



JOURNAL OF THE 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL: G.P.O. BOX 5289, SYDNEY, N.S.W., 2001, AUSTRALIA.

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SQUADRON COUNCIL OFFICE-BEARERS.

SQUADRON PRESIDENT: Mick Mason (U.K.)      SQUADRON VICE PRESIDENTS: Clive Wyman (Q.)  
Stan. Tarczynski (Vic).

SQUADRON TREASURER: Peter Alexander (NSW)      SQUADRON SECRETARY: Graeme Coombes (NSW)

EDITOR of 458 Squadron News: Peter Alexander (Sydney 419 5024)

Flight Correspondents:

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Queensland: Jim. Holliday, 43, Stella Street, Holland Park, Q., 4121;  
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458 OFF TO EUROPE.

Arrangements for the 2nd International Reunion of 458 Squadron, in the United Kingdom, are progressing well. The Party, led by Eric Munkman, will leave Australia in April and arrive for a well planned week in and around London. There will be meetings with U.K. 458ers, a Squadron Conference with Squadron President Mick Mason (the first UK Flight member to be Squadron President) in the Chair. There will be a visit to Knowle, Bruce McKenzie's old home in Surrey. A wreath will be laid on the Whitehall Cenotaph. There will be much sight-seeing--around historic London, to Shakespeare's Stratford-on-Avon, a cruise on the Thames. Then off to York and to Holme-on-Spalding Moor. More bookings are expected but at the date of going to press acceptors are: Jack and Evelyn Lewis, Bruce and Linda Dean, Stan and Jean Longhurst, Bob and Pat Millar and two others, Bob and Mrs Scholes, Fred Strom and friend, Eric and Dorothy Munkman, Don and Bev. Bitmead, Frank Wilson, Jack and Mrs. Bevan, Mick and Mrs. Singe, Don and Mrs. Anderson, Dave Firth, Jimmy Wren, Ted and Elsie Jewell, Ray and Marge Turley, Bill and Joan Clues, Peter Alexander.

Some of the party are keeping together after the official events of the Reunion and touring Europe for 18 days. Others are most welcome to join.

To join the Party or to join in the European tour, contact our Travel Agent, Vic. Williams, RSL Travel, 215 Clarence Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000 (Tel. 331 3121)

This is a historic 458 event--you and your lady should be in it.

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CROWEATERS COMMENTARY.      from Geoff. Esau

Firstly, may I, on behalf of S.A. Flight, thank those people who wrote in very kind terms of their stay in Adelaide in October. However, I must add that I personally was caused some embarrassment, particularly by a letter from Peg. Cuthbertson when she mentioned the flowers, etc., in the Motel rooms "Obviously provided by the "ladies". Being a mere M.S.P. I failed to include the ladies in those to be thanked by the Flight President in the Reunion report in the last News. What can I say ?

Croweaters Commentary (cont.)

There has been very little happening here since the last Newsletter. Christmas has come and gone (more anon) and January brought a spate of heat with seven days straight well over the old century, with one night's minimum being the highest ever recorded, 33.6, with a blast furnace breeze and a power failure in many areas so no fans, coolers or lights. Hell hath no fury like an Adelaide lass in such circumstances!

Personal Pars.

Flight President, Jack Riseley, sends best wishes for 1982, particularly those attending the U.K. Reunion. Being a forward thinker he realised there will be another Squadron Conference in April this year and asks any S.A. member with a submission for that Agenda to contact John Carey, Flight Secretary, as soon as possible.

John Carey has been holidaying with his daughter in Canberra and will not return for a day or two yet.

John and Dawn McGlasson mentioned having their daughter Michelle home on holidays over Christmas. She is an agricultural expert and spent quite a time on a cattle station in Arnhemland. Is now with the N.T. Department of Primary Industry, in Alice Springs, and loving it. Has she exchanged the crocs for the wolves?

