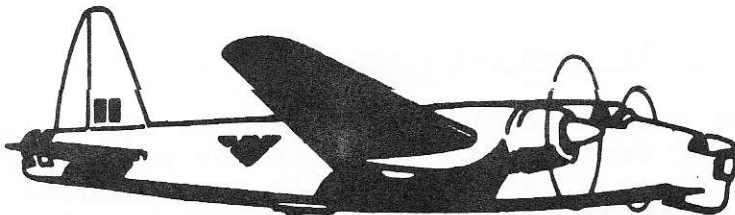


458

SQUADRON NEWS



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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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SQUADRON TREASURER: Peter Alexander (NSW) ----Australia: Stan. Longhurst (NSW)
SQUADRON SECRETARY: Graeme Coombes (ACT) Bill Clues (W.A.),
HON. SQUADRON AUDITOR: Bert Thompson (NSW) Canada: Jim. Donaldson (Manitoba)
U.K. Peter Leonard (Wales)
New Zealand: Kevin George
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THE SQUADRON GATHERING IN PERTH IS "ON".

A FAX from Bill Clues advises that members' response has been quite good. The following members, with their ladies, have indicated attendance: Jack Fleming (with David Evans), Cyril Murray, Bert Ravenscroft, Don. Bitmead, Vin. Clohesy, Eric Munkman, Ernie Laming, Syd. Bartram, Jim. Perry, Bill Hull, --and also "Dusty" Miller.

Bill will write to them as soon as he has more information. If there are other starters, Bill can take bookings (and cheque) up to the end of May.

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THE CORNSTALK COMMUNICATION.

from Jock McGowen.

The biggest event this Issue is Anzac Day. It never seems to get bigger, but then it doesn't seem to get smaller. Let's hope it keeps on going and we keep flying the flag until there are none of us left.

Those attending the Sydney Reunion were; Bob Lyndon, Bob. Smith, Jack Bevan, Bill Turier, John Dunn, Noel Walter, Don. Bitmead, Eric Munkman, Peter Alexander, Arnold Ashton, Cy. Irwin. George Unitt, Red Jack Baker, Black Jack Baker, Jock McGowen, Freddie Strom, Stan. Longhurst, Bill Hull, "Farmer" Giles, Jack Aitken, Harry Baines, Bob Millar, Sam Barlow, Ralph Bailey, Wally Mobbs, Ken. Rosen, Frank Ward, Bob Low, and Capt. Joy Goodman (a visitor).

Not a bad roll-up, 29, altogether, down a few on last year, but we must expect variations year by year.

The Cornstalk Communication (cont.)

A welcome return to the fold was Noel Walter: Noel was elected to the position of General Secretary of the proposed "458 Squadron Club" at Alghero, Sardinia, in 1944, and was instrumental in getting the first reunion going in Sydney on 25th January, 1946, at the combined Services Club. At that time Noel had only 50 names on his list, a long time ago; but how we have grown in numbers world-wide, due a devoted bunch of people led by Peter Alexander. Let's keep it going.

Welcome back, Noel. Just to make sure he will not escape again, he was elected to the N.S.W. Flight Committee, along with the return of the old committee.

Bomber Command Anniversary Church Service.

TO mark 50 years on, the Australian Bomber Command Squadron Associations, led by Bruce Otton of 466/462 Squadrons, organised a Church Service at the Garrison Church, Sydney on Sunday May 3rd. Attended by Chiefs of Air Staff, present and past, and a considerable array of medalled ex Bomber Command people, the congregation included many 458ers, including Eric Munkman, Peter Alexander, Jack Aitken, Black-Jack Baker, Stan Longhurst and others. It was in a sense, to quote the serving RAAF Chaplain, Air Commodore Wheeler, who preached the sermon, a meeting with history.

Personal Pars.

We have received a long letter from Tom Meredith in the U.K. Tom had a long career in the Middle East including his stint with 458. He sends his best wishes to his old mates in 458.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of "Cuthy" Cuthbertson. We all remember Gordon and send our sympathy to Peg and family.

