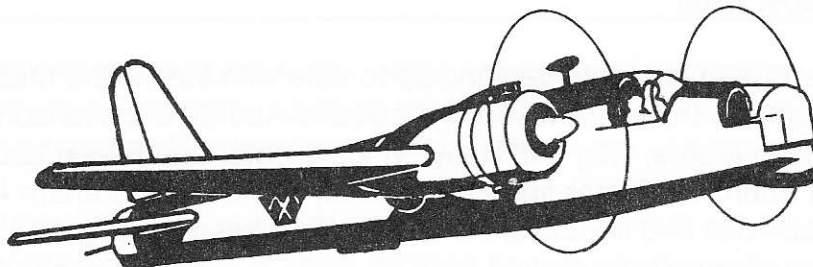


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# 458

## SQUADRON NEWS

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RAAF

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### 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL

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#### PLANNING FOR NEXT ALL-STATES REUNION

This will be held from Sunday October 14, 2001 to Saturday 20th October 2001 and at the enjoyable coastal resort at Port Macquarie. Local resident, Jim Whittem, is handling local planning in conjunction with the New South Wales Committee. Further details in the next issue.

#### BRITISH BULLETIN from Norm Duke

Reunion 2000 Another very enjoyable reunion was held once again at the Falcon Hotel Stratford - upon-Avon, and a good time was had by all. Under the able chairmanship of Leon Armstrong in the temporary absence of yours truly. We were very pleased to have Peter and Eileen Leonard with us this year after making a special effort to travel in spite of Peter's medical problems. Keith Wilkinson presented a splendid set of his photographs taken inside and outside the Brooklands Wellington, which sparked off a few memories and he has presented these to our 458 archives.

Frank Robertson also brought everyone up to date with the Holme Memorial collection. The roll was as follows: Leon and Doreen Armstrong, Jack and Audrey Christianson, Mo Borne, Esme McLean, Ken and Kathleen Morris, Reg and Betty Windett, Peter and Eileen Leonard, Keith and Ann Wilkinson, Bill Eden, Bill Prater and Peter Prater, David Duff, Graham Arnold, Frank Robertson and Jill Holmes. Jack Ball had to cancel his trip due to a hospital visit. All well we hope. It has been proposed that a reunion be held around April 25, 2001 in the York/Holme area. We hope that this will draw the crowds.

Christina McKenzie. I recently had a very welcome and unexpected 'phone call from Christina asking me to switch on TV 'right now' for a special vintage aircraft flying film. To my dismay the programme was not going out in the Southern zone. Undaunted she borrowed a taped video of the show from her gardener and sent it off to me in the post (if at first you don't succeed). During our conversation I learned for the first time that she had suffered and thankfully recovered from a serious attack of meningitis during the past year. Still apparently to-ing and fro-ing to Kenya. Kim (the Knole taxi driver) is still flying and running an avionics business in Kenya; and Jamie now a fully qualified Medical Doctor is based at a hospital in the East End of London.

Raymond Shirra. Thanks to the internet, Raymond tracked down my name and address. His father, James Shirra, was a member of the 458 crew, who became members of the 'Late Arrivals Club' when they walked 400 miles through the desert back to the British lines after coming down in the desert near Tobruk in August 1942? Raymond has sent me a fascinating photograph taken of the four weatherbeaten survivors on their arrival and hopes he can make contact with anyone who knew his father, and especially the other 3 walkers, Alec Barras, Ray Warwick and Leslie Jones. His address: 19 Inverkar Road, Ayr, KA7 2Js Scotland.

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#### SANDGROPPERS SAY from Ted Jewell

I am sorry, and sad to report the passing of two well known identities in 458 Squadron, Doug (Bruno) Anderson and Alwyn Wheat, who were both in the Squadron quite some time, they had been in poor health for some time.

I am lucky that I can write this Newsletter as I have been pretty sick with the flu which has been fairly widespread here in the west, after about three weeks I am just starting to get back to normal. I often read in the Newsletter of other States having annual general meetings to pick a new President and Secretary Treasurer, but we have never been able to get a meeting together for years. Bill Clues and myself have been in office about 30 years, and there doesn't seem any chance of a change in the future.