Bill and Mudge Taylor's son Brett has been home on holidays from Hong Kong with his wife. Bill has been doing a bit of fishing at Glenelg--perhaps to get his hand in in preparation for a postponed trip with Mudge to Palm Beach, Q., in the near future. He has recently seen his one time Navigator, Tom Phillis, not long returned from a trip to Sydney, staying with his family.

Geoff and Heather Esau has their daughter Carolyn and husband Brian, and ten month old David to stay for several weeks. Nice to get acquainted with the youngest member of the clan!!

Received a very nice letter from Don Bitmead with some excellent snaps taken at Benellen enclosed. Best wishes to all for 1982.

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SANDGROPPERS SAY...

from Ted Jewell.

W.A. Flight had another wonderful night out for our Xmas reunion dinner at the Plain and Fancy Restaurant in Perth. As usual we had a great roll up, with a few new faces not seen for a while. The food was good, the drink cold, and there was a present for the ladies. Those present were:

Bill and Joan Clues Tom and Betty Howard Ted and Elsie Jewell Fred and Dot Howe  
Henry and Vera Etherton Mavis Mayne Ray and Marge Turley Laurie and Dot Grigsby  
Peter and Doreen McCarthy, Charlie and Bet. Davis, Kingston and Esme Nobbs Ken and Dixie Rex.  
Sorry if I have missed anyone.

At Kojonup.

Jim and Lucy Palmer invited a few members down to their farm at Kojonup to spend a weekend and see what country life is all about. Elsie and myself went down, also Bill and Joan Clues, Ray and Marge Turley, Henry and Vera Etherton! What a great weekend we all had; everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves with a guided tour of the District during the day and coloured slides in the evening. Some were taken on our recent week on the houseboats at Renmark, very interesting indeed. Last week we had a backlash from a cyclone which covered a large part of the State, with flooding at Kojonup where Jim and Lucy are. I hope things were not too bad around their area.

Our next Get-together will be a B.B.Q. at our home down here at Mandurah, about two weeks time; everyone is invited so we are expecting a good turn up. It will be the last function some of us will be attending before we leave for England in April.

I believe Charlie Davis and Peter McCarthy have Anzac Day arrangements well under control. All members will be informed at a later date.

Cheerio for now and best regards to all.

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Q. FLIGHT NEWS.

from Jim Holliday.

Since the last News, the major activity of the Committee has been the preparation of the Honour Board in memory of W/Cdr. Lew Johnston, to be installed at the No. 1 Flying Training School, Pt. Cook. To refresh memories, this Memorial emanates from the Squadron Conference held in Sydney, 1979. Conference approved that a plaque in memory of Bruce McKenzie be placed in the Air Force Memorial Church, West Lindfield, and "Q. Flight was asked to consider possible arrangements for a similar plaque in memory of W/C.L.L. Johnston" (extract from the minutes). Subsequently, Mollie Johnston was consulted. The proposal to honour "Johnno" deeply touched Mollie. However, she preferred a "living memorial" to benefit airmen and airwomen of the R.A.A.F.. She envisaged a trophy for athletic competition, hopefully tennis, at Amberley. This proposal was submitted to Air Commodore Drury at Amberley, who in turn forwarded it to Department of Defence,

Q.Flight News (cont.) (Air Force Office) "whose prerogative it is to decide these matters". In due course, Air Force Office replied proposing that an award be established at No.1 F.T.S., Pt. Cook, for the student in each course gaining the highest aggregate in flying and ground subjects. Fittingly, "Johnno" trained at Pt. Cook in 1936. Contact with W/Cdr. Kelloway, C.O., 1 F.T.S., determined that the most appropriate memorial would be an Honour Board to record the names of successful students to the year 2000. On receiving Mollie Johnston's approval, the proposal was submitted to the Adelaide Conference last September where it received unanimous assent.