Bert Thompson is back home after a spell in hospital and we wish him well. At the same time we send our best wishes to Arthur Jollow, Lofty Bracker and old mate "Chappie". Keep it going, you guys.

In my own case, the Surgeon discovered there was a heart in there, and not a block of stone, as was hinted over the years. He signed the Form 700, and I am back on ops again. The wonders of the medical profession.

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CROWEATERS' COMMENTS

from Ted Creighton.

Anzac Day, 1992.

Despite reasonable weather, the general attendance was down this year at the 9.0.a.m. Airport Ceremony. Eight Squadron members along with Pat Bartram and Freda Creighton, answered the early morning roll call. Jack and Mavis Nelson also supported our group.

Numbers swelled for the March and some 16 bods, with the usual 458 verve and vivacity, precise step and immaculate formation, ambled their way from Victoria Square to the Cross of Sacrifice. Most of the blokes wandered back to the Talbot Hotel, and their ladies increased their number to four with the arrival of Madge Taylor. Unfortunately, the Talbot is no longer the pub 458 adopted many years ago. It has changed hands several times and now has lost its original character and charm. This year, again, it was such a kerfuffle to get a drink, and the mob was split into bits and pieces; it was almost impossible to keep together. We, therefore, have decided to find somewhere else to grace with our presence. When we find it, the location of our new home will be announced in the News. In the meantime, interstate visitors should check before heading off to the Talbot.

S.A. Flight Pulls a swifty. With some degree of embarrassment I have to report that John Carey and I received a pleasant surprise on Anzac Day. Somehow Bill Taylor found an empty corner in the Talbot, gathered in the crew and on behalf of S.A. Flight, as an expression of appreciation for the work done by the Careys and the Creightons towards the 50th Anniversary Reunion, presented each of us with a wall plaque. On what appears to be a thin sheet of brass mounted to a

wooden backboard effectively displayed in black is the Squadron Crest, areas of operation and a message of appreciation. Undoubtedly John Excell had a hand in the production. Thanks, blokes, for a fine presentation, but it was the complete teamwork of the Flight that got the job done.

The Back Page. Reading the Squadron News these days is getting a bit like reading the Hatches, Matches and Dispatches page of the local paper. Too often is there another name to place on the Roll of Honour. After having just relocated Bill Johnson and welcomed him back to the fold, we lost him again on 17th March. John Carey, Bill Taylor, Colin Hutchison, Bert & Marjorie Oliver and Ted and Freda Creighton gathered at Enfield Memorial Park along with the many friends and relatives to pay tribute to Bill on his last trip. Bill had a wide circle of friends and a very caring partner in Lesley Adams. Our condolences, Lesley. Also S.A. Flight--and in the words of Bert Ravenscroft-- particularly his groundcrew mates--were saddened to hear of the death of Gordon Cuthbertson ---a bonzer bloke and one of nature's gentlemen and a cornerstone in the Squadron. He is sadly missed by all. Our thoughts are with you, Peg.

[illegible]

by Ted Jewell.

As usual a wreath was laid by our Flight President Bill Clues at the Dawn Service in Kings Park on Anzac Day. The wreath was once again made by Vera Etherton. Later on in the morning, the weather in Perth was once again perfect, not too hot nor too cold, but-- "Where have all the old "Flight Marchers Gone?" When we lined up for the start of the March through the town we could only muster "4"---the worst we have ever done. Bill Clues leading, myself with the Banner and Henry Etherton on one side and Stan Hopewell on the other. Not very impressive really.

After the March and Service on the Esplanade we all met at the Hyde Park Hotel for lunch and drinks, arranged by Charlie Davis. There we had 36 members, wives, associates for a wonderful few beers.

Squadron Members present were: Bill Clues, Ted Jewell, Henry Etherton, Stan. Hopewell, Ron. Gannaway, Syd Baker, Doug. Anderson, Charlie Davis, John Lilly, Pete McCarthy, Ray Turley, and also Poss Dale. All in all, a very happy reunion, and I am sure all went away happier for having met old mates once more. We are hoping to see more old friends later in the year. All the best. Ted

All the best, Ted.