Having read all the correspondence I received from Jack Ellis about his struggle with the Aviation Departments, into the dubious activities of certain Air Safety organizations. I have discussed this with members of WA Flight and we agree there is little we can do about it, as we are out of touch with this situation.

Len Stewart is selling his house here in Mandurah and moving up to Perth to be nearer the family. Ben and Val Cormack have not been enjoying the best of health lately, they are selling their house

here in Mandurah and moving into a unit closer to the water. Living here in Mandurah, which is about 100km from Perth, I only see Squadron members when we have functions, or talk to someone on the phone. I have been told that Gordon Jones has not been very well lately. I hope things are much better now Gordon.

Henry Etherton has acquired two glass cabinets has done an amount of work on restoration. Bill Clues, our President, has arranged that we buy those cabinets to place in the Bull Creek Museum for the 458 Squadron show. We need things to show in the cabinets so any members in the West who have anything suitable, ring Bill Clues. (ED: The Squadron News joins all other 458ers in noting with sorrow the passing of Al Wheat and Bruna Anderson —two long term, and loyal Squadron members. Our sympathy to the next of kin).

#### CORNSTALK COMMENTS FROM Merv Hargraves

Bob Bruce and Pete Pettit placed a wreath on the Cenotaph on behalf of the Squadron commemorating the Battle of Britain — later attended an RAAF Association luncheon at Parliament House. Comment was food good, wines excellent and sampled with enthusiasm - they have made their booking for next year.

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON has been arranged at Ryde TAFE Catering College for 24th November, 12 noon for 12.30pm. Bookings please contact Eric 9972 0641.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Al Wheat, a West Australian Squadron stalwart. He will be missed by all. Our sympathies go to Joy and family.

The date of the NSW ALL STATES REUNION is arranged for Sunday 14/10/01 to Saturday 20/10/01 at Port Macquarie. Jim Whitem is handling things from the PM end. A full programme, costs and acceptance forms will be forwarded in due course. Mark the date in your diary.

#### SQUADRON HISTORY

Our committee meeting has discussed the progress of the publishing of the new edition of the Squadron History. This is coming on well, we will keep you posted.

Sam and Maisie Barlow have not been enjoying good health. We wish them better days soon. Keith Cousins had an article in the last issue of Wings - a good effort. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

#### MELBOURNE CUP RESULTS

1st Thelma Ward	2nd Tom Ridgway	3rd Bill Loughlin
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Those members drawing a horse were notified.

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#### Q FLIGHT COMMENTS from Jack Lewis

Not a great lot to impart for the Newsletter. However I'll do my best, I myself have been somewhat handicapped due to a detached Retina, which happened to me 5 weeks ago. Evelyn was in Wollongong to see her sisters, the day after she left I had presence of mind to go straight to my Doctor who rushed me off to the Eye Specialist who made arrangements for me to go to St. Andrews Hospital Eye Clinic, where I was operated on that same night. I was very lucky. Fortunately Evelyn cut short her stay, until her return, I had my niece to come and stay, attend to my needs. A slow progress of seeing as yet, very blurred and not focussing, it will take time and lucky for me my right eye was saved. Still on regular visits to the eye specialist. I did not know there were so many types of eye drops one had to use.

Apart from contact with President Eric, I have not been in contact with anyone I had calls come in from Clive Thorpe in Cairns, it was great to hear from him as we don't get many calls from the fellows up North. Clive wanted the address of Gordon Dalrymple who is now at Caloundra and I mentioned this in the last Newsletter. Gordon and Clive go back many years after the war and just lost contact. Guess They had a lot of catching up to do. It is a good thing to mention different ones in the news, it brings so many together again after moving to different places and contact forgotten.

Another call was from Joe Bartlett's son who is also Joe. Joe senior is now 87 and very frail and forgetful. Joe junior is going to keep in touch and arrange to meet as his father has many photographs fo 458. A pity we did not know before the 3rd edition of the book was published, we may have found out something from Eric Purcill, great to hear from Eric and enjoyed a long chat.

