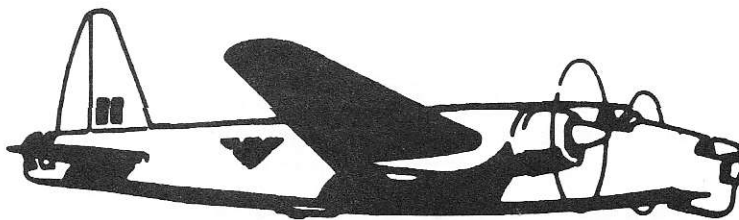


458

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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		New Zealand Ivan Green

Editor: Peter Alexander

Publisher: Eric Munkman

Flight Correspondents.

Victoria	Rupert Pearce, 46, Mt. Pleasant Road, Nunawading, 3131, Victoria,
U.K.	Norman Duke, Orchard Cottage, Guildford Rd., Cranleigh, England,
N.S.W.	Jock McGowen, 119, Patrick Street, Hurstville, 2220, N.S.W.,
Queensland	Jack Lewis, 5, Cupania Rd., Victoria Point, 4165, Queensland,
W.A.	Ted. Jewell, 61, Wyaree Road, Mandurah, 6210, W.A.,
N.Z.	Kevin George, 20, Kowhai Avenue, Kaikohe, New Zealand
Canada	Jim Donaldson, 72, Amarynth Crescent, Winnipeg, MB R2Y, Canada,
Sth. Australia	Ted. Creighton, 33, Farr Terrace, Glenelg East, 5045, S.A.

GRIFFITH IS POPULAR!

The choice of Griffith for the next All-States Reunion of 458 Squadron is proving popular. Elsewhere in this (long) issue of the News, we print the names of those who, already, have indicated that they will be there.

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VICTORIAN FLIGHT NEWS from Rupert Pearce.

Social. Eighteen of our members came to lunch on 16th----- at the Air Force Association at Cromwell Road, South Yarra.

Future activities planned are a) Lunch, on Tuesday 17th. September, and a Cup Day Get Together on Tuesday 5th. November---both at the Air Force Association, South Yarra, time 12 noon. And, b) a BBQ at the home of Nell and Harry Ashworth, Rosebud, Sunday 16th March 1997.

Vale! Mrs Pauline Boatman, of Elmhurst, Victoria, wrote to us to tell that her mother, Frances Hunter, passed away on 17th June, She was the widow of Mick Hunter, who predeceased her 11 years ago.

The Malta Medal. Several of our members have now taken advantage

Victorian Flight News (cont.) of the issue of the official replica medal. It is noted that next-of-kin are eligible.

(EDITOR: Some queries about eligibility --area of service--have arisen which we shall try to have cleared up.)

CANUCK CAUCUS. from Jim Donaldson. * * * * *

One old cobbler and honorary Canadian Colin Fereday dropped in for a visit on June 11th. Unfortunately I could only manage a luncheon and a short visit at the Aviation Museum with him and a couple of other mates.

He brought us up to date on his trip, which was in part to track down some of his relatives and past heritage. We also heard of his visit to Holme upon Spalding Moor and about the possibility of a 458 Squadron Exhibit in the new Yorkshire Aviation Museum, being established at Elvington. At present they have a collection of 458 material mostly drawn from "We Find and Destroy". He brought us up to date on the Loch Ness Wimpy. As well as a picture of the rear turret which he gave me to remind me of so many happy hours I spent admiring the scenery, with Norm. Duke standing beside it. He travelled this country from coast to coast. I am going to ask Colin to send a detailed story to you for the Squadron News. I for one would like to read a written copy. (EDITOR: Yes, indeed! See (below))

TO all our mates wherever you are, your mates in Canada wish you all the best. God bless! Jim.

* * * * *

A KIWI CALL. from Kevin George.

Well, Griffith is something of a surprise. However it is an interesting choice and we look forward, as usual, to an enjoyable Reunion.

Our recent trip to Hawaii and Canada more than fulfilled our high expectations. It was indeed a memorable experience. We travelled as far as Nova Scotia where we spent six interesting days with George and Zena McLeod. Part of that time we spent on the family farm which has been farmed by George and his son and ancestors for seven generations (A Bheil Gaidhlig agaibh, Sheorais? - P.C.A.) They took us up to Cape Breton Island where I was to walk across the farm once owned by my great great great grandparents and be photographed beside the Memorial in the little family cemetery.

