

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

Year 50, No. 197

# 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL

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February 1999

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# **EDITORIAL**

In this, the first issue of our 50<sup>th</sup> Year of continued publication of 458 Squadron News we send greetings for the New Year to all our readers.

In this year, very appropriately, the Squadron has achieved the ending of a long irritation. Our wartime Crest has finally been officially accepted and registered. Readers know the long story. The winged torpedo design was created (Hugh Hamlet was the designer) in the desert. For some administrative reason, it was never formally registered by the Inspector of RAF Badges – the Chester Herald. The Squadron of course has stayed with the design and continued to use it. After the war Squadron Officers went through the formality of a petition to the Queen for its registration.

The Chester Herald, was, apparently now willing, but the then command of RAAF was not (we mention no names). The RAAF said they had no expectation of ever again wanting a 458 Squadron. So, no registration. About 20 years later we tried again. This time RAAF Command was willing and helpful – but the Chester Herald said too late. So, no registration. In later years we have tried unsuccessfully one or two other approaches, while of course, continuing to use the wartime crest.

Suddenly, in 1998, we discovered that the RAAF of this day had taken away from the College of Arms London, the authority to approve RAAF Badges (too many delays, we understand) and was very supportive in our seeking registration through the Heraldic Office of Australia, Sydney – now the official authority. With the Squadron President's approval Squadron Officers have completed negotiations with the Heraldic Office and the 458 Squadron Crest is now formally official. There have been a few minor adaptations for Heraldic or Air Force reasons: the winged torpedo now flies on somewhat darker sky – since it was supposed to be a night sky. Also, accordingly, the moonpath is more accentuated, but "impugn it who so list" 458 Squadron Crest is now formally recognised and registered. (What did it cost? Approximately \$1,000 which came from Squadron Funds – mainly the long past profits of the Squadron History.)

Having now mentioned the Squadron History, let us report that while printed copies are virtually unobtainable, except at considerable price on the second hand market, and there being a small but continuing demand for copies, the History is being typed desktop-wise on computer, and for a price, copies will again become available. There are plans to add as a further Appendix the outcome of Peter Pettit's current collection of individual Squadron episodes. More of this when the project is further advanced.

Readers will find in this issue some very welcome copy from the Squadron in Canada: this makes a substantial part of this issue and is a demonstration of the strength of 458 in Canada.

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#### <u>THE TIP OF THE ARROW</u> from Mick Reid, 1539 Glenwatson Drive, Mississauga, Canada, LSE 2W1 Ed-This article is based on extracts from copy sent to us, at Bryan Quinlan's request by Mick Reid, well known and devoted 458 pilot in eastern parts of Canada.

This communication records some good tidings received from the Chief Historian of National Defence, Canada, who has responded to the receipt of a copy of the late Peter Eastcott paper dealing with a striking operation in which Peter took a major part in WWII.

The first op. Peter flew with 38 was with a Flt/Lt Wiggins, 26 October 42. He earned a DFC leading a formation of three Wellingtons from L.G. 226 in a dusk attack on a convoy outside the mouth of Tobruk Harbour. Four destroyers, flak ships and harbour defences fought to ensure that the last and largest tanker entered harbour safely. It was not to be. German documents reported that both Rommel and Kesselring witnessed the attack from the harbour cliffs as four torpedos hit the tanker. That night the ship was ablaze from bow to stern.

Peter noted that it was but ".... a line in the sand that made the difference between 458, 38, 69 and 221': Wilf Baynton joined 69 Squadron, SDF, Malta, October 1942 but in March 1943 finished the last few hours of his tour, that month, on the strength of 458; Peter transferred from 221 to 38 Squadron and met Bruce there later on. He said "Bruce was a 3-pip Captain at the time but otherwise quite the same in every other way. We transferred to Malta (via Shallufa) under 458 where Bruce became a Major, Flight Commander and eventually Commanding Officer." (In less than four months, as I recall).