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from Jim.Donaldson.

Last evening we completed the mailing of our last newsletter for our 6th. Commonwealth Wartime Aircrew Reunion. It is supposedly the last, but I wouldn't bet on it.

It states that we should be near the 4,000 mark, and we compliment ourselves that it is not bad for a bunch of old crocks, not bad indeed. The Head Table guests are as follow: J. V. M. Johnson, Johnson

A.V.M.Johnnie Johnson
F/Lt Bill Reid V.C.
A.C.M.Sir Rodger Pallin (AMP-RAF)
A.C.M. Sir Michael Knight (Pres.Aircrew Assoc.)
A.M. Sir James Rowland (RAAF--Pathfinders)
A/C Adamson (RNZAF)
A/C Len Birchill(RCAF)
Lt.Gen Knel (Chief, SAAF)

With that much brass we should really be able to strike up the band.

The following are the 458 attenders: Norm.Duke,Peter Eastcott,Colin Fereday,Donald Fleming,Frank Laughlin,George Powell,Bryan Quinlan,Mick Reid, John Reynolds,Jim Whittem,Jim.Donaldson.
We have arranged for accomodation for all the above along with their wives

Canuck Caucus (cont.) at the Place Louis Riel where we will be picked up and transported via a London Double Decker Bus to the Forks. There they will board the Paddle Wheel Queen for a three hour Dine and Dance Riverboat cruise. There we may be joined by members of 38-69-and 221 Squadrons, all of whom were Wimpy Torp. Squadrons, or so I am told. It could be an evening to remember--and the opening toast will be to all of you who will not be there. So, wherever you are at 7.0 p.m. on the evening of June 18th 1992, pick up your glasses to absent comrades wherever you or they may be.

I have just received a laser copy of Mac's picture from Mick. It does bring back memories and stirs up thoughts of long ago: oh, to be young again!

Registrants for the Reunion: Australia 77-134
 New Zealand 23-37
 United Kingdom 190-319

As well as many more coming from Europe and the other Commonwealth countries.

God bless. Jim Donaldson

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Q.FLIGHT NEWS. from Jim.Holliday.

A contingent of 18 marched behind the 458 Banner in Brisbane on Anzac Day. It comprised eight members, two stalwart Associates, three Odd Bods, three Viet Vets, and two grandchildren. All attended the Reunion, as well as two further members unable to march. Nine apologies were received.

Through the good offices of Bernie McLoughlin, our Reunion was held at the Queensland Irish Club, which hosts a packed house of veterans from all Services every year. There's no doubt that the general atmosphere contributed to the spirit of the Reunion. Unfortunately in this jovial animated atmosphere, the business of the Annual Meeting and Election of Officers had to be deferred. Members present were:

Jack Lewis, Chester Jones, Bernie McLoughlin, Bob. Helyar, Clive Wyman, Ron. Russell, Ian Higlett, Eric Kelly, Bert Garland, Jim. Holliday. Apologies from Alan Atherton, Eric Bird, Jack Hobbs, Bernie Hughes, Fred. Kleckham, Dud McKay, Jim. McKay, Alf Peake, Tony Stone, and Jack Baxter.

The Passing of Gordon Cuthbertson. With great sadness we report the passing of one of the Squadron's nicest blokes--Gordon Cuthbertson. For some 2/3 years he had been most unwell. Regularly every 4 weeks, Peg took Gordon to Greenslopes for treatment. On 6th April Gordon entered the local private hospital with complete kidney failure and a lung infection. He died on 8th April. At his funeral at the Uniting Church, Isle of Capri, Gold Coast, Peg and Gordon's son, in his eulogy, recounted many of the incidents of Gordon's service life, including his "arrest". Members of the Squadron formed a guard of honour as the bier left the church. Members of "Q" Flight will ever remember Gordon for perennial cheerfulness, courtesy, and, with Peg, open hospitality. Gordon was one of the members of 458's long-serving groundstaff and one of those whose long squadron service made 458 the united body it is.

