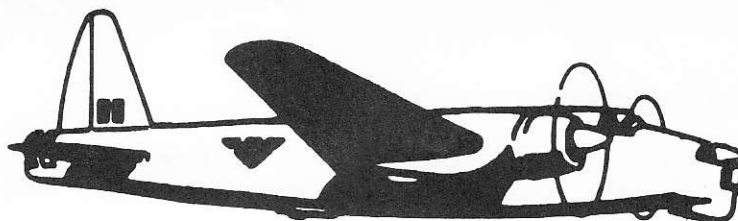


# 458

## SQUADRON NEWS



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JOURNAL OF THE 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL, GPO Box 5289, SYDNEY, NSW, 2001, AUSTRALIA.

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Year 47, No. 188.

November, 1996.

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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 .

Squadron President	Bert Ravenscroft (S.A.)	Squadron Vice Presidents:
Squadron Treasurer	Peter Alexander (NSW)	Australia: Jim Palmer (W.A.)
Squadron Secretary	Graeme Coombes (ACT)	Eric Kelly (Q.)
Hon. Squadron Auditor	Frank Ward (NSW)	U.K. Peter Leonard (Wales)
		Canada Jim. Donaldson (Man)
		New Zealand Ivan Green.

Editor: Peter Alexander  
Publisher: Eric Munkman

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N.Z.	Kevin George, 20, Kowhai Avenue, Kaikohe, New Zealand,
Canada	Jim. Donaldson, 72, Amarynth Crescent, Winnipeg, MB R2Y, Canada,
S.A.	Ted. Creighton, 33, Farr Terrace, Glenelg East, 5045, S.A.
Victoria	Rupert Pearce, 46, Mt. Pleasant Rd., Nunawading, 3131, Victoria.

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#### GRIFFITH REUNION STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY MEMBERS.

Responses and Forms filled in and returned indicate remarkably strong interest and support for the next All-States Reunion in March, 1997. If you have a form yet to be returned--the sooner the better! (By December 15th, please)      \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

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#### THE CORNSTALK COMMUNICATION.      from Jock McGowen.

\*Firstly, we must record with sorrow the passing of an old mate, Aub. Dombkins, who was for a long time in charge of Motor Transport. While we did not see a lot of him in recent years, we still miss him as a mate. We extend to his family our sincere condolences.

The Cornstalk Communication (cont).

- \* Eric Munkman and Noel Walter attended the Battle of Britain ceremony at the Cenotaph, representing 458 Squadron members.
- \* Eric Munkman and Don Bitmead visited Griffith early last month to check that all was proceeding well. With Dusty Miller they made inspections, had discussions and came home happy that all was well for March, 1997.
- \* MOST IMPORTANT! A new Venue for Anzac Day in Sydney! There were complaints about last year's venue for Anzac Day--due of course to the rebuilding of the Criterion Hotel downstairs. This got Eric on the move, and after a tip, he found a beaut. spot at the Central Park Hotel. This is on the corner of Park and Castlereagh Streets, diagonally opposite the Criterion Hotel on the opposite side of Park Street. Come in from Park Street, and we are on the FIRST FLOOR, left at the top of the stairs. We shall have a spot all to ourselves and it is brand new. Just a few steps further from Town Hall Station and closer to the end of the March. DON'T FORGET!
- \* We have from time to time had requests for Jacket Pocket badges to be sewn on to the normal Blue Jacket. Expense and finding a manufacturer have been problems here. Now Eric has found an overseas manufacturer and price will be around \$25 each. We have to ask those interested for a deposit. If interested please send us a letter of intent PLUS \$5-00. THIS will be the wartime crest as designed by Hugh Hamlet in the M.E. If you don't have a blue jacket then the badge can be framed behind glass for display all the time.
- \* And now don't forget the Car Badge to stick <sup>to</sup> the windscreen of your car. They are in the Flying torpedo form, just like the badge at the top of the Squadron News front page: coloured, 3" x 2". Available from Flight Treasurer Bob Bruce, 41A, Berowra Road, Hornsby, N.S.W., 2077.
- \* Welcome to 458 functions to Neville Hall a close mate, ex A.I.F., of Bob Smith.
- \* The Melbourne Cup Sweep. Those lucky people!

First Keith Cousins  
 Second Barbara Campbell  
 Third Pat Lyndon.

Congratulations!

- \* Now last but not least what can we in N.S.W. do to assist Norm Duke in equipping the Loch Ness Wimpy (other than money, which has (been attended to). So from wartime souvenirs we have so far received from

Jack Aitken--an Astro compass, brand new, still in the box. No questions asked.

