



# CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION JUNE 2020

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### ANZAC DAY 2020

This year was a very different Anzac Day for everyone. We were not able to be together to march, or for our wonderful CBICA Reunion Lunch, which was very disappointing but of course necessary for our health and safety. Distance didn't stop us reflecting and thinking of one another though, and all CBers present, and sadly lost were at the forefront of my mind.

To commemorate Anzac Day this year, my family joined in the RSL's Light Up The Dawn initiative, which meant we were up at 5 a.m. and over to my Mum's (Sue Gibson's) driveway by 5.45 a.m., along with her neighbours and some of our close friends. All safely standing apart and smiling across

to other people out on their driveways across the street, we wore sprigs of rosemary, held candles and listened to the special 6 a.m. Anzac Day service - a most moving and respectful service complete with a wonderful address from the Prime Minister, the national anthems of Australia and New Zealand and the Last Post.

As well as a candle, I held a cherished photo of my dear Dad Gordon Gibson smartly dressed in his suit with his medals on, taken by my brother-in-law during an Anzac Day March a few years ago. As with last Anzac Day, my Dad was in my thoughts, missing him very much. I also thought about dear Helen Kenny and Bruce Bentwitch, and all our CBers who have sadly passed away recently. In a happy memory, I thought back to Anzac Day 2019 when wonderful Joyce Grace represented our CB Veterans and proudly marched with some of her lovely family and our CB members behind our CB banner. I also had a very nice chat with Joyce to reflect on last year, and her very impressive endurance during the march. As I've said before, I think Joyce could have done another lap!

Everyone involved in Light Up The Dawn agreed that it was a most special and memorable way to commemorate Anzac Day, and offered a light of hope and comfort with all that has been going on. I commend the RSL for creating this initiative and I

do hope that it becomes a tradition long after we can all safely stand side by side again.





The RSL website published this message after this year's Light Up The Dawn initiative.

*“At 6 a.m. on ANZAC Day, in streets around Australia, hundreds of thousands of Aussies joined together in a powerful show of solidarity.*

*As the sun peeked above the horizon the country stood united – in uniforms or pyjamas, wearing medals, poppies or sprigs of rosemary – to let Australia's veterans know that their service and sacrifice will never be forgotten.*

*We at RSL are humbled by your determination not to let this pandemic take away this nation's most poignant commemoration. We are grateful for the ingenuity you showed in helping find another way forward, and touched by the many examples of kindness, generosity and mateship we have been privileged to witness.*

*On behalf of Australia's Defence family, we thank you for lighting up the dawn this ANZAC Day.”*



I hope you are all keeping warm and feeling some comfort in the fact that we appear to be getting closer to coming out the other side of what has been a very difficult few months. I also hope that we can get together in November (updates and details to come in our next issue of Newsletter).

I'm sending my very best wishes to you all. Long Live CB

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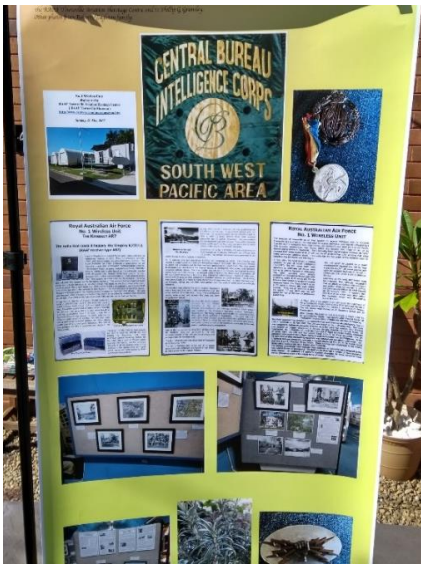
## ANZAC DAY – 2020 (From Annette Salmon)

We put this display up to honour all our veterans on Anzac Day. So many local people walked past and read about our women kana intercept operators including my mother and godmother and the part they played in the war.