The Board is constructed from Queensland red cedar, 6' x 3'. At the top of the centre section is a 15 inch round carving in white beech of Johnno taken from the photo in the Squadron History. The lettering is also in white beech. At the foot is the Squadron badge and an engraved plaque states that the Board is donated by ex-members of 458. The Board was despatched to Pt. Cook through Amberley on 14th January. Before despatch, Mollie Johnston, daughter Lea and son Nigel travelled to Brisbane to view the Board. Mollie writes: "on behalf of my family, I would like to express through the Squadron News, our sincere gratitude to all 458 Squadron members who sanctioned the idea of an Honour Board, which could not have been placed in a more appropriate place than at Pt. Cook. It is a very fine tribute to my late husband and one which will always be remembered by myself and family."

Daughter, Lea (Greenaway) also writes "Would you please convey to all 458 members how touched I was by their gesture in having an Honour Board prepared in memory of my father. Not only is the Board a beautiful piece of craftsmanship, but it is also a very fitting memorial. My father had an investment in people of all ages achieving their fullest potential and receiving recognition for their achievement. Also, his involvement with the Air Force was very significant and (if some of his stories were true!) a very enjoyable part of his life. Thus, the Honour Board seems to encapsulate many facets of life which were important to him. Seeing the Board made me realise how much he must have meant to you, that you should remember him in this way."

W/Cdr. Kelloway of No.1 F.T.S. desires a ceremony to dedicate the Board. Details will be advised.

Vale. Sadly, two Queensland members passed away in December. Harold Wesley "Kel" Kellam died after a long illness on 8th December and was privately cremated. Though confined to bed, wife Ann says Kel's mind was still sharp as a tack. Until he retired, Kel ran hotels. He was always a strong supporter of Q.Flight. In the immediate post-war years his great delight was running the two up school at the Anzac Day reunion.

Joyce Dew writes that husband Jack Dew passed away on 6th December from a very rare brain virus--Jakob Croutzfeld's disease-- for which there is no treatment. Jack was totally blind for six weeks before his death. Jack was born in Tully and spent his life there. In semi-retirement after his years as an electrical dealer, he maintained the two-way radio equipment at the Tully Sugar Mill and its crane trains. Jack's hobby was gemstones. He was a talented golfer. Many young professionals in the North owe much to Jack's teaching and encouragement. George Reed was before his retirement Chief Engineer of the Tully Sugar Mill. George was visiting the Southern States when Jack died. He writes that the Dews were a close and devoted family and that Jack was highly respected in the District. George Reed received V.I.P. treatment in Brisbane. His nephew sent his Rolls Royce to collect him for a holiday at the Gold Coast.

Tony Stone has recuperated well from his illnesses. Writes that he expects Cyril Murray for a few days after Xmas, followed by Jock McGowen. "Shorty" Long passed through Brisbane before Xmas; looked up quite a few old mates, including Frank Wilks at Toowoomba and "Tweetie" Bird at Teewantin.

"Ac" Taylor has now retired. After post-war service with the R.A.A.F., he made his hobby the Air Training Corps. Reports that crewmate Harry Godfrey from Melbourne met for the first time since the war. Nattered for six hours.

Met Dick Scott recently. Dick was posted to 458 but never served. He trained in aerial torpedo dropping in Northern Ireland. Posted to 458; flew crew and new aircraft to M.E. On reporting to Bruce McKenzie posted to Shallufa for night torpedo training. However, Shallufa School closed. Ended war in reconnaissance over Arabian Sea. Rues losing new aircraft to 458.

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CORNSTALK COMMENTS.

from Don.Bitmead.

Christmas Get-together.

An annual dinner was held just prior to Xmas in the Air Force Club Dining Room. It was a most enjoyable occasion and 29 attended. Those present included: Peter and Rita Alexander; Jack and Dorothy Aitken; Ralph and Min. Bailey; Sam and Maisie Barlow; Don and Bev. Sitmead; Pete and Barb. Campbell; Keith and Casey Cousins; Graeme and Dulcie Coombes; Yvonne and Patricia Crompton; Col and Imelda Corten; Bruce and Linda Dean; Lloyd and Betty Johnson; Arthur and Tess Jollow; Stan and Jean Longhurst; Eric and Dorothy Munkman; Tom and Val. Moore; Stuart and Iris Ricketts; Fred. Strom; Bert and Kitty Thompson; and Frank and Thelma Ward.

