



CENTRAL BUREAU INTELLIGENCE CORPS ASSOCIATION Inc.

September 2001.

Publicity Officer : Helen Kenny, 27/1-13 Mackenzie St, Lavender Bay NSW 2060 Email: lalkenny@hotmail.com

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

VP Day, 15th August, 2001.

In response to invitations received from the State Council of the R.S.L., I have in the last two years laid a wreath at the Cenotaph on behalf of the Association as part of the V.P. Day Ceremony. It seemed to be quite an honour for C.B.I.C.A. to have been singled out for this distinction and perhaps can be taken as recognition of the value of our World War 2 activities. However that may be, at the recent ceremony speeches were delivered by the Governor of N.S.W., Dr Marie Bashir, A.C., and of course by the State President G.E. Priest, A.M. On this occasion "Rusty" expressed at some length his condemnation of the Japanese Government for its total refusal over the years to admit responsibility for wartime atrocities.

Unit History.

No further news has been forthcoming in relation to our application for funding of a Unit History and in this case no news is certainly not good news. At Arthur Skimin's suggestion I contacted Kerry Blackburn who is now heading the Commemorations Branch responsible for the Government's 'Their Service, Our Heritage' Program. Unfortunately, the only information Kerry could give me was that our application had been forwarded on to Bruce Scott, Minister for Veterans' Affairs for his decision, but if he has made one he certainly has not disclosed it to us. Following discussion at the last Executive Meeting those members of the "Top Brass" who replied to our original letters indicating their support and asking to be informed of future progress have been informed of this situation in the hope that they may take some supportive action. Any suggestions as to what our next step should be would be appreciated.

Mini Reunion - Stockton R.S.L. Tuesday 13th November.

Already it seems a long time since we all met on Anzac Day and enjoyed that warm feeling that comes as we renew contact with old mates. Full details of the arrangements for our next get-together appear later in this Newsletter, but in case you forget, this is a reminder to mark this date in your calendar right now.

Gordon Gibson,
President,

67/1-9 Yardley Avenue,
WAITARA NSW 2077

Phone [02] 9487 3029 E-mail
sueg@optusnet.com.au

HON. SECRETARY'S PAR.

Hello, everyone, and good wishes to those back from hospital, not forgetting those who succumbed to the recent vicious virus.

In brief:- we are continually updating our mailing list. We maintain interest in the ongoing saga of The General Douglas MacArthur Brisbane Memorial Trust.

MINI-REUNION:-

Here are the details of the arrangements made by Gordon Swinney for get-together of CB members/wives & friends on Tuesday 13 November [repeat 13 November] at approx. Midday:-

VENUE: Stockton R.S.L. Club [Linda Garden]. Members are to pay for own meals and liquid refreshment in the Bistro. PLEASE do not send money to Treasurer Bruce.

TRAVEL:- to Newcastle Railway Station. Catch ferry to Stockton. Bus [Blue Ribbon Coaches] meets every ferry and drops passengers at R.S.L. Club. Bus also picks up from Club and returns to Stockton wharf [cost 70c each way]. On return, trains leave Newcastle Station hourly at approx. 25 minutes to the hour. Check out the Sydney-Newcastle City Rail timetable to make your connections. Ferries run every half hour. We look forward to seeing a good roll-up.

- > Stockton R.S.L. Club - [9428-2333]
- > Seagulls Café - [4928-3069]
- > Blue Ribbon Coaches - [4935-7200]

To the detriment of my dinner [burnt] I read straight through that great A.S.W.G. magazine 'Ink Emma Ink'. The very interesting extract on heart attack reminded me of a recent item in our War Vets' Village Journal "Yabba". I quote: STRESS MANAGEMENT - Picture yourself near a stream. Birds are chirping in the cool mountain air. Nothing can bother you here.

You are in total seclusion from that place called the world. The soothing sound of a gentle waterfall fills the air with a cascade of serenity. The water is so clear you can easily make out the face of the person whose head you are holding under the water. THERE NOW. FEELING BETTER?