In our street a number of us lit candles and stood at our front gates at dawn in remembrance. It was a very powerful expression of gratitude from Australians throughout the country.

We all had our radios and phones to hear the Last Post and Reveille but when the time came we didn't need them as there were people with trumpets and clarinets and even a violin playing up and down the street. I include a picture of Rob Moore with the banner at Baulkham Hills.

*Lest we forget....*



**VALE**  
**DIANA PARKER**

**27<sup>th</sup> December, 1919 – 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2020**

*[Sadly we received this notice of Diana's passing from her son Geoff. Diana and Helen Kenny were such wonderful, lifelong friends, from their CB association at Henry St. Helen was Geoff's god mother. Although living in Melbourne, Diana used to fly up to Sydney for ANZAC Day each year until two years ago. Geoff intends to provide a eulogy for the next Newsletter. Diana turned 100 a few days after Christmas, and fortunately my wife (Judith) and I were able to speak with her on her special day. BJJ]*

Dear Bruce, Judith and Katy,



Well after 100 years Di (Mum) peacefully let go on 15th April 2020.

The attached photos is from shortly after her 100th celebration.

She had a minor stroke a few weeks ago which had little initial impact but it moved on so she could no longer swallow on the Thursday before Easter. She was still aware of what was going on and able to talk a tiny bit and smile a lot up to the last night. She passed away on a sunny morning with me by her side. Very peaceful and no pain, so we are ever so grateful for that.

If the internet speeds are slow, I will put it down to Helen and Di using all the bandwidth catching up somewhere!

What an amazing group of people these folk were a part of, and of course so many other groups of folk exist.

A great life and good for Di to move on.

Di was interviewed by Diana Thorpe only weeks before Easter. Mum did not have much to say but enjoyed the occasion.

Warm regards,

Geoff

**DAVID WILLIAM (BILL) ROGERS AO**

**31<sup>ST</sup> March, 1926 – 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2019**

*[Following the publication of March Newsletter I received advice from Alan Fookes of the passing of Bill Rogers last September. I have been in contact with Bill's sons and daughter and passed on condolences from CB. Bill was a dearly valued Life Member of CBICA, and I know he was very close to Gordon Gibson and Helen Kenny, to name but a few. I had the pleasure of meeting with him at the Celebration Ceremony for CB at Nyrambla in Henry St, Ascot on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2015. [ photos see over]*

*The family has made available extremely comprehensive records of Bill's amazing career. Bill's own recollections of his CB life are published here, following the Obituary, provided by his son James. A further tribute will be published in the next Newsletter. I encourage you to read the excellent Tribute to Bill on the Monash University Website. BJJ]*

<https://www.monash.edu/vale/home/articles/vale-david-william-bill-rogers-ao>





Bill Rogers, Diana Parker, Helen Kenny Frank Hughes, Col Brackley, Bill Rogers & Gordon Gibson



## **OBITUARY**

Bill Rogers was born in Sydney NSW during the depression. At the time of his birth his father was Chief Chemist for the Vacuum Oil Company (later Mobil) and as a result Bill grew up in a variety of cities including Sydney, Melbourne and Perth attending six different primary schools. He completed his secondary education at Geelong College as a boarder in 1943. During his school years, Bill had a fascination with Gilbert and Sullivan and could often recall the verses of such plays as the Mikado, Pirates of Penzance, The Gondoliers and many others. Bill was also a keen sportsman and received first colours in three sports. Throughout his life enjoyed playing tennis and golf on a regular basis (Bill was a founding and life member of the Peterborough Golf Club in country Victoria).

Despite being offered the position of School Captain, Bill decided to join the fight against the Japanese in 1944 as a signalman. He completed Signals School at Bonegilla in September 1944.

