



SECRETS & SPIES

RESEARCH PROJECT

MUSEUM
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL
MARITIME MUSEUM

ANNETTE WAGNER – SPY

Blog by St Mark's Anglican Community School, Australia

Our group is made up of Patrick Kenny, William Brook and Jake Carpenter. We are in year 11, 10 and 10 respectively at St Marks Anglican Community School and all have a fascination with military history and the Second World War specifically. St Mark's Anglican Community School is a co-educational school in Perth, Western Australia. St Mark's was officially opened in 1986 and since have expanded to cater to 200 staff members and 1700 students. St Mark's is also just a five-minute walk from the beach which forms part of Western Australia's beautiful coastline. The state has a population of 2.67 million with the capital, Perth, having a population of 2.28 million.

Annette Wagner was a Swiss born German spy based in Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia from 1938 to January 1940. She had a radio station that she would broadcast secret messages to sympathisers with, took intelligence photos of Newcastle Harbour and monitored Australian Army units. She left Australia in 1940 and ended up working for Nazi intelligence in Europe for the rest of the war. She was arrested by French police in 1946 and jumped to her death from the interrogation room.

Our idea for the final digital product will be a recreation of one of Annette's radio broadcasts on the ABC. Her radio station would offer fashion advice to her listeners and traveling tips. She would also read out fake telegrams from Paris in French at the beginning and conceal intelligence messages to sympathisers and other spies within it. Our recreation of the broadcast would feature a voice actor who would portray the character of Annette Wagner and then go through a typical broadcast that she would perform.

Below is a short description of each team member's interest in the topic of espionage and World War Two:

William Brook, Year 10. Within WW2 I'm interested in the part that Great Britain had to play. This could be from the RAF to the 8th Army in North Africa. The politics pre, during and post war are also an interest of mine. I have also found spying an interesting topic within ww2 because it can be so pivotal. This obviously led to a fascination of Annette Wagner, who was such a unique spy.

Patrick Kenny, Year 11. I am interested in the global diplomacy and politics before and throughout the war is quite interesting as well. On the militaristic side of things I'm more interested in the European theatre compared to the Pacific. The Gestapo is quite interesting and this led to a fascination with Annette as she worked in close coherence with Nazi intelligence when she went back to Europe.

Jake Carpenter, Year 10. My grandmother's Croatian heritage has inspired an interest in Yugoslavian history, specifically during the Second World War. After the collapse and subsequent capitulation of Yugoslavia following the German invasion Tito led Europe's most successful resistance movement in the eventual hope of reestablishing Yugoslavia's sovereignty under a socialist regime. Continuing with the theme of resistance movements I am also interested in spies and espionage which has led to my interest in Annette Wagner.