Bruce was shrewd, or rather canny, in his appraisal of men selecting Peter Eastcott and later Norman Duke as his navigators. When Captain McKenzie joined 38 Squadron early '43, he wasted no time approaching Peter with the McKenzie twinkle in his eye to ask "would you like to 'show' me around?" (Preferably at low altitudes.) according to Peter, "It was meant to be." I would agree. Yes, for all of us – it was but a thin line in the sand indeed.

The Canadian chief historian has accepted and welcomed a copy of Peter Eastcott's paper for access to researchers and lodgment of a copy in the RCAF memorial museum in Trenton.

The twilight, Torp attack was on the harbour, at Tobruk, October 26, 1942, while Pete was with 38 Squadron. He, Bruce McKenzie, Bryan and others from 38 Squadron joined those of us of 458 on Malta, in the Strike Duty force, I believe, in March '43.

Like so many of we, 'other colonials', our stint with 458 Squadron became the focal point of our wartime experience as Sid Winchester recently attested. Needless to say Peter, your monumental undertaking "We Find and Destroy" has been largely responsible. I've copied a letter I wrote, early '92, to those who had requested copies of the "commemorative certificate" with a print of McKenzie's attack in Imperia Harbour. (Each sent a laser copy of the painting.) The letter revealed Eastcott's great regard for the Squadron.

My best wishes to you and yours for the New Year also convey those of One George Penfold who remembers you well. Said you two kept in touch after you met in the Far East., as veterans joined by government officials, to commemorate those who had given their lives in that conflict. George was, at that time, President of the RCAF Assn. He recalled that you represented veterans of the RAAF. George, a navigator in the "forgotten war" over Burma, now 83, chirper and still an activist despite a couple of strokes a decade ago that laid him low for a time. He wishes you well Peter.

Given your life-long work in the veteran's affairs you must have rubbed shoulders, on occasion with the legendary "Weary" Dunlop. Among my prized possessions are his autobiography and his "War Diaries". (Gifts from my cobber George Unitt.) Weary was most remembered for his service to those with whom he served, and, their needs post-war.

The tip of the arrow is, in a sense, represented by a painting portraying the fulfilment of ground staff labors – a Wellington running in on the deck to deliver a torp. (the tip of the arrow) to a target. An experience groundstaff were denied being confined to a grounded Wimp sweating in sun and sand, but one they could relate to thanks to a printed edition of the painting. Hopefully, there may be some more gen. on Peter Eastcott's exploits with Mac while on 458. He related some very hairy do's to me: One especially, of Mac making several passes over shipping in an Italian harbour – intent on making a drop. Pete, in the Astrodome, dodging flak. Lit like a Christmas tree. He, too, and Norm. merited the DSO.

(Ed: We well remember George Penfold and send him our best. Those meetings, some years ago now, were with the World Veterans Federation. In those days we always had an informal, social (alcoholic) gathering of the Canadians, New Zealanders and Australians – and how much the same folk they were! Canada and New Zealand no longer belong to the WVF, but our suspicion is that if present day young Australians, New Zealand and Canadian servicemen got together they would still be the same folk.)

# "Q" FLIGHT NEWS from Jack Lewis

Apparently "Q" Flight's All States Reunion held at Caloundra was a very successful exercise. Everyone attending seemed to enjoy themselves, we have received many thank you calls and notes. Thanks to "Q" Flight and visitors involved in making the event so successful.

It was good to see Earl Hetherington, Alan Atherton and Bob Dangaard down from the north and Fred Kleckham and Marjorie.

Sorry that Eric Lloyd and Bridie at the last minute were unable to attend due to illness of Eric, who is progressing well. Bert Garland is now over eye surgery, Bert and Isla are off on a Pacific Cruise in December.

Arthur Jones had a bit of bad luck, Arthur intended driving up to Caloundra to renew old friendships but instead he was operated on in Greenslopes Hospital for open heart surgery and had several bypasses attended to. Arthur is now coming along very well.

President Eric Kelly and Kath were very happy to welcome another grandson - congratulations.

