

CIRCULAR

458 SQUADRON NEWS



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February, 1984.

OFF TO NEW ZEALAND.

March, 1984, will see 458 Squadron hold its 3rd. International Reunion---in Auckland, New Zealand. The Party will include Squadron members and wives from all parts of Australia and from the U.K. After the Reunion dinner at the White Hart Hotel in Auckland, preceded by a meeting of the 458 Squadron Conference---which is the Squadron's top, policy-forming body,---will come a superb tour of New Zealand, both north and south islands.

It is not too late to join---latecomers should contact Veterans Travel, at 215, Clarence Street, Sydney and speak to Vic Williams. They can then join the 53 other 458ers and wives who are 'in it'. Vic's telephone number is 02--29 1808.

VIC FLIGHT NEWS.

from Stan Tarczynski.

The stately, shady, backyard of the Russell's Doncaster home was the enjoyable and usual venue for our popular Melbourne Cup Day---November 1st, 1983. 16 bods fronted up. Elaine Timms was a very efficient bookie's clerk, collecting, and also collating the draw for each race. With the "Tote" paying 1, 2 & 3 on every race and several larger Sweeps on the Cup, everybody got a prize. The only unlucky one, without a "pay-out" was Yenk Martin. Surprisingly the club percentage "take" was over \$8. Those in attendance, apart from our hosts, Ron and Joan Russell, were:---Dave and Betty Evans, Jack and Dot Fleming, Harold and Kath Martin, Ken and Beat Morkham, Mick and Mavis Singe, George and June de Tarczynski, Elaine Timms and yours truly.

With the Air Training Corps. Bill Hurford, Mick Singe and Stan Tarczynski went to the Preston Drill Hall for the annual presentation parade of the No. 2 A.T.C.. The latter presented the Squadron History to the most improved cadet and Bill Hurford renewed old acquaintances. Ernie Laming, who has not missed 19 successive presentations turned up with walking stick after his most recent, second, hip replacement.

The only other function to report was the Xmas B.B.Q. held at Jack and Dot Fleming's St. Leonards home, the other side of Geelong. The roll call on Sunday Dec. 4th was disappointing. The same people who fronted on Melbourne Cup Day were there with the exception of the Morkhams, Singes, Ern Laming, Jean Dickson and Elaine Timms. However, we gained Col. and Yvonne Hutchinson and a brand new member with his wife, who has retired from Queensland and is now living in Gisborne---Johnny Rosenberg. He also brought his own Castlemaine XXXX! One apology was from Frank "Shorty" Wilson from Rye, on account of his reaching a ripe old age of 73 the day before and he was not prepared to level at .05!

On account of the Flemings many spare bedrooms, the Martins and Tarczynskis availed themselves of unlimited restrictions on amber fluid and their overnight hospitality.

And so to Sydney.

In the middle of January, Tarz. and a Keysborough Golf Club member mate drove to Sydney for a golfing week. Following a few 'phone calls we were soon greeted at the Air Force Club one evening by Peter Alexander, Eric Munkman, Don Bitmead,

Vic.Flight News (cont.)

Stan.Longhurst, Bob.Bruce, Sam Barlow and his brother Kevin.
A most enjoyable dinner followed.

The next mixed Committee meeting will be held at the Air Force Club, Cromwell Road, Hawksburn at 6.30 p.m. Friday March 9th, commencing with a meal in the Dining Room. It will be necessary for all intending participants to RSVP to Hon.Sec.256196 or Hon.Treas., Bill Hurford, 783 9181 no later than Tues.March 6th for catering purposes. There will be a choice of menu

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CORNSTALK COMMENTARY.

N.Z.Reunion. The response to the call for a Squadron Reunion in NZ has been very good, so good in fact that 2 coaches are required. 53 members and friends have paid their deposit to date. If anyone has been holding back, please advise Vic.Williams at Veterans Travel (Sydney 290 1170) immediately as there is a large demand for accomodation.

Melbourne Cup Sweep. Again, we extend very many thanks to those members who support our Sweep and our finances. Members who draw horses were advised by President Eric Munkman before the Race. Unfortunately there can only be one first winner, and Sam. Barlow's horse came first. Second place was held by Bill Hull and third by Bob.Lowe.