1993 All-States Reunion. "Q" Flight will forward to Squadron News for the next issue a Prospectus for the 1993 Interstate Reunion in Queensland. It will contain venue, accommodation costs, programmes and a booking coupon. We'll be making the whole affair as interesting as possible to everyone and keeping costs to a reasonable level. We look forward to hosting our many mates from other States.

Personal Pars. Alf. Peake has now retired from his sugar plantation to live at Home Hill. He writes he often sees Alan (Snow) Atherton and "We talk for hours over a cold one." (I couldn't limit myself to one and I would like to learn their secret of prolonged refrigeration.--J.H.) Looking through Alan's photos of the Barossa Reunion, Alf remarks that he would not recognise any of them with their bald heads and bug guts. But "they all look contented."

THE BRITISH BULLETIN. from Sid Thompsett.

A most successful Reunion. A number of us gathered at the Brooklands Museum on Thursday 23rd April and enjoyed a most informative and exciting day. We were escorted round by one of the original apprentices of 60 years ago who worked on the designs of both the Wellington and the Hurricane. The visit was a private one kindly arranged by Norman Duke and everyone said it was one of the best times they had had. The Wimpy R for Robert is coming on marvellously. The fuselage is getting near completion and they are hoping to lift it up on its wheels this coming week. Both props. are slightly buckled but are in one piece, together with engine nacelles. When all the work has been completed, bearing in mind all the work is being done by volunteers--Norman Duke being one of them--they will not be covering it all over, only enough to shew the Squadron markings, etc.

The whole area of Brooklands is so interesting as it covers not only aircraft but racing cars, and with part of the racing circuit still useable they are hoping for big things in the future. After the trip round we had a very enjoyable lunch and the usual chit-chat, with Peter Leonard telling us all about his trip to the last Reunion in the Barossa Valley. Those who managed to attend were Norman Duke, Sid and Vi Thompsett, and son Philip, Leon and Doreen Armstrong, Peter and Eileen Leonard, Hal Lee and son, Reg. Windett and wife. Eric Phillips had hoped to attend but had to pull out at the last minute as he has been suffering from jaundice. He was most disappointed. I have received a request from the cousin of the late Sgt. D. Pepper, who was a W. Op with P. O. Furey, at Holme on Spalding Moor and went missing on a raid to Emden on 15-11-41. I can fill him in a little from the Squadron History but does anyone know anything else I might tell him? (Ed. Mr. Pepper has been in touch with us here too)

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VIC. FLIGHT NEWS.

from Stan Tarczynski. (Tel. 03-885-5583.)

The Xmas in March BBQ turned out to be the best ever attended yet. It was held in the Community Room of Ashburton and District Senior Citizens 24-Unit Village where I reside. All the way from Hamilton (200 K) came Vin. Clohesy and his new bride Mavis who was so impressed that she expressed a desire to join as an Associate member and said they would return for the A.G.M. and Dinner in June. Neil McPhee from Mornington was on a first visit. He retired some years ago as General Manager of the R.A.C.V. (Royal Automobile Club of Victoria). In addition, we had Ern and Helen Laming, Dave Evans, Jack and Dot. Fleming (St. Leonards), Bill Henry (much improved in health), George and June de Tarczynski, Elaine Timms, Beat Morkham, Jack and Vivienne Morris, Neil and June Dean, Bill and Ann Hurford, Jack and Margery Ellis (Dromana), Stan Tarczynski and Phyl. Semmens, Rupert Pearce, Yank and Kath. Martin, and last but not least Mick and Mavis Singe, who did so much to make this outing such a success. In all we had 28. For Squadron records, please note that Jack Cruttenden's address is 11, Cullen Court, Drydale, Vic., 3222; and Jack Guthrie's amended address is Unit 61, Private Bag, Eltham, 3095.

Dinner Deferred. Because of Mick and Mavis Singe's overseas trip to visit their mates, Peter and Eileen Leonard in Brecon, Wales, we have deferred our AGM Dinner to Friday, June 19th at the Air Force Club, Hawksburn, at 6.30 p.m. sharp. If any other members wish to attend this function who were not at our March BBQ, please let me know a week before to amend table bookings.

The RAAF Groundstaff of the Desert Air Force.