*[For an account of Bill's CB service please see the following article. BJG.]*

After the war Bill entered Ormond College and completed his Bachelor of Laws and then began to work for the law firm Hedderwicks, Fookes and Alston. Bill had a short break from the firm and moved to Maffra in country Victoria to run a small legal practice and eventually re-joined the Melbourne firm and throughout its many iterations (he was still a consultant with the firm – now known as Allens - , at 90 years of age). During his time with the firm Bill held many posts both inside and outside the firm and rising to Managing Partner of the firm in the late 1980's. External to the firm Bill was a highly respected board member of companies such as BHP, NAB, AMP, Costain, Gatic and Denso, of which he remained Chairman right up to the year of his passing. At the height of his career Bill was the longest serving Chairman of Woodside starting in 1984 through to 1999. Bill nurtured the company through many interesting challenges in his relationship through the firm. Including the creation of the North West Gas Shelf (off Western Australia's north coast) and fighting off takeover bids from Shell and BHP in the 1980's.

An interesting Woodside anecdote was that Bill was determined to present, as a gift, a ceremonial katana (sword) that had been surrendered by a Japanese soldier at the end of World War II and acquired by his father as a souvenir. Naturally, there were reservations among Woodside staff as to how such a gift would be received. Thankfully, it was accepted with pleasure and placed on prominent display. Despite its heritage, Bill preferred to think of it as a symbolic "sword of peace" going backwards and forwards between Japan and Australia. He also returned a katana he had personally souvenired by tracking down the family of the officer it had belonged to (the family were overwhelmed and tried to stuff his pockets with wads of Yen).

In 2013, the new 9000-tonne carrier, Woodside Rogers – named in his honour – slid into the waters at a shipyard near Busan, South Korea.

Bill was also involved with many community organisations such as the Association for the Blind, Berry St Family Care, Arthritis Foundation and Baker Medical Research Institute. Bill was the Chancellor of Monash University in the 1990's and in fact as a young lawyer, was involved in the purchase of the Clayton campus where Monash is now situated. During his time as Chancellor, he was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for services to tertiary education and to the gas and petroleum industry, and a year later he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from Monash.

Throughout his life, Bill kept strong ties with his alma mater. A member of the Geelong and Ormond College Councils, (he became chair of Ormond in the 1990's). In 1986, Bill and his brother Allan set up a scholarship fund to commemorate their father, which assists students in financial need to attend Ormond College. In 2013, he set up a further scholarship to commemorate his mother who, 98 years earlier, had been the first female student to study at Dookie Agricultural College, based in the Goulburn Valley. He hoped the scholarship would honour her historic role (she was the first woman in the southern hemisphere to gain a Bachelor of Agricultural Science), and at the same time create a future cohort of female agricultural leaders.

At home Bill was a man of his generation, having high expectations of his four children - John, Mandy, James and David, all of whom went on to have a variety of careers from puppeteer, teacher/gallery guide, public servant and lawyer.

Bill was indeed a humorous man and enjoyed telling a joke and leading a singalong at family events, although perhaps preferred the solace of the fraternity, to share his innermost thoughts. Bill had many friends from all walks of life and is remembered fondly by those who knew him. Bill is survived by his loving wife of 67 years Jan Rogers and three of his children, Mandy, James and David.

### **D.W. ROGERS AND CENTRAL BUREAU** (By Bill himself.)

I completed Signals Training at the Signals School in Bonegilla about September, 1944. Two Signalmen Trade Group II, David Jolley and myself, were sent to Central Bureau at 16 Henry St Hamilton Brisbane by rail. I think we were both billeted at the Kedron Dog Racing Track, which was an army camp, with other CB personnel.

We paraded at 16 Henry St and then at 0800 hrs we went to a nearby park, where there were a number of huts. Security was very tight and we needed identity passes to gain entry. CB had no colour patch and people were encouraged to wear the patch of the Unit from which they were seconded, or none at all.

The Unit at Hamilton was made up of Australian Army personnel, RAAF personnel, Naval officers and US Army people. There were a number of service females, chiefly engaged in clerical work.