Ethnic Dinner.

Our most recent venture into foreign food came on January 20th when we combined our 300th NSW Committee meeting with an Indonesian food meal. Jack and Dorothy Aitken found us this place in Newtown and we had an excellent meal. We do ask other 458ers who have not yet been to an ethnic dinner and would be interested to let us know.

The McKenzie Memorial.

On January 10th the bronze Memorial Plaque commemorating the life of Bruce McKenzie was formally unveiled at the All Saints Air Force Memorial Church, West Lindfield. A good array of 458 members as well as members of the Kenya-Australia Society heard Bishop Neville Langford-Smith, formerly Bishop of Nakuru in Kenya, preach to the congregation about Africa and Christianity in Africa and after the completion of the Main service, Peter Alexander spoke about Bruce McKenzie and his work, Peter White of the Kenya-Australia Society read a Lesson and Eric Munkman unveiled the plaque from behind the Kenyan flag. It is there for members and the world to see.

Squadron Blazer Pockets. These are being obtained from Pakistan where we have had samples of most attractive work.

Anzac Day in Sydney.

While quite a lot of us will be celebrating Anzac Day in London this year, arrangements are in hand for the usual Sydney gathering. This year the Air Force will lead the March and therefore we will be off to a much earlier start than normal. Please watch the papers for details. 458 will gather after the March as usual at the Great Southern Hotel (Henry Lawson Tavern)

Peter Bailie with us again.

It was particularly pleasing to see Peter at the McKenzie Memorial Service. We hope to see him frequently at 458 functions.

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VICTORIAN VIEWS.

from Stan.Tarczynski.

Christmas. The Christmas B.B.Q. at Jean and John Rodwell's on Sunday Dec. 6th. saw the welcome return of Kathy, wife of popular President Harald "Yank" Martin. More surprises were in store. Ted Kennedy from Ballarat brought with him George and Margaret Reed from Tully, Queensland. In mid afternoon and the first visit ever, came Air Commodore Jack Dowling and his wife Enid. Jack is not in the best of health and relies on a walking stick to help him along though he has made good progress.

Jack succeeded the late Bruce McKenzie as C.O. of 458 and tour expired at Alghero in Sardinia. He retired from the permanent R.A.A.F. ten years ago.

The following were in attendance at the the BBQ: Dot and Jack Fleming; Beat and Ken Morkham; Nell Ashworth (Harry at bowls); Mavis and Bob. Smith; Betty and David Lloyd (Betty is John Fleming's sister and we also had the pleasure of their company at the Adelaide Reunion, despite David being an ex-Navy type); Our hosts of course were Jean and John Rodwell, Lorna (minus crutches) and Mick Singe; Stan. Tarczynski and Gordon Nash. (Incidentally, Gordon, if you were highly amused at being reported in the Squadron News as being a keen gardener, the questionnaire you replied to stated one of your hobbies was gardening--Tarz)

The All-States Reunion.

The inaugural meeting to discuss the 1983 All States Reunion will be held at the Air Force Club on February 16th. at an informal dinner so that by the next issue of Squadron News we hope to announce the format.

Personal Paragraphs.

Dave (Bluey) and Gladys Firth--having retired six years ago, Bluey is enjoying reasonably good health and occupies his time travelling and gardening. He is also active in Rotary and the Masonic Lodge. His son and daughter are both married, living respectively, in Robinvale and Tatura, and there are seven grandchildren. Bluey's postal address is Box 46, Robinvale, 3549 and he lives at 81 George Street. Bill and Betty Flentje. Bill retired from the Forests Commission of Victoria three years ago as Assistant Divisional Forester for the Northern Division of Victoria.. Wife Betty has filled in a par that Bill is the Secretary of the Whipstick Park Committee which keeps him interested in the forests around Bendigo where they live at 15 Pilcher Street. However, he has other interests also--the Rotary Club of Strathdale and he does wildlife recording. Rodney, one of their three children, is working in

Victorian Views (cont.)

