

CIRCULAR

458 SQUADRON NEWS



THE EDITOR.

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ALL-STATES REUNION IN SYDNEY:

ANZACTIME FESTIVAL FOR 458 SQUADRON.

Squadron members came to the Anzac Festival in large numbers, both from Interstate and from the Country. There were many functions planned for wives and families during the week and, mostly, the wives were there in welcome numbers. Officially, the Festival started on Wednesday April 24th., but unofficially Sydney members were well engaged in small parties to welcome interstate members for some days before. There were parties, small but gay, at the Woolpack Hotel in Parramatta to welcome Len MacDonnell and Bob McKinna and their wives. There was an unexpected party at Frank Mahony's home in Hurstville to welcome Cec Percy. We hadn't seen Cec since the War-didn't know his whereabouts. In fact he and his family were in Victoria. They didn't know 458 was still in being. But a few days before the Reunion Cec saw a par. in the Melbourne Herald mentioning that Jim Munday and other Victorian members were off to Sydney to attend the Reunion. Cec rang up Jim, got the details, and got into his car with his wife and two daughters and drove straight up to Sydney. Delighted Sydney was to see them.

Wednesday April 24th. In the evening, after a day spent in meeting interstate and country members, Squadron members and their wives gathered near the Cenotaph in Martin Place, and members marched to the Cenotaph where the Squadron Vice President (deputising for Squadron President Gordon Orchard) placed a wreath in memory of the Squadron Dead. The wreath was built round a centrepiece which incorporated the post-war 458 Badge.

After the Ceremony, which was attended by about 40 members, members and their wives moved round to the Air Force Club in George Street for an informal reception. It was a gay and cheerful Evening. After the Reception, some Sydney members accompanied the Interstate members back to the Hotel Sydney, where most of them were staying, for a few more beers.

THE MARCH.

Thursday-Anzac Day. 458 gathered round the Squadron Banner in Hospital Road from about 9.0 a.m. on in preparation for the Anzac March. As usual we had a long wait while the Army and Navy led off but this gave us the usual chance to chat with old friends.

The Squadron Vice President (Peter Alexander) again deputised for the President (who was detained in Geelong by business) and led the Squadron--supported by Arthur Green (Victorian Secretary) and Erle Hetherington (Queensland Committeeman)--and followed by Jim Munday carrying the Banner, escorted by Cy. Irwin and Bob Milner. About 70 members marched. This Anzac March, as members overseas may not know, is a major event each Anzac Day in each Australian City. Returned Servicemen march with their old Units in large numbers and the Streets are crowded with enthusiastic spectators.

THE REUNION.

After the March terminated in the Sydney Domain, members made their ways to the South Sydney Police/Citizens Boys Club, a fine modern brick building, where the All-States Reunion was held. Members came in, in groups of old Squadron crewmates or close friends arrived until we had approaching 100 members there. We served, all in all, 50 gallons of Resch's Beer chilled in a special Portabeer. We ate an excellent lunch preceded by a substantial snack of Frankfurters, fish pieces, sausage rolls etc., Arrangements went with the greatest smoothness--a great tribute to the work of N.S.W. Secretary, Allan Walker, and the N.S.W. Committee--notably Cy. Irwin, Eric Munkman, Sam Barlow and Graeme Coombes--to mention only a few. While the members were at the Reunion, their wives were entertained by

Sydney (cont.) Dorothy Munkman and her Ladies' Auxiliary. The outcome of their trip to the Taronga Park Zoo is reported elsewhere.

After we had drunk enough to serve as an introduction to Lunch and had had lunch, there was a Minute's Silence in Memory of Departed Comrades. The Silence ended with the reading of the Act of Commemoration (in the form used by W/Cdr. Mackay on Anzac Day in Gibraltar) in these words:

"Hallowed in Christ be the Memory of Brave Men and Women who have died for the Freedom of the World. They shall yet stand before the Throne, an exceeding great Army, and in that last muster there shall be found our own well-beloved of 458 Squadron. They were young, straight of limb, true of eye. They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted. They fell with their faces to the Foe. They shall not grow old, as we who are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the Years condemn. At the going down of the Sun and in the Morning, we shall remember them."