Several years ago, at our Melbourne Cup BBQ at Jack and Dot Flemings' place at St. Leonards, we had a visit from Eric Johnston from Point Lonsdale seeking information and photographs of RAAF Groundstaff stationed with the Middle East Desert Air Force Squadrons. He has now produced a book (title as above). Price \$30-00 plus postage \$4-30. (Or bulk postage for 5 copies, only \$1-08 postage per book). For further information and copies contact the author E.S. Johnston, 19 Qu'Appelle Street, Point Lonsdale Vic. 3225. (Ed. We plan to review the book in the next issue.) We have still not forgotten the 5 gallon keg Eric brought as a sample of a new Geelong beer--but we don't know what became of the brewery.

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KIWI CALL. from Kevin George.

I am pleased to report that we have, at last, caught up with C.W. ("Wink"--otherwise "Cut") Price in Christchurch. He will be remembered as a Flight Commander at Protville when we joined the Squadron, and became tour-expired about the time that the Squadron moved to Bone. After leaving the Squadron I caught up with "Wink" again at Ghisonnacia when I took over his job and communications aircraft---a Fairchild Argus. Someone recently described that job as "Operational Controller". It sounds impressive but was really something of a holiday. I really had no need of the Fairchild either and eventually lost it when "Paddy" Simpson, a Squadron Leader ex 500 Squadron decided he had more need of it in Bastia than I did. He was "pulling rank" really. Possibly you have already heard from "Wink" (Ed. Yes, he writes that he is delighted to be a member of the 458 Squadron Association)

An important part of my little story printed in the last newsletter was omitted. "Sandy"'s brothers were non-drinkers. "Sandy" appeared to attribute his immunity to a family health problem to his nightly glass--or two.

Dawn and I would be tempted to put our names down for Perth in October if we had not already booked on a P & O cruise "Coral Sea Revisited" leaving Sydney on July 31st and terminating with a Farewell dinner at Sydney R.S.L. Club on August 17th. We will be pleased to hear from any Squadron member going on the cruise which calls at well-known wartime locations.

(Ed. Kevin also seeks Fred Nieman's address--which is enclosed!)

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SQUADRON WALL PLAQUES AGAIN AVAILABLE.

There is a small supply of 458 Squadron Wall Plaques again available --from Squadron Secretary Graeme Coombes at Unit 21, St. Andrews Village, Groom Street, Hughes, A.C.T., 2605. Price \$36-00.

PASSING OF HAROLD MANTON.

We regret to report the passing of Harold Manton in W.A. A Fitter on 458, Harold returned to farming after the war. He died a couple of months ago in his 80s. Our sympathy to his family.

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THE AUSTRALIAN REPATRIATION SYSTEM DEVELOPMENTS.

Australian members are aware of the long-drawn out controversy over proposals to integrate the Veterans Hospitals into State systems and according private patient status to eligible veterans in the areas in which they and their families live. Subject to agreement in each State (all have different problems) we have favoured that. The R.S.L. at Canberra level has vigorously resisted it until recently when it reversed its policy at a special National Council and adopted the same policy we have had. While State politicians are now agitating over details it does look as if this matter, which has consumed immense time, work, and frustration, is concluding.

We are now able to concentrate on pressing for completion of an adequate Age Care overall policy for Veterans and War Widows. This will include a Veterans Independence Policy to keep Veterans comfortably in their own homes as long as possible (that policy is slowly moving towards implementation), Veterans Health Weeks to help them keep their health (the first week has just been organised. A bit hastily done but next year will be better, we believe); and for those needing it, an adequate assurance of bed-space in hospitals/hostels for chronic and long-term sufferers. On that we are pressing the Government for information and action.

Governments should have done all this years ago.

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THE FUTURE OF ANZAC DAY. The marches are well attended still and will remain so for some years yet. But in the long-run, what then? Regular soldiers, sailors and airmen to march? Sons and daughters to march? If the latter, march with their elders or separately? (In some States they already do). Perhaps we should be considering this at the next All-States Squadron Conference. Anzac Day is a great Australian tradition.

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