While we were in Toronto Bucky Cather insisted on taking Dawn and me down to Niagara Falls; it is something of a specialty of his apparently. We are most grateful to him for an enjoyable day. In Vancouver Bryan Quinlan had arranged a mini-reunion, as promised. Our roving ambassador Colin Fereday had arrived. Previously he together with Bryan and Jack Miles met us at the Airport.

The following evening ten of us sat down to an excellent dinner, following which we drove back to Jack and Enid Miles home for a musical evening. Jac was an early vintage Bomber captain and an airline pilot until quite recent times. Also present were Jack Reynolds and Ben. Gruenwald, both members of our Canadian Flight.

We recommend Canada as a tourist destination. They have safe cities, exemplary driving habits and a fascinating variety of scenic and interesting places to visit, e.g. the old walled city of Quebec (the only walled city in North America) where we stayed for two nights in the Chateau Frontenac--"the most photographed hotel in the world".

Canada was for me a sentimental journey as I spent nearly a year there in 1941-2. We are most grateful to all our old Canadian contemporaries and look forward to other meetings with them--perhaps even at Griffith next year.

Yours with kind regards, Kevin.

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SANDGROPER SAY..... from Ted.Jewell.

At the moment we are going through a very quiet period--what with all the rough weather we have been having over the last month or so, high winds and rain with lots of damage to houses and trees. We also seem to have had an extra lot of sickness, colds, etc. We should be back to normal when the sunny days return.

Members had a great day at the home of Phil and Shirley Hicks, who are Associate members. There were only about 12 members present but we had a very enjoyable lunch with a few drinks. The ladies all bring a plate of lovely food and cakes for afternoon tea. Our President Bill Clues was there and looking pretty fit after his spell of heart troubles. Ray Turley brought Marg along. Ray is not a very well man. Henry Etherton was also there and still the same - never seems to change

Bill and Joan Clues are having a BBQ lunch at their home on 20th October so I hope we will have a good roll-up. Any member who misses out on a Notice, just ring Bill on 457-7402 and let him know you're coming.

I have been getting a lot of 'phone calls from Curly O'Connor. He was in the R.S. L. Home in Perth but last week was able to get a transfer to Mandurah, so I will see a lot more of him in future. He brought me some nice fish fillets yesterday. He lived here in the Mandurah Caravan Park for many years, so he knows the locals.

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CROWEATER CHIT-CHAT. from Ted.Creighton.

The Flight luncheon that was introduced last year to fill the gap between Anzac Day and our pre-Christmas gatherings has ideally balanced our social activities. Held again at the Feathers, Squadron President Bert Ravenscroft reminded us that we should be thankful that as early as 1944 in Sardinia, a few blokes recognised that 458 raised under the EATS would never be a permanent RAAF Squadron and would be disbanded on cessation of hostilities. They began to sow the seeds of a post-war Association that would carry the spirit, sacrifices and mateship, and history into the years ahead. That 52 years on on a cold winter's day there was a muster of 43 for lunch confirms the foresight of those blokes and is indicative that SA Flight is still able to contribute strong support to the Association and Squadron Council. Most of our "Old Faithfuls", including out-of-towners the Excells, the Olivers, and the Woodheads presented themselves. Verna Riseley brought along Al. Wheat's sister Isla Shepherd and it was good again to see Joyce Enright. We were able to thank John and Pat Carey personally for their contribution to Flight affairs over many years. With true 458 spirit, Kaye Michell widow of Col. was able to join us for a few pleasant hours. With her were son Colin and daughter Trish Cosh. Their party was completed by Corey Buckingham. In our advancing years it is comforting to have a Doctor in the House and we relaxed when Roger and Margaret Angove walked through the door. Unable to be present, Kath Bax sent along some decorative items that added colour to the set-up. Thanks, Kath!

Missing were Syd and Pat Bartram. They simply had to be with Laurie and Betty Crowley in Junee to help celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary. President Bert Ravenscroft sent congratulations and a card on behalf of all 458ers. Bill and Pat Cribb were up Renmark way recently and wangled a cup of char from the Showells. Bill says the Old Man of the River is pretty sprightly and that the famous beard is now a cross between Colonel Sanders and Burl Ives. The years are clearly treating the petite Fee kindly. No report on Ian's claim to have come up on the best tomatoes this side of the Black Stump.

The Pre-Christmas Get-together and A.G.M.

Will be at Aviation Institute, Scholefield Drive, Adelaide Airport from 12 noon on Sunday November 24th. onwards. Usual setup; BYO Picnic lunch but buy drinks from their bar. There are a few things we need to address but formalities will be kept to a minimum. Put November 24th on your 'fridge magnet NOW.