Mick Singe--the brown-coloured curtain which used to blank off the Navigators table so that lights could be used. Mick brought his Piano Accordion home wrapped in this curtain.

Jock McGowen--two Cabin lights, one currently on loan to Jim Whitem for his boat.

Any more? To help build up the second last Wimpy on the planet?

From Jock.

@ @ @ @ @ @ @ @ @ @

FULL  
 SIZE  
 90 mm  
 x  
 60 mm



THE RESTORATION OF R for ROBERT.

Letter from Norm. Duke. This is a brief note to acknowledge receipt of the exceedingly generous cheque for the wellington project at Brooklands Museum. I must admit that I am overwhelmed by the Squadron spirit, and the Museum are more than grateful for this welcome contribution to the refurbishment of the "Rag Ship". Regards, Norm.

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Letter from Brooklands Museum Trust.

Norman Duke has passed on to us a cheque for 500 pounds as a donation towards the Wellington from the 458 Squadron Council. We are very grateful for this generous contribution.

I am sure your Squadron will be interested to know that the Wellington restoration has won an interim conservation award from Scania and the Transport Trust. This will be presented in October this year and the project will be put forward for the finals of this award scheme in February 1997. I am very pleased that the hard work of the Wellington volunteers is being recognised in this way.

On another matter, Brooklands Museum is keen to increase its visitor numbers, particularly tourists from abroad. Would you pass on information about the Museum ...so that we might be considered by anyone organising trips to England. I will shortly have a new tourism leaflet.....

We recently had a tour from San Diego Museum which had incorporated Brooklands in their itinerary of Aviation museums of England.

Thank you very much for your generosity and help.

yours sincerely, (Mrs) Morag Barton, Director.

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VICTORIAN VIEWS. from Rupert Pearce.

President Mick Singe has written to Mrs. Matthews and the usual Christmas Hamper will be sent on behalf of the Squadron.

Vale. We regret to tell that Gerry Abrahams passed away peacefully at home on October 6th. He joined the Squadron at Bone and was previously with the Air Ambulance. He was a Fl/Sergeant, Wireless Mechanic in the Signals Section, and while waiting to return to Australia in 1945 he met and married Betty. She followed him from England as a war bride. They were married for 51 years. Neil and June Dean, Rupert Pearce, and Mick and Mavis Singe attended the Memorial Service where the Squadron Banner was displayed.

Social Activities. 17 members lunched at the R.A.A.F. Association at South Yarra on Sept. 17th.

Our planned Cup Day meeting at Sth. Yarra was cancelled because of poor support by Association members. However through the good offices of Neil Dean and Roy Pearce, the Oakleigh Masonic Temple was made available. Members present were: Neil and June Dean, Ron and Sue Eggers, Jack and Margaret Ellis, Don and Shirley Granger, Harold Martin, Beatrice Morkham, Vivienne Morris, Roy and Barbara Pearce, Rupert Pearce, Norma Pollard, Mick and Mavis Singe. Our special thanks to June Dean for her splendid culinary efforts, and to the ladies who assisted with food and the dishes. Roy Pearce was Chief Cook in charge of the barbeque, and Neil Dean organised the sweeps. None of us came away rich but it was voted by all a happy day.

Ladies Auxiliary. After 25 years the Ladies Auxiliary has disbanded and transferred its funds to the Victorian Flight. Over the years their efforts and social activities have done much to keep the Flight together. Thanks, ladies.

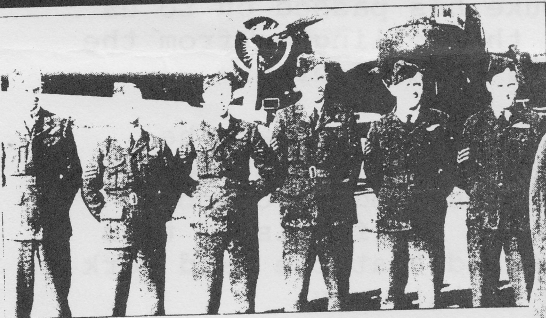
The 75th. Anniversary of the R.A.A.F. Neil and June Dean, Beatrice Morkham, Rupert Pearce, Mick and Mavis Singe represented the Squadron



Vic.Views (cont.)

at the Sergeants Mess, R.A.A.F. Williams, Point Cook, on 13th October to celebrate this event.

Crash of a 458 Wellington. Vivienne Morris has supplied a cutting describing a visit by Bert Garland to the U.K. and his meeting with one of his rescuers 54 years ago near Shaftesbury; Co-pilot Ian Higlett also survived (ED. Other members also have sent us this Press cutting. See below.)

