



CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION

Number 4, 1993

DECEMBER

EXECUTIVE NEWS.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK.

MELBOURNE REUNION 1993.

On behalf of all who attended the activities, in Melbourne, I wish to extend a vote of thanks to the organisers of a successful and enjoyable weekend.

We are extremely grateful to Geoff Patience and Roy Ward who were in control of the overall operation.

Special thanks to Jean Patience and Joan Ward who toiled behind the scenes to ensure that all proceeded according to plan, Ladies your efforts were greatly appreciated by all present.

* Saturday 13th. November Caulfield R.S.L.

This function was attended by a large number of members and family or friends, it was pleasing to see a number of R.A.A.F. Wireless Unit members present, some for the first time at one of our combined reunions.

After a time of renewing acquaintances and forming new friendships, Geoff Patience made a brief speech of welcome, grace was said by Canon Alan Langdon and dinner was served. When dinner was over and members had a further chance to socialise, came the formal part of the evening.

Roy Ward was introduced and outlined the arrangements for the barbecue the following day at Parliament Gardens, including the car parking facilities which was a great help to visitors to Melbourne.

After the death of Captain Eric Nave, who was to address the gathering, Lester Truex volunteered some aspects of the intelligence operation during the Korean conflict, but was unable to speak on this subject due to these operations being on the classified list even after so many years since the action took place. Lester explained the reason his talk was vetoed.

Due to the advancing hour unfortunately our two speakers had to restrict their addresses to a brief outline of their subject matter.

Keith Payne, who stated earlier in the evening that with the information he had compiled would be able to speak for quite an extended period. Sorry Keith due to time restraints you were unable to fully recount your topic. Keith gave an outline of an event in the Pacific War and its later consequences, Keith also

informed the gathering that the many reports, literature and signals he had brought with him could be viewed by anyone requiring additional information.

Geoff Ballard gave an interesting review of his visit to Bletchley Park and his attendance to a Sigint Reunion in the U.K. Geoff briefly told of its operations during World War II and its proposed future.

The time taken by our speakers in research and preparation prior to the presentation is appreciated. Please, on behalf of those who were present, accept our thanks.

Treasurer, Norma Keeling, gave a summary of the proposed 1994 venue——Jamberoo, New South Wales. More on the 1994 location and additional details by Gordon Gibson in this Newsletter and future correspondence.

An account of the evening would not be complete without mention of the drivers of the two mini-buses, not only were a number of the group transported from Georgian Court Guest House to Caulfield RSL and returned but were taken on a tour of some of Melbourne's sights. Returning along St.Kilda Road a major traffic hold up was encountered caused in part by the crowds from the U2 concert.

*Sunday 14th November Shrine of Remembrance:

Before 10.30am. a large group had assembled on the forecourt of the Shrine, at 10.30 two lines moved up the steps, entered the Shrine and circled "the Stone of Remembrance". Canon Langdon delivered a short address appropriate to the solemn occasion. After Alan had concluded I was privileged to lay a wreath and recite the ode, the Last Post was played; a moving moment as the sounds echoed throughout the Shrine. After a short pause the sounds of Reveille filled the Chamber and the group dispersed.

The Attendants and Custodian of the Shrine were most helpful, providing a Guard of Honour as we entered the Shrine and ensuring no one interrupted our commemoration ceremony.

*Sunday 14th. November Parliament Gardens.

The number of people who were present at the barbecue certainly surprised the interstate visitors. As the years pass the membership, and interest, in our Association is growing rather than diminishing.

The conversations that were left unfinished from the previous night were revived and memories relived. The food and refreshments left nothing to be desired, excellent on both counts. The ladies who were responsible for cooking did a magnificent job, My steak was cooked to perfection. Congratulations ladies and those who organised the function.

Geoff Padman and Gordon Gibson gave additional information regarding the 1994 reunion. Since our return to base Gordon has contacted the proposed venue site and will detail the relevant information in this and future Newsletters.

Unfortunately all good things must come to an end and so it was with the barbecue and gathering in Parliament Gardens winding up the 1993 C.B.I.C.A. Reunion.

Before I close there are a few things that should be said:

- ♦ Even though it was overcast at times the weather was fine and mild and perfect for our activities.
- ♦ On seeing the gardens, flowers, parks in and around Melbourne it surely deserves the title of "the Garden State".
- ♦ My personal thanks to those members of the Executive Committee, who liaised with the Melbourne organisers, especially Treasurer Norma Keeling and Secretary Gordon Gibson without whose efforts the Reunion may not have been the success it was.
- ♦ As this is the last letter prior to the Annual General Meeting I would like to thank the Executive Committee for the support I have received also Past President Jim Williams who was always available with advice when required.
- ♦ Congratulations and thanks to our Publicity Officer Dennis Moore who is responsible for the publication of the C.B.I.C.A. Newsletters and also reporting on all our functions and meetings.