We have had a letter from John Wainwright, the Air Force Officer, who was our guest at the All States Reunion dinner. He said in part "We were very impressed that your Association has flourished over so many years and with the spirit of the people who make it work. You must, I am sure, have been congratulated on the great job you have done in organising the reunion this year. As I said in the toast, I think that the esprit de corps which you demonstrate is vital to a Defence Force, and I believe that you would be welcome to visit any RAAF Base which is close to your reunions, and to leave behind you at the Base perhaps a small display which records the history of your Squadron and your Association. As the Defence Reform Program affects RAAF more and more, the sense of unity in the Air Force is becoming diluted, and any demonstration of such esprit de corps, dedication and sense of duty as you will display will certainly help RAAF to maintain its tradition and culture". After the Squadron Dinner we found one set of miniature medals. If the owner contacts me I'll send them on.

Since Caloundra social activities have been nil. What with Christmas upon us, and different members going away it was decided to postpone a get together. March has been considered for a luncheon to be held - more details later.

Letter received from one Keith Wilkinson, 23 Ferndale Park, Pedmore, Stourbridge, West Midlands, England. Information was required from any 458 members who may have known his father, Kenneth Wilkinson from Lancaster, who joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 then joined 458 at Bone in 1943 as a rear gunner/wireless operator. He flew with Jack Christianson (pilot), Fred Briggs, Bill Parnby and Eric Petty. Keith would be pleased to hear from any member with information they may be able to pass on. He is in the process of writing up a family history. (Keith has been widely in touch with Flight Secretaries.) Personal news so far to hand:

Theo Ravenscroft is still a very sick man, trips back and forth to Townsville for medical treatment takes its toll on Theo. We wish him well.

Eric Lloyd is progressing, still has many visits to doctors for medical attention.

Arthur Jones continues to progress well in his recover after open heart surgery late last year at Greenslopes Hospital. Arthur had expected to pay a visit to the reunion at Caloundra to catch up with many of his friends, when his heart problem arose. Harry Dorge has been very ill in Toowoomba Hospital with a blood infection still evident after knee surgery some 3 years ago. Harry was transferred to Greenslopes Hospital early January for further tests. Since he was admitted he suffered an Angina attack, and had open heart surgery last August. Vale. I write with sadness of the passing of my old friend Frank Wilks on the 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1999. I first met Frank when I was posted to Amberley, November 1940. We were posted overseas together and joined 458 January 1942. Frank was in a Hospital for 3 years and then went to a Nursing Home where he passed away. Our thoughts are with Hilda.

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### CROWEATERS CHIT CHAT from Ted Creighton

Because of the confusion existing at the conclusion of the November AGM, members need to note the following:

- 1. Sunday, April 25 is ANZAC DAY. The date is not negotiable and the march will take place on that day. Monday 26<sup>th</sup> is the holiday to satisfy the sports minded.
- 2. As the Gouger Café does not open on a Sunday, our Anzac Day Luncheon will have to be transferred to the Talbot Village Restaurant at the rear of the Hotel. More will be known when the RSL March Committee finally and publicly confirms all arrangements for the day.

SEARCH FOR NEWS of Eric Petty. Late December a call came from SA Flight Associate Lyne Skinner. Lyne alerted me that in his copy of the Oct-Dec issue of "Airmail RAF Asscn Magazine" he read that a Keith Wilkinson was trying to trace three RAF 458ers, viz: Eric Petty, Bill Parnaby and J A Christianson. He was about to write to Norman Duke when the penny dropped. I re-read his British Bulletin in our own November newsletter which sets out the only contact they have yet to make is ERIC PETTY.

ROLL ON 2000. Most of our oldies have had their share of trials and tribulations just lately. Cheer up blokes – there is plenty of 1999 left for things to get better!