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Q.FLIGHT NEWS.

from Jack Lewis.

Friday 19th July was a "Get Together" day for Q.Flight. A luncheon was arranged at Sizzlers Restaurant, Carindale. President Eric Kelly and Kath welcomed the following Q.Flighters with their wives and partners: Bernie McLoughlin, Jack Lewis, Bert Garland, Peter Bailie, Don. Brandon, Sel. Williams, Cyril Murray (good to see Cyril and Hetty, all the way from Yandina), Arthur Jones, and Keith Austin. Both the latter especially welcomed as it was the first time. Now the ice is broken, we are hoping to see more of them. Also welcome to Les. Willis, a friend of Bernie McLoughlin. Les. marches with the Squadron on Anzac Day each year. Good to see Peg Holliday. Sel and Joan Foote were to attend but Joan was not the best health-wise.

Bert and Isla Garland are at present in the U.K. visiting their son and family. In October Eric and Kath Kelly, accompanied by family and friends leave for a trip to England, Scotland, and Ireland. They have hired a mini-bus. Nice to look forward to!

Vale. I am sorry to have to write that Albert (Tony) Stone passed away recently. Tony was the ever-popular Instrument Maker on the Squadron. A private funeral was arranged.

Best wishes to all--Jack Lewis.

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THE CORNSTALK COMMUNICATION.

from Jock McGowen.

I suppose it is a sign of the times--each issue we report the loss of yet another of our mates. This time it is our dear friend Al (Tony) Stone---one of the originals who left Williamtown in August, 1941. I well remember the fond farewell on Central Station when my dear old Mum asked Tony to look after her little boy. I had a cold at the time and we had hardly got off the train at Newcastle when Tony poured a rum into me. Never had a drink up to that stage and I haven't stopped since. Our sincere heartfelt sympathy to Moira and the Stone Clan. We will all miss him.

* Speaking of the originals of whom there were 39 who left Australia on 7th August, 1941, I have been doing a headcount. 8 left. Lou Silbereisen, Jim. Palmer, Len Stewart, Geoff Hyles, Junior Davies, Roger Angove, Eric Munkman and Jock McGowen. If I've missed any, I do apologise. The List gets smaller each year.

* The N.S.W. Flight has had a quantity of Stick-On 458 car badges made --to stick on the front or rear glass of your car. They will be available at the Griffith Reunion; or should you want one now, to make sure of getting one, they will sell for \$5-00. The quality is first rate.

* Col Fereday is back from his trip overseas--more details in this issue.

* There will be another TAFE lunch at the Ryde College, here in Sydney, at 12 noon on November 15th. This will be our Christmas lunch. As usual seating is limited, so ring Eric Munkman on 9972-0641 to book.

* With regret we report that Joe Pratt recently lost his wife Jean. We send deepest sympathy to Joe and his family.

* Now for Griffith. First, the Starters. If you are not on the List please send in the Green slip or at least let Eric know. This is now urgent. The Starters: Eric and Dorothy Munkman, Bob and Dot Smith, Frank and Thelma Ward, Keith and Cassie Cousins, Bob and Pat Millar, Reg and Grace Hansell, Mick and Mavis Singe, Peg. Holliday, Peter and Rita Alexander, Vic Gibbens, Joan Russell, Neil and June Dean, Bob Bruce, Sam and Maisie Barlow, Don, Bev and Peter Bitmead, Noel and Nita Walter, Laurie and Betty Crowley, Jack and Evelyn Lewis, Don. Brandon, Mary Wallace, Sel and Joan Foote, Bert Ravenscroft, Tom and Val. Moore, Graeme Coombes, Harry and Nita Baines, Syd and Pat Bartram, Don and Joan Anderson, Ian and Beryl Giles, Bill and Flip Kelliher, Rupert Pearce, Norma Pollard, Bill Johnson, John and Barbara Ringwood, Les. Boyer, Bob and Pat Lyndon, Jim and Lucy Palmer, Jean Longhurst, John and Dot. Fleming, Curly and Kerry Brain, Kevin and Dawn George, Jack and Elsie Hamilton, Col. Fereday, Jack and Gwen Lawson, Peg. Cuthbertson,

The Cornstalk Communication (conc'd)

Bert and Marjorie Oliver, Cyril and Hetty Murray, Pete and June Pettit, Bill and Peg Hull, Wal and Betty Mobbs, Bert and Isla Garland, Ivan and Irene Green, Jack Bevan, Eric and Bridie Lloyd, Eric and Kath Kelly, Ron and Enid Miller, John and Pat Carey, John and Pat Excell, Jock and Ann McGowen, Col Corten, Jim and Dot Whittem, John and Moya Dunn, Horrie and Marie Campbell, Kevin Tait and Ivy.

