at Lysaght’s own firing range near the Springhill Road Plant, where the gun was developed and eventually manufactured.”

“Timothy’s job at Lysaghts was spotting targets while Owen Gun testing was taking place at a firing range within the works site.

“The spotter sheltered in a pit near the targets and emerged after every burst of fire to indicate where the bullets had hit.

“Tim went to mark the target during a reloading pause after one burst of fire. However, one round of ammunition remaining in the test gun’s magazine was discharged with Tim in the direct line of fire alongside the target.”

Timothy Ryan was buried in Shellharbour cemetery with no special community or military honours.

Research on Tim Ryan’s death was apparently “triggered”, according to Ron Tindall, after Figtree resident Milton East “related how the Owen Gun death was still clear in his memory.”

Ron Tindall is to be congratulated for this ground-breaking piece of research. Why the Mercury is consigning such historical gems to page thirty is beyond me. Ron Tindall’s been doing good work for a long time. I first encountered his writing in the November 1967 edition of the quality publication Walkabout.

PRESERVING WENTWORTH STREET PORT KEMBLA

I noted recently that the NSW Town of Maitland was to have its entire Main Street nominated for National Estate listing because of its surprisingly intact streetscape of nineteenth century shops.

If ever a heritage precinct in Wollongong needed preserving in toto it is Wentworth Street, Port Kembla. I know of no more intact between the wars strip shopping centre anywhere in Australia. Even movie producers have started to recognize its value and at least one production has utilized both the street and the marvellous Port Kembla baths as the location for a feature film. Some time ago SBS used the street as opening frames for a locally produced
Despite the unfortunate interior remodelling of the art-deco Commonwealth bank and the fire damaged Whiteway cinema, the street has massive potential now that it remains in the economic doldrums and real estate is extraordinarily cheap. The brains behind our much touted ‘Industry World’ should have the imagination to get the entire street declared as part of our National Estate before this precious between the wars streetscape is either demolished or unsympathetically ‘renovated’ out of existence.

THE ILLAWARRA STAR

Has anyone heard of or, better still, possesses copies of a local newspaper called The Illawarra Star. I am not familiar with it but an acquaintance informs me it was owned by W.C. Wentworth. Furthermore, this acquaintance informs me that one of its journalists, David Henwood, was an undercover Military Intelligence Officer who spent a lot of time with an ironworker called Gordon King, who was the local head of the Communist Part of Australia.

I would be delighted to hear from any reader who can provide any information about Henwood or King. I would be even more pleased to hear that somewhere someone has preserved some copies of the Illawarra Star, particularly those produced in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

RICE PADDIES IN PRIMBEE

I’ve recently been informed that the area where the sports oval is in Primbee today was once given over to rice paddies established by Chinese Market Gardeners.

I have not previously encountered references to rice growing in Illawarra and wonder if any reader can verify the claim about rice growing in the Primbee area.