Christmas Get-together. On Tuesday 29th November, 44 members and friends gathered in the Air Force Club for a most enjoyable evening and dinner. They were:

Peter and Rita Alexander Harry and Nita Baines Sam and Maisie Barlow Bob and Betty Bruce Yvonne Crompton, Graeme and Dulcie Coombes, Keith and Cassie Cousins, Bruce and Linda Dean, John and Moya Dunn, Lloyd and Betty Johnson, Arthur and Tess Jollow, Bob and Pat.Lyndon, Stan.and Jean Longhurst, Bob and Pat.Miller, Wal and Betty Nobbs, Tom and Val.Moore, Bob and Marjorie Pearson, Stuart and Iris Ricketts, Fred Strom and friend, Bob and Dorothy Smith, Noel Spurling, Frank and Thelma Ward.

The Plaques---a little more costly than it seemed. A typing error occurred in our last edition. The price for plaques is \$30-00 (NOT \$3-00). Squadron Secretary Graeme Coombes has a small supply. Made in New Zealand, they are very well done. (Editor--before anyone is inclined to suppose either Don or Graeme were at fault with the price of the plaques---I did it)

Committee Date changed. As a result of our departure for N.Z. coinciding with the normal meeting date, the next NSW Committee meeting has been brought forward to 13th. March.

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SANDGROPPERS SAY.....

from Ted.Jewell.

Here we are once again with a New Year ahead of us all; I wonder what it has in store for us all. W.A.Flight had a very successful year as we all had some very enjoyable social occasions throughout the year and I am looking forward to coming events in the future.

Once again we had a very enjoyable night out for our usual Xmas social dinner. Each year we have tried to change our venue for this event with more or less an ethnic affair. Scottish, Lebanese, Italian, etc. Our last was at Cicio's Italian Restaurant in Perth. We had 30 members and wives in attendance---a wonderful evening enjoyed by all, with plenty of food and as much house wine as we wanted to drink.

And next.....

Our next funtion for W.A.Flight will be down here at Mandurah, for a B.B.Q. lunch at our home. Members have been coming here for quite a few years and we all enjoy it. I hope to be able to talk some of the local members into attending in the names of Harold Manton, Curly O'Connor, Nobby Nobbs and Len Stewart.

Personal Pars.

Tim.Dale is now in a nursing home and able to go home now and again. All the best, Tim

Bill and Joan Clues are at present visiting their daughter Vicki in Melbourne and son Gary in N.S.W.

Shorty Long is looking well and enjoying life with fishing and bowls; Charlie Davis is the same as ever. Plays plenty of bowls to keep himself occupied.

I keep busy myself with gardening, fishing, and bowls. Nice place to live, here at Mandurah.

Cheerio for now---more news later. All the best.

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PROGRESS OF A MEMORIAL TREE.

In the years immediately after our return from the War, the N.S.W. Flight planted a Memorial Tree at RAAF Station, Richmond. Flight President Pete Campbell officiated and the chosen tree was a Kaffir Plum and the year was 1951. Two years later we placed a brass plaque near it to commemorate the Squadron Dead. Former C.O. Lew Johnston officiated at that. The Tree prospered until someone ran over it with a truck. It had to be re-placed. This date is uncertain (research in early numbers of the Squadron News has yet to arrive at the date) but the chosen tree was a Eucalyptus. In February this year Peter Alexander and Graeme Coombes, as Federal Secretary and Federal Treasurer respectively of the Air Force Association spent a weekend at Richmond for a top level meeting of A.F.A. interstate executives and decided to look at the Tree. It has prospered and is now a very big tree. The plaque has been well cared for by the RAAF--the brass is polished and clean---and all is well. Thanks, RAAF Base, Richmond.

SQUADRON OFFICIALS.