**NEWS****WAR HERO MEETS RESCUER WHO HELPED TO SAVE HIM 54 YEARS AGO**

COMRADES IN ARMS: The ill-fated crew with Bert on the right



# Pilgrimage of a pilot

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Q.FLIGHT NEWS.

from Jack Lewis.

It has been said that no news is good news, so here's hoping that's right and that all in Q.Flight are well. After returning from the U.K. Bert Garland dropped me a note to say he had met 458ers in the U.K., here is the quote. "During our recent stay in England I had a 'phone call from Leon Armstrong who advised Nor.Duke of our presence. I spoke to Norm. and he and wife Joyce came to Heathrow to see us off. We had a good talk and we appreciated their kindness. They had a long way to come at the awkward hour of 7 p.m."

No further news. Best wishes, Merry Xmas and Happy New Year to all. Jack.

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SANDGROPPERS SAY..... from Ted.Jewell.Get together at the Clues.

On 20th October Bill and Joan Clues held a Get together at their home. All those that attended had a most enjoyable day--even though it was the hottest day for a long time--about the old 100°. It was very pleasing to be able to see some members who had not been in good health. Present were: our hosts Bill and Joan Clues, Henry and Vera Etherton, Ray and Marg. Turley, Len and Val Stewart, Gordon and Olga Jones, Jim. Palmer, Doug. Anderson, Ted. Jewell, Margaret Gannaway. Several couldn't make it because of sickness: Nobby Nobbs, John Lilly, Pete McCarthy, Charlie Davis.

Overseas? I am hoping that in the New Year, if all goes well, I will be off to the U.K. and Europe for a couple of months--I last went when we had the reunion there. I hope the weather will be kind.

The next Flight dinner. This will, as usual, be at the Freeway Hotel in South Perth. We should have a good roll up for a great day.

All the best for Xmas and the New Year to all 458ers and their wives and families. Ted Jewell.

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CANUCK CAUCUS. from Jim Donaldson.

Received your letter along with the August Squadron News, which I thoroughly enjoyed. Your postscript in regards to the relationship of former members of 458 and the friends we have picked up along the way, the miles that have been travelled from all parts of the Globe. To renew friendships that started during the war, and have kept alive with the History of 458 Squadron has to be a story on its own. Could you write a short story for the Readers Digest. They could print it throughout the world and we might contact more of our mates unaware of the Squadron News or history. (ED. Indeed, why not! Shall do)

I am attending a Memorial Dinner of the Wartime Pilots and Observers Association---it is held every year followed by a Church service on the following Sunday and that is followed by the National Memorial Service on the 11th. God Bless! Jim.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE BRITISH BULLETIN. from Norm.Duke.

In Memoriam. We have to report the sad news of the death of Mick Mason at the age of 89. Mick was the C.O. of the UK Flight for many years and well remembered as a great teller of tales and was the chairman in London for the International Reunion in 1982. He had been in a care home for many months and our sympathy and regards go to his daughter Doreen.

The Reunion at Stratford-upon-Avon. This was successfully held on September 15th/26th with 31 present (17 members) on parade for dinner of the 15th. with 18 (10 members) for an encore on the 16th. Roll call was: Leon/Doreen Armstrong, Jack/Grace Baker, Jim/May Croft, David/Rose Davis, Norman/Joyce Duke, Harry/Nance Filley, Norman/Glenis Gilbert, Peter/Eileen Leonard, Stewart/June Kent, Ken/Kathleen Morris, Bert/Nell Sleight, Reg/Betty Windett--and new members David Duff (with ex RAF guest Graham Arnold), Bill Eden, Jim and Joyce Peters, John Douglas and Reg Fletcher.

All voted for a repeat performance to continue these renewed friendships. Several members were unable to be with us, particularly Eric Phillips, one of our faithful supporters for many years, who has serious medical problems, and also Hal Lee, Dewi Davies and Jock Pattison, for various health reasons.

David Duff, a newly joined member, formerly a telephonist from Holme to Gib, presented us at the Reunion with a copy of his complete Squadron movements diary (copy to the Editor). A rare record. Thanks, David.

Bert Garland's Visit. Following a special photographic feature in the London Daily Express, Leon Armstrong managed to locate him after exhaustive detective work, at his son's address in Brighton. Joyce and I were able to spend half an hour with him and his wife at Heathrow before his flight left to Brisbane. Full marks for the 458 grapevine.

Stewart Kent's Photos. Stewart presented members at Stratford with his photographic copies of the squadron history reproduced from old Flight magazines. Thank you, Stewart.