Best wishes for Christmas 1993
also a happy and healthy 1994.

Regards,

Aub. Roberts.

15 Gregory St.,
Putney 2112

(02) 807 1426.

HON. SECRETARY'S PAR.

COMBINED REUNION NO. 6—JAMBEROO VALLEY
LODGE.
12TH.-14TH. NOVEMBER 1994.

Tucked away on ten acres of lush bushland and landscaped gardens in the Minnamurra Rainforest area this superb lodge blends the peace and freshness of its natural environment with the standards and comfort of a modern resort

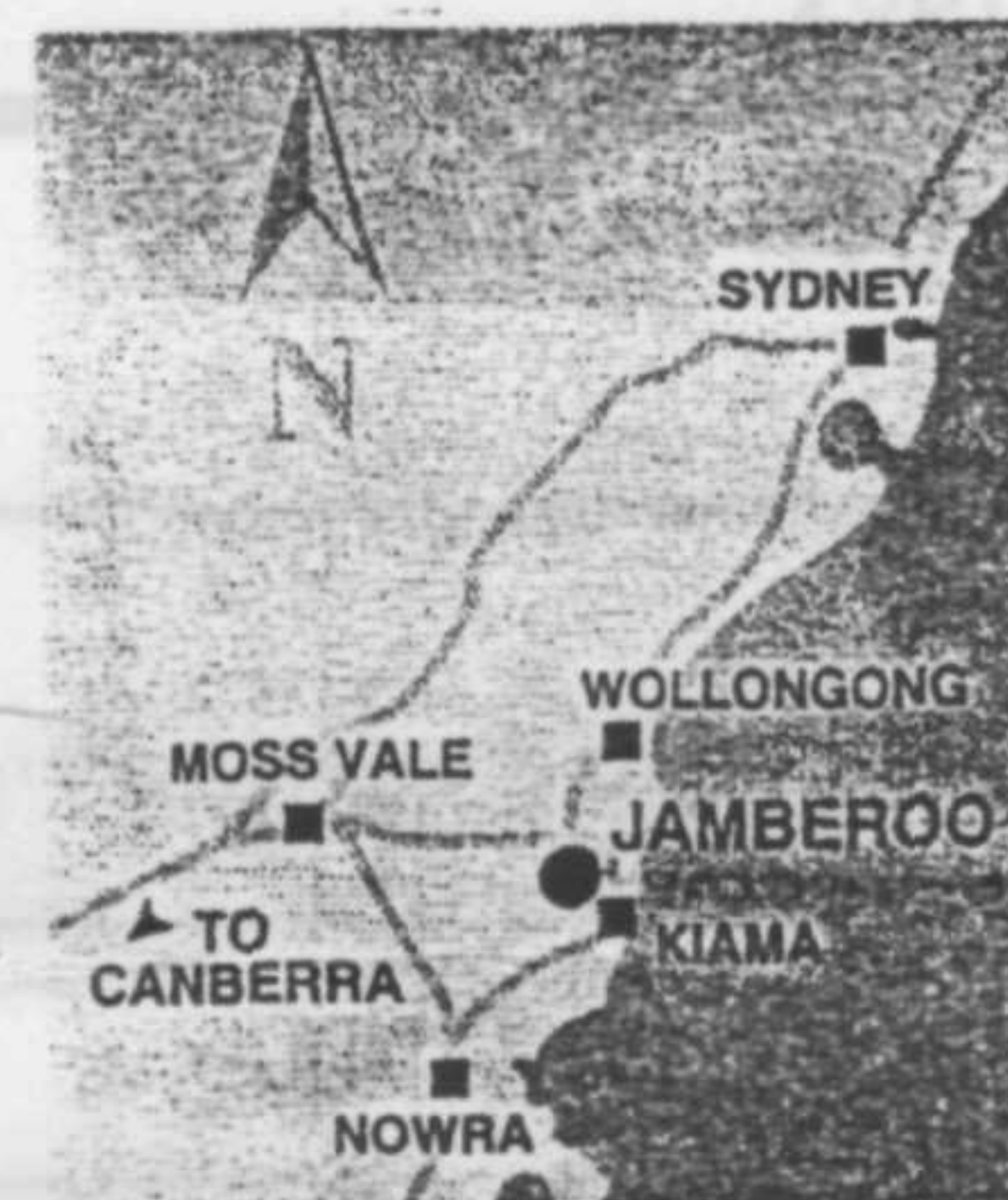
Rooms.

