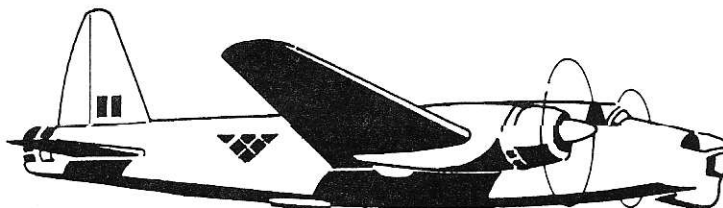


458

SQUADRON NEWS



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4 5 8 S Q U A D R O N O F F I C E - B E A R E R S .

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Archie Fell (N.Z.)
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FINAL CALL FOR THE TWIN TOWNS.

D. FLIGHT NEWS

from Jim. Holliday.

We have now been able to extend the closing date of registration for the Interstate Reunion at Coolangatta from May 31st to June 30th. So, all those whose commitments have delayed acceptance now have a further 30 days grace. However, an early reply will greatly assist. If the Registration Form has been mislaid, send a letter. The programme has been honed to a fine edge and, as we said in our first circular, we've planned to maximise the opportunities for socialising. Our official guests at the Squadron dinner on Tuesday night will be Sir Walter and Lady Campbell. Sir Walter who is Queensland's Chief Justice but on 22nd July, eight days before, he will become Governor of Queensland. So, we will be especially honoured. The other official guests will be Mr and Mrs. H.G. Winders---Mr. Winders is President of the Twin Towns Services Club. Both Sir Walter and "Mick" Winders are ex-R.A.A.F. Here's a final thought to those still debating about coming to the Reunion: it will be at least 8, probably 10, years before the next Interstate Reunion is hosted in Queensland. Can you bear to wait that long to enjoy the warm winter sunshine of Queensland?

Anzac Day. Once again, we marched behind our banner in the Brisbane Anzac March. Spectator enthusiasm grows year by year. However, fewer of our members marched this year. Age is catching up. And to test our old bones the band that led us beat out 150 steps to the minute instead of the usual 120. Phew! We felt a Fourex coming on half way through the March. What a way to greet Gordon Postle returning to the March after business had kept him away from the last two. The Reunion afterwards was attended by Bernie Hughes, Gordon Postle, Bob Helyar, Chester Jones, Joe Elliott, Bernie McLoughlin, Bert Garland, Eric Kelly, and Jim. Holliday, as well as several ex-RAAF Associate members. Unfortunately, the prevailing "wog" forced Flight President Jack Lewis, Chas. Warren, and Len. MacDonnell to apologise. Apologies also came from the Gold Coast contingent, Gordon Cuthbertson, Jack Baxter, and Tony Stone; and for Sel. Foote too. The Annual Meeting re-elected Jack Lewis as President and Jim. Holliday Secretary/Treasurer.

Tony Stone is now a "born again" man. Says corrective surgery on his back now enables him to wriggle his toes, and he proposes to be back on the bowling green before long.

NEW SOUTH NOTES.

from Cy.Irwin.

New Flight Secretary for N.S.W. Members will note that a new scribe has been elected to take over to report N.S.W.doings through our Squadron News pages. At the Flight Annual Meeting on Anzac Day last I was appointed Flight Secretary--to relieve Don.Bitmead in this position. Might I firstly say hello again to Squadron members and secondly express my regrets that Don is not at present able to carry out the duties he has so ably managed for a number of years past. Squadron members owe a great debt of gratitude---thanks,Don,and may you have steady progress to recovery after your recent accident. The illnesses of Don and of Bruce Dean were reported in the last News. At this time of newsprinting it can be happily reported that both are on the mend. Sorry to report that Stuart Ricketts required spinal surgery. But he is now home and on the mend.