So far as I can remember, my first job was sorting through intercepted Japanese radio messages putting them into heaps according to priority, destination and so forth, and then they went to translators and cryptographers. There were CB personnel located in New Guinea, Darwin and various Pacific Islands. We communicated with them by radio and in one or two selected areas by teleprinters. At this stage most of the intercept work was being undertaken by Australian Special Wireless Group, made up chiefly of RAAF people.

In early January 1945 I was moved to Ascot Racecourse in preparation to go to New Guinea. Shortly after, we were trucked to the Hamilton wharf where we boarded a three thousand ton Dutch Tramp Steamer, along with about 800 miscellaneous souls including US deserters being returned to stockades in New Guinea. All the amenities for the voyage were stolen by the wharfies and we were left without adequate food, and, as it later transpired, adequate water. The vessel was called the "Van Swoll" and it was disgusting. We slept below decks with the hatch covers in place on the floor of the metal holds which were hosed down at 6.00 a.m. daily with salt water fire hoses and you had to stand holding your worldly goods and arms out of water. There was only sufficient water for shaving and latrine activities took place on a wooden platform suspended over the side of the ship which meant that in rough weather the side of the ship took on a rusty colour.

We encountered a cyclone in the Whitsundays which sent two ships in the convoy aground. We had two meals a day and most of the day was spent in queues around the ship. It took roughly two hours to get to each meal. After three weeks we were out of fresh water except for drinking. We had a submarine alert which revealed that only about half of us would be accommodated in rafts or boats if we sank. We finally arrived at Aitape where fighting was still going on, but we could stretch our legs, have a shower and the ship took on food and water. We also shed the U.S. deserters, who were offensive fellow travellers.

Four weeks after leaving Brisbane we arrived at Hollandia in Dutch New Guinea and were trucked about twenty miles into the hills to an altitude of about 3,000 feet where the climate was acceptable and we pitched tents etc.

Here in Hollandia intercept and sorting and some translating took place and there was radio communication to Morotai and sometimes, weather permitting, back to Brisbane. Above the camp were the Star Mountains where quite a few Japanese ranged about and periodically raided food dumps. For reasons best known to them, two CB fellows decided to explore higher up. By

nightfall they had not returned and early next morning an expedition was fitted out to look for them. I was a member of the group I can't remember whether as a volunteer or conscript.

The terrain was very rough and we travelled in two groups along razor backs. In the late afternoon we had found nobody and my group split up to explore the valleys on the side of the razor back. I was walking down the bank of a swollen river on my own and realized that I would have to cross to the other side as further progress was impossible where I was. With my rifle slung I started across the river, which was about three feet deep. I slipped and took off down the river towards a fall about 100 yards away. Fortunately my rifle jammed between two rocks and there I was stuck with water pouring over the top. It was too dangerous to move, so I waited and just before dark the rest of my party arrived on the bank and by then I was sticking out of the water. They then camped at the foot of the falls and talked to me all night. Next day the water had subsided and a rope was thrown to me which I tied around my waist and scrambled ashore. The missing two were found the same day by some Filipino Rangers who were keeping the Japs away from our camp.

A couple of months later a small group of us were told to pack and were flown to the Celebes, thence by US frigate to Lingayen Gulf where we landed and went to San Miguel in central Luzon, home of the famous brewery. The brewery was starting up, but only producing sugar alcohol. We set up camp on the brewery golf course which was completely overgrown and unrecognisable as such.

Our C.O. Mick Sandford arrived and we settled into the old routine. The intercept radios were across the creek from the tent lines. Dad and General Berryman paid us a visit and they were very critical of the standard of our clothing which by then was a mixture of US/Australian issue. This criticism was eventually visited upon me, as it was figured the visit might not have occurred had not been for me. [*"Dad" .... Brigadier John David Rogers*]

We had occasional nocturnal visits from Japanese stragglers foraging for food and the local Filipinos ran a trade with the Japanese stealing food and clothing and selling it to the Japanese who were never really far away. We got to know a few of the locals but they would steal as soon as they had the opportunity and sometimes were quite hostile.