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# A TRIBUTE TO JOCK PATTISON

Col Fereday writes from Canberra : I am sorry to convey the sad news of the death on January 3, 1999 – from lung cancer – of an old 458 stalwart, Jock Pattison, an ex-armourer, who lived at Holme on Spalding Moor. I had a letter from Jock in early October 1998 in which he mentioned he was about to have a medical examination for a lung "shadow" – he was then in good health and spirits – and now, just 3 months later, Frank Robertson – whose letter is enclosed in copy form – has sent us the sad news of Jock's passing. I have written back to Frank expressing great appreciation from all of us here for Frank's care to ensure that a fine Squadron member and patriot was given a fitting, honorable Service Ceremony at his (Jock's) funeral. Only a week ago I had written to both Frank and Jock conveying my best wishes and sending Jock a Calendar of Canberra views in return for a treasured Calendar of Yorkshire scenes – sadly Jock will never see my small reciprocal token but he knew how much we appreciated his devotion to all 458 Squadron interests and memorabilia in Holme. Jock will now have been laid to rest beside his beloved wife, Nora, in the beautiful All Saints Churchyard at Holme. We have paintings of that Church given us by Jock. Frank Robertson writes: "Holme, 6/1/99 - My Dear Colin, I regret to advise that our great colleague and friend Jock Pattison died at 1830 on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1999. 81 years old he had a good enjoyable life with no regrets. He was in York District Hospital for a week before his death in discomfort and pain from lung cancer. He was a great patriot and was very proud of his service with No. 458 Squadron in 1941-42 and with our association in the 80s. He greatly admired the Australian aircrew who flew from Holme in those old Wimpeys which seemed so frail. He was very proud to wear his RAF Blazer and medals and with dedication and solemnity laid the wreath at the 458 Memorial Tree on ANZAC Sunday here at Holme. The Funeral Service will be held at 1430 on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>, and interred with his wife in the Churchyard. I am, through Norman Duke, arranging and laying a wreath on behalf of the Squadron at the graveside. I shall display the Squadron Badge, RAF Ensign, Australian and British Flags in the Church in honour of his Service and Allegiance and, as we know, great pride in comradeship and Esprit de Corps.

The Squadron Hamper was delivered to Mrs Mathews, photos taken; will send in due course.

### Later Report

Since the above was received Col Fereday has referred, through Bob Bruce, some further details. The day of Jock's funeral dawned with heaviest snowfall of the winter. It can be impossible to ascend the hill to the ancient Parish Church in such weather but, however, rain cleared the snow. The 458 badge was placed by the lectern and the Australian and Air Force Ensigns beside the central pillars. The church was packed. The local Gliding Club provided a low level flyover. A wreath was prepared by Frank Robertson with a copy of the Australian Flag and 458 Badge. The family were proud and pleased by the tributes and large congregation., Later, there was an adjournment to the Hare and Hounds for food and appropriate drink. This is reported to have lasted for some time!!

#### VICTORIAN NEWS from Rupert Pearce

<u>Social Activities</u>: The BBQ held on Cup Day was attended by: Harry and Nell Ashworth, Neil and June Dean, Ron and Sue Eggers, Jack and Margaret Ellis, Don and Shirley Granger, Ken and Joann Hinton, Laurie and Jean Kew, Harold and Cath Martin, Roy Pearce, there was an apology for Barbara, Rupert Pearce, Norma Pollard and Mick and Mavis Singe. President Mick presented Harry Ashworth with his Life Membership Certificate and Harry responded expressing his surprise and pleasure at this honour. It was an enjoyable day, Neil Dean ran the sweeps, no one became rich. Our thanks to the Temple Company for the use of their facilities.

<u>Pilgrimage to Point Cook:</u> This year's Pilgrimage to Point Cook and the Service of Remembrance was held at the RAAF Chapel on November 8, Principal Air Chaplain A/Com. (Retd) Steve Box lead the Service. The Chapel was nearly filled to capacity. Cadets from the ATC paraded the colours and Squadron banners, wreaths were laid at the altar by the RAAF and various branches including 458 Squadron.

Lunch at the Officers' Mess was attended by 130 guests and members. Neil and June Dean, Don and Shirley Granger, Roy and Barbara Pearce, Rupert Pearce, Normal Pollard and Mick and Mavis Singe represented the Squadron.

Lunch at the Manningham Club, November 24: Those who came were John and Marge Bilney, Neil and June Dean, Ron and Sue Eggers, Jack and Margaret Ellis, Don and Shirley Granger, Ken and Joann Hinton, Rupert Pearce, June Schoppe, Mick and Mavis Singe. Apologies were from the Martins, Beatrice Morkham, the Pearces and Tom Primrose.

