

CIRCULAR

# 458 SQUADRON NEWS



ITEM EDITOR.

Box 5289, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

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November, 1958.

## ARCHDEACON DAVIES UNVEILS 458 PLAQUE. BRILLIANT ADELAIDE CEREMONY.

Padre Bob Davies, Air Force Chaplain to the Mediterranean Area during the War, who is now Anglican Archdeacon of Wagga Wagga in New South Wales, flew to Adelaide to unveil a 458 Squadron Plaque on September 21st.

The Plaque commemorates the Squadron's War Dead and is placed near a 458 Memorial Tree, planted at Adelaide's West Beach Airport.

Long Preparations. Arrangements for the Plaque and Tree were carefully planned by the South Australian Flight for nearly a year and the success of the Ceremony corresponded to the thoroughness of the work done. Originally it was intended to erect the Plaque at Edinburgh Airfield but later it was decided to erect it at West Beach Airport where the general Public could see it (Edinburgh Airfield having Security restrictions).

Civil Aviation Help. The Department of Civil Aviation, which controls West Beach Airport strongly approved and supported the idea and made available an excellent site. The Department hopes other Squadrons will also plant Memorial Trees there. The Tree planted by 458 Squadron is a Paperbark.

The Ceremony. Over 200 people attended the unveiling ceremony by Padre Bob Davies, which took place at 11.0 a.m. on Sunday September 21st. The Mayor of Brighton spoke on behalf of the Visitors, who included representatives of the Returned Soldiers League, the Public Service, other Squadrons, and relatives of the Fallen. After Bob Davies had spoken, he unveiled the Plaque in memory of the War Fallen of 458 Squadron. Press pictures, which gave a full coverage, shew the Padre withdrawing the 458 Squadron Banner from the Plaque, with the assistance of an Adelaide Padre, Padre H.E. Shepherd and the support of S.A. President Lofty Trewartha.

Bob Davies pointed out the selection of the place for the Tree and Plaque, adjacent to the beautiful hangar housing the plane in which Ross and Keith Smith made the first flight between England and Australia, was significant of a correlation of courage and intrepidity.

Ron Badger's work. S.A. Flight officers commented afterwards that the success of the arrangements was in a great measure due to Committeeman Ron Badger. They said that Ron had gone to great pains in selecting a Tree, arranging for the Plaque to be made, for the cement foundations to be constructed and contacting those interested.

The site selected is a beautiful one and the Department of Civil Aviation will always care for the Tree and the surrounding lawns.

On his long Flight from Wagga through Sydney, Bob Davies met 458ers in Sydney both going and returning and they were able to exchange wartime memories and recent news. These members afterwards expressed the greatest enthusiasm and pleasure at meeting Bob again.

Other Squadron Trees. 458 Memorial Trees have previously been planted at Richmond Aerodrome in N.S.W., Amberley aerodrome in Queensland, and at Holne-on-Spalding Moor Aerodrome in England. It is known that the Victorian and Western Australian Flights have plans for Memorial Trees in their States.

ALL-STATES REUNION, BRISBANE, ANZAC Weekend, 1959. Please let us know you're coming.

Q. FLIGHT NEWS.

from

Jim Holliday,  
(43, Stella St, Holland Park  
Brisbane.)

The attendance at our Annual Meeting was the best for some years, probably due to our transferring it from the colds and sniffles season of August to the spring weather of September. Despite this we received six apologies. The country members were in fair force. Eric (Dicky) Bird came down from Cootharaba and as usual we had Bob Coles of Toowoomba and Bernie Hughes from Emu Vale.

Elections. The Meeting elected Lew (Johnno) Johnston as its new President. Yours truly is still Secretary. The retiring Committee was re-elected. Unfortunately we have lost one of our oldest committeemembers in Ron Russell, who has been transferred to Melbourne by his firm, Ampol, to be i/c Training for Australia. All Q. Flight wish him well, but regret to be losing him.

3 Squadron. Johnno Johnston has been responsible for contacting a member of No. 3 Squadron who is endeavouring to dig up members of his Squadron in Queensland with the view of forming an Association. To further this, Johnno and myself attended a Barbecue-cum-meeting at the home of Geoff. Chinchin; which was a most enjoyable evening.

