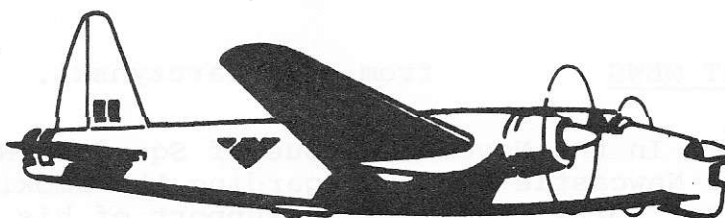


458

SQUADRON NEWS



JOURNAL OF THE 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL, G.P.O. Box 5289, Sydney, 2001, AUSTRALIA.

Year 42, No. 165

February, 1991.

Registered by Australia Post, Publication No. NAS 6056.

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

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ALL-STATES REUNION, BAROSSA, October, 1991.

With this issue, 458ers will find Enrolment Forms for the 27th. All-States Reunion of 458 Squadron. Obviously 50 is a remarkable anniversary; and the program organised by S.A. Flight will do justice to a great occasion. This is one that should NOT be missed. It is another chance for us and our ladies to enjoy the companionship, and the memories of long friendship, arising from a war that does not seem as long ago as it indeed was. It is a privilege that war initiated and long journeying together through the years has cemented. See you there!

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THE TERRIBLE THREE PADRES. Biography of Fred McKay.

The biography of one of our "Terrible Three Padres" is on the market. Maisie McKenzie, a well-known writer, has told a very readable story simply entitled "Fred. McKay", with an oil painting of Fred himself on the dust cover.

The Middle East chapter tells only a morsel of what we all know about our padres in the Desert and in Italy, but the author has given us enough to revive some pretty sturdy memories of how Bob Davies, John McNamara, and Fred McKay worked together as an indivisible and popular trio.

The book is on sale in various bookshops, for \$29-95, but the safest bet is Unichurch Books, 262, Pitt Street, Sydney.

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VIC. FLIGHT NEWS

from Stan.Tarczynski.

For Lofty. In the November issue of Squadron News information was sought for Newcastle Legacy regarding the smoking habits on the Squadron of the late "Lofty" Chalmers, in support of his widows War Widows pension application. They were married after the war. It is with extreme satisfaction we can report that a reply was received from S/Ldr J. McCann, A F C , R.A.F. (Ret'd)--9 Merrivale House, Crapstone Road, Yelverton, Devon, PL20 6BT, England, saying he was Lofty's skipper and remembered well that he was a heavy smoker. For the record, his original letter to Legacy as a reply was enclosed in error to me, and I forwarded it to Newcastle some three weeks ago and so far have not received my copy back and am unable to report further details.

Since the last issue in which Keith Clymo was mentioned in reference to the above came out, we must report with deep sorrow his passing. It was a private funeral. He was a drinking partner of mine on the Squadron and post-war at the Hotel Australia (Melbourne), with his mate, Reg Greer, father of Germaine.

Personal Pars. Ken and Beat. Morkham have moved to smaller premises--2A Oberon Street, Forest Hill, 3131--Tel. 877 4711. (Squadron News please note) Therefore we will now have a new venue for our Xmas-in-March BBQ. The new date is Sunday March 10th., at 24/1 Stocks Avenue, Ashburton. This will be the Community Room for the 24 units at Stocks Village where I reside, with a sports arena adjoining with a few shady trees. For further information contact me on 8855583. The A.G.M. and Dinner follow on Friday May 31st at 6.30 sharp--this includes wives.

Rupert and Beth Pearce have not had the best of luck lately. Beth had a severe stroke but fortunately it has not affected her speech. But it confines her walking to within the house. Rupert has been without wheels since mid December when he was involved in an accident (\$6000 damage). It may be back about mid February.

