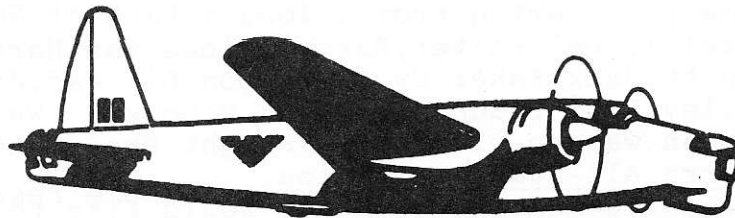


458

SQUADRON NEWS



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

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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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THE CORNSTALK COMMUNICATION from Jock McGowen.

Passing of Len. Teale. It is a sad opening of this Issue with the loss of our old Squadron Pilot, Leonard Teale. Since his return from the war he created a niche for himself that was unusual, to say the least. His acting and reciting was well known but also there was his work for World Vision Australia. His 458 friends extend to his widow, Liz and four daughters our sincere condolences. We saw Len on Anzac Day when he marched with the boys. His Memorial Service at St. Andrews Cathedral was attended by a number of 458ers. (Ed. 458ers who were at Gibraltar, may remember Len playing the lead in a performance the play English Without tears. He then spelt his name Thiele)

Reg. Hansell Better. We hear that Reg is home again after heart surgery and is making good progress. Make sure you are O.K. for Canberra, Reg. We want to see you and Grace there.

Anzac Day. Our Reunion was held, after the March, at the Criterion Hotel, as it was last year. Those attending were: Stan Longhurst, Jim. Whitem, Bob Millar, Bob Bruce, Jack Bevan, Bob Smith, Bill Turier, Bob Lyndon, John Dunn, Peter Alexander, Marshall Allan, Eric Munkman, Kevin Barlow,

The Cornstalk Communication (cont.)

Sam Barlow (recovering from a long attack of Shingles), Tom Ridgeway, Rinso Purcill, Noel Walter, Harry Baines, Max Hargraves, Bob Low, Len Barton, George Unitt, Jack Baker, Cy. Irwin, Don. Bitmead, Jack Preston, Bob Wilkinson, Ralph Bailey, Bill Fiddes, and Jock McGowen. We had a pleasant lunch and Eric Munkman was re-elected as Flight President.

The Canberra All-States Reunion. In some respects not so satisfactory: we had some 110 members say they would like to come along. While we we did expect some to drop by the wayside for health or financial reasons, we finished with only 69 members. This has caused some problems with activities. I guess we will make out--but there are still some rooms available and we would love to see you. Final Accounts will be posted in June--payable not later than end of July. Come on, old friends out there, IT IS LATER THAN YOU THINK! BE IN IT FOR 1994!

Acceptors so far are: Eric Munkman, Jock McGowen, Stan Longhurst, Bob. Lyndon, Bill Hull, Reg. Hansell, Keith Cousins, John Dunn, Peter Alexander, Tom Moore, Wal Archbold, Don Bitmead, Dennis Holland, Jack Lewis, Eric Kelly, Bob Boulton, Bill Johnson, Mick Singe, Massa Foote, Cyril Murray, John Fleming, John Excell, Jim Perry, Col. Fereday, George Unitt, Syd Bartram, Bill Turier, John Hamilton, Bert Garland, Bill Hurford, John Lawson, Ken. Brown, Bert Oliver, Farmer Giles, Bert Ravenscroft, Henry Etherton, Harry Baines, Kevin Tait, Bill Kelliher, Snowy Atherton, Jim Palmer, Ray Turley, John Carey, Ian Showell, Bill Clues, Jim Whittem, Graeme Coombes, Alf. Peake, Allan Rackham, Ron. Verity, Kevin George, Mel Senn, Ivan Green, Rinso Purcill, Bob. Bruce, Rupert Pearce, Archie Fell, Stan Simpson, Frank Ward, Iris Ricketts, Frances Harding, Bob Smith, Sam Barlow, Noel Walter, Ron. Miller, Don Anderson, Fred McKay, Geoff. Hyles, and Laurie Crowley.

