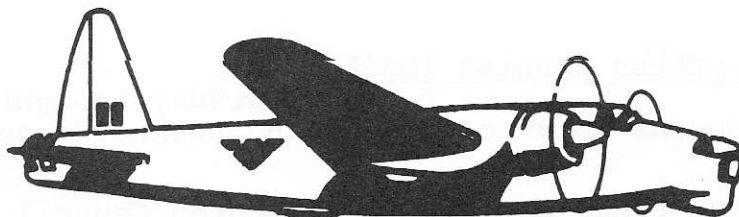


458

SQUADRON NEWS



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

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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 .

SQUADRON PRESIDENT: Stan. Longhurst (NSW): SQUADRON VICE PRESIDENTS:
SQUADRON TREASURER: Peter Alexander (NSW)----Australia: Mick Singe (Vict),
SQUADRON SECRETARY: Graeme Coombes (ACT) Bert Ravenscroft (SA),
Hon, SQUADRON AUDITOR: Frank Ward (NSW) U.K. Peter Leonard (Wales),
Canada Jim. Donaldson (Manitoba)
N.Z. Ivan Green.

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Q'ld Jim. Holliday, 43, Stella Street, Holland Park, 4121, Q.

A HAPPY AND ENJOYABLE REUNION AT AND AROUND MERMAID WATERS.

From the start of the well-organised All-States Reunion--the 28th--there was an atmosphere of both excitement and happiness--the happiness of men and women of an extended family coming together again in their later years. The excitement, particularly of the first evening with the welcoming Reception, with the excitement of seeing who was there and recognising 458ers not seen for very many years--and there were some. One such was Alf. Peake, who with fellow North Queenslanders Theo. Ravenscroft, Danny Dangaard and Erle Hetherington had made the jounies south. We welcomed Christine Smith, Bert's widow, to her first but not last 458 Reunion.

The second day took 458 to Movie World, a Gold Coast Disneyland, where they spent the day watching some remarkable stunts and films.

Day three by coach (all transport was efficiently organised) to RAAF Base, Amberley for lunch and a look at the RAAF's attack aircraft.

The Wednesday brought 458 on the water with a day-long visit to Stradbroke Island and Sanctuary Cove. Some of the adventurous--we mention Graeme Coombes and Col. Fereday--took to high-speed launches and sped past us. Lottery winners took to the air.

The All-States Reunion (cont.)

Thursday brought the Squadron to Brisbane and Mt.Cootha Botanic Gardens and Lookout--another enjoyable day together.

Friday, the final day, saw the Squadron Council meet in the morning to discuss and arrange 458 affairs at Squadron level for another two years. It received reports from Squadron officers and from the Flights; looked at some matters of Australian ex-service welfare and resolved to contact politicians about them. It discussed how long we should go on having these interstate reunions and decided to leave it to each meeting to discuss the next. It decided that the next--1995-All-States Reunion should be within N.S.W. It varied procedures to create some more Life Members of the Squadron Association those honoured being Mick Singe (Victoria), Graeme Coombes (ACT), and Peter Leonard (Wales). Peter's loyalty in coming regularly to Australia on 458 occasions was noted with great appreciation.

Squadron Officers. Council then appointed its officers for the next two years. They are:

Squadron President	Stan.Longhurst (N.S.W.)
Sqdn Vice Presidents	Mick Singe (Vic); Bert Ravenscroft (S.A.), Peter Leonard (UK); Jim Donaldson (Canada), and Ivan Green (NZ)
Sqdn Treasurer	Peter Alexander
Sqdn Secretary	Graeme Coombes.
Sqdn Auditor	Frank Ward.

Council concluded by warmly thanking Q.Flight and particularly Ron Russell for a splendidly successful Reunion. See below for the Dinner.

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CORNSTALK COMMUNICATION. from Jock McGowen.

It is always sad these days when we report the loss of our mates. This issue we have the loss of Ernie Laming and Stan.Tarczynski from Victoria, and sadly from N.S.W. Tim "Lofty" Bracker after a long illness. Our condolences to those who mourn.

It has been mentioned before in the News but for some excellent reading get yourself a copy of "The RAAF POWs of Lamsdorf", written in part by Jim.Holliday. A great book for \$25-00 posted.

As everyone will know, the next All-States Reunion is to be in N.S.W --three venues are being considered. (See STOP PRESS for where) We are conscious of the cost and of the need to have a beautiful final dinner under one roof. But we assure you it will be good, so start saving now.

As mentioned in the last News there will be a Reunion Dinner for Bomber Command in November, 1993 in Canberra. This will be at the Convention Centre and be at the time of the reinterment of the UNKNOWN AUSTRALIAN at the War Memorial and there will also be a Memorial service. All who served--on air or ground--with Bomber Command will be welcome. Further details from National Secretary, RAAF Association, Box Q314, Queen Victoria Bldg, York Street, Sydney, 2000.

Speaking of dinners, we shall be holding our next luncheon at the Ryde TAFE College on Friday 3rd September at 1200. Cost \$16-00 per head. The food there is great.