Sadly, in closing, I must record the following:-

VALE

1. Mike Casey, South Strathfield N.S.W. [A.I.F.]
2. Ed Kelson, Hunters Hill, N.S.W. [A.I.F.]
3. Joyce Sandars [nee Roberts], A.W.A.S. Glen Waverley, Vic.
4. Nancy Hurley [nee Waterworth] U.S. W.A.C. Wife of Max, Casterton, Vic.
5. Norman Webb, St Ives, N.S.W. [A.I.F.]

Until next time, - Per Ardua ad Astra,

Joy Granger,
2N. RSLRVV,
P.O. Box 56,
NARRABEEN NSW 2101.

HON TREASURER'S PAR.

Having heard of a Kokoda Memorial in the Concord area, I discovered it is located a short distance from where I lived with my parents at Concord West, when a schoolboy in the 1930's.

The Kokoda Track Memorial Walk commences with a rose garden within the Concord Hospital Car Park, extends north for about 1 KM with the northern end at Bray's Bay Reserve, an inlet of the Parramatta River.

The easy walk is paved construction with a gentle gradient. At various points are 21 stations, granite topped with insertions detailing location and history of battles that took place nearly 60 years ago. Villages such as Deniki, Myola, Uberi, Gona, are just a few mentioned. All, of course, in the Owen Stanley Ranges.

Prior to the war the walk area was virtually a wasteland where my father and I went fishing, catching mainly eels, which was fun.

Those responsible for the Memorial must be congratulated as it is a wonderful tribute. Sponsors included the R.S.L. & Sub-branches, sporting and business organizations, private citizens, and the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

One of the sponsors was Concord R.S.L., a board member being Lew Kelsey, a neighbour in our school days. Both our fathers served with

the A.I.F. in France in WWI. Lew recited the Ode at Mike Casey's funeral service.

For those wishing to visit the site, easiest parking is at Bray's Bay Reserve, which borders Concord Road at Rhodes, although I believe weekend parking is difficult.

Within the area is a tearoom and undercover picnic facilities.

Now to C.B.I.C.A. matters.....

I had a letter from Joyce Stead who resides at Gympie, QLD., telling me her late husband Tom was also at 1 S.T.T. in the Exhibition Building, Melbourne.

Tom was then posted to R.A.A.F. Command, Brisbane, and tutored Dennis Moore in Kana. Dennis sent her a photograph some time ago.

From Brisbane, he then served in Townsville, Biak, New Guinea and finally in the Philippines, probably with 6WU, as Tom also was in the group to go to Japan, but fortunately the bomb put an end to that.

Joyce wonders if anyone remembers her late husband.

I also recently received a letter from Cec Cousins, who resides at Eleebana, just south of Newcastle, telling me of the illness problems both he and his wife have experienced over the last couple of years.

With advancing years, we are all getting a little "long in the teeth" but let's hope Cec and others have improving health. Incidentally, I recently saw Jim Kennedy on the bowling green at St Ives, and he still enjoys playing the game.

Finally, for those who have inquired, our Subs are not subject to G.S.T., and remain at \$10.00 p.a.

Bruce Bentwitch,
Hon. Treasurer,
7 Holly Street,
Castle Cove NSW 2069
[02] 9417-1427.

PROFILES

Les McClean.

Les, back on the Executive Committee after a few years away from it, joined the Army in March, 1942, when 18, did his basic training at Dubbo and followed this up with an N.C.O.'s Course.

After this, he was shipped to Western Australia, where, for a short time he was Company Dispatch Rider [Don R] to an Infantry Battalion. ["I never liked marching much" Les confesses].

Sniper training followed. Les, who'd been in the Cadets at Sydney Grammar School, found this interesting, "except that I had two rifles to clean!"

Les says that at 18 he was quite a good shot, a quick runner, and was lean and small, unlike the big-framed lads from the Western Australian farms.

Transfer to Brigade Intelligence came next, and in June 1942 he went to Central Bureau at 225 Domain Road, South Yarra, where he did decoding and cipher. His next address was 21 Henry Street, Ascot, and from there, it was to the Six-Mile, that distance from Port Moresby, Papua.

Les was injured in Port Moresby and was transferred to the Second A.G.H.