As you can see, they are coming from all over, including 4 from New Zealand.

Official History Recording. We recently obtained a Microfilm of the history of the wartime Squadron---720 pages but at 60 cents per page we have some thinking to do. Keep you posted.

Move for the N.S.W.R.A.A.F. Association. Now moved to new premises at 222, Pitt Street, Sydney---11th floor. The Flight Committee will meet there in future.

Model Aircraft. Over the years I had built up a collection of over 70 scale models, all in plastic, and have finally decided to donate them to No8 EFTS Tiger Moth Memorial Museum where they will be a memorial to those 458ers who gone ahead, whether or not they trained at 8 E.F.T.S. The dedication will be in May, 1995 and any chaps out there who trained at 8 E.F.T.S., please let me know your names. So far we have 4 from N.S.W.

Running out of Squadron Histories. We are getting requests for our Squadron History "We Find and Destroy". Now there are not many copies left and this will be the end of the second printing; there will not be another printing, so, if you want a copy don't wait too long. Also there are not many Lapel Badges left and the same applies to them--when these are gone there will be no more.

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VICTORIAN NEWS. from Rupert Pearce.

The Passing of Elaine Timms. Elaine had not been well for almost a year and passed away on March 15th 1994. She was Jim's widow. Members of the Squadron attended her funeral. We send sympathy to her children, Carolyn and Charles.

Can You Help. Mr. Ian Cox of "Murrungower", Victoria Rd, Seville, Vict. 3139 is seeking any information about his brother, Sgt Alex Cox who was lost when based at Hoxlyme-on-Spalding Moor. (ED. Alex flew with (Ron Furey's crew. On November 15th, 1941 they took part in a raid (on Emden. They did not return).

Christmas in March. The BYO BBQ was held at the home of Jack and Margaret Ellis at Dromana. Sixteen members came with five friends. We were pleased to welcome George and June Tarczynski. Prizes were won by Margaret Ellis, Helen Laming and Neil Dean.

Victorian News (cont.)

Anzac Day. Mick Singe led our small contingent. We are grateful to the A.T.C. personnel who carried our banner. Others present were Bill Hurford, Jack Ellis, Shorty Bradshaw, Stan Cartledge and his granddaughter Karen, Ian Giles, Ron Eggers, Jack Fleming, Gordon Nash, Murray Weaver, Rupert Pearce and his brother Roy. Neil Dean carried a 3 x 2 ft color picture of a Wellington (which one commentator said was a Lancaster). The usual Reunion followed at the Melbourne Bowling Club, and there we were pleased to see Ian Alison, Tom Primrose and Harold Martin.

After Many Years. Ken Hinton of 130 Manningham Rd., Bulleen 3105 contacted Mick Singe. Ken served at Gibraltar and later in Germany before returning to Australia. He later rejoined the R.A.A.F.

Bill Fordyce and the Great Escape. Bill has returned from the 50th. Memorial service of the Great Escape from Stalug Luft III held at St. Clement Danes Church, London on 25th March. He says Vera Lynn sang at the Reception for visitors and that was a highlight. The Church was beautiful and the service wonderful and very emotive. It was packed and there were approximately five Australians present. He was able to see his son in France after 3½ years and is very happy to have made the journey.

The 1963 film "The Great Escape" was based on the true story of the Allied P.O.W.s at this German Camp in Poland, who dug an escape tunnel. 83 men got out before the Germans discovered it and began a massive hunt for the escapees. Bill was number 84 in the line of escaping prisoners and just meters from the end of the tunnel before the guards started shooting at anything that moved outside the camp.

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CROWEATERS COMMENTS. from Ted Creighton.