We have recently purchased a copy of the 458 History from RAAF HQ --it is on microfilm and as we can get various items from the film we shall keep you advised. This film is copied from the original wartime documents, we understand, and we are warned that the quality is only as good as the original. Let's wait and see.

Bill Fiddes from Nelson Bay made a call at Williamstown Air Base the other day and took photos of the 50th Anniversary Tree that we planted back in 1991. It looks great and I would say it is at least 8' tall and is very healthy. Thanks, Bill.

Cornstalk Communication (cont.)

Now, don't forget to keep up the effort with the Air Force Association; the help that is handed out to those who may need it is not generally publicised but it is there if you want it. Help the other bloke, join up !

The Queensland Reunion was just great; nice to see of all people Geoff. Hyles and Joan; had not seen them for years. Alfie Peake was there and my right hand has just about recovered after Alfie shook it: he is just as big and strong. Erle Hetherington was there from Cairns; looks well and still driving his Jaguars. We hope that we of NSW can match the efforts of the Q'land boys.

At the last Air Force Association State Assembly, held at Port Macquarie Life Membership was recommended for Eric Munkman for his devotion to 458 and the Association in N.S.W. over many years.

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THE SQUADRON DINNER.

The final social function of the All-States Reunion was the Dinner. This was held at the Mermaid Waters Motel where most were staying. Over 150 sat down to dine together. During the evening an honour was paid to original 458er Fred Strom. Fred who isn't in the best of health these times, was awarded the RAAF Association's Certificate of Merit for his work, over many years and his deep loyalty to the 458 Squadron branch of the Association. His Certificate was handed to him in the presence of the Squadron that has meant so much to him by Peter Alexander, who is the Association's National Secretary.

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OTHER HONOURS.

The recent Queen's Birthday honours included the grant of the medal of the Order of Australia to Peter Alexander for work with the Australian veterans movement and the Scottish and Celtic communities. This makes him one of relatively few Australians to belong to three Orders-- St. Michael and St. George; the British Empire; and of Australia.

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VICTORIAN VIEWS.

from Rupert Pearce.

(ED. We welcome Rupert as Vic. Flight Correspondent; he takes over after (the death of Stan. Tarczynski who served for so long).

Stan. Tarczynski. We are saddened to advise of the sudden death of Stan. Tarczynski. A Memorial Service was held on June 3rd at the Senior Citizens Centre at Ashburton. It was jointly arranged by the RSL, East Malvern, the East Malvern Golf Club, Meals on Wheels, and the Board Members of the Senior Citizens Centre. Many friends spoke of his achievements, from when his family first arrived in 1912 from Poland. It was attended by 185 people; Squadron members present were Mavis and Mick Singe, Bill Hurford, Beatrice Morkham, Bill Henry, Viv and John Morris, Helen and Ernie Laming, Dave Evans, Kath and Yank Martin, June and Neil Dean, Tom Primrose and Rupert Pearce. We extend our deepest sympathy to his family.

Ernie Laming. 458's second W.O. Discip. died at Heidelberg Hospital on June 17th. He had been able to attend the Squadron Reunion at Mermaid Waters--mainly in a wheel chair. His funeral service was attended by approx 240 people--family, the Corps of Commissioners, the R.S.L., the Northcote Uniting Lodge, the A.T.C., the R.A.A.F., and 458. Ernie, a regular RAAF N.C.O. came to 458 in North Africa and stayed with the Squadron until its disbandment. He later served in Japan with the B.C.O.F. and in post-war Australia. He served for 22 years. Every 458er knew him as a loyal and hardworking person and a real friend.

Our A.G.M. This was held on June 25th at the RAAF Association, South Yarra. Office-bearers elected were: President: Mick Singe, Vice Presidents: Jack Fleming and Jack Ellis; Secretary Rupert Pearce; Treasurer Bill Hurford. Lunch followed the meeting. It was decided to hold the following functions: Cup Day BBQ at Jack and Dot Flemings'

Victorian Views (cont.)(23,Manning Street,St.Leonards). The Christmas-in-March function will be held on March 20th 1994 at the home of Jack and Margaret Ellis at Dromana (5,Heales Street,Dromana) All welcome at both functions.

In Queensland. There were 14 Victorian members at the Mermaid Waters Reunion,some staying on to enjoy the better weather. All agreed it was a very friendly Reunion. Congratulations to Ron.Russell and his helpers.

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CROWEATERS (BRIEF) COMMENTS. from Ted.Creighton.

Comments trickling through indicate that the S.A. contingent had a most enjoyable time on the Gold Coast. Our thanks and congratulations to Q.Flight for coming up with yet another really successful All States Reunion.

With mid-winter months upon us down south nothing stirs.
Do Not Disturb signs are the order of the day. No news--"Nuff said!

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KIWI CALL from Kevin George.

Well,the Reunion was,as usual,most enjoyable. We are grateful to the Queensland Flight for a job well done. The organisation was right up to the high standard being set by the other Flights,and the venue and day trips well chosen. What an impressive place Queensland is. We had not been there for twelve years and found many changes. We were told they were in recession like the rest of us but it was not apparent to us. This time we saw areas of Southern Queensland not previously visited and were impressed by the variety of landscape. The rolling volcanic country to the North West of the Glasshouse Mountains particularly appealed to us.