<u>2 Flight A.T.C. Presentation of Awards December 4</u>: Neil and June Dean, Mick and Mavis Singe attended this night. The Best Presented Cadet was Leonie Brockenshaw and President Mick gave her the Squadron award of "Glorious Summer", the story of the Battle of Britain. No. 2 Flight ATC carries our banner on Anzac Day and we have a long association with them.

<u>Future Activities:</u> RAAF ASSOCIATION ANNUAL ECUMENICAL SERVICE 14<sup>th</sup> MARCH We have been invited to attend this Service to be held at St. Martin's Church, Cromwell Road, South Yarra. Meet at the Air Forces Memorial Centre 1100 hours to arrive at the Church and be seated by 1125 hours. At the close of the Service a 2 course luncheon will be available at the Air Forces Centre. The cost of the luncheon will be \$18 and drinks will be available at bar prices. Entrée Cards should be procured prior to the day, 'phone reservations (9826 8573) will be accepted with confirmation by cash/cheque/credit card prior to March 8. Or contact Rupert Pearce (9878 2932) if you wish to attend.

<u>BBQ at the Ashworths</u>, 13 Harverson Drive, Rosebud - March 21. As usual bring your own food and drink. This day will give us an opportunity to talk about the next Reunion.

<u>Anzac Day</u>: The leader of the March is A/Com. Keith Parsons, CBE, DSO, DFC, AFC. The Air Force is expected to move off at 1100 hours, afterwards at the Melbourne Bowling club and our ladies are welcome. <u>Annual General Meeting</u>: this will be held on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> May at 12 noon at the RAAF Memorial centre, Cromwell Road, South Yarra.

The next Reunion will be held in Victoria: The venue and date has yet to be decided.

<u>The Malta Cross Commemorative Medal:</u> We have assisted John Withecomb, a former Member of 458 and Ken Crompton, a relative of George W.S. Crompton, who was a crew member with Bill Fordyce, to obtain this medal.

Award Productions Ltd's \_new address is: Dpt. M, P.O. Box 30, Haslemere, Surrey, UK, GU 26 6UT.

<u>Personal</u> - Helen Laming is now at View Bank House, 69 Banyule Street, Viewbank, VIC. 3084. The loss of her sight has made the change from her home unavoidable.

Bluey Firth sends his best wishes from Tatura. Joan Munday writes from Coronet Bay that her family were with her over Christmas. She sends her best wishes to all members for 1999. Mick Singe thanks every one who came to the Caloundra Reunion for their Get Well card.

We welcome Roland Orchard, son of Gordon Orchard, as an honorary member.

### SANDGROPER'S SAY from Ted Jewell

<u>Our Christmas Dinner</u> - This was once again held at the Freeway Motel in South Perth, but it will be our last there as it is to be pulled down. We had 41 attend, the lunch was great as usual, plenty to eat and drink. It was good to see so many of the old Squadron members who came along with their wives, poor health stopped some from attending. I was pleased to see Col Cortin come up from Busselton where he now lives, it is about a 3 hour drive to Perth. Other Squadron members were Ben Cormack, Doug Anderson, Charlie Davis, Gordon Jones, Stan Hopewell, Jim Palmer, Henry Etherton, Bill clues, Ted Jewell, Nobby Nobbs, as in previous years the ladies received a Christmas present and a kiss from our President.

<u>Barbeque in Mandurah</u> - Squadron members were coming down to my place in Mandurah in January, but everyone decided it is too hot then, so it will be here on the 7<sup>th</sup> March, Sunday. All are welcome, we are lucky at present in Mandurah with plenty of fish and crabs to be caught. I had a call from Jack Christianson of UK who is in Perth on holidays, said that he was travelling around the State with a group, and he was hoping to come down to Mandurah but had run out of time. <u>Anzac Day</u> This will be held in Perth as in other years. Our President will be laying a wreath during the Dawn Service at the War Memorial in Kings Park, "Once again a thank you to Vera Etherton for the Wreath". Fall in is at the same place and time for the March through Perth, with the Service on the esplanade. We are hoping to see a few more starters this year. After the service we are having lunch at Miss Maude's Restaurant in Murry Street.