Accommodation is provided by 45 spacious motel units each with private ensuite, reverse cycle air conditioning, direct dial STD/ISD phone, tea and coffee making facilities, colour

television and writing desk. Most units have private balconies which overlook the pool and provide magnificent views of the surrounding landscape.

An Easy Escape.

Away from it all "atmosphere" within easy drive of Sydney or Canberra and surely not all that far from Melbourne or Brisbane.. Experience the Lodge's unique character, the peace and tranquillity, the clean country air, the natural surroundings and the relaxed atmosphere.



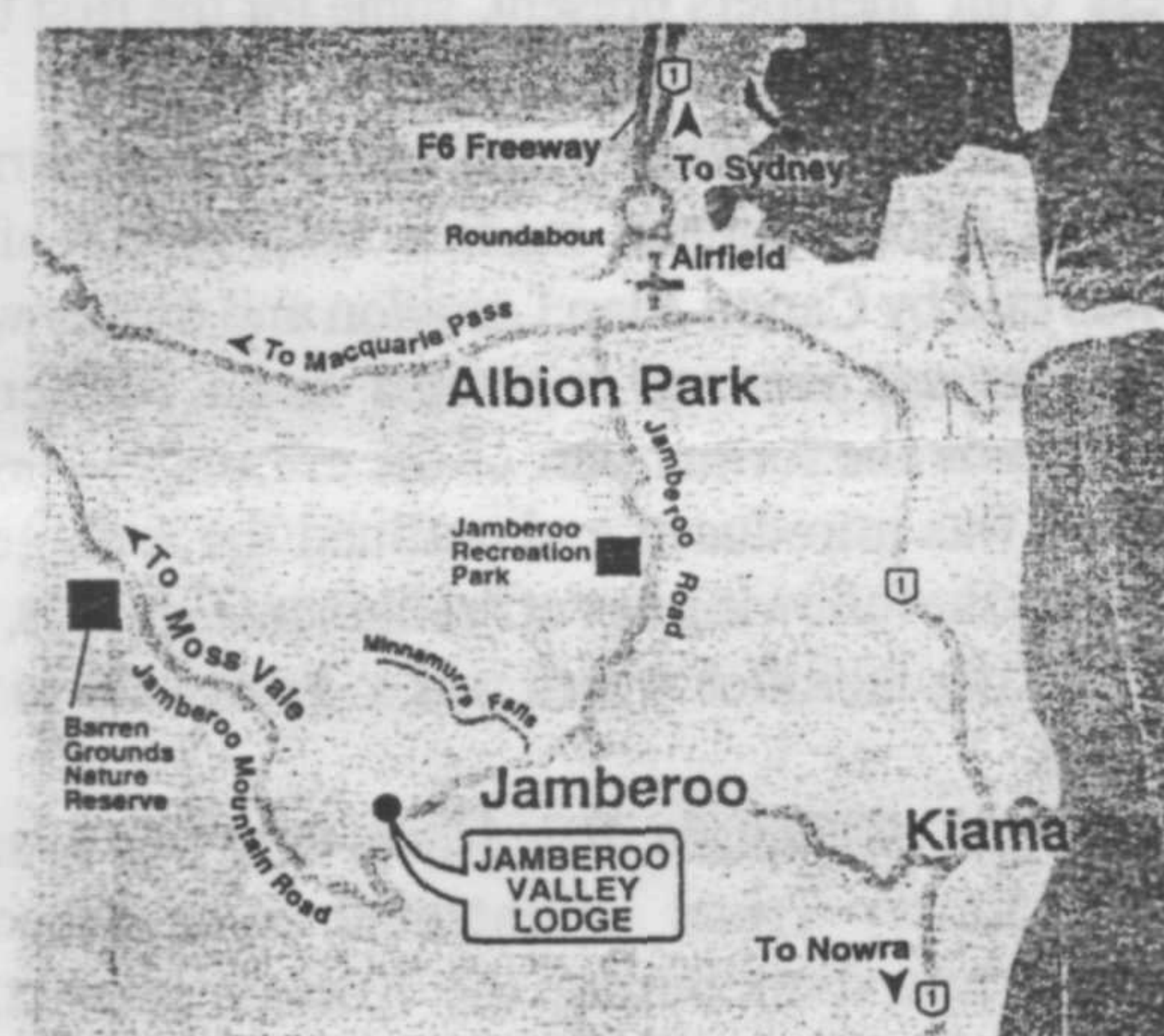
Lazy Days or Activity?

Enjoy the spectacular scenery from your private verandah, lap up the sun beside the pool or in the cooler months relax in front of the open fire. More activity? Play a few sets of tennis, a game of billiards, table tennis or explore the creeks and surrounding bushland.