Bernie McLoughlin presents a Crest. Q. Flight has also been honoured by its Committee-member Bernie McLoughlin, with his presentation of a Squadron Crest, which is to be placed with due ceremony in the United Service Club on the evening of Wednesday, 12th. November. This plaque was obtained by Bernie from London, mounted on good solid English Oak. It is a magnificent piece of work and will do justice as a wall decoration in any member's home. Should anyone desire to obtain a replica, would they please contact Q. Flight through the Editor.

Battle of Britain. On Monday, 8th. September, the Squadron again participated in the "Battle of Britain" Ceremony. Clive Wyman laid the wreath at the Shrine.

The Cup Competition. Our Melbourne Cup Competition was again a modest success, due mainly to the efforts of the Associate members. "Baystone" was drawn by Cliff. Mannion; "Monte Carlo" by Dolores Garland; and "Red Pine" by Mr. W. Gough, friend of one of our Associate members. Apart from the monetary angle, Q. Flight welcomes the opportunity to conduct the Melbourne Cup Sweep as it brings us in contact with so many of our country members. We have had letters from practically all those outside the Metropolitan area, including Cyril Webb, Jim Browne, Jackie Dew, Tim McQuaid, Theo Ravenscroft, Bob Dangaard, Bob Male, Selwyn (Massa) Foote, Kenny Cahill, and Ray McDougall.

Christmas comes... Our Christmas Do is set down for Saturday 22nd. November. It is usually rather hot about this time, but we intend to have as many devices as possible to cool the customers, including, of course, cordial.

The All-States Reunion. Our Committee is working at present, in collaboration with the Ladies Auxiliary on a programme of entertainment for the All-States Reunion in Brisbane next Anzac Day. It is Centenary Year in Queensland in 1959, and Q. Flight hopes to make its Reunion worthy of the occasion. We are planning for a record number of visitors. In fact, if we do get a lot of interstate members, we will probably extend the programme. Our slogan, for people in other States, is "Make Anzac Day, 1959, your holiday in Queensland." Gordon Postle has already arranged for 1st. Class hotel accommodation at 37/6d. per day. We are also asking our members to write to mates in other States and offer them hospitality in their homes. Please let us have your bookings early. This, tentatively, is the programme:

Thursday April 23rd., 1959.

Afternoon: Interstate and Country Members arrive;

Friday April 24th.

Evening: Welcoming Dance;

Saturday April 25th.

Afternoon: Anzac Cup Golf Competition;

Evening: Private entertainment;

5.0 A.M. Dawn Parade;

10.0 A.M. Squadron Conference (Visiting Ladies entertained);

2.30 P.M. The March;

3.30 P.M. All-States Reunion;

6.0 P.M. Private entertainment;

Sunday April 26th.

10.0 A.M. Start for Beachmont--lunch

arranged by Lew Johnston and Jim Baxter;

The Western Australia Cup Race;

Afternoon: Proceed Gold Coast and Surf;

6.0 P.M. Barbecue at Johnno's Residence.

THE HISTORY FUND-----HOW WE'RE GOING.GRAND TARGET---£ 735.

	<u>N.S.W.</u>	<u>S.A.</u>	<u>VICTORIA.</u>	<u>QUEENSLAND.</u>	<u>U.K.</u>	<u>W.A.</u>
Previously acknowledged.						
--Adv.Subs.	228-10-0	£7-10-0	10-10-0	29- 0-0		36- 0-0
Subs.@ 30/-	C.Nation J.Ind R.Bailey G.Wright A.Piggott J.Whittem B.Menser N.Walker A.McGregor A.Kerry G.Balmer A.E.Campbell F.Wilson B.Crawford J.Fenwick H.Baines F.Hickey M.Hargraves D.Holland	I.Showell I.Showell B.Taylor B.Taylor G.Esau B.Ravenscroft A.Scholar N.Trewartha R.Badger T.Phillis D.Conway E.Kelly Mrs.Cox J.East H.Oliver J.Sheerlock E.Baker B.Thomas R.Angove J.Bax C.Bowley N.Bertram N.Bertram C.Michell C.Hutchinson L.Letcher	B.Wheatley G.Meredith J.Ramsay L.Boyer R.Redpath W.Flentje C.Percy A.Green	J.Elliott B.McLoughlin B.McLoughlin B.McLoughlin B.McLoughlin B.McLoughlin B.McLoughlin C.Webb K.Campbell C.Wyman C.Warren L.MacDonnell E.Hetherington D.Bird B.Male A.A.Taylor B.Coles B.Snowden K.Cahill B.Garland J.Dew J.Browne D.Brandon T.McQuaid G.Postle C.Warren S.Foote L.L.Johnston L.L.Johnston L.L.Johnston L.L.Johnston R.Dangaard R.McDougall		
Total Subs to date	£57- 0-0	£46-10-0	£22-10-0	£58-10-0		£6- 0-0
Flight Committee Advances	375- 0-0				£25- 0-0	
Special Functions	59- 0-0					
RECEIPTS	£491- 0-0	£46-10-0	£22-10-0	£58-10-0	£25- 0-0	£ 6- 0-0
TARGET	£425- 0-0	£50- 0-0	£100- 0-0	£85- 0-0	£25- 0-0	£50- 0-0
		TARGET	£735- 0-0			
		RECEIPTS TO	£649-10-0			
		DATE				

