gibson, who laid the wreath on our behalf.

Owing to the stormy weather, the ceremony was held indoors and as usual was carried out largely by children from neighbouring schools who laid the wreaths, delivered the oration, sounded The Last Post and then waited on us at morning tea. Thanks are due to the Roseville RSL for their warm hospitality and were conveyed personally to their President on behalf of CBICA.

Chermside Chooks (August Newsletter)

Over a period of many years, Helen Kenny, in her role of Publicity Officer and Newsletter Editor, has regaled us CBers with a host of interesting and informative stories and articles. But in the August N.L. she surpassed her previous journalistic scoops with the mystery of the Chermside Chooks. What a bizarre story! Can anybody throw any light on it, or do we have to await the reincarnation of Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes?

Executive Committee

On behalf of myself and all members and friends of CBICA, I express our thanks to the Executive Committee for their work in 2013 with special appreciation of the way Helen Kenny, Bruce Bentwitch and Joy Granger have worked under personal difficulties and way beyond the call of duty to keep our Association going strongly still.

Membership

By my count there are still 88 members and friends on our mailing list. Pretty good I think, all things considered.

Vale

Sadly we have to record the passing during the year of the following members: Peggy Teague, Jack Brown, Gordon Lewis and Lou Harris. Our deep sympathy to their families and friends.

Annual General Meeting 2014

Finally my very best wishes to you all for a Happy Christmas and health in the New Year. The Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 3rd February 2014 at the Roseville Memorial Club at 1.30 p.m. Please try to be there if it is anyway possible.

Gordon Gibson, President
67/1-9 Yardley Avenue
Waitara NSW 2077
(02) 9487 3029

HON TREASURER'S REPORT

With December here it seems the years go quicker than the previous one. On the last page of the September Newsletter I wrote a note to individual members who had not paid their year's subscription. To date ten members have not replied.

Mentioning subscriptions, it has been decided that the sub for the year commencing 1 January 2014 for members and associates will be \$10. For the few members who have already paid their 2014 sub the additional \$5 will be credited to their 2015 sub.

I also mention the Annual General Meeting will be held on 3rd February 2014 at Roseville Memorial Club at 1.30 p.m. Notice will be sent to members nearer that date.

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Bruce Bentwitch
7 Holly St, CASTLE COVE NSW 2069
Ph: (02) 9417-1427

AROUND THE TABLES

On November 11, 2013, a small group of CBers and families met for the Service then lunch at the Roseville Memorial Club. Pouring rain prevented some from coming. For others, such as Madeline Chidgey and Mary Burke, the Club, on Sydney's North Shore was GI – Geographically Impossible. Noni Benn got a flat battery. Time spent recharging it meant she missed out.

Those present were:-

Joyce Grace: She wrote: "Rain did not stop a few of us meeting at Roseville, so nice to see and join them. In September I took delivery of a new Corolla sedan – what a thrill to have a new car. (*Joyce hopes to build up the mileage by driving it down to Moruya.*) Best wishes to all CBers."

Bruce Bentwitch: "Although it was a wet day the Service indoors meant at least we were not worried by the traffic noise. It was great to see some of our members again."

Sue and Gordon Gibson: "Attended Remembrance Day with our granddaughter Samy who helped her "Pa" to lay the CB wreath. She was most impressed by the occasion."

Katy Denis: (Gordon Gibson's daughter) Attended Remembrance Day and it was a beautiful Service with so many school children paying tribute. A lovely day."

Dee Johnson: (Samantha's other Grandmother) Was very impressed with the whole Service, especially the Killara High School participants – and of course Gordon and Samantha's wreath laying.

Noelene Hansen: Will pass on the news to her husband David in Shalom Nursing Home. She wrote, "Three members of our family spent ANZAC Day at Bletchley Park. Very impressive. Best wishes to all."

Noelene's family brought back a souvenir of Bletchley – a small palm-sized magnetic jigsaw showing the Manor at Bletchley Park.