Nearby.

Enjoy a round of golf, visit Jamberoo Recreation Park, go horseriding, stroll through Minnamurra Rainforest or browse around the craft, pottery and antique shops of Jamberoo. Go bushwalking in Barren Grounds nature reserve, experience the scenic splendour of Carrington Falls and Saddleback lookout or visit the coastal township of Kiama.

Surfing, sailing, fishing, bowling, canoeing, scenic flights are other leisure activities within easy reach.



As you have probably guessed, what you have just read was mainly the blurb from the Lodge's advertising brochure which may be a trifle overstated. Seriously, however your Committee has gone into the idea of a different style venue very carefully (Norma Keeling has personally "cased the joint" following the recommendation of Geoff. Padman who lives in the area) and we are confident that Jamberoo Valley will provide an ideal location for a relaxing break coupled with the usual opportunities to forgather with old comrades at a formal dinner on the Saturday night, the wreath laying and a barbecue lunch on the Sunday. The cost of all this? For those requiring a double or

twin room, \$185 per person, for a single room, \$239 and for a triple room \$165 per person. Remember that this charge is inclusive of accommodation and all meals from Saturday lunch to Monday breakfast.

There are 44 rooms available in the Lodge and we have "bitten the bullet" by making a tentative booking for all 44 on your behalf. The important thing is that if the Reunion is to be a success we must have from you a deposit of \$40 on each room not less than 8 weeks prior to the 12th. November—in other words by 17th. September. So please start planning for this weekend now as you will be asked to complete the usual intention notice on receipt of the March Newsletter. It will be impossible to make "last minute" bookings this time!

New Members.

Ted Brown of Burwood, Victoria, Joe Da Costa of East Hawthorn Victoria, Cec Cousins of Eleebana, N.S.W. and Margaret Raymond (nee Fullgrave) of Chelmer, Queensland. It was great to be able to meet and chat with Joe and Ted in Melbourne while Cec is hopeful of joining us in Sydney on Anzac Day. Margaret had a very interesting career in the Signal Corps and then joined A.S.W.G. when they moved to Kalinga in 1943. Welcome to C.B.I.C.A. all four!

Finally let me put in my two pennyworth about the Melbourne Reunion. Heart-warming is my phrase and what a great roll-up of C.B., W.U. and A.S.W.G. types especially on the Sunday. Ecumenical at last? We're getting nearer. Merry Xmas to all.

Gordon Gibson Hon. Sec.

7 Lindsay Close

Pymble 2073

Ph (02) 449 9450.

THE TREASURER'S COLUMN.

Another reunion success, hope all enjoyed themselves as much as I did—looking forward to next November at Jamberoo. It's great to meet up with old comrades, isn't it? I don't mean "old" in that sense as we're all managing to keep young at heart else we wouldn't still be taking part in our reunions—agree?

Thank you Joyce (Pugh) for your company after the barbecue, our "spud" dinner was terrific, my first, hope you enjoyed the rest of your holiday and had a safe trip home.

Thanks Marcia (Wilson) for the beaut photos and your letter it was most kind of you, apologies for not ringing you at Dee Why but do hope by now you're home and that Gordon is making great improvement. I'm sure all our members send their best wishes.

I'm sure members were glad to see Jim (Williams) at the reunion despite his ill health lately. Also was glad to catch up with Ronnie O'Neill, one of our new members, and that you were able to have a lengthy chat with Mary Saxby, it's exciting

meeting up with old pals, isn't it? One of the main reasons of reunions.

Once again Wynne (Christmas, what an appropriate name at this time) thank you for the stamps, Jim is also a good collector for me. So sorry to read your trip to England was curtailed by a stretch in hospital, hope things are improving for you and you'll get that trip in the near future.

Thank you Elsie (Richard) for sending me Joe's sub., we were all so sorry to hear of his very poor health—please do keep in touch.

I do appreciate your letters Olive (Williams) and the contents therein. I too served under F/Lt. Ward both at Brisbane Fighter Sector (which like C.B. was also a very secretive outfit) and have happy memories of that time. I met up with him at our Brisbane reunion and talked about old times—it was great. I must comment on your writing Olive, did you take a course in calligraphy?

I do hope Max (Hurley) you're out of hospital and home again and enjoying better health.

Almost forgot to thank Geoff. (Patience) for all his help with our reunion, especially for building our cash account by the sum of \$138.20 by holding a raffle and donating the prizes—thanks a lot.