Summary. Not bad, but some way to go yet. We ask members to continue to send their advance sub.deposits for the History to their Flight Secretary, who will send it on to the History Committee. Our sincere thanks to those who have already helped us by advancing their subs. We are pressing on and have approved an Artist's Rough of the Dust Cover, based generally on the Competition winning design. We have a Foreword from Air Marshal Sir Geoffrey Tuttle, who was Group Captain when 458 was at Protville, and is now Deputy Chief of Air Staff R.A.F. We are having an Introduction from W/Cdr. L.L. Johnston, our 2nd. C.O.

THE VICTORIAN VOICE.

from

Lisle Wurr

(3, Cowderoy St., St Kilda).

I've come to the conclusion that nothing good or bad is happening to anyone in Vic. Flight.

Arthur Green has been travelling interstate on business and accordingly very busy.

We have been planning a Committee meeting to arrange a "Do" before Christmas, probably a Dinner Dance so that we can have the women, of whom we have seen so little this year.

Starters for the Brisbane All-States Reunion that I know of are Arthur Green, Bill Carr, Hank Martin, Bluey Wirth, Jim Munday and Bob McKinna, and will no doubt include their womenfolk. May get a few more at the Committee meeting.

Mick Mather and I rub shoulders nearly every Friday night at the South Melbourne Market. On odd occasions Mick seems to float along a few feet off the deck.

For the past six months I have been teaching Migrant classes two nights a week, and have found the work very interesting. Now I have a school of my own for teaching these New Australians, with another teacher to take my second group. If all goes to expectation I hope to be able to establish four groups at this school within a month. However I might be going to Malaya with the R.A.A.F. in a teaching post at Penang or Butterworth. It's not certain but it would be a great experience for Pat and the boys and would give me the chance to learn Malay.

Reverting to Migrant classes, the show is run by the Commonwealth, who pay the Victorian Education Department, who pay the teachers. Quite good pay for the Teachers, and as far as the Migrant is concerned, it costs them nothing and they can attend classes on four nights a week.

Best wishes to all.

CORNSTALK COMMENTARY.

by

Bob Bruce

(Mt. Wilga, Manor Rd.,  
Hornsby, N.S.W.)

The Squadron Guessing Competition resulted in a profitable addition to swell a very depleted Bank balance. It was very nice to see popular Cec. Nation carry off 1st. Prize. Congratulations, Cecil. 2nd. Prize went to Mrs. E. Davies of Lakemba, and 3rd prize to Mr. Alf. Parker of Rydalmere, who are friends of Squadron members. To those who sold tickets, and assisted in the running of the Competition, and the ultimate drawing, we say a very big "Thank You" !

A History Evening. On Saturday the 1st. of November, Kemp and Joan Beach were hosts at a Games Evening at their home to assist the raising of funds for the publishing of the Squadron History. The evening was a terrific success, both socially and financially. Some £59 was raised. Among Squadron members, Ladies, and their friends present were noted N.S.W. President Sam Barlow, Graeme and Dulcie Coombes and family, Peter Alexander, Eric and Dorothy Munkman, Alf. and Enid Hammond, Doug. and Tamar Bennett and family, Doug. and Elmo Haigh, Cyril Irwin, Yvonne Crompton, Bob and Betty Bruce, Bill and Jean Cotton, Fred. Stron, Stuart and Iris Rickotts, Mick Hallahan, and several friends of Sam Barlow and Cy. Irwin. Kemp and Joan deserve great credit for the success of the Do, and the generous support of the Patrons left nothing to be desired.