The N.S.W. President then briefly welcomed members, particularly those from interstate and the country. He said that the degree to which 458 men were prepared to travel to attend Squadron functions was an indication of the spirit which had made 458 the quite unparalleled organisation it is. To the long-travelling members he said, "To have come from so far, gentlemen, is a Testament of abiding friendship which we know how to value."

Proceedings were recorded, by the aid of Dick Healey, and members recorded messages to be sent to friends of 458 in England. A recording from the U.K. was played over during the afternoon. Many remembered voices were heard: Harry Bishop calling Lofty Chalmers, Pete Campbell and Bill Carr. Steve Search calling Ken Crago (who had come down from Gunnedah for the Reunion.) Johnno, Mick Mason and many others. The Reunion went on till after 6.0. when the sixth keg reached its end. The large and attractive Hall of the Police/Boys Club was filled with groups of old Squadron friends. We recall, to instance one or two, observing a group in which Ralph Bailey, Pete Pettit and Arthur Lehdey were prominent and others which included Stuart Currington and Bill Turier; Wally Archbold, Terry Waldon, Bob McKinna; Len MacDonnell, John MacKellar, Stuart Ricketts and Col. Corten. Another round Bob Male, Harry Baines, Sam Barlow and Cec. Percy.

This seems a suitable place to list the names of 458 ers who came to one or more function during the Anzac Festival.

D. Firth	Cec. Percy	A. J. Walker	A. Hammond	E. Munkman	G. F. Coombes	K. Beach	E. Doman
S. Longhurst	A. Piggott	D. Bitnead	J. Hawke	N. Griffiths	J. Miller	F. Hickey	J. Ind
W. Archbold	C. Nation	J. C. Baker	E. J. Baker	B. Lyndon	B. Reynolds	P. Alexander	B. Lord
B. McKinna	B. Millar	N. Bertram	"Yank" Martin	C. Irwin	T. Waldon	L. MacDonnell	R. Davies
L. Chalmers	H. Galvin	T. Mitchell	J. Aitken	G. Bartlett	H. Bryant	D. Millard	R. Burgess
L. Piggott	R. Hansell	C. Hankel	F. Stron	E. Hetherington	J. Carey	T. Harris	B. Astley
G. Catchlove	G. Burgess	F. Mahony	J. Whitten	D. Healey	D. Cook	L. Barton	D. Anderson
J. Preston	J. Wadsworth	A. Dombkins	N. Skinner	P. Pettit	C. Corten	S. Barlow	T. Moore
K. Guiney	J. Munday	A. Green	B. Carr	M. Egan	J. Pratt	P. Bailie	F. Ward
J. Fenwick	R. Bailey	A. Lehdey	J. McGowen	B. Thompson	J. Dunn	C. Hayward	B. Turier
S. Currington	H. Baines	B. Male	C. Hoskings	G. Cannon	G. Balmer	H. Marks	R. Hills
A. Macmaster	G. Bradd	E. Purcill	B. Lamond	K. Crago	F. Ridge	A. Ashton	J. Bevan
T. Fabian	A. Jollow	R. Milner	J. Nichols	W. Sullivan	D. Whiteman	R. Tyson	

After the Reunion, and a brief break for some meat pies at the Air Force Club, was held the annual meeting of the Squadron Conference, 458's top governing body. This meeting is reported elsewhere.

Friday April 26th.

THE ANZAC DANCE.

Friday, being a free day, gave members a chance to work, to rest or to have a look at Sydney with their wives. In the Evening was the Dance. This was held at Transport House in Cleveland Street, a new venue for 458 Dances. We had a good attendance an excellent Band and a supper it would be hard to equal anywhere in the world.

A novelty effect was the issue of Leis to all the Dancers, each Lei bearing a number. There were prizes for certain numbers---of which the first three were 4, 5, and 8, curiously enough. Supper, organised by the Ladies Auxiliary, included oysters, fish, frankfurts and coffee. Kemp Beach was M.C. and a good choice too. Like all 458 Dances it was a happy occasion. We ourselves (the Editor) remember thinking, while watching 458ers dancing to the haunting melody of the Pride of Erin, how stirring an achievement in postwar friendship 458 had become. We thought (perhaps we had reached the stage of fatigue when the imagination becomes fanciful) that in 20 years we would look back and strive to recreate in our memory this scene of old and valued friends dancing.