Squadron President: Clive Wyman (Q.) Squadron Vice Presidents: Archie Fell (N.Z.)
Col. Fereday (A.C.T.)
Squadron Treasurer: Peter Alexander (NSW) Squadron Secretary: Graeme Coombes (N.S.W.)
Squadron Hon. Auditor: Bert Thompson A.A.S.A. (NSW)

Flight Correspondents:

Victoria: Stan. Tarczynski, 22, Highgate Grove, Ashburton, Vict., 3147;
N.S.W. Don. Bitmead, 11, Scarborough Street, Monterey, NSW, 2217;
U.K. Sid. Thompsett, 49, Amblecott Road, Grove Park, London, SW 12 9TN, England;
Queensland Jim. Holliday, 43, Stella Street, Holland Park, Q., 4121;
Western Australia Ted. Jewell 61, Wyaree Road, Mandurah, W.A., 6210;
South Australia Geoff. Esau, 24, Fowlers Road, Glen Osmond, S.A., 5064;

Editor of 458 Squadron News; Peter Alexander (Syd. 419 5024)

Q. FLIGHT NEWS.

from Jim. Holliday.

Report on "Windy" Gale. Publication in the last Squadron News of the letter seeking news of Ken (Windy) Gale brought immediate results. Eric Lloyd advised that on returning to Brisbane in 1943, he had contacted Ken's sister and her husband, Alan Crooke, who was head brewer at Castlemaine Fourx. Enquiries at Fourx revealed that Alan Crooke had now retired. Eventually, Alan Crooke telephoned from his home on the Gold Coast. An ex-RAAF friend had shown Alan a copy of the letter and, on behalf of his wife, he had written to W/Cdr. Evans, Air Attache in Paris, forwarding a photocopy of Ken's Log Book. At the time of his death, Ken was a member of 617 (Pathfinder) Squadron and on his 98th operation. Also on 617, was another 458er, Ack Ack Taylor. He was flying in a Lancaster with Arthur Doubleday on the same raid as Windy's last. Windy and his pilot, Harry Steere, were in a mosquito on Target Identification (T.I.). Over R.T. Ack Ack heard Harry Steere report they were hit, too low to bale out, and would try to crash land. Alan Crooke and his wife (Windy's sister) visited the common grave of Windy and his pilot at St. Erlon, France. It was immaculately kept with fresh flowers at the headstone. Enquiries revealed that the members of the French ex-service organisation maintained the grave. Alan Crooke offered a donation but it was politely and firmly declined. Maintenance of the grave was the French way of saying "Thanks".

Xmas Function. A most enjoyable function was held at the home of Joyce and Jim McKay at Upper Mount Gravatt. Most of the members in the Brisbane area attended. Peg and Gordon Outhbertson and Kitty and Jack Baxter came up from the Gold Coast; Charlotte and Chester Jones came down from Mt. Beppo, their retirement location; Harry Dorge and son, Bradley, from Toowoomba, with Pat, also attending a State Junior Soccer League Conference; a sun-tanned Chas. Warren chauffeured by Kath and Eric Kelly; Isla and Bert Garland, Joan and Squadron President Clive Wyman; and of course Joan and Sel. Foote who brought the succulent steaks, chops, rashers and eggs. A special thanks to mine hosts, Joyce and Jim., for the splendid organisation, ably assisted by Peg. Holliday. Unfortunately Evelyn and Flight President Jack Lewis couldn't attend, being committed to a family reunion in Parramatta. Apologies also from the Dud. McKays, the "Shorty" Taylors (serious surgery for Dorothy) the Stones, the Brandons, and Len MacDonnell.

R.S.L. Honour for Theo Ravenscroft.

As an addendum to his Xmas greetings to all members, Theo Ravenscroft writes: "On 12/11/83 I was presented with the V.C. of the "RSL, at the Diggers Dinner here at Longreach. I received the Gold Badge, Life

Q.Flight News (cont.) Membership, and Certificate of the R.S.L.A." From reports received, Theo has performed most distinguished service for ex-servicemen and ex-service organisations for many years, travelling hundreds of miles throughout the Western Districts. Another 458er who has earned distinction in civvy life. Personal Pars.