Early in August we had some intercepts confirmed by rumour that a huge bomb had exploded in Japan and that a group of Japanese Generals was coming to Luzon. They arrived and left apparently without reaching any agreement. By this time it was apparent we were about to move again as new gear had arrived. Then, about three days later we heard of another great bomb and that evening an American soldier ran through the lines in his underpants shouting "the War is over". I think we more or less shut down activities once the news was confirmed. Quite a few of us hitched rides to Japan for a bit of a sticky-beak. The devastation was hard to believe.

The powers that be then decided that idle hands make mischief and decreed that we would all be put to work making a proper road into the camp. Monsoons were upon us and it was all a bit of a mess.

I spoke to two friends Elkin and Casey and suggested that we start a newspaper with a view to avoiding road work. Col. Sanford agreed and we then visited the local U.S. H.Q. where we obtained a Gestetner machine, paper, a typewriter and a jeep. "Union Jack Up" as born and was published for a few weeks, occasionally to the dissatisfaction of the C.O. when liberties were taken in relation to such matters as liquor for the officers and nothing for the troops.

Mid October we were all surprised when we had orders to break camp. I had had a couple of train trips to Manila guarding Japanese soldiers on the way to be shipped back to Japan. They were in terrible shape, and the train, which was open cattle trucks, had to be stopped for defecation exercises and hosing down of the trucks. The 80 miles took 12 hours for one trip.

We entered a temporary camp at the dockside in Manila and then boarded a Liberty ship the "Francis M Blanchard". The living was rough, but it only took nine days from Manila to Brisbane.



When the vessel docked an officer on the wharf called out “is Signaller Rogers on board?” Sig Rogers came to the rail and was ordered to disembark. Complete with all my worldly goods I came down a temporary gang plank and was informed that Dad was waiting not far away in a staff car. Reporters looking for a story were told that Mum was seriously ill. Dad took me to Arrowfield armed with a leave pass and there was an Army plane taking General Berryman to Melbourne. I have to say that the General was none too pleased to have been kept waiting.

We took off and over Armidale in NSW one of the front windows of the plane blew out and we had to head for Sydney. The plane became freezing and the General’s batman and I were just in shirt and trousers. In Sydney, I managed to get a bed with the Barkers overnight and also got malaria but managed to get home the next day. “Truth” published a picture of me on the front page under the heading “drama and mystery in soldier’s air dash”. The paper had contacted Mum, who disclaimed any suggestion she was in ill health.

As I had registered for admission to University I was able to be discharged before the end of the year. On discharge we had to sign a solemn undertaking not to discuss our work in CB with any person, or to associate with any CB personnel in any organised way for 30 years. As a result the first reunion took place in 1975, although a few of us used to get together from time to time.

## “RADIO GIRL”



Central Bureau has been a part of my life since I attended my first CBICA Anzac Day march and lunch in 2014. My 2017 book, *The Secret Code Breakers of Central Bureau*, was in part the result of many conversations with many veterans of Central Bureau and other signals intelligence organisations. The war was still very real for them, and they helped make it real for me. I made sure that many of them made cameos in my book, because I wanted it to be about the people as much as an account of the wartime code breaking efforts in Australia.

My next book, which came out in April this year, is about a woman who appeared in *The Secret Code Breakers of Central Bureau*, so in a way it’s a kind of sequel. *Radio Girl* is about Florence Violet McKenzie, the founder of the Women’s Emergency Signalling Corps. She wasn’t in Central Bureau, or any military service at all. She was Australia’s first female engineer, and a successful entrepreneur, who was worried that war would break out, and if so, that Australia would run out of men who were proficient in Morse code. She was right on both counts.

Morse code played a critical role in communications; every post office had a Morse operator to send and receive telegrams, and Morse was the standard system for sending military messages.