Anzac Day in Sydney. A good roll up of local and country members reported for the 1985 Anzac Day March and reunion---voted the most enjoyable for many years. The Rollcall was: Red Jack Baker, Eric Munkman, Stan.Longhurst, Cy.Irwin, Bert Thompson, Bob.Low, Stan.Simpson, Erle Hetherington, Henry Bryant, Wal.Archbold, Ralph Bailey, Roy Gilkes, Bob.Millar, Bob.Lyndon, Dick Cattenach, Alan Piggott, Arnold Ashton, Jack Bevan, Noel Spurling, Eric Purcell, Peter Alexander, Dick Healey, Jock McGowan, Fred.Strom, Sam.Barlow, Merry Baines, Black Jack Baker, Wally Mobbs, Bob.Smith, Bob Bruce, and Marshall Allan. We were also pleased to welcome a son of our late member "Snowy" Fennell who came with Wal.Archbold. The Flight meeting was held during the reunion at the Great Southern Hotel and office-bearers for the coming year elected. The statue quo was maintained with two notable additions to the committee, Alan Piggott and Dick Healey.

Other news. A most enjoyable midday barbeque was held at Stan and Jean Longhurst's Ryde home on Sunday 31st.March. Thanks to them both for hosting a family day for Squadron members. Sorry to report the death of Squadron member Jimmy Wren early in May. Stan.Longhurst attended the funeral to represent the Squadron and express condolences to Jim's family. Jim was a "Reo" electrician with 458, arriving when the Squadron was a Foggia and staying until disbandment. He was one of the Squadron party to visit the U.K. during the 2nd International Reunion.

State Assembly. The Annual R.A.A.F.A.Assembly will be held on June 22/23rd at Port Macquarie with Oxley Region as the host branch. Fred.Strom and Stan Longhurst will attend as delegates for the 458 Squadron branch of the RAAFA. Members are reminded of the Squadron All States Reunion hosted by Q.Flight for the period July 29th to August 2nd. A good roll up of NSW members is expected.

Anyone for Bowls ? Many Squadron members have turned to the noble old game of bowls for their relaxation. An Air Force bowls day is arranged annually in late August at West Lindfield Bowling Club. 458 has in the past fielded a team and member interested could 'phone Stuart Ricketts (817 2414) or Cy.Irwin (427 2852) for details.

SANDGROPPERS SAY..... from Ted.Jewell.

Anzac Day. As usual Anzac Day in Perth was a most memorable day with marchers and crowds almost at a record. The weather as always was a perfect, sunny, day. Our Flight President Bill Clues was at the Dawn Service in Kings Park to attend the Service and lay a wreath at the War Memorial in memory of Fallen Comrades. Later on, at the Fall In before the March W.A.Flight was well represented by about 20 marchers, plus a few strays. After the March and the service on the Esplanade we all retired to the Hyde Park Hotel where we have been going for several years for drinks and lunch. The final count was about 50 members and wives.

Good to see Yank and Kath.Martin who were holidaying in Perth. Also John Lillie who was over from Melbourne. Said he was considering returning to the West to live. Good also to see Tim.Dale there again as usual.

Ben and Val.Cormack have a unit here in Mandurah as a holiday home, and they have had Yank and Kath.Martin staying down here with them for several weeks. Ben and Val. had to go back to Perth for a spell, so Elsie and I drove them around Mandurah to see the sights; took them over to see Harold Manton where he lives at Halls Head, and spent some time yarning about old times; then we caught up with Curly O'Connor at the Caravan Park where he lives---still the same Curly as of old. I went around one morning to Ben's place and found Len.Stewart there repairing Ben's lawn edger, so that Yank could do the trimming, believe it or not! We couldn't catch up with Nobby Nobbs as someone said he was away prospecting on the goldfields. We now have another member of 458 moved to Mandurah---Hensel Hemy and his wife, Lil., and this makes seven members living down here.

Sandgroppers Say....(cont.) At the moment it seems that only Elsie and myself are starters for the reunion in Queensland, but I am hoping there could be others. There is the old saying "it's a small world": seems right. I had to have the local T.V. repairman in several weeks ago. After talking to him awhile, he saw my 458 plaque on the wall and said his brother was with 458 Squadron---Lloyd Simpson.