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SANDGROPEERS SAY....from Ted.Jewell.

I am sorry there was no W.A.Flight news in the last edition--was it lost in the post,or did it arrive too late for print? Maybe I will hear what happened. (ED.For once,we had a deadline that had to be firmly enforced,to our regret).

There is very little news since then but we have had two lunch outings at associate members homes. The first was at Ken and Dixie Rex's home to celebrate Ken's 70th birthday. I could not stay longer than 20 minutes for Elsie has been sick for some time. I am not sure how many were there finally,but in the short time I was there members who had arrived were: Bill and Joan Clues,Ray and Marg.Turley,Peter and Doreen McCarthy,John Lilly,Gordon Jones,Bob and Dot Dresland, I would like to say how pleased I was to see Gordon again after some time;hope we see more of him.

The next lunch day was at Margaret and Brian Hicks' home on July 4th. The idea was that the ladies bring a plate or dish of hot food and everyone share. I was not able to be there as I was at my sister's 80th birthday, but I am sure everyone really enjoyed themselves.

Fifty Years On. I have had several long talks with Curly O'Connor on the telephone lately and I am sure he hasn't changed one bit as he used to be on the Squadron. Bill Clues and myself are going round to see Curly shortly. Bill is going to pick up Skeeta Stavely at the home where he lives and take him with us. Should be a few tales told. Regards,Ted.

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Q.FLIGHT NEWS. from Jim.Holliday.

It was the friendly Reunion. Groups were gathered here,there,and everywhere,nattering. Probably it was because we were able to accomodate everyone under one roof. It may be that some members were able to attend a Reunion for the first time (one of them was Alf.Peake) and there was a lot of catching up to do. Once again Peter and Eileen Leonard from Wales and our three stalwarts from New Zealand made the

Q.Flight News (cont.) journey to be with us. It was heart-warming to see some 150 sit down at the Official Dinner. The wartime friendships of 458 still live on.

Perhaps the highlight for many was the visit to Amberley to see, and inspect, those magnificent F111s. They looked every bit the machine for their purpose. They shewed no signs of their 20 years in service and were very ready for the next 20 years, for which they are scheduled. And then lunch in the Sergeants Mess with starched Tablecloths and gleaming silverware. Movie World was a surprise and lots of fun. It must be very tiring doing all those antics several times a day. In comparison the Boat Cruise was a day of rest.

Very Special Commendation. The Reunion owes its organisation and smooth running to Ron Russell. He instigated the "attractions", arranged special price concessions, wrote and mailed all information, recorded the banking and did all the accounts--on his own. A tremendous effort. From Queensland members, a very special thanks.

It's sad that Ernie Laming passed away with a heart attack shortly after the Reunion. Despite doctor's orders, Ernie was determined to attend. No one will ever forget his smiling face enjoying every minute of it. To Helen, our very sincere sympathy.

I hope everyone had the chance to inspect Erle Hetherington's magnificently maintained Jaguar. Mint condition. With the Dangaards as passengers he drove all the way from Cairns---and Erle over 80!

We regret to report that Clive Wyman is not very well.

The reason why "Q" Flight's contribution did not appear in the last News was the change-over by Australia Post in mail distribution. Three letters arrived three weeks late. Peter's request for news came the day before his deadline.

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CANNUCK CAUCUS. from Jim Donaldson.

G'Day, Mates. I have something that I believe will be of interest to you. As you know, Wally Sullivan dropped a line to Jock McGowen in regards to the action that took the lives of F/O Bill Hailstone, W.O.2 Howard Bradley, W.O.2 William Wright, W.2 Donald McConnechy, and F/O John Diggins. He witnessed the actual destruction of their aircraft.

For some reason, the actual account of the action which shewed F/O Hailstone's exemplary courage, determination and devotion to duty did not produce official notice. I am glad (says Wally's account) to do something to set the record straight because his action was the bravest thing I saw in the course of the war.

Contact with Bryan Quinlan has filled in the names and places of enlistment of the crew. Through the local newspapers we have been able to locate six sisters, one brother and two friends.

The families had no idea what happened to their loved ones and are very grateful to Wally for letting them know. As one of the sisters said on the 'phone --a miracle has occurred and we finally know what happened to our brother.

Thanks Peter for all your efforts on our behalf. God bless. Jim.

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CORRESPONDENCE: Letters to the Editor.

From Charles Catt, 32, Dent Crescent, Port Macquarie, N.S.W., 2444.

Dear Peter, Thank you for sending me the May, 1993 edition of 458 Squadron News which I found most interesting. I don't know if you know that I was one of the last to arrive at Holme-on-Spalding Moor but was definitely the last man to leave there. You may remember that we were all vaccinated for yellow fever when the Squadron moved to the Middle East. I was the one who got a dirty needle and ended up in Davy Hulme Hospital, Manchester with septicemia--losing weight from 12 stone 4 lbs to 9 stone.

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