She rented a woolshed in Sydney’s Rocks district, and put advertisements in the local newspapers: “Ladies, come and learn Morse code.” (or words to that effect). They came in their lunch breaks and after work; and high school students came after school. They wanted to join the armed forces (although women were not allowed) and hoped that she was their ticket to get in. She was old enough to be their mother. They called her “Mrs Mac”, and she called them her “girls”.

By late 1940 the government was desperate to find men who knew Morse, but they were reluctant to employ women. Violet McKenzie waged a campaign to get ‘her girls’ into the services. In April 1941 she escorted fourteen young women to Harman, near Canberra, the first women to be enlisted in the Australian navy. It was all kept hush-hush at first, in case the experiment did not work out.

They later joined the air force and army too.

Her woolshed became an unofficial signals training centre, where men could come and be trained by the women. She trained over 3,000 women; and she and her women trained over 11,000 men, including large numbers of American naval personnel, by the end of the war.

At a recent lunch I told veteran CBer Helen Kenny that I had written a book about ‘Mrs Mac’. Helen smiled and told me that she had trained at Mrs Mac’s school for two weeks during the war.

Apparently when she had returned from Brisbane to Sydney for officer’s training, the trainees had been sent there for their signals component.

I had no idea! I had interviewed Helen for my Central Bureau book, and had spoken to her several times since, but somehow that had never come up in conversation. She was about to leave, so our conversation about it was brief, and that was the last time I saw her. I wish I could meet Helen one more time and ask her more about that part of her wartime experiences.

Researching and writing both *Radio Girl* and *The Secret Code Breakers of Central Bureau* has been a life-changing experience for me. What started out as, I confess, a “cool idea for a book” led to encounters and friendships, and an understanding of the great contributions that so many humble, not-so-ordinary Australians made during the Second World War.

..... David Dufty (June 2020)

*[Thank you, David. “Radio Girl” is published by Allen and Unwin, and was released in April. It is available for around \$20 from most “quality” booksellers, and from several online outlets. BJG]*

## EPILOGUE 1

*[Alan Norton kindly offered several articles for publication in Newsletter, which I will publish over several issues. I am grateful that he and his wife, Katie, have taken the time and effort to produce the record. They are all fascinating reading, and are wonderful examples of (oral) history. Here is the first. Thank you indeed Alan. BJG]*

Following the war the Australian Kana Code Operators tended to still keep in contact with each other as we had become a closely bonded group. I seem to recall that Wireless Unit Social Associations appeared in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

As I recall most of the operators had enlisted from Victoria and New South Wales with perhaps a sprinkling from Queensland and South Australia. It is likely that there were only one or two of us from Western Australia.

The meetings that we had together were certainly informal occasions but it was a joy to meet again some of our wartime friends and to recall experiences we had shared from the past. I recall attending ANZAC Day marches with our members in Melbourne and Brisbane. But, I repeat, that none of these get togethers were of any formal nature and usually one person would conduct any office requirements.

These Wireless Unit social groups continued for many years after the war but with the passing of time what with members passing away and experiencing ill health patronage fell to the point that I think these social get togethers of ours fell apart through lack of numbers.

In Sydney, the two or three 1 Wireless Unit intercept members still kept in contact but that was about all.

By this time many years had passed since the war had ended. One day I was travelling on a Sydney electric train when a senior gentleman sat down beside me and brief discussion took place between us when he told me that he had been returning from a meeting with members of Central Bureau and I thought he said that he was President of that meeting group. I cannot tell you how amazed and surprised I was to learn that this was the first time I had spoken to anybody representing Central Bureau.

He encouraged me to join his Central Bureau Association but I pointed out that we intercept operators were separate from his Association and would more or less be ring-ins who knew nobody from that organization.

This gentleman's name was Denis Moore and he insisted that we operators and Central Bureau were still part of the one family and would be welcomed if we joined them. I subsequently contacted my operator friends and we attended a Central Bureau meeting in Sydney where we were very well received. I believe that meetings were held at that time at the Australian Cricketers Club in Sydney city.