Best regards to all.

BRITISH BULLETIN. from Sid.Thompsett.

I am very pleased to report that we were able to arrange a small but nonetheless a very happy reunion on Saturday 27th April at the Air Force Club in Piccadilly. Those attending were Norman Duke, and his wife, Leon Armstrong and his wife, Peter Leonard and wife, Mick Mason and lady friend, Sid.Thompsett and wife, Harry Bishop, Norman Gilbert and Eric Phillips. A very pleasant and enjoyable evening was had by all---especially with the photos that Peter Leonard showed us of his visit to Aussie and New Zealand last year. He was still full of his trip and he couldn't thank everyone of you out there for the hospitality that you afforded him. His words explain it---"A trip of a lifetime". Talking of trips, next year's International Reunion was in the minds of one or two and, to date, it seems that those who might make it are Peter Leonard and wife, maybe Leon Armstrong and wife, also Hal Lee but when the itinerary is in print maybe others might be interested---will it be out soon? One or two were unable to attend the reunion but sent their regards---i.e. Fred.Nieman, Bill Waite, Dickie Downer (formerly Tombs), Bert Sleight, George Pigg, Justin McCann---and others. I received a very nice letter from Betty Johnson, explaining how she has planted some bulbs around our tree at Holme-on-Spalding Moor, and how she met Frank Robertson who takes care of the area by the Tree---it was all so neat and tidy. Betty keeps in touch with Lock Simpson and his wife, also with Otto Mann's wife. I have just received a few photos from Al.Wheat from his visit to Hendon Museum during his visit last year. I guess that about winds it up for this time---it's nice to be able to pass on a little news for once.

CROWEATERS CAUCUS.....

from Geoff.Esau.

Some hundreds of people attended the Air Force Memorial Service on April 25th at Adelaide Airport. Conducted by Padre Ben.Williams the service was held in glorious sunshine, which remained all day. It was a notable occasion for 458 in that John Carey brought the new Flight Banner, the previous one having succumbed to the passage of time. Photos of those present were taken beneath the Squadron Tree, with the banner having pride of place. Included were Bert and Lorna Ravenscroft, Syd. Bartram, Jack Riseley, Brian and Jean Woodhead, Joyce Austin, John Carey, Ted.Creighton, Ken.Robertson and me.

Prior to the March in Adelaide, in true Flight fashion a kerbside meeting was held in which all offices were declared vacant by Arn.Scholar. John Carey was elected President; Bert.Ravenscroft remains treasurer, and yours truly was elected Secretary/Scribe. Arn.led the march and the ranks already mentioned were swelled with the addition of Kevin Tait, Bill.Cribb, Bert Oliver, Reg.Priest, Paul Hallam jnr, Ray Whitrod and Keith Grimshaw (ex 38 Sqdn.). Sufficient made it to the Talbot after the march to round off a very pleasant day. While there John Islip (recently from Victoria and sadly confined to a wheelchair) was brought in for a chat and a few beers by his son David. Luckily three of those present well remembered John from Gibraltar days. A pleasure to meet them both.

Bert Ravenscroft has asked me to mention that subscriptions (now \$5-00) are due and payable---please. A large part of the sub is required to provide running costs and postage of 458 Squadron News. In the past the financial members have been carrying the non-payers, all of whom have been receiving the News. Costs have escalated to the point where this is creating a serious problem. Bert's address is 11, Thornton Street, Henley Beach, 5022. He will be most happy to hear from S.A. subscribers who are unfinancial!

Mention was made in the last News of official displeasure at the singing of God Save the Queen at Air Force Memorial Services. I am pleased to report that, after further discussion this has been happily resolved and all is now sweetness and reason.

Personal Pars.

I advise with regret the death of Tom (C.J.)Phillis after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Our deepest sympathy to his family.

Jack Riseley has been to W.A. for a meeting of the Partially Blinded ex-Servicemens Assoc. and reports that the West is an excellent place to visit. Syd. and Pat. Bartram have been holidaying at Robe in the S.E. (another good spot, but smaller). Bill and Madge Taylor have been in Queensland for a few weeks and are apparently enjoying it. They are not home yet anyway. Kind regards to all.