A goodly roll-up! So good to see Jim Palmer coming over again. Must be a record Jim and Lucy - the spirit of the originals lives on.

We have had apologies from some who, to the regret, cannot make it. Jock

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RED DOT POINT.

Members who happened to be unfinancial have responded promptly and supportively to the Red Dots in their News. Many thanks! A couple of Flights have asked that there be a further reminder to a few who may have missed last time. No offence intended if you have a red dot here. We just need the money to carry on in our (and your!) later years. An Annual sub to your Flight!

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THE RECONSTRUCTION OF R for ROBERT.

Readers will recall being asked for contributions towards the continuing reconstruction of R. for Robert--the Wimpy raised from Loch Ness. We are pleased to report a generous response from some members and Flights--plus a contribution from Squadron Council funds.

We thank: Bill McFadden, Bernie McLoughlin, Tom Primrose, Rupert Pearce, Col Fereday, Mrs. Tonkin, Jim Palmer, Buck Pedersen, Brian Woodhead, N.S.W. Flight, Victoria Flight, Bill Johnson.

The amount now to be remitted to U.K. will be 500 pounds.

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THE BEST OF BRITISH--U.K. Flight News from Norman Duke.

Good news for our Reunion in Stratford-on-Avon on 15/16 September. Acceptances so far total 33, representing 17 members. The highest for many years--and the books are still open.

Joyce and I spent a few hectic days with Colin Fereday, seeing our local sights and visiting the Wimpy at Brooklands, climaxed with a nostalgic lunch with Leon Armstrong and his wife Doreen at the Grasshopper Inn at Westerham in Kent. It was Leon and Colin's first meeting since 1944. Colin had paid his respects to the 458 memorials at Holme on Spalding Moor before travelling south to Surrey. It was great to see his smiling face again. We finally saw him off at Heath Row on an ancestor-hunting trip to Scandinavia before returning home via Canada.

Sad News. The death of Wally Beer, formerly a Wop/Ag with Brian Quinlan's crew, who had endured many years of suffering with great fortitude, and regretfully, since making contact just over a year ago we had not been able to meet. Since then his wife has also died. We send our deepest sympathy to his son and family.

Contact? We have heard from Alex Jones, brother-in-law of John Whittaker who was lost in action (with P/O Scott's crew) on August 23rd 1943 from Protville. Alex's address is 79, Brookfield Park, Weston, Bath, BA1 4JJ, England. He would value contact with anyone who knew John and the crew. (ED. More details in next issue when we hopefully will be able to find the space).

Ernie Ireland, from Cranbrook, British Columbia, has phoned to advise us he is in UK for a holiday. I hope to see him soon.

Kind regards - Norm.

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VALE. Letter from Mrs. Lillian Shepherdson, Avalon Beach, N.S.W. - PO Box 607.

Dear Sir, It is with sorrow I write to advise you of the passing of my father, Cyril Wincote Price, of A/69, Main Road, Christchurch, New Zealand on June 19th 1996, after several years of continuing ill health. His pride in his Squadron was paramount and a Squadron photograph always had a prominent place in his home. I think his greatest disappointment was his health not allowing him to attend the Brisbane Reunion--he was looking forward to it so much. "Wink" is survived by his wife, Lee, myself and 3 grandchildren and 2 greatgranddaughters. I hope most sincerely that in the not too-distant future N.S.W. will allow us to show our pride by marching on Anzac Day. I wish you every success with the 1997 reunion,

yours faithfully, Lillian Shepherdson.

(Editor: "Wink" Price (the preferred name, though on 458 he was, (for obvious reasons called "Cut" Price) was a Flight Commander (in North African times--well remembered and liked. Our sympathy (to his family).

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PILGRIMAGE OF A 458er--COL. FEREDAY'S JOURNEY.

Now that I have more or less recovered from my six weeks jaunt overseas, I thought I might drop you a line as some aspects of my trip may be of interest. The timing was that I could attend a meeting of relatives--my father's side, at Lincoln. This took place and was attended by about 25 people, nearly all of whom I met for the first time. It went very well with much interest on the beautiful Lincoln Cathedral with which the family's ancestors had close connections.