I had a call from Curly O'Connor last week from Hollywood Hospital, it seems that he was in a fight or something and received some broken ribs. Veterans Affairs were hoping to get him into a Nursing Home. I spoke to a nurse from the hospital, she said he is not a very well person. Gordon Jones has been in hospital, had to have an operation on his back. Charlie Davis is still in his wheelchair. John Lilly spends some time in Hollywood Hospital. Peter McCarthy is now in a Nursing Home. Doug Anderson hasn't been too well. I guess old age is catching up to all of us, some a little quicker than others.

A little reminder to WA Flight members who are unfinancial, now is the time to become financial, send your cheque to me. All the best – Ted Jewell.

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#### BRITISH BULLETIN by Norman Duke

It is good to be able to report several items of good news for the February '99 Newsletter. We hear from Jim Croft that his radio therapy treatment after cancer surgery has been successful. Maureen Prater, Bill Prater's wife, has also made a remarkable recovery after major cancer surgery. Bert Sleight is convalescing after a heart attack last September, and says he is continuing to 'plug along'. Hal Lee has been in touch to tell us he is recovering

from an op for a condition known as Actinomyrosis? - normally associated with cattle, and known to vets as 'wooden tongue'. Hal wonders if it dates from his many years service with the RSPCA?? You have all our sympathy Hal, and our hopes that you are well on the way to recovery. Mona Mathews of Holme on Spalding Moor sends her grateful thanks to the 458 Squadron Council for the Christmas Greetings and Gift Parcel in recognition of her late husband's care in looking after the Squadron memorials and graves.

At the instigation of Frank Robertson, the Memorial Tree at Holme has been officially registered with the National Inventory of War Memorials. Bill Prater tells me that when recently reading 'Guns in the Sky' by Chas Bowyer he came across the historic episode of Sgt Watson's survival in a dinghy after crashing in the sea on August 4, 1943, when flying with F/Sgt Spencer's crew. This is fully reported in We Find and Destroy on pages 125/126. 458 history seems to turn up all over the place.

To end on a sad note, we lost another faithful member this month, Jock Pattison another victim of cancer. Jock was one of our oldest members at 81, who joined the Squadron as an armourer in 1941 and remained behind when 458 left Holme in 1942. He lived at Holme upon Spalding Moor, and was given a great send-off at his memorial service at the Church on the Hill. Peter Cochrane and Frank Robertson attended, and a wreath was laid on our behalf. A friend from the Pocklington Flying Club – Bernie Svenson – carried out a low level flypast in a Pawnee glider tug. Jock would have appreciated the 'send off' at the Hare & Hounds after the service. Best wishes to all

### KIWI CALL from Kevin George

There is not much in the way of news from NZ Flight. The enclosed draft is a collective contribution from the NZ Flight to assist in funding our worthy association. As the banks now charge \$15 for even a small bank draft, it is obviously more economical to send one draft from all six of us. Please ensure that our two new members, Jack Pryde and George Whatnall, are enrolled and receive their copies of Squadron Newsletters.

Their addresses are: Jack - Te Kohi, Bag 161, Wairoa, Hawkes Bay, NZ. George - No. 8, Te Akau Street, Ohope Beach, Whakatane, NZ.

My visit of last April to Sydney for Anzac Day, and subsequently to visit some of my Australian cousins, was so enjoyable that it may become an annual affair, as I have decided to do it again in April. Kind Regards.