As Christmas is upon us I'll end my column on a Xmas note. I was at the Christian Blind Mission Christmas party and whilst there the choir, who entertained us sang a carol I, myself hadn't heard before, the tune was most melodious and the chorus went like this:—

*Christmas isn't Christmas till it happens in your heart:
Somewhere deep inside you is where Christmas really starts:
So give your heart to Jesus, you'll discover when you do:
That it's Christmas, really Christmas, for you!*

Wishing all our members and their families all the very best for the festive season as well as for the year 1994.

Norma Keeling.

CENTRAL BUREAU'S WAR EFFORT.

The author whose work is about to be reviewed wasn't in C.B. nor did he have any first hand experience with C.B. or the war. He wasn't born until the war was nearly over. His sources of information are, however, first class and so are his qualifications to write an historical work. Edward. J. Drea is Chief of Research and Analysis, Division of the U.S. Army Centre of Military History in Washington D.C. The book is called "MacArthur's Ultra—Code breaking and the war against Japan, 1942-1945." His sources include the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 457 in Washington (now declassified after many years of secrecy),

World War II U.S. Army Unit records, War Department files and papers from The MacArthur Memorial Bureau of Archives in Norfolk Virginia. Significantly his research extended to Japanese Military Archives in Tokyo which were meaningful to Drea because he is fluent in the Japanese language. Australian War Histories were also accessed. The bibliography covers some 150 publications. Dr. Abraham Sinkov and Joseph E. Richard contributed oral recollections.

Edward Drea was not a participant and as a professional could be expected to be objective—he doesn't have to be an apologist nor a protagonist. Near the conclusion of his work he tells of Dr. Sinkov placing our Association's plaque on the wall at 21 Henry Street. The words on the plaque, mulled over by your Committee some years ago in the Combined Services Club in Barrack Street, Sydney, are recorded. "Central Bureau, an organisation comprising service personnel of Australia, U.S.A. Britain, Canada and N.Z., both men and women functioned in this house from 1942 till 1945. From intercepted radio messages the organisation provided intelligence which made a decisive contribution to the Allied victory in the Pacific War." Says Drea, "This brief public tribute left Central Bureau's exact, extensive contributions to the war against Japan wrapped in obscurity". Drea has now unwrapped them—as completely as seems possible fifty years afterwards.

This book talks about MacArthur's use of information obtained through monitoring, intercepting and decoding enemy radio communications, now referred to as "Ultra", in his campaigns from New Guinea to the Philippines. In Drea's view Central Bureau was MacArthur's own "Ultra" unit; born and matured during the Pacific War and activated by MacArthur on 15 April, 1942. This signal intercept organisation comprised U.S. and Australian Army and Royal Australian Air Force signal units. Veteran intercept operators of the Australian Special Wireless Group and members of a British signal detachment evacuated from Singapore formed the Australian Army contingent. They joined with Americans from the Philippines and American S.R.I. personnel from Fort Dix. Drea refers to Colonel Spencer B. Akin as Director with Wing Commander H. Roy Booth, Major Alastair V. Sandford and Colonel Abraham Sinkov as Assistant Directors.

In the early months of the war it seems that in terms of quantity and usefulness MacArthur's "Ultra" came not from his own Central Bureau but from Commander Fabian's FRUMEL (Fleet Radio Unit, Melbourne.) Indeed right throughout the war C.B. was only one of the sources of "Ultra". For the first six months no more than thirty Americans and a like number of Australian cryptanalysts were code solving at C.B. Drea says that Colonel Sinkov told him that the Australians had little cryptographic experience. The early Australian effort concentrated on "Traffic Analysis" from intercepts made at Townsville. Decryption was not possible in the early days.

Naval intelligence went to MacArthur via the Combined Operations Intelligence Centre (see Newsletter 3/1993). Following complaints about slipshod handling of Ultra there were tense negotiations and on 30 January 1943 MacArthur reorganised C.B. C.O.I.C. was relieved of the task of processing Ultra. Colonel Chas. A. Willoughby was given the duty of

passing on Ultra to General Sir Thomas Blamey's command. Willoughby, himself, is revealed as a controversial figure but more of that later. Throughout the war MacArthur strongly and successfully resisted attempts by Washington to place C.B. under the wing of the War Department's Arlington Hall, the code breaking headquarters in the States.

According to Drea's research it was not until very early in 1944 that Central Bureau was transformed into a high quality cryptanalysis agency—an organisation capable of producing Ultra. This followed the solution of a range of Japanese Army ciphers and, of course, the capture of Japanese Army code materials by Australian Infantrymen at Sio in New Guinea. The book tells of drying out wet code book pages in a gas oven in that famous garage at Henry Street and otherwise drying documents which came out of a water filled Japanese dug pit, on a clothesline strung up in the garage.