By the time he was well enough to leave hospital, C.B. had moved to Finchhafen [N.G.]. Les caught up with it there, and went with C.B. to Dutch New Guinea, to a post on Mt. Cyclops, 2,000 feet up. Posting to San Miguel in the Philippines followed, and then came transfer to Greenslopes Hospital [Brisbane] and, after an operation, time at a Rehabilitation Centre, then discharge at Liverpool, N.S.W.

Les's father was in the hotel business, and as a child Les had lived at the Sandringham Hotel, Newtown. In peacetime, Les joined his father at an hotel, married Naida [now deceased] had three children, [Sandra, Jeannette and David], and took on different jobs. After studying plastics and rubber technology at the University of N.S.W., he became licensee of the Leppington Inn of Trees, at Leppington.

Later, he became licensee of Phillips Foote, George Street, Sydney, in the historic Rocks area. Many CBers remember Phillips Foote as a favourite meeting place for lunch on Anzac Day, and also as a site for committee meetings.

At 60, Les decided to retire. One of his life's pleasures has been sailing, taken up when as a boy of 14 he'd sail from Charlie Busch's boatshed in Rushcutters Bay. Eventually, he became Commodore of the Cruising Yacht Club, and still keeps his boat there.

Two of his grandchildren, Lauren and Luke are skilled young sailors. Luke, 14, is National Junior Champion of Herron boats, Les says, with pride. Joel, Aaron and Jeremy also have their grandfather's devotion.

PROFILE #2.

Allan Norton, Executive Committee member.

Allan came from a small farming community near Albany in south-west Western Australia. In 1942, as a 17 year old, he enlisted in the R.A.A.F. as a W/T Operator and was posted to Ballarat, Victoria, No. 1 Wireless Air Gunners School. Subsequently, he was selected to participate in a "secret and dangerous mission" which turned out to be that of a Japanese Kana Code wireless message interpreter. The course was of a highly secret nature at the time, and training took place in a barber's shop at the Ascot Vale Showground, Melbourne. There are 71 symbols in the Japanese Kana signal alphabet, and because the Japanese tapped out Morse key signals very rapidly, they had to devise a type of shorthand representing these Kana signals which were later transposed back by the operator to the original Japanese signal transmitted. Speeds of up to 50 Kana words per minute were common place. Allan recalls the course lasted about 6 weeks, but the real learning curve took place in the actual interception conditions.

Allan's first posting as a Kana Code Receiver was to 1 W.U. in Townsville, Queensland. Signal receiving operations were conducted at Stuart Creek in a double brick shed which was disguised as a farm house and situated in a paddock. The actual radio receiver equipment used were museum pieces called HR7s and made by A.W.A. American HROs were also in use.

The Kana Code operators were initially accommodated in houses at Pimlico, a Townsville suburb. His recollection of 1 W.U. operators present in Pimlico in August 1942 were Bert Usher, Laurie Warren, Curly Wright, Tom Davis, Rupert Fisher, Dud Gillespie, Max Barrett, Keith Carolan, Harry Mills, Joe Ortlepp, Kel Hocking, Snow Watkins, Harry Atkinson, Ron Sims, Dick Cash, Doug Goebel, Bob Hearn, Mac Jamieson, Stan King, Chas McColl, Nippy Nalder, Ned Sparks, George Blumer, Ivan Auprince, Foo Bates, Len Carrig, Whiffy Donahoo, Len Hughes, Blue Jones, Ken Lloyd, Arthur Smartt, Pete Moncur, Bob Satchell, Dave Peterson, Paul Smith, Harold Whitty, Jack Bleakley, Bud Carberry, Frank Roche, Snow Justice, Allan Pharoh, Daisy Edmonson, Jack Beauchamp, Denny Scala, Ron Warlow, Geoff Hollins, Alby Jenkins, Brian Lowry, Allan Ryan, Stan Purcell and Lou Harris.

Shortly after all personnel were relocated to Roseneath [a bush camp] which was closer to the actual interception nerve centre farm house at Stuart Creek.