VIC VIEWS

from Stan.Tarczynski.

Anzac Day.

Beautiful weather in Melbourne for April, beating all previous meteorological records, and so we were blessed similarly for the March. Fifteen members fronted up. They were: M.Singe, K.Morkham, E.Laming, W.Hurford, E.Bradshaw, E.Kennedy (who came especially from Ballarat), J.Fleming, R.Hutchinson, A.Green, S.Cartledge, R.Russell, W.Henry, T.Primrose, and S.Tarczynski. The duty of carrying the banner was as usual performed by cadets of 2 A.T.C.

Following the March we proceeded to the Melbourne Bowling Club at Windsor where we were welcomed by Ian Alison. Harry Ashworth arrived a little later on. At the other end of the spacious clubroom was a huge gathering of the 2/8 Armored Regiment celebrating its 100th Anniversary. Among them, one Maunie Perrott came over and introduced himself as having come from Sydney and a mate of Bob Bruce.

Vale.

Kev.Guiney. We have only recently received the sad news of his passing. His widow lives at 65 Fitzwilliam St., Kew. Also, on Feb. 26th, Ian Giles and Tom Burgess attended a private burial of Ron Redpath at Newtown (a suburb of Geelong). Vic.Flight extends deepest sympathy to relatives.

Personal Par.

Ern.Laming received a letter from Mrs.Mona Matthews acknowledging the arrival of the Xmas hamper, etc, and saying how much Bill used to look forward to receipt of same. She also remarked how pleased he was to look after the graves and very grateful for our remembrance of him. He is buried not far from the 458 graves, near a seat where he used to sit and smoke his pipe.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letters to the Editor.

From Mrs.Frances Hunter, 34, Rundell St., Ararat, Vic, 3377.

Dear Peter, It is with pride that I'd like all 458ers to know that 458 was represented in this year's Anzac Day March here. Our grandson, Scott, who is in the school cadets marched, wearing his Pop's medals, proudly. A cross is erected each year with the name of every serviceman who has passed away since last Anzac. There were 11 crosses and sadly to say, Mick's was one of them. In front of them in flowers was "Lest We Forget". I am having the 458 Squadron badge engraved on Mick's headstone as I am as proud of 458 as Mick was. Thank you for your message in the last Squadron News.

yours sincerely, Frances Turner.

From Roy Chappell, 4 Devon Walk, Taroom, Tasmania, 7006.

Dear Mr.Alexander, As author of the Squadron History "We Find and Destroy" you will be well aware of Don.Saville who was a Flight Commander on your Squadron. I knew him as C.O. of 104 Wellington Bomber Squadron while I was the I.O. (only 1 per Squadron in the M.E!) during the period August 1942 to February 1943.

When he left us in Malta he went back to U.K. and in March was appointed C.O. of 218 (Stirling) Squadron---without any real break from operational tensions. After a further 9 or 10 operations he was killed over Hamburg on the night of 24/25 July 1943.

In retirement from the University of Tasmania I have written "Wellington Wings", a history of 205 Group from the viewpoint mainly of 104 Squadron and 236 Wing. Don.Saville interested me so much that I am now doing research for a biography and would very much like to ask help through 458 Squadron News. The Australian War Memorial has recently made a grant-in-Aid for the biography and soon I hope to visit the mainland to undertake interviews with people who remember Saville. Could you permit a request for information to be made in the next issue of Squadron News? I had something like the following in mind----

INFORMATION QUERY. W/Cdr.D.T.Saville, DSO DFC--killed over Hamburg July 1943. His Biographer would like information, stories, photographs from anyone who remembers Don.Saville: Write to F.R.Chappell, 4 Devon Walk, Taroom, Tasmania, 7006. Saville served in Ferry Command, 12 Squadron, 458 Squadron, 104 Squadron, and 218 Squadron.