There are detailed descriptions of the various strategies and battles which took MacArthur through New Guinea, the Admiralties, Biak and on to the Philippines. The focus is on just how the MacArthur command used, misused or entirely ignored Ultra and how Ultra itself on occasions failed and fell short of expectations. Americans are not portrayed as infallible heroes. Colonel Willoughby whose task it was to interpret Ultra in MacArthur Headquarters, is criticised for his ethnocentrism and tendency to superimpose his own rationality on to his opponents even when on the basis of available Ultra he should have been making more realistic assessments. Fighting near to Moresby and at Buna and Aitape are recorded as examples of Willoughby's miscalculations. MacArthur himself tended to accept and act upon intelligence more readily when it accorded with his schemes or "his self styled sense of destiny". He tended to "cast aside counsels of caution" suggested by Ultra and to take calculated risks to achieve his own predetermined goals.

Ultra failed after the fall of Hollandia to the Americans when it lost track of Japanese counter moves. The regrouping Japanese troops used very low powered transmitters which the eavesdroppers apparently did not hear. Ultra did not give the correct picture of Japanese capabilities at Biak and a long and bitter battle followed. Only luck averted what may have been a successful Japanese counter attack by sea.

If you can lay your hands on this book it is interesting to compare the accounts of the various campaigns with the accounts of those same campaigns recorded by Mr. Jack Bleakley in his important Australian publication "The Eavesdroppers". They are similar enough to suggest that sometimes the same primary documents were consulted by both authors but there are marked differences. Just by way of an example both Jack and Mr Drea recount Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku's launch of operation I (I-Go- Sakusen). This was to be a massed aerial onslaught against Allied shipping in the Solomons. The authors agree precisely on the numbers and the sources of the aircraft Yamamoto planned to use. The major difference is, however, the account of Admiral Yamamoto's ultimate sacrifice, which has become an attention grabber for many expositions about Pacific Sigint. Jack says that the critical flight itinerary for the Admiral "was intercepted by the ever alert Kana operators at 1 W.U. and at FRUPAC

(Honolulu).....". Edward Drea uses the words "His (Yamamoto's) exact itinerary was learned from a deciphered message three days before the trip". Drea's notes about sources of information say that the details of Yamamoto's schedule were first reported by Naval code breakers in Hawaii. Nowhere in Drea's book is there any specific reference to RAAF Wireless Units by name — it is a book about Ultra and not operators. Rusbridger ("Betrayal at Pearl Harbour") is another author who recognises only the American interception and decryption of that fateful Yamamoto itinerary.

In his concluding analysis Drea notes the argument of some observers that Ultra did not matter in the long run because American material superiority would have overcome the Japanese anyway. He says that without Ultra the casualties would have been much higher and the war protracted.

Ultimately he recognises that "the American G.I.'s and Australian Infantrymen who moved forward against yet another Japanese held ridge, pill box or bunker won the ground war."

Finally it is speculated that it was because of Ultra that those bombs were dropped. The Japanese had correctly speculated that the big invasion was to be against Kyushu. Ultra painted a picture of a massive effort to defend the Home Islands. We knew about the units assigned to defend the beaches, the use of Kamikaze air and sea craft and the involvement of civilians. American Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, predicted that an invasion would produce a bitter struggle, heavy American losses and a Japan laid waste. So they took the alternative and dropped two bombs and MacArthur was denied the opportunity to head the biggest invasion force the world had ever seen.

If you have any interest in shedding some light on the results of the work to which you contributed in the war read "MacArthur's Ultra" by Edward J. Drea published by the University Press of Kansas in 1992. Maybe your library can locate a copy for you.

PEOPLE.

New member Joe daCOSTA joined the Australian Army in 1942. He thought he would be an infantryman. Joe was 19 and could speak fluent Japanese.— and he expected to be a foot-slogger?

Quick as a flash he found himself "in a web of secrecy and intrigue" under the wing of Eddie Kelson. And he remained in the Defence and Foreign Affairs Departments until 1982. In between he was with C.B., 51 W/T., 1 W.U., A.T.I.S. rep with various units and B.C.O.F. He saw service in Vietnam and just for variety was also a Chinese linguist in D.S.B. which later became D.S.D.

For those knowledgeable members with such diverse interests as the Australian Ballet and "Hey Hey it's Saturday" yes it is true, he is closely related.

These people came to (or accepted for) one or more of the Melbourne Reunion functions. Do you recognise any names? If you had been there you could have swapped stories.