Off to Yampi Sound.

A gathering of Squadron fellows at the Air Force Club farewelled Geoff. Burgess, passing through Sydney on his way to Yampi Sound, in the more remote North of Western Australia, where he is to have a three year term as Accountant to Australian Iron and Steel. As readers will know, there are extensive deposits of iron ore in Yampi. A very hectic and also late evening was had. In intervals of elbow lifting, various Squadron members got in various activities. The N.S.W. Secretary disposed of Guessing Competition tickets among Club members: the Editor of the Squadron News, who purported to have sciatica, was observed playing foursome Table Tennis. Geoff. departed next day taking our good wishes and pursued by Horse-winning tickets in the Guessing Comp.

A Tennis Day. Don't forget the Tennis Day at "Mt. Wilga" on Sunday 7th. December. Bring the wife and family and make a day of it.

Sid Baker tears past. We were delighted to welcome another 458er, passing through Sydney in Sid Baker from the West. Sid, with Mrs. Baker, was on the way to New Zealand, to enjoy some of the fruits of business success in a Maoriland holiday. We found there was just a bit more of Sid than once there was but few other changes in him. After the War, Sid and a brother went in for Earth-Moving Contracting, and have had a very big success.

Cornstalk Commentary (Concluded).

A MERRY CHRISTMAS to ALL, and let's hope 1959 brings about the successful fulfillment of the Squadron History and that a good crowd of N.S.W. members can make the Brisbane All-States Reunion. Will all who are planning to making the trip, advise the Secretary as soon as possible as we might possibly then charter an aircraft.

THE BRITISH BULLETIN.

from

Sid Thompsett,  
(369, Downham Way, Bromley, Kent)

Have been so very busy lately. Have been involved in helping our local Scouts, as I am on the Group Committee and we are flat out getting as much money as we can to build our own headquarters. However, as soon as we heard about the printing of the Squadron History, I got a letter out to all our members and to date have had requests from 12 members. The U.K. Committee voted that the £25 (our target) be sent off without waiting for the rest to reply.

I am looking forward to having one of the 458 Bannerettes.

We have received photographs taken on the Perth journey which we are glad to have-- photographs are always welcome.

Mick Mason, Harry Bishop and I have played over the tape which was made in Sydney, and thanks for the messages. We are holding our half-yearly Reunion at the Feathers Hotel on November 15th., so we are hoping for a good turnout.

April in London. Looking ahead to next April, we are making plans for a bumper turnout. As Anzac Day falls on a Saturday we are hoping to have more of our Northern members down to London. It will be a very busy day, starting at 11.0 a.m. with the laying of our wreath on the Cenotaph. 12.0 p.m. Service at Westminster Abbey. 3.0. p.m. Tea at Australia House, finishing the day, not as we usually do with a Buffet Reunion but we are looking the Marquis of Granby in Shaftesbury Avenue, London, for our first Dinner and Dance. This will be a big day and we are hoping for our members' strong support.

There was talk of Bill Carr coming over to the U.K. this year---are we going to see him?

Regards to all of you out there.

FROM THE CROWEATERS.

by

Ron Badger  
(8, Goods Crescent, Brighton,  
S.Aust.)

The prelude to the Tree Planting Ceremony was greeted with an immediate response by both newspapers and radio, and, with our own circulars, resulted in an attendance of over 220 people. After much deliberation, the Civil Aviation Dept. gave their full support in placing the Memorial on the expanse of lawn in front of the now famous Sir Ross and Keith Smith Memorial in which is housed the famous Vickers Vimy in which these intrepid airmen made the first flight from England to Australia.

Bob Davies arrived in Adelaide two days before the Ceremony and was met at the Airport by Lofty Trewartha, Ron Badger, Bill Taylor, Johnnie Bax, Nick Bertram, Flash Thomas, and Johnnie Dunn. Bob stayed with Bob Williams at Trammere. There was a Welcoming Party on the Saturday evening, with a Barbecue and a monster novel fire outside. There was a big attendance of members, including Bluey Firth from Robinvale, and Ian Showell from Renmark supported by their families. A very stout effort considering the distances. Bluey Firth shewed films of the Western Australian Reunion.