Anzac Day, 1994. The day was dry and warm to hot. When lumped together, attendances at the Airport Service, the March and the Talbot made rollcall for the day pretty well par for the course. Dick Healey, visiting Adelaide for a couple of days was picked up from his hotel by John Carey and attended the 8.45 a.m. Airport Service. Due out later in the day, he unfortunately could not swell our numbers for the March. Known to be on Sick Parade were Arn Scholar (stroke), and Bill Cribb (gout). Get well, blokes! The Talbot no longer looks like the Talbot. All polished marble, mirrors and potted palms, it could well be Caesar's Palace. However, Earl's Bar is a ghost of its former self and very much the worse for wear. Stayers for lunch at the Talbot were down on numbers even though bolstered by friends of Peter and Monica Thom and Joyce Austin. Conversation got around to the pre-Christmas Get together. With our advancing years it was thought it deserved better than a cut-lunch on a Sunday at Adelaide Airport.

A postcard from Bert Ravenscroft tells of his being here there and everywhere in Yankee land. Reg Priest announces that he is off on a short trip to Singapore.

Flight Finances. Expenses for 1993/4 exceeded income by \$40-63. In the same period Members' subs failed to meet our levy for S.A. share of Newsletter costs. This Anzac Day we received subs from only 12 members. To all the other blokes we say, Please, get the \$10 sub off to Bert Ravenscroft at 11, Thornton street, Henley Beach, 5022. We can't keep whittling away our bank balance, and ten bucks is not much to keep the Flight alive and kicking.

Who remembers Ned Kelly the electrician? On Anzac Day, a young Army bloke, Nathan Price, searched the Talbot for a 458er who may have known his grandfather. He displayed medals shewing Sgt Kelly served in the Middle East and Italy. Nathan based presently at 9 Kara Street, Gepps Cross, 5094. His Tel. 08 262 4229., would be thrilled to hear from anyone who knew his grandfather on 458. All young ones with direct interest need our encouragement. A strapping Army type like Nathan would make a good Sister Hannah to carry S.A. Flight's banner for our

Croweaters Comments (conc'd) dwindling marchers on Anzac Day.

Bill Taylor advises that a somewhat heavier Ian Showell slipped into Daw Park for a knee reconstruction. He is now back resting in the Renmark Hospital. Ian claims that his tomatoes, grown from imported seed, are the best this side of the Black Stump.

Best wishes from all, Ian.

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SANDGROPPERS SAY..... from Ted Jewell.

What a great day was had by Squadron members who drove down from Perth (Elsie and I from Mandurah) to spend the day with Jim and Lucy Palmer at Kojonup. It is about 300 Km from Perth. We all arrived in time for drinks before having a BBQ lunch. I must say that from then on we didn't seem to stop eating and drinking beer, tea and coffee until we left about 10-30 p.m. for the motel where we were booked in for the night. Jim took a few members for a tour round the shearing shed, etc. Those who went down were Bill and Joan Clues, Ted and Elsie Jewell, Ray and Marg Turley, Irene, Ron, Alice and Margaret Gannaway, Nobby and Esme Nobbs, Ken and Dixie Rex. We all wish to thank Jim and Lucy once again for such a wonderful day.

Anzac Day. As usual, Flight President Bill Clues laid a wreath on the War Memorial in Kings Park at the Dawn Service. Thanks again to Vera Etherton for making the wreath as she has done for many years. A bright sunny morning saw our President leading the few members who were present for the March through Perth and the Service. After the Service we met at the Hyde Park Hotel for drinks and lunch. With members and friends we had about 30 for lunch. Members there were Bill and Joan Clues, Ted and Elsie Jewell, Charlie and Betty Davis, Syd Baker, Ray and Marge Turley, Henry and Vera Etherton, Poss Dale, John Lilly, Ron and Alice Gannaway. Syd Baker told me he is now 87.

And Next. W.A. Flight's next function is on the first Sunday in July, at the home of Shirley and Phil Hicks, for a casserole lunch. We always have a good roll up there: those game enough can even have a dip in the pool. All the best.