Our Christmas luncheon as yet not been decided on but will contact our regulars who attend and get organised. Unfortunately, so many are up North and Central Coast and it isn't convenient for them to attend. But they are thought of, others are on the sick list, time catching up and health is not what it was.

A little early for Seasons greetings as this News is going to press early. However to and all compliments of the season. From "Q" Flight. Regards, Jack Lewis.

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#### CROWEATER COMMENTARY from Pat Cribb

Our President, Col Hutchinson, is attending the Ceremony of Remembrance at the State National War Memorial on North Terrace, Adelaide, on Saturday, November 11th. at 11am. It was suggested our Squadron may wish to place a wreath or book on the memorial, to which Colin has espoused by donating a copy of the History of the Squadron, 'We Find and Destroy by Peter Alexander, which is subsequently to be passed on the RAAF Memorial in Finnis Street, North Adelaide for their archives. Sadly, Fee Showell tells us Ian is not at all well and is in the Renmark Hospital. Their home is up for sale, and Fee will then move to other Renmark accommodation. She wishes to be remembered to their many 458 friends. We send our loving wishes to them both at a difficult time.

Our Annual General Meeting is on Sunday, December 3, again at the Woohshed Military Road, West Beach, which we enjoyed so much last year. We look forward to meeting again for a good lunch and good company — oh, and a good A.G.M. We extend to all a Very Merry Christmas and Best wishes for 2001.

#### VICTORIAN NEWS from Rupert Pearce

##### Social activities.

A pleasant lunch was held at the Manningham Club on August 29th. Those who came were: John & Margery Bilney, Neil & June Dean, Jack & Margaret Ellis, Don & Shirley Granger, Ken Hinton, Roy & Barbara Pearce, Rupert Pearce, Norma Pollard, Mick & Mavis Singe. Apologies were received from Ron & Sue Eggers, Joann Hinton & June Schoppe.

##### Personal Notes:

Ron Eggers and Harry Ashworth have both had a spell in hospital. Joann Hinton is over her illness and Ken Hinton is having some tests. There may be other members who are not well. We wish them all better health.

Christine Smith is pleased that Veterans' Affairs have finally granted her a pension and Gold Card. Our thanks for the assistance given by Mr John Tait of the R.A.A.F. Association (Bert died in December 1991.)



IN SUPPORT OF JACK ELLIS

As previously reported 458 has, at Jack's request, been making representations to the Australian Senate. Squadron President Kevin George and Peter Alexander have contacted the Senate. There has as yet been no reply!

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KIWI NOTE from the Squadron President - Kevin George

I have had telephone conversations with Ron Verity, Ivan Green and Jack Pryde during the past three months, but it is much longer since we spoke to Arch and Gladys Fell. So we rang them last evening. They are reasonably well and there is no change since we last spoke to them. Dawn's shoulder continues to improve, at about the predicted rate, and she is now but little handicapped by it. Dawn and I are going over to "the big island" to which our daughter has recently moved with her husband, to be with them for the week over Christmas. I trust that you, Peter, will enjoy your visit to Europe. I wonder if it is to do with Veterans Affairs.

Even so. I presume you will find time for side visits and otherwise enjoying yourselves. I have not yet made up my mind about going to Australia for Anzac Day 2001, but am considering Melbourne for a change. Port Macquarie is, of course, firmly penciled in. With kind regards.

CANUCK CAUCUS from Bryan Quinlan

First and foremost from all our Canadian buddies, our congratulations on the superb Summer Olympics. Wonderfully scripted and executed, with tremendous attendance. Every Aussie can justifiably be extremely proud of a world class performance.