The Ceremony. The Ladies Committee arranged flowers on the lawn in front of the Tree and Plaque, which was draped with the Squadron Banner.

After Lofty Trewartha had welcomed Bob Davies and those attending, Bob thanked the S.A. Flight for their welcome and said how pleasing it would be if Padres McKay and MacNamara could also be there. He then unveiled the Bronze Plaque and trusted that the Tree, a Melaleuca Leucadendron (Aust. Paperbark) would thrive to perpetuate the memory of 458 Fallen Comrades. The Bugler sounded the Last Post. Bob Davies said the Ode, prefaced by the prayer Said in Gibraltar on Anzac Day.

We then adjourned over to the seating accommodation in front of the Memorial and Bob gave his address. He traced the advent of the Aircraft from Wilbur Wright to the present era and illustrated what a tremendous impact it had had on the World in that short period. However it was quickly being replaced by far more devastating weapons. Christianity was the only hope for the salvation of the World in a return to a more sane condition.

Of 458 Squadron he said that while not one of the spectacular Squadrons of the War, it was manned by men held in high regard. He then quoted from the

From the Croweaters (cont.)

comments made by the present Deputy Chief of Air Staff, Royal Air Force, Air Marshal Tuttle, in the Introduction to the 458 Squadron History:

"Fifteen years ago I was lucky enough to have No.458 Squadron under my Command in North Africa. I have never been so impressed with any Unit before or since.  
"..... No.458 Squadron was one of the main reasons why my Wing was taken off  
"operations--the enemy ran out of ships!"

This statement made a marked impression on the members of other Squadrons there assembled.

After the Address we sang the hymn "Oh, God, our Help in Ages Past," The next morning Bob gave a short talk on the World-wide Monitor Session at 5DN about his visit and 458 Squadron. Before he left about 13 members rolled along to a farewell lunch.

Through these pages we thank you, Bob, for coming; we thank you for your remarks.

Operation Melaleuca Leucadendron Highly Successful.

Bluey's Return. A week later Bluey BIRTH came down again from Robinvale and there was an enjoyable evening at Johnnie Bax's home where Bluey gave a Film Evening of the W.A. Reunion, supported by Syd Bartram with colour slides of S.A. Functions since the War. It was interesting in these films to see the children growing up from function to function.

Other Activities. We had a further Evening at the 48th. Battalion Clubrooms, where other Unit Clubs foregathered for a Sports Evening. 458 acquitted itself well with the staunch help of Ding Conway.

The Annual Christmas Kiddies Picnic is due on December 16th. and shows every promise of being a success.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letters to the Editor.

From Air Marshal Sir Geoffrey Tuttle, K.B.E., C.B., D.F.C.; Deputy C.A.S., R.A.F., Air Ministry, London.

My dear Alexander, Thank you very much for your letter of the 9th. August. I would like to thank your Council for being good enough to invite me to write the foreword to the History of No.458 Squadron operations in the war. I think it a great honour. I attach to this letter a suggested foreword, which I hope you will think adequate.

I shall, of course, never forget my association with it although it was all too short, and last year I was lucky enough to see Colonel McKenzie when he was over here from Kenya. I am so glad to hear that your Association is so active. It is not usual for Squadron Associations to do so well so long after the exciting events in which we all took part. It reflects great credit on the spirit of the Squadron.

Sincerely,  
Geoffrey Tuttle.

From the Department of Air, Melbourne.

Dear Sir, I refer to your recent communication and desire to inform you that in order to qualify for the award of the France and Germany Star, a member of the Air Force must have served with a Unit stationed in France, Belgium, Holland or Germany between the 6th. June, 1944 and the 8th. May, 1945. Visits, journees, inspections, and procedure into the Area on temporary duty is not a qualification for the Award unless a period of at least thirty days was spent in the Area. Aircrew members operating over Europe from Bases in the Mediterranean Area cannot qualify, but qualify for the Italy Star.

No.458 Squadron was based in the Mediterranean Area and any service with this Unit was counted towards qualification for the Africa Star up to the 12th. May, 1943, and for the Italy Star, between the 11th. June, 1943, and the 8th. May, 1945.