Victorian Flight President Mick Singe and Mavis went west over Christmas to son David's family at Northam, and met up with Jim Palmer at Narrogin--he drove 120 kilos from Kojonup for their reunion. On the return journey, from Kalgoorlie to Ceduna, over a day and a half with the temperature over 47° (centigrade) they had to do without airconditioning, which had failed.

The 458 Banner refurbished. It is pleasing to report that our Squadron Banner has been refurbished after all these years, thanks to Shorty Bradshaw's daughter-in-law at the reasonable cost of \$280. Come on, fellas--see you at the Anzac March.

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CANUCK CAUCUS.

from Jim.Donaldson.

There is not a great deal of 458 Squadron news to report on the Canadian front: to tell the truth it is conspicuous in its absence.

I imagine the reason is that the majority of the 24 members whose whereabouts are known are sojourning in warmer climes, down south in the USA, where they are known as snow birds. This is because they were spoiled during their stay with 458 Squadron in the Desert, after experiencing the warm weather and companionship of the men from Down Under they could no longer resist the temptation of travel. Hence the mass migration of snow birds.

Some of us, however, stay at home and brave the chills of our northern clime to keep the wheels of industry turning, the fires going, and make sure no one comes along to take over the country while the snowbirds are away. As well as to pass on such news as the following.

The Wartime Pilots and Observers Association announce that they have over 1,000 confirmed reservations for the upcoming reunion to be held June 18-21 1992. Also I understand that someone Down Under is working on a Charter Flight. When I pin it down as to who it is, I will pass on the information.

I enclose a list of our Canadian members--maybe we can revive some old friendship. (Ed. We hope to include it in this mail-out)

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My thanks to Bill Clues for filling in the last Newsletter while Elsie and I were in Bali for two weeks holiday. We were in thatched cottages on a beach, had a wonderful time and enjoyed every minute of our stay.

Personal Pars.

I recently had a letter from Charlie McCarthy, who said he doesn't stray far from home these days, but spends most of the time in his workshop. Good to hear from you again, Charlie!

Anzac Day. Will be our next turn out. I hope we shall have a good roll up. We seem to have quite a few now who have No Marching Chits. That makes attendance at the March disappointing. But after the service in the city, we are booked in for drinks and lunch at Miss Maud's Restaurant, Perth where we should expect around 40 members, wives and friends to enjoy several hours together and talk over old times.

* * * * *

As mentioned in the last News,our Christmas function was held on Sunday, 25th November,at the home of Joan and Ron.Russell at Mermaid Waters on the Gold Coast. It was most successful. The sky was cloudless,the sun bright, and a gentle zephyr wafted around. A pleasant day for a pleasant matter. Good crowd too. Kitty and Jack Baxter,Joan Brandon and Don.Brandon, Peg and Gordon Cuthbertson,Joan and Sel Foote,Isla and Bert Garland,Peg. and Jim Holliday,Chester Jones,Kath and Eric Kelly,Evelyn and Jack Lewis, Bridie and Eric Lloyd,Bernie McLoughlin,Moyra and Tony Stone,Hilda and Frank Wilks,Joan and Clive Wyman,and,of course,Joan and ROn.Russell. Joan had invited two other British War Brides who travelled to Australia with her,and the ex-R.A.A.F. husbands,Mr and Mrs Ron.Rigby,andMr and Mrs. Kel Clarkson. Apologies from the Dud McKays,the Jim. McKays,the Hobbs, Dorges and Dangaards.

The McKay Story. As also mentioned in the last News, Bernie McLoughlin and Jim. Holliday were invited to the launching of Maisie McKenzie's book about Fred McKay. In his welcoming address, Sir Walter Campbell, Governor of Queensland and ex-RAAF) remarked that he attended many book launchings but this was the biggest and most enthusiastic he had ever attended. This is evidence of the popularity and high regard in which Fred McKay is held everywhere. He is now 85 years and in splendid physical and mental health. That night he was Guest of Honour at the annual dinner of the Scottish Association, presided over by the Governor.