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THE BRITISH BULLETIN.

from Norm Duke.

George Pigg. I have heard from Margaret, George's wife that George (sometimes known in his RAF days as Darkie) sadly died on 30th January, after a long illness, having suffered from emphysema for 18 years. We send our sincere sympathy to Margaret. She tells me that George joined 458 after serving as an Observer with 39 and 47 Squadrons on Beaufort torpedoes, in Malta and North Africa. I do not know his original crew but apparently due to illness he became a spare Navigator and flew with Bruce McKenzie on several trips, having vivid memories of the Cannon. He later served as a Nav. instructor in Palestine. He lived in Seahouses, Northumberland, and 28 years after the end of the war bumped into Bruce on the end of the pier at Seahouses. Such is fate.

Bert Sleight. Bert writes nostalgically of the "old green buses" he saw on a recent holiday in Malta. The same colour he remembers back in 1942/43, though probably of a more recent vintage. Luca is now an "International" airport.

Chico Mercer tells me that regretfully he won't be able to make the Canberra Reunion (Me too) but hopes to get one more before it's too late.

Stewart Kent..... son of Fred Kent, a WOP/AG with Wink Price's crew would like to hear from any members who might remember his Dad.

At Holme-on-Spalding Moor.... I am getting a good response to our planned reunion on September 3/4th. At present we expect a minimum attendance of 24 at the dinner on 3rd and the Church Service on Sunday 4th. I hope any visitors from OZ will come. I will advise UK members in good time.

Best regards from all here.

Norm.

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Q. FLIGHT NEWS. by Jack Lewis.

Anzac Day. A very large and a very enthusiastic crowd cheered, clapped and waved the Marchers as each contingent passed by. As Anzac Day was the end of a long weekend we were amazed to see so many spectators. It makes one feel good to see how much the ex-servicemen and the spectacle of the Anzac March is appreciated by the public. Q. Flight had a small contingent of marchers bolstered up by a few "Odd Bods" we are generally able to gather up.

The A.G.M. After the March at a meeting, Eric Kelly was elected as Flight President and Jack Lewis as Secretary/Treasurer.

Personalities. Fred Kleckham has been rather a "Jet Setter" over the past year. He and his wife spent a few months in Vanuatu, home for a few weeks, then to the U.S.A. to visit Fred's sister-in-law and her family, then on to the U.K. to visit Fred's family, then back to the U.S.A. to look at the Big Apple. Home again for a few weeks then to Heron Island for a diving festival. Home again then to Sydney for a month. Quite a run about for one year.

I had a note from Earl Hetherington in Cairns; he is well and will be 82 next month---just about a month younger than Jim Holliday. Earl and Bob Dangaard are planning for Canberra in October so we shall see them there.

Jack Baxter has sold his property at Raby Bay and will be shortly moving to Kirra on the Gold Coast. His new address (NEWS ADDRESSER TO NOTE) Unit 7, 20 Marina Parade, Kirra 4225.

Bob Helyar. On the eve of Anzac Day Bob Helyar suffered a heart attack. After a week in hospital Bob is now recuperating at home. Feeling bored because he cannot play golf for six weeks--which upsets him much. We all wish you well, Bob.

Best wishes to everybody. Jack Lewis.

@ @ @ @ @ @ @ @ @ @
from Jim Donaldson.

CANNUCK CAUCUS.

We will have to pray the good Lord is helping us if this arrives in time. The postmark on the notice was 3rd and it arrived (by air) on the 13th. I believe that is the longest it has ever taken. Being diplomatic, I will blame it on the Canadian P.O.

If it doesn't make it there is no great loss, as I have not even managed to make it to one of our Wartime Aircrew meetings this year.

Unfortunately Peg has been having a rough go this last while. To make matters worse she has to eat my cooking. We are extremely lucky that no matter how rough it gets or how much pain she has to handle, she manages to hold on to her sense of humour.