.....the links between 458 and 104 were quite strong as a number of your crews came to us at the same time that W/Cdr.Saville took over 104. I can think of S/Ldr Sargeant, and P.O. (now Air Commodore) Mick Mather.

I have read and enjoyed your book.

With kind regards,

yours sincerely, Roy Chappell. (Will those who can, please help--
Editor)

From Tony Mauro, RR #3, Oliver, B.C., Canada.

Dear Peter, How are you? Well, I hope. It has been a long time since my last newsletter --nearly a year I think. Is there a problem? Maybe it is just the postal service... Anyway I am more than pleased that 458 is coming to Canada in '86. I am looking forward to seeing you all again.

Correspondence (cont.)

From Tony Mauro. As for suggestions on the best location for the Reunion I would heartily endorse Mick Reid's idea; Vancouver is certainly a beautiful city with many things to do and see. The Rocky Mountains of course are a MUST! I would also suggest a trip through the beautiful Okanagan Valley (where I now live). A tour from Vancouver by way of the magnificent Fraser Valley and return via the Okanagan Valley with an overnight stop would be a nice trip. I admit I am biased but I think 458 can do no better than make Vancouver the main stop of the '66 Reunion. Also in May of '86 Vancouver will be the site of Expo' 86---a Worlds Fair with a transportation theme---looks as though it is going to be a truly spectacular event!.....My wife and I are planning a motor trip across Canada within the next month or so. If I am lucky I may be able to contact some ex 458ers---hope so anyway.

That's all for now---see you in '86. Tony.

* * * * *

From Arch. Fell, 7 Everingham Place, Pakuranga, Auckland, New Zealand.

Dear Peter, I am wondering if you may not have received my letter of 21st September last.....the letter contained news of the passing of Bill Scott and I hoped you would publish it in the News as I am sure many members will remember Bill. Gladys and I attended the funeral and we have visited Bill's widow, Joan. Bill had only returned from New Guinea a couple of months before his death, with a terminal illness. Last we heard from Joan was that she would probably move to Gishorne where her daughters are, if she sells her house.

Kindest regards to yourself and all 458ers around you.

yours sincerely, Arch. Fell

(Ed. Indeed, we did not know of Bill's death. We send our sympathy to his widow and family---some of whom we met at the Squadron dinner in Auckland during the 2nd International Reunion)

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from Al. Wheat, P.O. Box 160, Geraldton, W.A., 6530

Hi, Peter, Unfortunately my last note was too late for the "News". But hope I am in time for the next issue. The Wimpy Appeal still stands at \$30-00. (Vic. Flight \$5 and George Brain \$25). Surely, we should be able to glean a few bucks from individual members with a soft spot for the Wellington aircraft.....(Ed: Members will recall the interesting letter from Al. in a previous issue about his visit to Hendon and inspection of the last and only Wellington aircraft in existence. Members saw the aircraft during the 2nd International Reunion. Al is now collecting funds towards its preservation. Flights subscribed earlier).....Secondly, Amy Power has unearthed a note book from amongst Peter (alias Butch, alias Bubbles) belongings. Only four pages had been used but the contents are most interesting. Peter's daughter loaned me the book to enable me to copy same (copies included). Incidentally the book goes to Simon, a grandson who is affectionately known as Butch.My Wimpy photograph project is very slow---as I have been extremely busy since returning from U.K. in that we have purchased a new business premises and been absolutely flat out. However Lock Simpson and I have done our initial vetting, which of course cost him quite a few stubbies when I visited his domain.....Sincerely, Al.

* * * * *

From George (Curly) Brain, Brain's Newsagency, 14-18 Napier Street, Deniliquin, 2710

Dear Peter, please find enclosed my subs as per slip. Read with much interest Al Wheat's account of his trip to England---so impressed me that I was motivated to sending a donation of \$25 towards the preservation fund.

We have now living in Deniliquin four 458ers I often meet with, and open the hanger doors. Harry Ashworth and Ian Alison were up here in Deni on a couple of occasions---Ian and I were very good friends prior to our Squadron days.