After the Dance---which went on an hour longer than planned---some of the Sydneyside members went back to the Sydney with the Interstate members for a drink. We

All-States in Sydney (Cont.) understand one N.S.W. Official went to sleep on this occasion-- a sleep he well deserved.

THE HARBOUR TRIP.

Saturday April 27th.

A specially hired Launch, called "Protend", took a party of 44 adults and perhaps as many children on a cruise along the south shore of the Harbour, past Garden Island and Mrs. Macquarie's Point, Rushcutters Bay, Rose Bay to Watson's Bay where we turned north to cross the Heads to Middle Harbour. We had just the right number for the ship, the weather was perfect. As we passed the beautiful houses and gardens which still line the Harbour shores, particularly in Middle Harbour, up to the Spit, even Sydney members could declare they had had no idea the Harbour was so lovely.

The children were given soft drinks on board and we stopped at the pretty and secluded little Cove at Parsley Bay, where the Ladies Auxiliary organised tea.

PARTY AT THE PIGGOTTS.

That evening, about 40 members and wives went to a party given by Alan and Kitty Piggott at their Ryde home. They had a royal time, dancing, chatting and eating one of the suppers for which Kitty Piggott is famous. Apart from that it was a delight to be entertained by Alan--one of 458's major personalities. We cannot pass from Saturday without recording Alf Hammond's star turn when sitting on a rail at the side of the Marquee; he leaned back and suddenly disappeared from view. He came up out of the outer darkness of the garden outside, minus (squadron bow) tie but still with a lit of beer in his glass. He promised us a repeat performance later on but this did not eventuate.

Sunday April 28th.

GOLF/BARBECUE AT WALLACIA.

A 458 Convoy left the Melba Theatre at Strathfield and drove out to the Picnic Area near the Nepean River at Wallacia. Cy Irwin and Frank Hickey got the golfers off, while Kemp Beach and Dick Healey looked after the Keg, Bob and Pat Lyndon barbecued and the Ladies prepared lunch. The Anzac Cup this year was won by Jack Miller of Sydney with Stuart Ricketts as Runner-up. Doug Millard won a prize for interstate and country players and Joe Murphy for visitors. Another beautiful day concluded with a party for interstate and country members at Sam Barlow's in the Evening.

PORTRAIT OF THE SQUADRON PRESIDENT.

Squadron Conference, held during the Anzac Festival, elected SAM BARLOW as Squadron President. He succeeds GORDON ORCHARD who has held that office for the past three years with distinction.

Sam, during the war served as Observer in Col Fereday's crew, in the Bone/Alghero period. His operational tour with 458 was brought to a conclusion when a hung-up bomb exploded under their Wellington on landing, and he was severely wounded. Other members of the crew lost their lives.

Returning to Sydney he cut short a University course to go into business in the Drapery trade of which he has made a considerable success, being a partner in a number of shops now. He took from the first a lively interest in the post-war 458 and played a part second to none in the creation of the organisation in N.S.W. and later on in other States. He was for several years N.S.W. Treasurer and is currently senior N.S.W. Vice President. He has been notable for intense and constant loyalty to everything 458 has attempted and done. He has lent all his business ability and determination to the progress of Squadron projects. 458 would not, in fact, be 458 without Sam. He has attended all the All-States Reunions.

Notable for a Viking-like ability to deal with beer himself, his generous and warm hospitality has been one of the great factors in cementing 458 together.

Good luck to him.

The DAZED DELEGATE is not publishing his diary this time. He declares, anyhow, that he was not dazed merely breathless with keeping up with the events. We are, instead, able to provide the story of...well, we were going to say, of the DIZZY DAMES...but perhaps we shouldn't. But let them speak for themselves in the story of Room 234 and the Visit to the Zoo.

OFF TO THE ZOO

by

Dorothy Munkman.

With my Committee, of the Ladies Auxiliary, it was my pleasure to entertain our visiting Ladies during their stay in Sydney for the Anzac Week.

Women being barred from Reunions it fell to us to take the visiting Reunion-widows under our wings on Anzac Day. Being very noble (Sydney mothers of children know what a day at the Zoo is like, although to visitors its a sight to be seen) I suggested to our guests that we should show them the Zoo.