Receiving Kana signals was often extremely difficult because many Japanese transmitters used the same frequency, e.g. 8915 K.C.'s or 9080, so that on many occasions, it was like listening into a fowl-filled shed with different chooks cackling at varying volumes. Sometimes it was almost impossible to pick out one weak signal probably being sent from an aircraft about air raid intentions. Interception of radio signals was conducted around the clock with separate operator shifts each day. The occupation of Kana operator was very intense and stressful and contributed, he believes, to several operators suffering nervous breakdowns which led to their early deaths. It was imperative to receive the intercept information correctly the first time heard. Often the Japanese did not send repeats and our operators were never in a position to ask for any. As mentioned earlier, reception was usually extremely weak and in amongst incredible radio interference.

For this reason, it was imperative the Wireless Interception Units be as close as possible to the Japanese radio transmission points.

Subsequently 1 W.U. was relocated to a camp at John's Gully about 11 miles north of Port Moresby, and he recalls it was heavy work dragging those long timber poles up the hill so that they could be erected as part of radio signal reception aerials. Prior to his departure from Townsville, the operations there were taken over by women telegraphists and it was at this changeover that he met Joyce Linnane, Connie Giovanetti, Nicky Nicholson and Laurina Dale.

A forward party of intercept Kana operators was later sent from John's Gully to Salamaua and Nadzab.

As a 'Trick Chief', that is, in charge of a shift of Kana Operators, Allan was posted to 3 W.U. [he thinks it was] and travelled overland to Adelaide River to assist in the set up of the Army Intercept Unit there which was located beside the Dutch Beaufighter Squadron strip. All intercept radio equipment was installed in trucks and operators did their work from look-alike covered-in furniture removalist vehicles. His next move in interception work was to Morotai.

In 1945 he believes he was with 5 W.U. in San Miguel, Tarlac Province, Luzon, about 80 miles north of Manila, where Australian operators worked in very close collaboration with the Americans. The secret wireless equipment was housed in the office premises of the previous sugar cane and whisky distillery. His paddy field tent was shared with Mac Jamieson, Jack Bleakley and Stan King. The conditions and

food provided by the Americans were the best the Kana operators had ever received. At war's end, his Unit was amongst the closest Australian servicemen to Japan.

Post war, Allan completed his Bachelor of Commerce degree and accounting qualifications. For many years he conducted 3 businesses in Sydney, namely - Office Staff Recruitment, Public Accounting Practice, and a Real Estate Agency.

Katie and he now have grown up children. Whilst Allan is now semi-retired, he still remains active with Rotary, St George & Sutherland Community College, Commercial Business Brokers, the Bowel Cancer Research Program, Bushcare, and of course, the Sydney A.F.L. Swans. He has travelled across Australia 19 times, and around this continent on 4 occasions.

ENIGMA.

Last month the SMH film section informed us that Robert Harris's spy thriller "Enigma", with its Station X/Bletchley Park setting has been made into a film, due for screening in October in Australia.

Michael Apted directs, Kate Winslet is one of the stars, and Mick Jagger is co-producer of this film about "the subterranean heroes [who] crack the Nazi Enigma Code".

The report said: "Mick Jagger lent the film his original, four-rotor Enigma encoding machine for historical accuracy in construction props".

The next week the Herald ran an obituary about the British scientist Professor "Teddy" Hall, who, after serving in the RNVR as an ordinary seaman, went on to prove that Piltdown Man was a fraud and to carbon date the Turin Shroud.

Hall, a man of great brain and great wealth, gave generous endowments to science. He had been a collector since youth, starting with cigarette cards. In maturity he collected scientific instruments, "including an Enigma machine on which he sent coded messages to another owner".

So - must you be a millionaire to own an Enigma - if you can find one? Not quite - but close to it, it seems.

For answers, Newsletter rang Mr Matthew Connell, Curator of Computing and Mathematics at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney.

In 1994, Aub Roberts, our President, arranged for a small group of CBers to visit the Powerhouse, which had just bought an Enigma

for A\$30,000 from Sotheby's London Auction rooms. Mr Connell, Curator then as now, brought out the Enigma, handling it with white gloves. At the time [as Newsletter for September 1994 reported] it was thought that only 150 machines survived from several thousand that the Germans had made.

Mr Connell told us : "There are only three Enigma machines in Australia. We have one, and D.S.D. owns two, but has lent one to the War Memorial.