Fred Appleton, Harry & Joan Atkinson, Ron Austin, Philip Beck, Vin & Margaret Berkery, Jack & Dorothy Bleakley, Snow Bradshaw, Bill & Betty Browne, Harry Buckland, Stan Clarke, Ron Carr, Les Edwards, Rupe & Remy Fisher, Harry & Gwen Hickford, Warwick & Beryl Higginbotham, Kevi Hogan, Tam Hoskins, Ced Hulse, Bruce & Edna Jane, Harold & Florence Jones, Ron & Maureen Lee, Mick & Cynthia Manestar, Howard & Dawn McKenzie, Alex & Beryl Nicholson, Evan & Margaret Nutting, Eric Shaw, Ron Souter, Wally & Mavis Roper, Gerry & Margaret Stewart, Herb & Gweneth Toohil, Jack & Esme Touzel, Bill Carter, George & Rita Guiver, Tony & Mollie Hyland, Yvonne Andrews, Ted Brown, Robert Brown, Edith Brown, Ian & Lorraine Buckingham, Norma & Syd Carey, Gwen & Geoff Charlesworth, Betty Chessell, Madeline & Ron Chidgey, F.E. Davies, Flora & Alf Davis, Peter Dredge, Isobel & Don Dunn, Dave Geyer, Patrick Gill, Sue & Gordon Gibson, Herb Gielis, Ailsa Hale, Coral & Sandy Hinds, Frank Hughes, Vair & Phil Barbeta, Norma Keeling, Pamela & Alan Langdon, Joy Linnane, Lorna & Frank Whelan, Dennis Moore, Ronnie O'Neill, Barbara McNab, Gwen & Geoff Padman, Diana Parker, Joyce Pugh, Aub. Roberts, Mary Saxby, Liz Devlin, Kay & Les Truex, Joan & Roy Ward, Jim Williams, Sue & Ken Trezise, David Berry, Jean & Geoff Patience, Joyce Pugh, Joyce & Mike Casey, Eunice & Al Jenkin, Wilma & Keith Payne, Jean & Bert Rushen, Bill Clarke, Betty Murray, Bett & Tony Murray, Marj. & Jack Reeve, Joan & Will Renshaw, Joyce Sandars, Mavis & Allan Smith, Joe da Costa, Beth & Geoff Ballard, Irene Chessire, Betty Davies, Louise & Alan Flannery, Marge Marshall, Steve Mason, Joan & John Warmington.

(Accurate listing was the aim but is not guaranteed; sincere apologies for errors or omissions.)

IN BRIEF.

Army Signallers and C.B.

Remember back in June when the Queensland Signals Officer's Association sought Betty Chessell's help in locating Army Sigs people who worked in C.B.? The Association has advised Betty that five historic sites (from a signals point of view) have been identified in Queensland. 21 Henry Street is of course one of the sites and will acquire yet another plaque.

American member publicises Aussie War Effort

Member Graham R. Lobb writes articles for a small daily newspaper called the "Wayne Independent" published in Honesdale, Pa., where he was born. Graham says that the great role played by Australia, first in the Middle East; and then in New Guinea and the Pacific is not known— except those of us who served Down Under. Graham has sent to Newsletter some of those articles. Brisbanites and folk from Toowoomba would

be delighted by the good P.R. work Graham is doing for Australia. At some time Newsletter may be able to publish them or at least some extracts.

The Book Review

The review copy of "MacArthur's Ultra" was loaned to Newsletter by Michael Casey, one time C.B.I.C.A. President. A special endorsement on the inside cover makes it special for Mick. The endorsement says "To Michael H. Casey, with compliments of Joe Richard and my best wishes. Edward J. Drea."

"A Clown of an Innings."

Some time ago Newsletter had a response to a few paragraphs in which the reader sensed a mild political (small p) theme. It was from the Revd. Wm. J. Carter. Bill and I shared a table at the Caulfield R.S.L. in November. Bill has kindly let Newsletter have a copy of his latest book, "A Clown Of An Innings".

Although it does contain a full page replication of the cover of "The Eavesdroppers" it is not about C.B. or the Wireless Units. Nevertheless they may have impacted Bill's life. Perhaps, next year, we might attempt to review "the Musings of a Cricketing Priest", which is how Bill describes his book.

Our Deadly Silent Heroes.

Melbourne "Herald Sun" journalist, Terry Brown, visited one of the Melbourne Reunion events. He received enough information about C.B. and the interceptors, including some war-time photos, to run a full page story in the "Herald Sun" of November 20 under the above startling headline. Geoff. Patience sent a copy to Gordon Gibson. Its a good story and would make C.B. people happy and the Wireless Unit people even happier. You could bet "odds on" that the Yamamoto story would appear and it did under its own special heading. It was also "odds on" that eavesdropping the message would be credited to I.W.U. No mention of the Americans and Honolulu.