Melbourne. Linden, who has completed four years at Deakin University is trying to obtain a position as food technologist, and Neil has started at Bendigo Technical College.

There are still a few members who have not returned the Questionnaire. May I be so bold as to name them in the hope that the digit may be extracted?--J. Bilney, K. Brown, T. Burgess, E. Bradshaw, S. Cartledge, W. Carr, R. Connolly, J. Ellis, R. Guiney, A. Green, I. Giles, H. Godfrey, J. Irwin, J. Jenkins, T. Kennedy, H. Martin, G. Orchard, R. Pollock, C. Percy, V. Richards, R. Rabone, and J. Lilly.

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BRITISH BULLETIN. from Sid. Thompsett.

I have had a call from Vic. Williams, RSL Travel, about the 458 party from Aussie. Both of us appreciated the meeting as we were able to iron out some things --particularly the Hotel, which is now to be the St. Ermins where we had arranged the Squadron Conference and Dinner. The wreath-laying at the Cenotaph has to be at 11.a.m. and then we travel down to Knowle. The visit to Holme-on-Spalding Moor Station has to be arranged as it is a secret air force station now. (This is now O.K.--Ed.) We would like to know numbers coming.

Mick Mason was absolutely amazed when I 'phoned him about being made Squadron President.

I have a friend in Aussie for the past ten years or so and I would appreciate it if one of our Perth members would pay them a visit; they are Sid and Janet Looseley, 16 Wandoo Street, Kelmscott, Perth.

That's about it for now. Looking forward to April. All the very best.

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CORRESPONDENCE: Letters to the Editor and others.

From Tony Mauro, 3476, Dieppe Drive, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V5M4C7.

It has been 36 years since our Squadron was disbanded in Gibraltar, and here I am, finally, writing a letter, which is a rarity for me.

The reason for this, of course, is the up-coming U.K. Reunion and if we can possibly manage it, my wife and I will be in England at that time. We are planning to attend the wedding of our son-in-law's sister which is scheduled to take place on April 24th in Blackpool. I know that date conflicts with the date for the dinner at the hotel in London but I am hoping that somehow one date or the other may be changed. If not, I am sure I shall be able to contact some of the old gang either before or after the 24th. Perhaps you could send me an itinerary by air?

Well, Peter, there it is--a voice from the past--quite an achievement getting even this little down on paper.

Over the years I have really enjoyed receiving the newsletters. It has been just great following the lives of some old familiar names--names that are harder to put faces to as the years roll by--after all, it's been 36 years! It would be a truly great occasion for me to see some of them again and I hope it will come to pass.

Perhaps you would be interested in a little history of my life since 1945? Anyway, after leaving the service in Dec. of '45 I went to work on the C.P. Railroad as a switch foreman and stayed there until my retirement in 1978 at age 61. Went to England for a holiday and just missed making connection with Bruce McKenzie who was killed at that at that time..

We have four children--ages 26 to 31--2 of each and 2 now married.

Although my address is still Vancouver, we are spending more and more time at our summer place in the interior of British Columbia and will soon make this our permanent home. It's a place called Olivia--long hot dry summers and not too cold in the winter. Our mobile home sits comfortably on the edge of a lovely little lake.

I know you have been in touch with Jock McLeod and I too have seen him a few times. Have not heard from him in over a year. I have seen 2 other ex-458ers--Hugh Berry who left the Squadron in Italy and went to India. He is now retired and living in north British Columbia; the other one is John Pollock now living in Toronto, Ontario. I contacted him while on a visit there last year. First time I'd seen him since '45--happy to find him in good health--also retired.

I think now I have rambled on long enough though I have left many things unsaid. But I would like to add that I have never forgotten 458 Squadron and the fine friends that I met there--I cherish those memories. And, Peter, if you should run into a few of those old mates please say hello for me--I am sure some of them will remember that "goddam Cannuck". I am enclosing money for the history something I should have done long ago. So thanks for listening. Good health and good luck--Tony Mauro.