"Soon after we bought ours, two more were discovered overseas. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, more turned up behind the Iron Curtain. The price has gone through the roof. \$60,000 was the last figure given, but now it's nearing \$70,000".

Recently, Mr Connell, with a Powerhouse budget of \$80,000, put in a bid for a rare 12 rotor machine known as Fish. *Value? \$140,000*

The auction [held at Cologne] created great interest because it is thought that only five Fish exist in the world. The German name for these machines is Lorenz Geheim Schreiber [meaning "secret writer" or "personal secretary"].

[Mr Connell had more news for us. Mr Peter Wescombe, of the Bletchley Park Trust, will be giving a talk at the Powerhouse next January. C.B.I.C.A. will be invited].

Newsletter had one last question, this writer having memories of pounding a TypeX machine in the Henry Street garage. It was : "Have you a TypeX?". "We don't, but I'd love one," said Mr Connell. "If you turn one up get in touch with us first!"

H.K.

"The Chocolate Spy".

New member, Joan Cole, [nee Vickers] of Eltham, Victoria, was with the W.R.N.S. at Bletchley Park, then in Colombo. Her letter, held out for far too long because of space, follows:

"I worked on code breaking at Bletchley - and caught a spy! I was walking in the park one day and a pleasant young man spoke to me. 'Would you like a big box of chocolates?' he said. 'Rather!' I replied. 'Bring me what's in the wastepaper basket,' He said, 'and it's all yours - a big one!'. 'Rather,' I said. 'Where will we meet?'. He told me and I arranged for the Military Police to meet him instead. I think they pinched the chocolates. I never got them!"

A box of chocolates doesn't sound much of a bribe today. But, in war-rationed England, it could have tempted a girl of lesser will. Thanks, Joan, for the story!

H.K.

VALE Eleanor Hurst Bennetts [nee Smith].

Her eldest son and executor, Peter J. Bennetts, Wing Commander [Ret'd] wrote to us on March 8, 2001, from Belconnen, A.C.T.

It is my unfortunate duty to advise of the passing of my mother, Eleanor Hurst Bennetts [nee Smith], known as "Smithy" in her time in the W.A.A.A.F. Mum passed away in Corryong, Victoria, on 13th February 2001, and was interred in Corryong Lawn Cemetery on the 15th.

Over her life Mum spoke often of her time in the W.A.A.A.F. as a telephonist with Central Bureau, and of the acquaintances and friends she made then, although she only maintained contact with a small number - now mostly also passed on. She particularly spoke of 21 Henry Street in Brisbane, but sadly never had the opportunity to return. In some way, her stories may have influenced my own decision many years ago to join the R.A.A.F., where I served for 27 years before retiring in 1993.

Mum and Dad had married in April 1945, and raised five children born between 1946 and 1961. There were 14 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren at the time of her passing. Dad had predeceased Mum in 1989.

I'm not sure when Mum joined the C.B.I.C.A., but her old copies of the Association Newsletter went back to at least the early 80's. I do know that she enjoyed very much receiving and reading the Newsletter, and thank you and the Association for providing that facility.

Peter J. Bennetts, Wing Commander [Ret'd].

VALE Michael Henry Casey [1924 - 2001].

On Monday, July 30, 2001, family and friends of Michael Casey gathered at St Anne's Roman Catholic Church, South Strathfield, for a service to celebrate the life of our former President who had died the week before, aged 77.

Many CBers attended the service, and went on afterwards to Strathfield Golf Club for tea, drinks, and talk. Michael [Mike] and his wife Joyce first met here as playing members of this club in 1962 and married soon after. Their home for the past 28 years has backed onto the first green of the course, which seems an extension of their garden.

Michael's parents dairy-farmed at Hyde's Creek in the beautiful Bellinger Valley, about 10 Ks from Bellingen. They had five children - three boys and two girls. Life was hard on dairy farms in those days. With his brothers Jim and Brian, Mike was up at four in the morning to do the milking chores.

He rode to school, and came home for more milking the cleaning of dairy farm equipment. Hard work set the ethics of obligation and conduct for the boys and girls, Molly and Betty. For the rest of his life, Mike kept to these precepts.