It had long been my ambition to visit Holme upon Spalding Moor, from which 458 first operated. So, armed with helpful advice provided by Eric Munkman, Jock McGowen, Norman Duke and Frank Robertson (who lives at Holme) I travelled there for a short stay at "Ye old Red Lion". I was looked after, and guided around the village, the old airfield, All Saints Church and Graveyard by Frank Robertson (ex-76 Sqdn--which came after 458 left), and Jock Pattison (ex-458, an armourer at Holme). Both gave me their time with utmost help and hospitality. Jim Croft, my second pilot came over from Southport with his wife, May, and stayed the night. The local Pubs, the Red Lion and the Hare and Hounds had much business during my stay. Eric Munkman had asked me to give Liz Smart a hug from him (Barmaid at the Blacksmiths Arms when 458 was there) but, sadly, she passed away in 1995 aged 93. I did manage to give the present Barmaids at the Hare and Hounds a hug or two from Eric. The locals want another 458 visit!

I was deeply moved by the 458 Memorials at the Airfield and in the Church. There is also a fine Memorial, though not at the Airfield, to Leonard Cheshire, V.C. who commanded 76 Squadron. I met members of the Committee of 76 Squadron at the Red Lion. Both Squadrons are honoured at Holme.

The Memorials to the two Squadrons are cared for by Frank Robertson, Jock Pattison and others and by the firm of J. Rotherham--now the Airfield is an Industrial Estate. I thanked Joe Rotherham, Jnr, on behalf of 458. (I hope you approve). Vast open areas of the Airfield are disused--I could easily envisage how it would have looked in 458 days.

Frank, Jock and I spent some time at All Saints Church where several 458 airmen are buried. Jock's wife Nora is buried there in the civilian section.

Frank, an outstanding historian, is keen to seek a corner in a new Museum at Elvington in Yorkshire for the Allied Air Forces. He proposes to place there photos of a dozen or so 458 exhibits (framed by J. Rotherham) and he hopes for further memorabilia of a personal or anecdotal nature from our members. Jock arranged for a neighbour to take me to Goole

Col's Journey for 458 (cont.)

a better departure spot than York. Arriving in London, I quickly left for Guildford for my second long-standing ambition--to see the Loch Ness Wellington--ditched on a training flight after previous Ops. I believe all except one of the crew were saved and the Pilot is still around. A dedicated assemble of volunteers (about 300) has worked to restore the wreck to being a Wimpy recognisable by posterity, and shewing Barnes Wallace genius.

458, which flew Wellingtons throughout the war is honoured by having Norm Duke as one of the most dedicated volunteers. Norm and Joyce not only enabled me to achieve my ambition to see the restored Wimpy but treated me with unstinted kindness and hospitality and gave me a glorious overview of beautiful Surrey. There are only two Wellingtons left--one at Hendon and this one now at a final stage with fabric placed on the geodetic and doped. Part will be left uncovered to shew the geodetic. I enclose a small contribution to the cost of this final stage to show my appreciation of the work of the volunteers. The Brooklands Museum contains a number of other exhibits of aviation interest including a dam-busting bomb and one of the huge bombs used to penetrate the reinforced concrete of U Boat shelters--both from Barnes Wallace's genius.

Before leaving England, Norm and Joyce enabled me to lunch with Leon and Doreen Armstrong. Leon was a Flight Commander of 458, This was a great finale to my fabulous trip to England. Next I went to Norway to try to trace relatives of my Mother's side of the family. Her parents came to Australia in 1880 from Norway, so I wasn't sure of success. However a helpful Norwegian lady rang around for me and helped me in my quest. I am keeping in touch with her.

The final part of my trip and also a great ambition was to see again good Canadian friends. I knew that while there were uncertainties about my Norwegian trip, my Canadian trip would be a truly easy one amongst kindly and hospitable friends, and this is the way it proved to be.

Firstly, for four days in Halifax--no Air Force connections except that my batch of Air Force hopefuls left here for England in 1943. I had a pleasant time, even coming out of the Casino slightly ahead.

My next stop-over was in Mississauga (next to Toronto) where I was given a great time by ex-458er Mick Reid and his wife, Margaret. Mick is very concerned that the interests of the Canadian Air Force and the British Commonwealth are safeguarded. A Canadian Air Force ensign, with Union Jack in the corner flies proudly near his front door. While Mick seems to have some eye trouble, he still drove along the 5-lane highway to Toronto in lane-changing traffic at speeds about twice I could manage! We visited a local Royal Canadian Legion Club and chatted with the President--a good beer drinker! Mick and Margaret shewed me lots of Mississauga including a lovely Art Gallery of traditional and Indian works. All in all, a most happy stay.