As against the ragtime meetings held by our Wireless Unit get togethers the Central Bureau meetings were very formal with Chairman, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer and perhaps a solicitor in attendance. I would have thought that Committee Meetings comprised about ten people in attendance.

I was most impressed with the cordiality given to we new Wireless Unit members as well as the organized hard work that was being performed in publicizing the value of Japanese Code Breaking work conducted during World War 2.

I got to know these Committee members very well and remember the volume of voluntary work they did towards keeping the memory of past interception work alive. Members of this Committee were obviously very capable from experience gained. For example one member (Joy Grainger) had spent many years associating with Canberra National Radio and Helen Kenny had been a war journalist and had all sorts of connections with journalists and their writings.

The amount of office administration by this group was considerable and ranged from organizing representation on ANZAC Day, attending to correspondence, helping authors with facts who wished to write about Australia's contribution to winning the war as regards interception as well as visiting Canberra Intelligence Officers for requested information. I became a member of this Committee.

I mention that Denis Moore's health had deteriorated and sadly he died sometime later. It is my recollection that the presidency of Central Bureau group was then taken over by Gordan Gibson with the aid of his wife, Sue, who continued the responsible task of guiding the Committee representing Central Bureau. The work they and the fellow Committee members did must have taken hours of their private time but each member was happy to contribute and we respected and enjoyed each other's company.



In the meantime, of course, time was passing by and all of us were becoming much older. The Committee reached a point where through lack of members and falling meeting attendance that the Committee could not continue operating. This topic was discussed with Gordan Gibson as to whether the Committee should just fold or hand it over to a younger generation comprising sons and daughters or grandchildren of the veterans.

President Gibson was cautious in releasing the controls so to speak as there was uncertainty as to whether a younger crew would be up to the dedication and the commitment to the task of the old personnel. Anyway, the decision was made to anoint Gordan Gibson's daughter Katy Denis and other appointments including Bruce Goudge and a son of Denis Moore and other younger volunteer members to take over previous roles.

As it turned out this transfer of authority to younger people has proved a real blessing for Central Bureau. Fresh enthusiasm was injected into this group who showed keen interest and a real dedication to remember the war time deeds of their fathers and mothers. Increasingly it appeared that grandchildren too were becoming more than interested in service performed by the grandparents and parents.

The current team of Committee members of Central Bureau in Sydney are doing a remarkable job and I fully acclaim their efforts.

At some time the Central Bureau meeting place was relocated to Roseville RSL New South Wales premises and it was really heartwarming on Remembrance Day to have representative high school children from about 16 schools assemble there on the lawns outside the building and express their thanks for what Australian veteran service men had done during the war. A young bugle player would play the Last Post and the whole ceremony was very moving for old folk such as me.

..... Alan Norton

## **FROM AN EARLIER CB NEWSLETTER**

On Rob Moore's suggestion, Newsletter will publish extracts from previous Newsletters. This was published in Newsletter of December, 2000 and reported by the then Publicity Officer, none other than the father of current Committeeman Rob Moore – Dennis Moore.

### **SIGINT REUNION MELBOURNE**

Our Reunion started when we met at the Commemorative/Dedication Tree (*Casuarina stricta*) in Shrine Park Melbourne. It was the eleventh day of the eleventh month, 2000. This was Remembrance Day - the old Armistice Day of 1918. The *Casuarina* tree is our tree. At its base is a plaque worded: "This *Casuarina* is dedicated to the memory of all those who served in Central Bureau and its field units - Australian Special Wireless Group; AIF; RAAF Wireless Units; RAN and Allied Forces who were involved in Signals Intelligence Operations against Japan during the war in the Pacific, 1942-1945".