Mickey Reid's report on our Eastern contingent contains the sad news of Ernie Henwood's sudden passing on 24th June 2000. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to his wife Beatrice and the family members. Mickey recalls talking to Ernie many years ago and that Ernie's enduring memory was of bridge games at Gibraltar with Peter Alexander, Tony Mauro and probably Tom Lindsay. Mickey also drew a blank on his attempt to contact Bill Munro at his last-known Mississauga, Ont. address and will try to determine Bill's status and whereabouts. On a positive note, Mickey had an enjoyable telephone chat with George MacLeod who is back to his very chipper self and living it up with wife Zena, crediting his doctors and prescribed pills for getting his heart condition under control — he was earlier diagnosed as unsuitable for a bypass operation. George, who is also a bee-keeper informed Mickey of his remedy for arthritis is an occasional squat atop a beehive with dropped trousers will do the trick via the venom from a few resultant stings he must be kidding — anyone tried this cure? Anyway George continues to pursue an active and eventful life as he closes in on 81 on Nov 1. He is also very interested in the status of the Squadron History.

Mick and Marg presently have a full house of very welcome guests, including daughter from France, grand-daughter Tiffany from the UK, and three nieces. Mickey may have a long wait for the bathroom. More on this next edition. Catching up on back news, in September, I was very pleased to receive a phone call from Jim Lovelace in Halifax advising of his new address and telephone number now that he has moved into a 'luxury Senior Citizen complex' — Jim has continued to surmount serious health problems following a stroke in Nov. 1999. Which affected his mobility, eyesight and hearing. However he is stubbornly fighting back and not only celebrating his new pastoral appointment in Halifax, but is working on a sequel to an earlier book. I also had an enjoyable telephone chat and exchange of news and exchanged addresses with Glen Hoosier in Edmonton. Glen is in good health and a regular golfer. I hope to receive a more comprehensive report from him, but did learn that two daughters are currently in Saudi Arabia, one son is teaching up north after a stint in Nigeria and another daughter teaches close to home. Canuck revealed the previously unknown existence of former ex-458er Tom Rowan and Glen agreed to try and re-establish contact so we can

add him to our dwindling membership roll. Mickey Reid and Bryan Quinlan.

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And from Mississauga — from Mickey Reid.

Aussie - Aussie -Aussie!!

Congratulations! And thank you

"The Greatest Games ever!"

"The most spectacular Closing Show ever"

GOOD ON YOU!

Your athletes won their most Olympic Medals - ever!

Now it's world acclaim for hospitality and friendliness

The 'Games' may be ended but the memory lingers on.

My Aussie Calendar of 1995, loaded with stats of your land, tells me that your last claim to medal fame was when the Games were held in Melbourne in 1956. Your lads sure give their all on home turf and pulled out all the stops this time around — doubling your golds and tripling the silvers of those earned in '56. Our media men heaped praise on all your achievement (as above) noting that your total medals only exceeded by the three mega—powers (but barely by China) and all of which accomplished by a country boasting but 18,000,000 population. Well done. - Again, good on you.

Our National CBC televised the Games in their entirety and also Aussie vignettes such as "Abel's Outback" and the origins of "Waltzing Matilda" which, happily we recorded. Our best wishes to you and your loved ones.

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#### WHATS NEW on the Ex-service Front?

Well from the Air Force side, there is currently the biennial Federal Conference of the RAAF Association which covers a wide range of proposals—affecting Repat (e.g., extension of the Gold Card—the complexities of the Determining System for pensions-) and Defence, particularly Air Defence). These are complicated matters, particularly on review of pensions and warrant close examination.

On the welfare side, there are ongoing activities with inquiries into the health of Gulf War servicemen - the so-called Gulf War Syndrome - and there is ample evidence out of USA and Britain that the Gulf War has left much ill health for its veterans. Maybe some light may be thrown on its causation, possible causes include air-borne toxins from Saddam's Nerve Gas dumps, multiple inoculations or depleted uranium used to shield tanks. Peter Alexander is a member of the supervising forum for this study.

Then there is the proposed study relating to the hapless.

Australians irradiated at Woomera or Monte Bello. This study is barely moving while Defence and Veterans Affairs discuss who pays for it. Then the World Veterans Federation is to celebrate its 50th Anniversary in Paris. A changing body as WW II and Vietnam veterans are joined by veterans from a host of other conflicts in the Balkans and Africa.

Another area of activity is with memorials the long-running struggle to get a Bomber Command Memorial is inching on and the proposal for a Canberra Memorial to the Australians who fought, and died, a century ago in South Africa is energetically under way.