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Correspondence (cont.)From Bill Waite, 7, Woodstock Road, Harlow Green, Low Fell, Gateshead, NE9 7TS, England.

It seems that my letter of last September has gone astray. Its main purpose was to inform you of the sudden and tragic death of my old friend, Trevor Walden, who was W/Op. in J.A.F. McKay's crew. He had been ill for some time with a heart condition, but being the tough little man he was, carried on working. We last met at the reunion in London in 1980, when he told me he was planning a touring holiday in July of that year, taking in Devon and Cornwall and that he intended to arrange a meeting with Ken. Trevenna who was our second pilot (before going on to be a captain in his own right) at his home in Redruth, Cornwall. When Gwen and I returned from our holiday in Scotland in August 1980, a letter was waiting from Eileen, Trevor's wife, telling us that Trev. had taken ill near Truro and had died in hospital the following day. He had arranged a meeting with Ken, but on the day he had not felt fit enough to drive so Eileen had phoned to cancel. However, on the evening of that day, Trev. had driven over to where Eileen and their daughter Jannette were staying. Eileen wrote how grand it was for her to see such a happy reunion between two men who had shared so much and obviously had so much to talk about. Unfortunately, Trev. became very ill the following morning; he was taken to hospital by ambulance but to no avail; and he died that afternoon. Trev. was barely eighteen when we first met and then, after square bashing, signals school, gunnery school, O.T.U., and then 458. He celebrated his 21st. at Bone. After leaving the Squadron we still managed the odd meeting in various parts of the Middle East. He was a very efficient W. Op., as Dick Boydell would confirm and, at one time, he was seconded to Montgomery's southern command to set up a Signals section. He was the youngest of a large family and I got a lovely letter from his mother when he got home thanking me for looking after her baby who had gone away a boy and returned a man. Whenever I was in London on business we always arranged a meeting, if only a quick lunch. I had to write again because Trev. was a very popular lad and will be remembered, I am sure, with some affection by a lot of Squadron members.....yours aye, Bill

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From Margot Knight to Mel Goers--from 90, Winterborne Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, England.

At the present moment we are a family of five living in this wee house in Abingdon, as Roland and Jean are home on leave from Tanzania, with Peter, aged two in August and Daniel John just a week old. He arrived a week early but only stayed in hospital for two days. It is a great joy to have them here. They will be here off and on for about two months when they fly back to Dodoma..... Rosemary and her family have been in Hove for a year as Bernard had a year's work as surgeon at the hospital in Brighton. They are now back in their own home in New Malden, very happy to be home again. Robert, 5, has now started school. Sharon is three and does everything Robert does, and is very adventurous. They all come up here for my 70th birthday.

Oliver and Anne have now been nearly a year in Prague, where he is Air Attache and now a Wing Commander. I have not been to see them yet but hope to go, all being well, as the Polish situation is rather tricky. He managed to get on the front page of the Daily Telegraph as he had a contretemps with the Czech police in which they used tear gas on him and the Canadian attache and arrested them for 8 hours. I didn't hear any more so the incident has been hushed up but no doubt to do with the nearness of the Polish border. I hope to see them all soon as their children, nearly 16 and 14 are at school in Kent.

I myself remain pretty fit. I am getting used to living alone and have made quite a few friends through the church. I also do some baby-sitting to bring in some shekels and so as not to get bored. I had two weeks with my sister Buckette and her husband in July. I also had some lovely weeks in Hove with Rosemary and family, travelling by train as I no longer need a car. I read a lot, watch TV much too much but as I do not go out in the winter at night, it is indeed a boon. I like to garden but that is the size of a pocket handkerchief so does not take long. My neighbours are very kind and cut my lawn (!) and do other jobs.....with my love, Margot.

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Space prevents publication, in this issue, of other letters but they will appear later.

Like many of the Squadron, the Editor will be overseas in April/May, so it is possible the next issue of the News will appear a little late --Editor.