It reminds me somewhat of the spirit that 458 was blessed with.

And with that I'll close. To all our mates that are still with us, may the good Lord bless and keep you, wherever you are. And for those who are waiting for us to arrive may God bless you and yours.

Jim.

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VALE. The News has heard of the passing of R. Boulton of 458. No further details. May he too rest peacefully.

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KIWI CALL. Kevin George writes that there is nothing to report this time. However they are looking forward to the Canberra Squadron All-States Reunion in October.

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CORRESPONDENCE--Letters to the Editor and Others.From Lock Simpson, Wembley, W.A.

Dear Peter,Recently received a card from Reg. Bullen, telling me he was in Malta, and a few weeks later he wrote me concerning his visit. Reg is now a retired R.A.F. Air Vice Marshal and lives in England, near Cambridge. His remarkable act of heroism in Malta, for which he was awarded the George Medal is recorded in the Squadron History, Pp.172/3.

He wrote: " Our week there coincided with three days of carnival parades before Lent and the Feast of St. Paul when the cemeteries are closed. That left us with Monday to pay our respects. It was windy and sunny but I shall write to the WAR Graves Commission suggesting a shelter of some sort, even a small chapel would be appropriate for elderly relatives who might have travelled across the world to be there. I was glad that many original limestone gravestones, now indistinct, have been by newly etched marble. Rus's grave has yet to be given that treatment but should be done soon. It was a moving experience seeing the graves of so many brave young men, including our friends from April, 1944..... unfortunately the hospital at Umtarfa is now a school so we couldn't visit that again. I would have liked to have done so. I had 2½ months there before being flown back in a Dakota to hospital in England, as Wal (Clarke) was there also, of course."

Best regards, Lock Simpson.

From Mick Reid, Mississauga, Ontario, L5E 2W1, Canada. to Col. Fereday.

Dear Colin,

Nellie Powell, wife of our beloved old cobbler, George telephoned Sunday with the sad news that George died, peacefully, in his sleep of a heart attack. Since our last Reunion in Winnipeg, George and I had been in close touch to ensure he received his Malta medal, technically delayed. Also, about this time last year, George underwent an operation for cancer of the lung. Then with help from Ottawa, his name was included in the Malta list of those entitled.

George was a valued member of our crew when our WAG, George Unitt, was hospitalised. He then joined Colonel McKenzie's crew, with Peter Eastcott and later Norman Duke and fellow WAG Charlie Forman who later became his brother-in-law. George Dunmore was Bruce's co-pilot.

George, Peter and I renewed our friendship in Ottawa in the mid 60s where we joined Bruce and Christina for an overnight reunion. Faithful George, after a night-shift, underground, in the mine at Elliott Lake, made the long train trip to Ottawa to be with us for that brief but most memorable time, from which our post-war friendship grew.

George and Peter were both pleasantly surprised in 1988 when Norm. Duke, who succeeded Peter as Bruce's Navigator, arrived from England with his wife Joyce, to celebrate with us General Electric's retirement party for Peter. It was the first time all our wives were together.

George served in office with the Royal Canadian Legion, Ontario Command, and was awarded their Long Service Medal. The last time we spoke he anticipated a further award in the offing in recognition of his faithful service, the local blood bank or other community service.

We will miss George very much. Our deepest sympathy to Nellie and her Family. He will be remembered. Mick.

EDITORIAL--Necessarily brief. - - - - -

Australian members will have been interested in an account of the quite successful outcome of the fight some of us have fought to protect Australian Veterans rights. Some nasties but miniscule compared with what might have flowed from the Auditor-General and Professor Baume's Report. But space prevents--perhaps next time. Similarly an account of the development of the Loch Ness Wellington. We are of course lucky that members do keep us well informed and supplied with news. It is one of the (fairly numerous) successes of 458 Squadron.

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