Vale Theo Hutton. We have been advised of the death of Theo Hutton. Some years ago he contracted an incurable ailment and went into a nursing home at Nambour on January 6th. At an early reunion Theo had handed me a parcel, saying it contained a relic from Gibraltar and to keep it unopened until he advised. I have now opened it and found it to be an old Australian flag, very tattered, with a red field. Some of the local lads believe it to be the flag that flew over 458 HQ in the Middle East. I have forwarded it to Peter Alexander for identification. (Ed. Received--identification under way).

[illegible]

KIWI CALL.

from Ron.Verity.

It is hard from here in Christchurch to generate concerted interest among members in this fair land. Letters remain unanswered or never reach their destination. If it were not for your Newsletters I might be living on another planet.

As visualised, once we had sold the business, we expected a greater freedom to visit other parts of the country. And that has happened. Between Christmas and the New Year we were as far north as Tauranga and Hamilton; and, more recently, we have been as far south as Invercargill. A school I attended there in the "Twenties" was celebrating its centennial, an occasion I felt should not be missed. About the same time Peter and Barbara (son and daughter) walked the Milford Track--an experience they will long remember. Unfortunately Mary and I are past that kind of exertion.

No news is generally thought to mean good news; maybe that is our message on this occasion. It would be fair to say, however, that were we to meet, the chief topic of conversation would be the Gulf War--and that is not good news. There has to be a better way of solving differences. There should be a way of neutralising dictators before they become too ambitious. Democracy?--Perhaps? And then a supra-national body like the International Court of Justice as the final arbiter. Is it going to happen in our lifetime?

Time to go. Thanks for your reminder and I am sorry I have so little to offer. It is nothing short of remarkable that you still find time to keep the copies rolling out. Thanks also to all those who assist in preparing and posting the News.

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THE CORNSTALK COMMUNICATION. FROM Jock McGowen.

Whereas all of us hoped and prayed for a peaceful 1991 this was not to be, and our thoughts go with all those young guys who are now repeating the performance of 458 and many others over 50 years ago, and enjoying the rigours of desert warfare. We pray for their safe homecoming, very soon.

The McKay Biography. Stan Longhurst and I went to St. Stephens Uniting Church in Macquarie Street, for the release of the story of "Fred McKay", a truly fascinating story and one that brings all the various facets of Fred McKay to the forefront. It was an honour for Stan and me to be invited. It was a delightful morning.

Valete. Every issue we have a list of those old mates who are no longer with us. This issue we have on this sad list Max. Egan, a 458 Airgunner who in civil life was in the long-distance transport industry. He played cricket with us post-war too. To Jean, our condolences. Barry Menser, 458 pilot and businessman in the Motor trade and loyal Squadron member. To his lady, Edna, our sympathies. And then Ken. Everett, who was 2nd pilot to Ken Pond on 458 and in postwar life a grazier in northern N.S.W.. Our sympathy to Heather his lady. And also Theo. Hutton, 458 Navigator and architect. Our deep sympathy.

Air Show. Another Air Show is planned for Richmond in October, as part of the R.A.A.F.'s 70th anniversary celebrations. Let's hope the Gulf War presentsituation doesn't interfere. We have planned a short day session at Williamstown to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the foundation of 458 Squadron there on 10th July, 1941. There have been a few doubts as to whether this can be held due to increased security at R.A.A.F Bases, but at this stage it appears it is still on.

A Considerable Anniversary. We had a delightful luncheon to celebrate the 350th. meeting of the N.S.W. Flight Committee. This was attended by Committee members and their ladies. Some of the first committee members are still serving--Eric Munkman, Fred Strom, Bob Bruce, Peter Alexander, and Sam Barlow. Other original members were invited but could not make it. Pete Campbell and Ralph Bailey, who were original Vice President and President could not attend.

The Squadron Map is still selling. With this issue we plan to enclose a leaflet on the Table Mats we are now offering in sets of six.

Anzac Day. Let's have a good roll up! Form up at St. James Square: AGM and light lunch at the Great Southern Hotel, George Street.

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