Next I went to Winnipeg where I was looked after by Floyd and Kaye Lovelace (ex-14 Squadron Marauders). All Air Force people passing through Winnipeg know Floyd and Kaye. Floyd was a driver of the huge locomotives on Canadian Railways. Kaye works like a beaver to give beautiful dinners to visiting "blow-ins" like me. Floyd had organised a meeting and I met Jim Donaldson, our Canadian Flight Correspondent, and the Hansons. Jim shewed me and Floyd much of the Museum and we were very happy to be so looked after. Then Floyd and I were invited to lunch by Ruth Moore, widow of Guy Moore, flying instructor when I was at Calgary myself. Guy was also one of the "Founding Fathers" of the Western Canadian Aviation Museum.

After this, it was time for me to leave to go to Vancouver by train through the Rockies, so finally we all had dinner at Branigans Restaurant at the Forks--a heritage area. At long last I was able to get the bill--it was terribly hard to "pick up the tab" in England or Canada. I am sorry to say I have omitted so many other generous functions of our mates in the U.K. and Canada... So I left for Vancouver with a single-berth compartment---very comfortable if not quite equal to a Hotel stop off. All meals are provided in the Dining Car and are included in the charge.

But I enjoyed the Superior Air of the Headwaiter, and an extra bottle of wine became no problem!

At Vancouver I was met by that great 458 member--Bryan (Junior) Quinlan who was there to record my arrival. It was great to learn that Kevin and Dawn George were about to arrive. So Bryan and I were able to give Kevin and Dawn a truly great welcome, such as I had received. My host for Vancouver, Jack Miles was also there. I had met Jack and Enid Miles at an earlier Wartime Aircrew reunion in Winnipeg and kept in touch.. Jack had continued on in aviation and his home in Vancouver is something to envy. They looked after me extremely well and we saw a lot of all areas of Surrey, near Vancouver.

I was disappointed when I rang June Barber of Victoria, Vancouver Island, --a special friend of the Moores of Winnipeg, to learn that she was to leave next day for Alaska, by cruise ship, as the very next day I was to leave Vancouver to fly to Sydney on my way home so that it would be impossible for the Miles to arrange for me to farewell June. But "No". My host Jack Miles worked it out that we could go by Sky Train to Vancouver, see off June and daughter Mary, return to Surrey and then leave to go to the Airport. So, all went well and June and Mary were delighted when Jack and I farewelled them. At this stage, Bryan took over and took me by car--through very busy traffic--to the Airport. Nothing is too much trouble for people like Bryan!

Even at the Airport we had ladies offering to take photos of Bryan and me. Of course, we can't all look like Elvis Presley! (And I don't mean me!)

See you in Griffith if not before!

from Colin Fereday.

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AUSTRALIAN VETERANS AFFAIRS.

The Budget was not a bad one, in prevailing circumstances, for the ex-service community, though the impost on people needing to enter Nursing Homes may be a problem. We shall see when details are available.

In other areas we strive on--revision of the appallingly complex Guide to the Assessment of Repatriation Pensions (GARP) is one matter, Indemnity Insurance for Advisers is another. We spent some time (in Melbourne) at a Conference on PTSD--Post Traumatic Stress Disorder--now being treated at about 9 facilities around Australia. Pioneering work (isn't it extraordinary we should be pioneering in a disease known for decades--as Shell Shock or whatever) but thinking is that if not treated very early it is incurable. A possibility we have directly discussed with the new Surgeon General. It appears that over 40% of Australian servicemen/women in Rwanda are now suffering from PTSD.

There is to be another approach to acceptance of smoking as a cause of Prostate cancer.

Some things go on for ever. We have several now: the Sydney Air Force Retirement Village, held up over 4 years by bureaucracy (Admin. Services) now held up further over the possible presence of (maybe) rare red-capped toadlets and yellow-bellied burrowing frogs: the Bomber Command Memorial, another 4 year struggle, queried over site and type of memorial (this may now be moving -- thanks to the new Minister of Veterans Affairs); the proposed Veterans Charter which appears to have shocked someone in Veterans Affairs, Canberra. But all things, they say, come to those who wait!

Post-script. Strike you?--from Col Fereday's journey, Mrs Shepherdson's Letter and many other things--how strong a friendship we have in 458. Indelibly given to us at war and unfailingly preserved and built up over the following half century.

P.C.A.