After primary school, Mike became a boarder at Woodlands College, Lismore. Finishing his education there, he went back to the Bellinger Valley, to work in the office of Hammond and Wheatley, a remarkable country store which serviced the then-large community in the area. The war interrupted this job and Mike's study of accountancy by correspondence.

He joined the A.I.F., and was training at Dubbo, N.S.W., when the late Eddie Kelson chose him for posting to H.Q., Central Bureau, 21 Henry Street, Ascot.

After Ascot, the young, enthusiastic, ever-smiling Michael saw duty in Darwin, New Guinea, H.Q. Hollandia [Dutch New Guinea] and

later H.Q. San Miguel in the Philippines. Judging by the number of letters he received, Mike was certainly missed by the girls at Henry Street.

The time we spent at San Miguel in Tarlac Province was memorable. There was always the thought of the impending Allied invasion of Japan. But the atom bomb fell, peace came and the war was over.

Some of us celebrated with a little too much rum and coke at the nearby Barrio Mapalexio. We would soon be going home. Nevertheless, fearless Michael, Bill Coates and Peter Elkin had other plans. They took a five day leave-pass, and got a hitch on a U.S. Army truck to Manila and Clark Field Airbase.

There they met a friendly American pilot, and next day were on his B24 Liberator bomber, flying to Okinawa, from where they caught a C-46 transport plane to Tokyo. They may be counted among the first Australians to arrive in Tokyo after peace was declared.

"This was an extraordinarily dangerous journey, but they made it back to Tarlac just in time to catch a disgusting old goods train to Manila and the ship Francis N. Blanchet to Sydney."

Michael returned to Bellingen and to Hammond and Wheatley, completed his accountancy degree, moved to Sydney and joined Toohey's Brewery in 1956, remaining a valued executive for 30 years.

In 1985 Alan Bond acquired Castlemaine Toohey, Ltd. Long term members of senior staff were sacked, and the time-honoured right for publicans to sell their hotel leases plus the value of goodwill was cancelled. Many leaseholders faced liquidation or bankruptcy.

The matter went before Mr Justice Waddell in the Supreme Court. Mr Tom Hughes, Q.C. was Counsel for Toohey's and Michael represented 116 members of the leaseholders' action group as a key witness. His evidence was accepted. The verdict left Bond facing a thirty million dollar goodwill payout.

Some grateful members contributed to the trip Mike made to Gallipoli in 1990. [Joyce, who, of course, went with him, paid her way]. It was the 70th anniversary of the Anzac landing.

Their fathers, both in the 13th Battalion, A.I.F., had gone ashore at Anzac Cove some time after 18 minutes past four on April 25, 1915. At the Dawn Service in 1990, the Caseys remembered their fathers.

Mike had vast knowledge of Gallipoli and of the battles of the Western Front – Bullecourt, Verdun, Passchendaele, the Somme and Ypres. He had researched the responsibility for failures which resulted in such appalling loss of life, and was a passionate critic of the British War Generals, particularly of Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig. Our famous General Monash carried his absolute respect.

The Caseys, on their 1993 trip, were able to visit some of the Western Front battlefields, and also saw Rome, London, Ireland and the U.S.A., where they stayed with Joe Richard and Elsie, and visited Maurie Coombs and his wife Betty. [Joe and Maurie, both CBers, married Australians].

When in England, Mike and Joyce made a pilgrimage to Lords, to see a four-day Test played between Australia and England. "Australia won – of course", said the Caseys.

Mike played cricket, golf, tennis, squash and League, but his love for cricket came first. His father, Patrick, had sown the seed of interest in the game. At the S.C.G., there was never a louder voice of protest than when the umpire failed to agree with Michael's decision 'OUT!!'. He had an eye like a hawk, and enjoyed the history and rules of the game. Mike was a life member of the S.C.G., and liked to occupy the same seat in the M.A. Noble Stand. At home, the unspoken rule was "Don't pass between Michael's chair and the T.V. screen" when he was watching cricket.

CB members were fortunate to have Michael as President for several terms. He was an excellent president and committee member, and was honoured by C.B.I.C.A. by being proclaimed a Life Member.