After lustily cheering our men in the March (by the way, Elsie, how's Bill ?)

Personalities (cont.)

DON BITMEAD is now with the A.T.C., making the fourth 458er in Sydney to join;

CEC PERCY has a Motor Body and General Repair Works, in partnership with his brother at Frankston Road, Dandenong, Victoria (Twin Bridge Motors);

KEN BROWN is now farming at Katunga, Victoria;

GEORGE UNWIN with Peg and the family, has moved from Sydney to Crookwell, near Goulburn, N.S.W., where he is managing a Store. His multitude of friends in Sydney, and in particular, members of the N.S.W. Committee will very greatly miss George's friendly and loyal personality. They will look forward to seeing Peg and George again soon;

SVEN HANSEN is with the Dumaresque Shire Council in N.S.W.; we understand he is Senior Clerk;

PETE PETTIT; to Pete and his wife, our sincere congratulations on the birth of a daughter (Nicola);

KEN CRAGO paid a welcome visit to Sydney for the Reunion from Gunnedah. He was sorry not to see George Morgan there but proposed to look him up in Singleton;

BERT FRANCOMBE is with the London County Council;

RON TONKIN is understood to be at Ettalong Beach, N.S.W.;

MAX EGAN is with the Industrial Hose Dept. of Goodyear Rubber, Sydney. Max is now the Father of five children. He sends good wishes to Shorty Taylor;

ALLEN WALDON has a Galtex Service Station at Grafton;

BLUEY LAMOND looked in at the Sydney Reunion, bearing the appearance of much well-being. He is with Beales Pianos and has also recently built a War Service Home;

AUB DOMBKINS, who also was at the Sydney Reunion, has been ill. We wish him complete recovery;

JIMMY WHITTEM is going to Alice Springs soon as Deputy Director of Animal Industry. He is at present with the Veterinary Dept. of Sydney University;

WALLY "CAESAR" BAIRD has been on a visit to Adelaide;

CLARRIE HANKEL has a sheep property at Henty, N.S.W. which he is building up. He was ill for some years but is now recovered. He is married with two boys. Clarrie says he will shew W/Cdr. Dowling some good duck shooting at Henty if he gets in touch within there.

KEN KNAGGS is Master of Apprentices with Australian Iron and Steel at Port Kembla, N.S.W.;

NICK BERTRAM who flew over from Adelaide for the All-States Reunion is a hopeful starter for next year's Reunion in Perth.

BOB MALE came down to Sydney from Queensland for the Reunion and was most welcome.

1958 ALL-STATES REUNION TO BE IN PERTH.

Squadron Conference, meeting recently in Sydney, accepted the invitation of the Western Australian Flight to hold the 1958 All-States Reunion in Perth. Delegates expressed the opinion not only that it was a very excellent idea to hold the next Reunion in the West but that members going there would have a really first class tire. Interstate members are asked to start planning now to make the trip--- preferably with their families. The N.S.W. Secretary elsewhere gives a few facts and figures about fares and means of travelling there.

SANDGROPPERS SAY.....

W.A. Flight News from Jack Riseley.

Since my return to the West there have been two events on the Western Australian Calendar; the Annual General Meeting and the Anzac Day Reunion.

Numbers at the Annual General Meeting were disappointingly small, but in the West non-attendance does not always mean lack of enthusiasm for some country members find it far too difficult to attend.

Al. Wheat always seems to make it---there is always a car or some business to be attended to in Perth coincident with any meeting. He is definitely one of the stalwarts. Len Stewart was re-elected President. Butch Power (the Reluctant Dragon) Secretary. And Shorty Long Vice President. Minor placings were given to Ron Gannaway, Ray Turley and Peter McCarthy as Committee members.

As the West is to be Host Flight for the '58 General Assembly, it seems that these boys---and indeed every W.A. Squadron member---will have plenty to do during the forthcoming months to make sure that the interstate members sample some of that Western Australian hospitality for which the State is famous. Make every meeting a MUST from now on, you 'gropers, as there'll be a place for you on one of the numerous Committees which will be formed to cope with the influx from the East.