Ailsa Hale: "A wonderful Service."

Lyndall Gladstone: (Ailsa Hale's daughter) "It was a very moving Service and it was lovely to see the many schools participating."

Helen Kenny: “Not enough time to talk to old mates. I’ll be moving into aged care late in November. Address to follow – keep in touch! Try to anyway.”

REPRIEVE FOR ASWG

The October issue of Ink Emma Ink, the official Newsletter of The Australian Special Wireless Group, brings good news.

Steve Mason, President of ASWG, who is also “that editor fellow” says, “Circumstances have changed since the meeting when it was decided to wind up the Association, cease publication of Ink Emma Ink and distribute our surplus funds.”

Decisions at the Pumphouse Hotel on September 11 mean that the Association and its Newsletter will continue on a lesser scale. There will be two editions of IMI per year, smaller in size and issued when enough news is at hand.

Steve is willing to carry on with the help of Lynden and Rosemary, but admits: “With advancing years the future cannot be assured.”

Only two Aswegians in Melbourne marched on ANZAC Day this year. Steve Mason says he plans to turn up in 2014 and will wait for someone to join him.

Other information in Ink Emma Ink reports that a new ASWG memorial plaque in Perth will bear an enlarged photo of the Bletchley Park badge. Jean Hillier suggested this.

Three of the identity discs scratched up by those Chermide Chooks bore names of men who served with the ASWG. The men were:

Captain Victor Lederer,
S/Sgt William Ryan, and
Lieut-Col Alastair Sandford, who became
“the brilliant head of CB”.

TYPHOON HAIYAN

After the typhoon hit Tacloban City on Leyte Island in the Philippines on 8th November, 2013, we wondered whether Associate CBer Anne Brown, who lived there, had survived.

Thousands had died. TV reports and film showed the wreck of a flattened city, through which the grieving relatives roamed, starving, desperate for water, food and help.

Anne had returned to the Philippines with her husband, Jack Brown, some years ago. Their son had a surfing business there, and Jack, author of “Katakana Man” remembered friendships made long ago. He first saw Tacloban when he went there with 6 Wireless Unit aboard M/Gen. Akin’s ship “LST 700”. This was part of General MacArthur’s huge convoy which sailed from Hollandia in October 1944.

The convoy came under heavy attack by the Japanese. On landing, the Australians, dubbed the “Foreign Legion”, found a war-devastated Tacloban, in which they set up camp in the grounds of the local high school.

[Tokyo Rose knew they were there as Mac Jamieson will write in a promised future article. She threatened they would all be killed. She was proved wrong. H.K.]

After a while Filipinos, including the Price family, befriended some. Friendships lasted. It was a big move for Anne and Jack Brown to leave South Australia for the Philippines. Jack got his wish to see Leyte again – but died some time ago.

So, what happened to Anne?

Newsletter rang historian Dennis O’Leary (author of “Kittyhawks Beyond the Gap”) to find out what he knew. Dennis, who lives at Lake Albert, NSW, was a friend of the Browns.

He said immediately, “She’s safe!” and put her in touch. “Don’t ask much,” he warned, “She’s absolutely traumatised.”

Soon after Anne rang H.K.

“My son saved my life,” she said. “We lost everything. The roof of the house went. The rooms looked like swimming pools. The noise of the typhoon was dreadful. I still have the wind in my ears.”

Yes, she’ll go back, but temporarily is staying with friends, including Dennis O’Leary’s sister, Monica, who is a Sister – a nun.

Anne’s son is with the Consulate in Manila.

CLIMATE REPETITION?

It’s strange to read Jack Bleakley’s book “The Eavesdroppers” and to find on pages 188/189 this account (reprinted with permission):

“On the night of 29-30th October (1944) a rampaging typhoon hit Leyte compound on the Tacloban area, flattening everything but the sturdiest houses and buildings.