He was professionally suited to his occupation, loyal to his employers, and admired and respected by his family and friends. Mike cherished his wife Joyce, loved his devoted daughter Joanne, and was absolutely besotted by his only grandchild, 16-months-young little Courtney.

We miss you, Michael.

Frank Hughes.

VALE Edgar Kelson

Subsequent to my enlistment in May 1940 following the Dunkirk debacle earlier that year, I received a call to report at the Sydney Agricultural Showground the next month. There, I joined a recruit training battalion. Edgar Kelson happened to be a member of the same unit.

Our friendship began when I learned he had been responsible for the formation of several all Jewish Boy Scout Troops in New South Wales. In my younger days I also led an active life in the Scouting movement. Hence a friendship began that continued to the day of his death.

Some weeks later, while standing on parade in Moore Park outside the Showground, we were visited by a colonel who walked along our ranks and ordered this man and that man to take one step forward. Edgar and I happened to be two of about 70 chosen.

Our group was sent to Seymour in Victoria for further training with No. 1 Special Wireless Unit, a formation within the First Australian Corps of Signals. Our new unit eventually became the foundation of the Australian Special Wireless Group.

We left Australia by sea aboard the most prestigious liner of the British Merchant Navy – the "Queen Mary". Our convoy of 5 vessels, accompanied by several warships, proceeded to Colombo in Ceylon, now called Sri Lanka. The Queen Mary, being too large to enter the harbour there, proceeded to Trincomalee, where we and other troops were transferred to smaller ships, which took us to the northern end of the Red Sea.

After a brief stay near Alexandria we moved northward into Palestine. While there Edgar and I were sent to a special intelligence training centre at Cairo where we were taught the secrets of evaluating German and Italian radio transmissions made vocally or transmitted in Morse Code.

In North Africa, Greece and Crete, Edgar's contribution was particularly significant with regard to desert warfare. He listened to the voices of German tank commanders commenting on the vagaries and risks of the battles in which they were engaged. Likewise, he monitored the vocal and Morse code transmissions of German air crews. This provided valuable information to those commanding Army, Navy and Air Force at the highest level.

With regard to the fighting in Greece and on Crete, many died, more wounded, suffered dysentery and a large number were captured by the German invaders. Concerning Crete, a recent news item in the Sydney Morning Herald stated that the ratio of casualties suffered by British and Australian troops engaged in fighting was greater than any other action throughout either World War I and World War II. In all these circumstances Edgar did not betray any sign of anxiety, nervousness or panic.

During our escape from Greece to Crete we were put aboard a small ship at Piraeus, the port adjacent to the city of Athens. This vessel was about the size of a Sydney to Manly ferry. As fellow passengers we had a number of British consular officials, together with their wives and families. In addition, there were 130 captured German paratroopers.

These prisoners were placed in the ship's cargo hold, guarded by several of our men.

Edgar's responsibility was to listen to their conversation. In doing this he discovered their plan to overpower the guards and seize control of the ship, a real possibility in view of the fact that the guards had with them most of the automatic weapons. Thus we sailed the sea alone to Crete to fight again and escape once more.

We came back to Australia in 1942, landing at Adelaide. There, Edgar Kelson "vanished". I was sent to the newly formed C.B. in Melbourne. Later, I found that Edgar Kelson had been posted to C.B. at 21 Henry Street, Ascot. He was Quartermaster, then Adjutant, and held the rank of Captain.

After the war Edgar rejoined his father's importing firm and later managed it after his father retired.

Meantime, our friendship continued until the day of his death, cemented not only by the hospitality and kindness given to me whenever I visited their home in Bellevue Hill, but also through the common interest Edgar and I shared in the realm of music.

Stan Winn.

VALE Norman Webb

Norm and I joined Central Bureau about the same time in September 1943. I remember him then as a bright young fellow with a great sense of humour and a keen interest in sport. We were team mates in an Army cricket eleven playing in Brisbane on our rest days. Our paths divided in 1944 most of which I spent in Darwin while Norm was in New Guinea.