The Canberra Sinking..

Jack Brown from South Australia reads the Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter. His attention was captured by an article by Dennis and Peggy Warner on the sinking of H.M.A.S. Canberra. The article is lengthy and refers to radio intercepts, code breaking, the late Eric Nave and the Kana Code. It concludes that Allied Commanders' complacent belief that they knew better than their intelligence cost thousands of lives. A case of Ultra not heeded perhaps.

Jack wrote to the Warner's to correct an error about the number of Kana signs. His letter struck a chord and was published in the April-May issue of the Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter. The letter outlined Jack's war-time role as a "Kana Operator" and described the Kana code.

PROFESSOR T.G. ROOM AND THE HUT 9 TEAM.

New Member Robert W. Brown recalls one of those Australian cryptographers and some of his team. Here are his recollections.

"Professor T.G. Room (Pure Maths, Sydney) remained a civilian until, in preparation for the move to San Miguel (which for this section did not eventuate), he was given the honorary rank of colonel and a full course of inoculations. He and his wife and family lived near Central Bureau and he went home for lunch every day, often enquiring first of one of the local personnel how long it would be before threatening clouds deluged the area. He regularly wore a 'uniform' of shorts and long socks, white shirt and tie. He died several years ago aged in his mid eighties.

Barry Smallman and I shared his office at one end of the building. All day he wrote and pored over figures on large sheets of paper, sometimes inviting Barry or me to sit in and see the result. He relied on us also for correlated material when he was sliding strips on print outs of messages sorted on specific groups. We had particular success with three figure traffic to from and within an air transport unit operating principally on the PNG north coast and sometimes farther west. Close proximity of the hut to that of Captain Eric Nave and Wing Commander Roy Booth enabled frequent conference with them.

Barry Smallman, one of the Oxbridge students drafted into the British Army, given a crash course in translation, and sent to Central Bureau, returned post war to complete his university studies and join the British Foreign Service. He served on most continents, some of his postings being New Zealand, the West Indies and finally Bangladesh as High Commissioner. Now retired, and living in Kent he is Chairman of the British Civil Service Selection Board and a council member of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge.

Colin Bevan returned to teach at the Brisbane Grammar School. Now retired, he sustained a stroke last year. Donald Friend died in recent years."

Turn to the back page to see whose faces you remember.

DARWIN REVISITED

Bruce Bentwich has contributed the following piece of nostalgia after a recent trip which included Darwin.

"Having spent the first nine months of 1944 with 2 W.U. at Coomallie Creek and then a week at the airport during September 1945 (due to the Liberator bringing us from Clark Field developing engine trouble and awaiting another flight to Sydney) I decided to take a tour of the Darwin region.

Darwin today is a very modern, cosmopolitan city of approx 80,000 residents, a far cry from the Darwin we knew devastated by Bombing and later cyclone Tracey. I believe some buildings such as the original Town Hall which survived the bombing were demolished by the cyclone.

From Darwin I visited Kakadu and Litchfield National Parks, Katherine Gorge, Mataranka, Crocodile Farm, Territory Wildlife Park, Air Force Museum and the Adelaide River War Cemetery a few miles south of Batchelor.

At the cemetery, which is a compliment to the War Graves Commission I inspected the plaque for "Jock" Mc.Wade who as far as I know was the only member of 2 W.U. to die during the war. If memory serves me right I believe he died of a stomach complaint which was not helped by medical incompetence. The inscription on the plaque reads:- *75267 Corporal A. Mc.Wade Royal Australian Air Force 16 th July 1944 age 20. Ever Remembered.*

People on the tour could not believe that most of the servicemen who died at Darwin were in the age bracket 19 to 25.

As a matter of interest Jock appears in the photo on page 86 of Jack Bleakley's "Eavesdroppers". He is standing second from left of the central post.

When speaking to the locals they tell me the concrete slabs for the kitchens etc. can still be seen to this day at the various camp sites in the area.

Bruce Bentwich.

Thanks Melbourne! It was a great weekend.

And thanks to everyone who contributed some words to the columns of Newsletter in 1993.

Share your recollections and write something in 1994.

Christmas Cheer & New Year Good Wishes!

Dennis Moore
Publicity Officer

183 Sylvania Road,
Miranda 2228

02 524 6267.

THE HUT NINE TEAM



Back row (l to r): Cyril Smith, Reg. Williams, Colin Bevan, Barry Smallman, Dick Smith, USA, Dick Wilkinson, Donald Friend.

Front row (l to r): Max Gershun, USA Judith Roe, Professor T.G. Room, Margaret Hill, Robert Brown.*

*Robert loaned this specially prepared bromide print for publication in "Newsletter".