The ex-servicemen and women who gathered around the tree have never forgotten - and never will forget - their mates who died in the war and after it. They have not grown old in memory. Their faces and names are clear. About 140 had accepted the invitation to come to the Reunion, which marked the 58th year of Central Bureau's founding in Melbourne and the 25th anniversary of our

Association. I have no accurate count of those near the tree, but there would have been 80, who greeted one another with handshakes and kisses. Some by the tree had not even know that CBICA existed until they read of the SIGINT Reunion in Reveille and Vet Affairs. "It is something like making contact with a 'family' I didn't know I had", wrote Kelvin Hocking, a former South Australian member of 1 WU and 4 WU, who now lives in the ACT. u find it exciting and I'm looking forward to the Reunion". He was there - and is a new member of the Association.

Before proceedings began we were handed the programme for the Reunion and a copy of Chapter 19 from Geoffrey Ballard's book, "On ULTRA Active Service". This chapter, "Establishing a SIGINT Organisation in Australia" is a record to keep. At 1110 hours came Orders of the Day. The Hon. Roy Ward OAM, welcomed us, spoke of "proposed action" for the day, and introduced the Rev. Robert Brown to deliver the Address. Robert Brown, who worked beside Professor Room at CB, spoke from the heart and gave a most thoughtful address which we will publish in the Newsletter. He used a loud hailer (held patiently by Geoff Patience) as we crowded close to hear. President Gordon Gibson then stepped forward to lay the wreath, which mingled green laurel leaves with red Flanders poppies.

The ritual of the Ode, and the recorded sounding of bugle calls (Last Post and Reveille) followed, the ceremony ending with the playing of the national anthem "Advance Australia Fair". (This was not Australia's national anthem when the prison camps opened after VJ or VP Day. The words used then were "God Save the King"). The ceremony was over. Most then went by special buses on a tour which took them past "Cranleigh" where, in March 1942, CB began setting up its "Research and Control Centre". The old mansion has gone now. Flats stand on its site.

The late Nobby Clarke once sent an e-mail to Dennis Moore saying: "I have vivid recollection of Marion (Manson), Anne (Moon) Linda (Paton) and Norma (Peel) at the old mansion of the Jack family in Domain Road South Yarra". These WAAF had reported the frequent presence of an old lady on the landing which "raised something of a security problem", as the only the surviving member of the family, Miss Jack was authorised to "reside there during the gestation period of Central Bureau". When complaint was made to Miss Jack about the matter, she replied: "Oh, that would be mother".

Nobby also remembered the time when he and Joe Da Costa were chatting in Japanese as they came down the stairs. Hearing this, "that master of deadpan", Norman Webb, popped his head out from a room on the left and exclaimed: "For a moment there, I thought we'd been invaded!"

## **TWO PEOPLE RESEARCHING CB**

### **Alli Sinclair and Diana Thorpe.**

Alli and Diana are independently researching CB, and have made contact with some members. I have received several enquiries from CB Veterans as to why Ali and Diana have not pursued their enquiries. In view of the current Covid situation, both researchers have been unable to travel to pursue their interviews. Please understand they will contact you when travel restrictions are lifted.

## A CORRECTION

Had Helen Kenny been editing March Newsletter, my error, reproducing a paragraph from Steve Meekin's 2015 speech referring to the *other* Stan Clarke, would never have appeared.

Stan Clarke OAM (pictured at Mulwala VP Anniversary Service) advises that he is *not* the Capt. Stan Clarke referred to in March Newsletter. Stan Clarke OAM, pictured, was a Kana Operator and saw Service in Townville, Moresby, Nadzab, RAAF Command Brisbane, Hollandia, Leyte and Luzon – in that order, and finally with 7WU at Strathpine, Brisbane. Stan says he was keen on promotion, but realises that confusion could be caused ... and asked that I right the matter.

My apologies.[BJG]



-oooOOoooo-

Stay Safe    Stay Warm    Stay Healthy

Bruce J Goudge  
(Hon) Secretary  
0412 579 160