“Gale force winds, rushing at 80 – 100 miles per hour drove across the countryside, brought thousands of gallons of water crashing down on campsites, airstrips, aircraft and the township itself.

“Many of the convoy ships, still unloading, were blown onto the shore. The Australians’ camp was almost obliterated and there was a rush to get to the safest shelter available, the morgue in the Chinese Cemetery.

“Rain – 34 inches in 40 days, delayed reconstruction of the Leyte airfields, which were absolutely vital to MacArthur’s Philippines plan, which was the invasion of Luzon, leading to the liberation of Manila. This operation had to be postponed until the New Year, 1945.

“Fortunately the excellent mobile operations vehicles withstood the typhoon and the wet and the *kana* intercept operations continued with only one day off the air.”

This was October, 1944. Haiyan was in early November, 2013. Do CBers remember that first (1944) typhoon? It’s 69 years ago, but those who survived it might set down their memories for Newsletter. Write to H.K. – she needs help to keep the pages filled.

VALE

Condolences to families of:

Joe da Costa, linguist with CB, who has died, aged 95. “Joe walked with a Geiger Counter through Nagasaki 12 days after the bomb was dropped. He was one of the very first into Vietnam, one of the very few to have survived both WW11 and Vietnam.” [From Ink Emma Ink]

A chapter is devoted to Joe da Costa in “Acorns – A Peculiar Bunch of Nuts”.

Mrs M. Hatfield of Nyngan, has died. She was an Associate Member, and news of her death came by a telephone call. Please ring Helen Kenny (02) 8405-1051 to give more details.

FAITHFULNESS

An email from a doctor to a friend told of a patient who came to the surgery to have stitches removed from a thumb. In the waiting room the patient, in his 80s, seemed anxious and kept looking at this watch. When, at last, the patient went into the surgery, the doctor asked why he was in such a hurry.

The patient said he needed to go to the nursing home to eat breakfast with his wife. She had Alzheimer’s, had been in the nursing home for five years and no longer recognised him - her husband. He went everyday.

The doctor was surprised and said: “And she doesn’t know who you are?”

He smiled and said: **“She doesn’t know me, but I still know who she is.”**

Comment at the end of the email was, “True love is an acceptance of all that is, has been, will be, and will not be.”

MOVING TIMES

Hon Secretary, Joy Granger, and Newsletter Editor, Helen Kenny have moved from Independent Living into Full Care.

“It’s time,” someone once said, in fruity tones.

Agreed, but it’s not enjoyable!

Joy’s address is:

War Vets’ Village,
Room 15, Catalina,
Lakeside Drive,
NARRABEEN, NSW 2101
Tel: (02) 9981-2397

Helen’s address:

Room 1,
St Paul’s Aged Care,
27 Eastern Valley Way,
NORTHBRIDGE, NSW 2063
Ph: (02) 8405-1051

Joy’s room looks onto bushland and Christmas trees red with blossom. Family has helped her. There been a lot of shredding. She took little with her and sounds happy the move is over.

Helen writes:

“Thanks to my niece Sally Gibson, I had a wonderful “declutterer”, Carmel Bradstreet, who runs “Ready, Steady, Relax”, a relocating service for Seniors, I’m ensconced at St Paul’s.

“One room now – looking onto a courtyard with fountain and trees, and a bathroom. All meals and excellent nursing care.

“For years I’ve amassed books by the hundreds. Many have to go. The revolving bookcase won’t fit and the handed down family furniture – Great Aunt Amelia’s giant sideboard with mirrored top must find a new home.

“What do you do with silver rings from table napkins or little X-X shaped stands for carving knives?

“Photos? Letters?

“Decide. Decide. And quickly! After all – I once lived in a tent with a kitbag!”

Happy Christmas and 2014 to all CBers. Hoping you will be among family and friends, not lonely and not in pain.

Best Wishes,
XXOO H.K.