Best wishes. To Peter Leonard who is awaiting an appointment at hospital for cataract treatment. We all wish you speedy recovery, Peter.

R.for Robert. Thank you, 458 Australia for your generous donation to 'R' Robert. 458's name is now inscribed on the Brooklands Honour Board. Norm.

\* \* \* \* \*

CROWEATERS CHIT-CHAT. from Ted Creighton.

Bert Ravenscroft with all SA Flight members extends to all 458ers very warm Seasonal Greetings. Bert also expresses his appreciation of NSW Flight stepping forward to organise a 1997 reunion at Griffith. He is looking forward to another enjoyable meeting with the many members who have signalled their attendance.

Our long wet, cold, winter made it All Quiet on the Southern Front. Only sightings have been Kevin Tait, Peter Thom, Keith Grimshaw and Bert Ravenscroft. Hopefully, everyone is getting fit for the Airport on November 24th. Our current lack of news will enable the Editor to increase the editorial content.



Croweaters Chit-Chat (conc'ld)

Vale! John Carey advises that at a Legacy meeting he had been told that Dawn McGlasson, widow of Jack, had died on October 2nd. We have not heard of any next-of-kin but express our sympathies. Regards, Ted.

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ECHOES OF COL.FEREDAY IN CANADA. from Bryan Quinlan.

Bryan tells us of the visit of Ernie Ireland to the U.K. with some photographs (not received!) Ernie has had health problems but his daughter shepherded him through a extensive schedule that included a) a visit to Brooklands, b) a visit to Holme-on-Spalding Moor, meeting Jock Pattison and Mona who gave him a great welcome. Stayed at the Red Lion. Mona sends her great appreciation of 458's remembrance; c) various service locations and his ancestral home in Ireland; d) hoped to meet Norm Duke but health problems caught up and Ernie had to return home.

Bryan reports with sorrow the death of Wally Beer, his former crew member from Limavady--followed by his wife Mabel. Bryan also sent us an extract from his newsletter to Canadian members. We now further extract it!

A brief word about the mini reunion with Col Fereday and with Kevin and Dawn George from New Zealand. Attending were Ben Gruenwald, Jack and Dorothy Reynolds, Jack and Enid Miles (adopted 458ers) and Bryan and Joan Quinlan. There was a 75% Vancouver attendance.

A dinner party was held at the Coyote Creek Golf Course in Surrey and we had a great time reminiscing, looking at old and new photographs, hearing about old friends and savouring the renewal of close international ties during our wartime membership of 458.

Following dinner, Jack and Enid kindly invited us back to their fascinating and lovely home where we were all inducted into the "Cloverdale Clods"--achieved by everyone participating as a band in support of Jack and Enid's expert leadership on the organ, with each contributing his own creative renderings on such instruments as snare drum, bongodrum, tambourine, xylophone etc. It was great fun!

I said farewell to Colin Fereday at Vancouver's new International Airport and perhaps the start of a new chapter in Col's chance friendship with the opposite sex. We shall see! On Wednesday I spent several enjoyable hours with Kevin and Dawn before waving them goodbye on their way to visit a daughter in Hawaii and then home to NZ.

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CORRESPONDENCE. From Norm Duke news of a new UK member Peter Cochrane who lives at Dunnington, not far from Holme-on-Spalding Moor, who writes: "We live within a mile of the Yorkshire Air Museum and would be glad to meet any 458ers. In March '45 a JU 88 crashed on this house: the crew and three people were killed. 3 years ago a group from the Airgunners Association and a group of German Nightfighters Association held a service to dedicate a memorial cross on the front lawn. Last year another memorial service was held--a moving occasion. A few months ago General Leutnant Gunther Rall came to lay a wreath. When I left 458 in 1944 in Sardinia, I didn't expect to entertain a Luftwaffe General 52 years later.!"

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From Danny Dangaard in Mareeba. (to Eric Munkman).

Many regrets that I will be unable to make the Griffith Reunion. Circumstances and time away from home does not permit me. It looked like a good idea at first for four of us but after lengthy phone calls between Erle Hetherington, Fred Kleckham, Alan Atherton and myself we arrived at a "No Go" decision. At present I am not enjoying good health and not looking forward to a fourth hernia operation. I am doing "battle" with Veterans Affairs for a Gold Card and a service pension..... Again regrets.

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THE EDITOR (for Squadron Council) joins in wishing readers the best for Christmas and the New Year. For variety he does it in his ancestral Gaelic...NOLLAIG CHRIDHEIL agus BLIADHNA MHATH UR LEIBH UILE!