We met up again in San Miguel, and I have recollections of playing hotly contested softball matches against the Yanks with Norm in a team of which Max Hurley was captain and the late Bob Frost catcher. Like Max Hurley, whose story also appears in this Newsletter, Norm, while at San Miguel became engaged to a beautiful young W.A.C.

Unlike Max, Norm had to wait impatiently for some months after the war for his fiancée Patricia to arrive in Sydney from her home town in Boston, Mass. They were married promptly after that and became lifelong partners. After completing an Economics Degree at Sydney University, Norm had a successful business career with the M.L.C. Insurance Co., managing its branches in Lismore and Parramatta.

Norm was present at the inaugural C.B. reunion at Kensington in October 1974, but did not actually become a member until quite recently. I am sure a lot of us would have liked to have had a longer contact with him. In addition to his devotion to his family and his love of sport and travel, Norm gave a lot of time to Volunteer Community work. Very sadly for Norm his wife passed away three years ago. He was survived by his two sons Ross and Phillip.

Gordon Gibson.

VALE Nancy Lou HURLEY [nee WATERWORTH]. U.S. W.A.C.

Letter from Max Hurley, 85 Jackson St, Casterton, Vic. 3311.

"This is a message to tell of the death of my loving wife, Nancy Lou [nee Waterworth]. We were married on August 5th, 1945 in Tarlac. We had a wonderful time together. We hope the ones who came to our wedding enjoyed themselves.

We had a lovely life together, with our two daughters, living in the country most of our time. we thank all who can remember us. Wish you all a happy life and all the best,

Max Hurley."

Yes, Max. many do remember that wedding in the beautiful chapel at San Miguel. [see photograph]. Others remember how you renewed your marriage vows 40 years later in October 1985 at Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.A., with the same minister and organist present. As Geoff Ballard wrote in "On ULTRA Active Service"

"It was Nancy's first visit to her former home country in the 40 years since their marriage and Max's first-ever visit to the U.S.A. ... About 90 former SIS/Central Bureau members attended the Louisville reunion, including 12 of the original guests at the San Miguel wedding. Of these, six were former hut mates of Nancy Lou."

Newsletter asked Max to tell us more about Nancy Lou.

Back came the reply [which we have had to edit slightly for reasons of space]. It was headed :-

Nancy and Max

New Year's Eve 1945, Max landed at Hollandia. He reported for duty on the early shift. When he arrived he was a bit surprised at having only one W.A.C. on duty. All the rest had gone to a New Year's Eve party, including Nancy Lou Waterworth.

The girls then put in a long shift to catch up. Max didn't take long to get to know all the girls. They worked shifts and had to work all the lead up to messages to give the idea of what quantity of messages any given place sent. The W.A.C. took their meals in a large cookhouse down a steep hill.

This meant a big walk up and down, but this kept the girls nice and slim and fit.

After lunch they went swimming in their homemade togs to keep cool.

One day we went boating on General MacArthur's boat which he kept on Lake Sentani. It was a close go as everyone dived over when the boat was still going and the boys had to help the girls into the boat. Fortunately, no-one was hurt and the General's boat was saved, but of course no-one wanted to go boating again. They were satisfied with going out on the hill with a blanket for a cuddle....".

"Max and Nancy borrowed a jeep and drove down to Hollandia to see Max's cousin who was a nurse on a hospital ship. Nancy went to sleep as she had just come off night shift.

"We went from Hollandia to San Miguel and the girls had a nice camp in what was a country club. Several rooms were used as W.A.C. club rooms".

The church was being built for services and particularly for the wedding service for Max and Nancy in August. The marriage took place in the new church and the reception was in the American dining room. The honeymoon was at the Y.W.C.A., Manila, the couple being taken to Manila by MacArthur's driver.

There was not a lot of time for the couple to be together as the war finished and they were both shipped home. Then Nancy came to Australia [from Indiana]. She and Max lived in Melbourne where their first daughter was born. Later another daughter was born, so Nancy had a very happy family. Once Max and Nancy settled down they took a trip to Manila where they had enjoyed the early part of their life. Years later they went to U.S.A. for the Unit reunion which was most enjoyable. Everything was very happy until

Nancy got cancer. After a short illness she passed away in May, 2001, much to Max's sadness.

Max Hurley



Max and Nancy's Wedding