As No.458 Squadron was not stationed in France, the service in France by the members concerned must be considered in the nature of temporary duty. There is no evidence to shew that they completed at least thirty days in the qualifying area and, therefore, they must be considered ineligible for the France and Germany Star.

yours faithfully,  
A.B. McFarlane,  
Secretary.

In other words, if you want to wear it, don't ask Air first.--Editor.

458 SQUADRON MEMBERS IN BRITAIN--PLEASE MAKE A POINT OF SUPPORTING THE SQUADRON FUNCTIONS IN LONDON NEXT ANZAC DAY-----APRIL 25th., 1959.

Correspondence (cont.)From Bob Helyar, Box 63, Tara, Queensland.

Dear Peter,

Have just received the latest Squadron News and read with much interest all the doings and particularly the report of the Perth Reunion. There's a lot of those chaps I'd like to meet up with again.

Recently, I located Len Netherway in Horsham. Len and I trained together in Canada and U.K. and joined the Squadron at L.G.91 together with Orch., Dick Boydell, Norm. Walker and Joe Christie. He was one of the survivors of Dougie's crew and spent a few years behind the fence. Squadron members will be glad to know that he is in top form, has four kids and is foreman in a Foundry in Horsham.

I am still in Tara and have my own business selling Shell products and Massey Ferguson machinery. We have two children, full stop.

Very glad to hear that the Squadron History may go into print shortly and enclose my cheque for 30/-.

Kind Regards,  
O.J. Helyar.

From Jim Perry, 15, Margaret Street, Port Augusta, South Australia.

Dear Pete, This will probably shock you no end, for even though I have the 458 very much at heart, I am a very poor correspondent.

Nevertheless, now that I have started, I should like you to know that I look forward to the Squadron News and get a lot of enjoyment out of reading it. That also applies to my wife, Joy for she recognises a lot of the names of blokes who were on Gib.

I was very sorry to miss the W.A. Reunion for I had set my heart on getting there, but unfortunately I took it into my head to start up in a Joinery Works and at that particular period it was having teething trouble. But now it is starting to settle down.

It was a very great surprise to see Blue Firth who stayed overnight with us and gave us time to digest a few beers and view his very interesting slides.

We used to see Bob Drimman every couple of months but since February Bob has been on the Sick List and I've missed his visits. Usually we visit the local R.S.L. and arrive home between 11.0. and 12.0 and get Joy out of bed to cook bacon and eggs or set to and light up the fire and perform for ourselves.....

yours faithfully,  
Jim Perry.

From Les Cook, "West Craven", Grosvenor Avenue, Park Lane, Pontefract, England.

Dear Peter, I have just received the May Issue of our News and it prompts me to pass on an item which may be of interest to members. Being a member of the R.A.F. Association, I receive the journal Air Mail every two or three months, and recently the Association announced that they have arranged to reproduce individual pages from the York Minster Roll of Honour for Next-of-kin. I do know that there are some 458 names there, as some were on view the day we held the Tree-planting Ceremony at Holme-on-Spalding Moor. The Roll contains over 400 pages bearing names of some 18,000 killed during the Second World War while flying from Bases in N.E. England.

Pages will be reproduced on white paper of good quality and sold at one shilling each, including postage, but printing cannot begin until the demand is known. Next-of-kin requiring reproductions are asked to notify the General Secretary, National H.Q., R.A.F.A., 83, Portland Place, London, W.1. It is essential that the rank, surname, and christian names and Squadron number be stated and whether the casualty was serving in the R.A.F., R.A.A.F., ..... May I say here how much I enjoy reading the News.....

I was able to call at Holme-on-Spalding Moor about six weeks ago and I am pleased to report that the Tree is in good shape though it doesn't seem much bigger yet! Unfortunately I haven't been able to attend any of our Reunions--but I'm still hoping! If anyone desires any assistance in regard to the York Roll of Honour, I shall be only too pleased to help.

In conclusion, I send you and all the 'Big Dig's Little Digs' my very best wishes.

Yours sincerely,  
Les Cook.

From Stan Parker, Box 446, Ayr, North Queensland.

Dear Peter, ....If it is at all possible I will be in Brisbane for the next Reunion, but my chances are very remote. I am canefarming and April is planting time. If I should make it I will have no accommodation worries....

Like Bill Taylor of Adelaide, I am delighted that 458 is assisting Legacy. I am a member of the local contact group, of Townsville Legacy. Any help to the Movement will be greatly appreciated..... Kind Regards to all 458ers, .... Stan Parker.