# CANUCK CAUCUS from Bryan Quinlan in Canada's West.

Attached to this bulletin are the results of a memory survey collected in Canada for use as you see fit and ultimately for inclusion in the permanent wartime Squadron records. (Ed. There is a very useful number of personal summaries attached to Bryan's Bulletin. As an illustration, we now append a commentary from George MacLeod who flew, among others, with Claude Bourque) -

I received the last issue of "458 Squadron News" and noted the death of "Orch", one of our Flight Commanders of 1 Flight. I also note your request for anything interesting – before we "fade off into history". I have had two heart attacks in the past two years, if I am spared I'll hit 79 on November 1, 1998, so perhaps it is time to fade. I have one little story – about 458 – which I haven't seen elsewhere: When we were stationed at Bone, Algeria, in the Fall of 1943, many of us came down with yellow jaundice. Health authorities blamed it on insufficient vegetables and fresh meat. Our medical officer was able to scare up vegetables from the countryside – but couldn't purchase any fresh meat in spite of our camp being overrun with the native Arab's sheep. They realised that their money would likely be worthless after the war, so they asked high for what they had to sell – I think it was 5,000 frances for one sheep. This was a ridiculous price so two or three of our Aussie mates hustled a fine fat sheep into their tent – killed it and dressed it. Within five minutes the shepherd was running round looking for his sheep. He was told to get lost! The fresh meat and vegetables revived the Squadron members somewhat, but the portions were too small to enable the whole Squadron to partake of the fresh meat. The head, fleece and intestines of the sheep were deposited in a bag and dropped far out in the Med. I was told, after I had left the Squadron, that sometime later this bag drifted and was deposited on the beach near where we were camped. There the Arabs found it. All the best.

# THE CORNSTALK COMMUNICATION from Jock McGowen

- You know some people are just not satisfied to be safe and sound on Mother Earth, they have to take on tasks not quite as dangerous as flying in a Wimpy but our NSW President, Eric, with tickets given by his grand children took a walk over the Arch of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. He said it was great. I am and many others are prepared to believe him.
- We record the loss in Queensland of Frank Wilkes and from NSW Flight we send our sympathy to the family.
- While on that sad subject we record the recent passing of Walter Sullivan. Walter was a navigator and a fairly early member of 458, and on his return to civilian life, spent much of his time acting in TV shows and plays. We have not seen him for some time but Pete Pettit kept in touch with him.
- Another sad loss to us all was Jack Aitken, Jack did not attend many Squadron functions, except of course the TAFE lunches, Jack was an early pilot on 458 and on return to Australia he did a lot of flying with Cloud Seeding DC3 of CSIRO and a pilot with Butler Airlines. Jack was a very interesting fellow to talk to about the early days of flying. He is survived by Dorothy and sons John, David, Peter and daughter Jane, and their children. It was an honour to be invited to the private funeral, and I was asked by Dorothy to convey her thanks to 458 for the constant supply of information by way of the Newsletter. Our sympathy to Dorothy and the family.
- After a heart problem it is good to know that Jimmy Whittem is back at home and flourishing.
- New South Wales members don't forget Anzac Day. Same venue as last year the Masonic Centre, Goulburn Street, Sydney.

Pete Pettit is making up a list of anecdotes for future publication. Give Pete some help. His appeal follows: A  $3^{rd}$  Edition of We Find and Destroy is being prepared and it is hoped that a collection of anecdotes of Squadron life will form part of the project. They could be presented as an annexure or, if enough turn up, as a separate publication. So far only about half a dozen people have made a contribution and there must be a thousand stories out there waiting to be published, so let's have 'em! The anonymity of all guilty parties will be preserved by guarantee! All contributions to Pete Pettit: By mail to -26 Dudley Avenue, Roseville, NSW 2069, by phone to: (02) 94165464, by E-mail to pettit@mpx.com.au

# OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

#### The Bomber Command Memorial

The form of this Memorial to the courage and achievement of the three and a half thousand young Australians who died with Bomber Command in WWII (the largest Australian casualty list in WWII) continues to be debated. The Bomber Command Squadrons Committee, including 458 Squadron representatives, who are the survivors of those who served with Bomber Command, unanimously agreed on a fine design by the noted Sculptor, Dennis Adams.

The administration of the War Memorial has chosen to differ. They still, we suspect, hanker after another "good contemporary sculpture" - like the RAAF Memorial now in Anzac Parade. Bomber Command will not agree to any meaningless memorial. Now the War Memorial is calling for three more designs.

The Air Force Retirement Estate, Turramurra This continues a slow process of negotiations with Banks and Councils. The hope is that units will be available for purchase in about 12 months.