I recently moved into the newsagency business along with my wife and two of our younger sons. Sold our property at Jerilderie but still retained our irrigation farm which our eldest son now manages. When I do visit Sydney I always seem to be short of time and long on business. My intention to contact Squadron members always fall short of the target. Must do something about a special trip before it becomes too late. Kindest regards and Best wishes George Brain.

* * * * *

DINNER FOR N.S.W. FLIGHT. The next "Ethnic" dinner will be different. It will be a fish dinner. The location (for what has been called the best fish in Sydney) will be JAYCEES Restaurant, Lower Help Street, Chatswood. Time 7.30 p.m. Date Monday July 8th. Advise Eric Munkman (451-0824) if you are coming. It is B.Y.O. but we may be able to make favourable special arrangements---check with Eric.

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ATTACK ON THE AUSTRALIAN REPATRIATION SYSTEM.

Squadron News readers will be aware from comments in earlier issues that spokesmen and women for the Australian ex-service movement have been increasingly concerned in recent times about the Federal Government's intentions in relation to Repat. We have feared attacks on the "Onus of Proof" provisions which hitherto have greatly helped veterans and their widows to obtain help. That was the famous Section 47 of the Act favourably (to ourselves) interpreted by the Federal and High Courts. The Minister for Veterans Affairs (Senator Gietzelt), of course, told us--in writing and many times, that the Government would not touch Section 47 as it related to entitlements. He even issued Press Statements condemning "certain elements" misleading and alarming veterans by suggesting the Government would so alter Section 47. (This writer thought he recognised himself among others in the "elements"). The Minister also promised consultation with the ex-service community before alterations were introduced.

What happened? Without any prior consultation, following the "Mini-budget", Section 47 has been removed, not only from assessment matters and the Service Pension, but also from eligibility matters affecting servicepeople who served, in W.W.II, in Australia. By a more round-about method it is removed, according to legal opinion, from those, like 458ers, who served overseas. (This is the "reasonable hypothesis" of which you may have read). For us, in respect of new claims, the legislation appears to say "If you can establish a Case, then you don't have to establish a Case".

The legislation makes it almost impossible to obtain a new T.P.I. pension for the over 65s. It severely handicaps new claimants (other than TPI's widows) for the War Widows Pensions. Dependents allowances are to be phased out.

It is true, let me say, that existing pensions are not (yet anyway) under threat. But if you have held off from claiming and have put up with disabilities, then your future rights are, we believe, under a cloud.

The writer appeared before the Royal Commission into Vietnam Chemical Sprays by request and gave evidence as to the effect of the changes on Vietnam theatre veterans (and 458ers would be similarly affected by the changes). The Judge, as you have read, subsequently flew to Canberra to argue, unsuccessfully, for deferment of the changes. The Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council (AVADSC), the crest organisation for all interested National Australian Veterans organisations, is opposing what has happened.

But every veteran and his family needs to play a role in this last battle for the Australian ex-serviceman. Even if you are unaffected, how long will that be for? We ask each of you to write to your local Federal Member AND all the Senators for your State urging reversal of the changes. Write your own letter to them at Parliament House, Canberra. If the following draft helps please use it as a base. Don't be "conned" by a put-off reply.

Dear Senator (Federal Member)

As one of the electors for your Electorate (State), I write to express the strongest objection to the changes being made to the great and historic Australian Repatriation system--in the Repatriation Legislation Amendment Act and proposed in the Veterans Entitlements Bill. These changes will, I believe, severely reduce the rights of Veterans and their widows, particularly from World War II. They were introduced without consultation with our ex-service Associations and in some matters indirect breach of ministerial promises. The changes are a repudiation of Australia's historic commitment to look after those who served Australia at war.

Please vote to reverse these adverse changes. I am particularly concerned at the changes affecting Onus and Standard of Proof, the T.P.I. pension, future War Widows claims and future assessments.

yours sincerely,

(Contributed by Peter Alexander)

Editor--this fight is for us all. If we let it go, we are written off before our time.