Jack Baxter is enthusiastic about his new boat, three stories high and in Jack's words, big enough for a fully attended Reunion. Dud McKay writes of a refreshing holiday at Princess Charlotte Bay, way north in Queensland. Bags of oysters and fish but a crotchety crocodile more than rocked one of the boats. Eric Lloyd ---now finally retired---reports Kev. Byrne is now living at Coolum Beach. Imminent retirement for Harry Dorge, and Theo Ravenscroft within 12 months. Don. Brandon is modernising the plumbing of a beautiful old home acquired on the shores of Redland Bay. George Reed bothered but obedient about Doctor's ban on smokes. Alan Atherton recently toured Europe and the East. Jack Lewis looked a little like a portrait of Lord Nelson recently, with his right arm slung across his chest. Jack had surgery to correct the contracted sinew of his third finger caused by his many years of wool classing.

"No Moon To-night" Those who read Don. Charlwood's book "No Moon To-night", published in a recent Readers Digest Volume, may be interested to know that the "Screened" Navigators Charlwood met on his return to Lichfield C.T.U., were ex-458 Navigators who served on the Squadron at Holme and in the Middle East: Keith Campbell, Norm. Kobelke, Len. MacDonnell and "Windy" Gale. P.414 of the book.

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CROWEATERS CAUCUS...

from Geoff. Esau.

I waited, on instruction, before sending in our news, for the big, the only, event on the social calendar, a barbeque arranged for the 6th February. Unfortunately, the weatherman promised a century and for that and other reasons the attendance was small. The popular venue, Botanic Park, is an ideal spot, well grassed and with many massive trees to provide shade---which with several cold bottles reduced the temperature to 'Comfortable'.

Those present were John and Pat. Carey, with their small granddaughter Tania, Sid and Pat. Bartram, Kevin Tait, who brought Ron. Badger (on leave pass from Adelaide Hospital), Heather and myself. Barbeques were out and cold collations in and the day was really enjoyed by those present.

Personal Pars.

Arn. Scholar was involved in a car accident a couple of months ago and is making progress on the road to recovery. Tom. Phillis has had to return to hospital. Our best wishes to Arn. and Tom. and, of course, to Ron. Badger in R.A.H. as mentioned. I understand that Bill and Madge Taylor are off to Queensland for several weeks in the near future, and wish them a happy holiday. Some months ago and just after the printing of the News, I had a letter from Joan Priest, of Richmond Park, Robe, in the south east. She is carrying on the property as a holiday farm and asked me if I would mention this in the News for obvious reasons. Unfortunately, it was overlooked and I now wish to make amends. I understand that visitors may spend a day there or book in for an extended holiday. I know the area though not this property, and it is full of interest and high on S.A.'s list of tourist priority. Address is: P.O. Box 104, Robe, 5276, South Australia---or 'phone 087 68 2149. Best of luck to you, Joan! (Editor: the late Sir Hughie Edwards. V.C. one of the greatest of all Australian airmen and always a friend of 458 Squadron, used to stay in Robe for holidays whenever he had been ill or needed rest after his term of duty as Governor of W.A. and spoke in high terms of Robe (and of Pat Enright who lives there)).

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INTERIM AND UNSATISFACTORY REPORT ON REPATRIATION. Previous issues have, briefly, told of the work of the Committee appointed by the Minister of Veterans Affairs to review the Repatriation system. It has met monthly for the past year. Peter Alexander has been one of the small number attending. The Committee reported, hopefully including some improvements to the system. It included a proposed change to the Determination system (to abolish Boards and the Review Tribunals) which we have opposed (though the RSL and Legacy did not). Now, the Government has verbally announced its intentions on the system. It plans to abolish the Onus of Proof clause (Sect. 47) which has been so helpful to ex-service people and widows, for assessment of pensions (not entitlement), for the Service Pension and for the Regular Forces. It has agreed to none of the proposed improvements. The Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council to which the Air Force Association and therefore we ourselves belong has decided to oppose the whole Government proposal. Some further discussions are pending but if in future issues we ask you to tell your M.P.s and Sena tors to oppose the change---Please do.

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STOP PRESS. The News has been advised of the deaths of Keith Kappler and R.H. Hinks. We are most sorry.