PERSONAL ITEMS.

Don Bitmead. To Don and Bev. Bitmead, our congratulations on the birth of a daughter;  
Gerry Young and Ian Sorrell. These two S.Aust. members, Ron Badger reports, are now out of Hospital after lengthy illness. Good luck and health to them;

Peter Hemingway. For the Lost and Found column--Dick Healey tells us that Peter is now Assistant to the Chief Chemist at the Mary Kathleen Uranium Co. Ltd, at Mary Kathleen, Queensland;

Doug Bennett is now stationed at Tumut;

Jock Philip has had 11 weeks in Hospital but is now improved. Earlier he visited Queensland where he met Jack Lewis and Terry Mullins. He attended the Q. Flight Social and won a chicken. Among his Squadron visitors in Hospital was

Joe Pratt who himself has been having various Hospital tests and treatments for headaches including, he tells us, an Encephalograph;

B. Hamilton: now stationed in Canberra where Buster Balmer recently saw him.

A CHRISTMAS DRINK is being arranged for Sydney members at the Air Force Club on Friday December 19th, from 5.0 p.m. onwards; 330, George Street--2nd Floor.

458er OF THE DAY---DAVE FIRTH, of ROBINVALE.

Dave (Bluey) Firth was a member of the Volunteer Air Force in pre-war days and, as such a contemporary of "Bubbles" Power and Ron Cannaway. When the War came he had attained Senior N.C.O.'s rank and was the R.A.A.F. Fitter Sergeant with 458 at Holme-on-Spalding Moor. Red headed, thin, serious and conscientious he was one of the important 458 personalities, grouped with such Squadron figures as the C.O., Adjutant, M.O., Stores N.C.O., etc. He continued with 458 as a Senior N.C.O. right through to North Africa. We recall him, in Africa, as part of the group of Ding Conway, Frank Mahony, Bill Ernst, Junior Davies and himself. We recall driving from Egypt to Tunisia with him and "Timber" Wood when 458 migrated from Egypt. That was a job Dave, as always, gave painstaking care to.

Returning home, he settled on an Orange and Fruit Irrigation Settlement at Robinvale in the Victorian Murray River area, where, latterly in association with his son, he has been very successful. His loyalty to 458 has triumphed over distances. Often an attender at Melbourne 458 functions (though Melbourne is the nearest Capital City for Robinvale it is many miles away), he (with Ken Cupper) organised the first 458 Country Reunion at Robinvale. Accompanied by his wife, he has made the long journeys to most of the All-States Reunions, including the Perth Reunion. He makes a point of visiting 458ers scattered over the great distances of Australia during his travels and, as 458's Roving Ambassador, has played a part second to none in maintaining the links of friendship among 458ers.

COMMENT.

In preparation for the policy-making meeting of Squadron Conference in Brisbane, 458 through its Flights is now forming its views on the question, raised by W.A. Flight, as to whether 458's Associate members should be allowed to wear the 458 Lapel badge. Let us try to illumine the problem by a few questions (to which we shall not supply answers).

If I see someone wearing a 458 lapel badge, what would I expect that to mean? That question in itself, we suspect, throws so blinding a flash of insight that many 458ers will question no further.

But it is not necessarily the last question. Were the ranks of 458 forever frozen at the last Parade at Gibraltar? Is 458 not still a living organisation to which airmen may still be posted? Might it not be better, in some areas, to have a 458 Flight made strong by fully-participating Associates, than to have a struggling 458 or no 458?

We can think of other questions, rebutting and counter-rebutting. We shall ask only one more. What do you want 458 to be? Tell your Flight.

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AUTHORISED BY THE EDITOR (Peter Alexander), Box 5289, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W., AUSTRALIA.

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To the Squadron Secretary, Box 5289, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W.

A. Provisionally, I am going to Brisbane for the Anzac All-States Reunion, April, 1959. I expect to be accompanied by..... Please ask the Queensland Secretary to book me in. I enclose..... as a Deposit on..... beds for..... nights, at £2 per head. I propose to travel by..... I am interested in any arrangements which can be made to travel in a 458 party.

B. I enclose 30/- as a deposit on a copy of "We Find and Destroy" the Squadron History. Please forward it to me as soon as publication is effected.

NAME:...../ADDRESS:.....