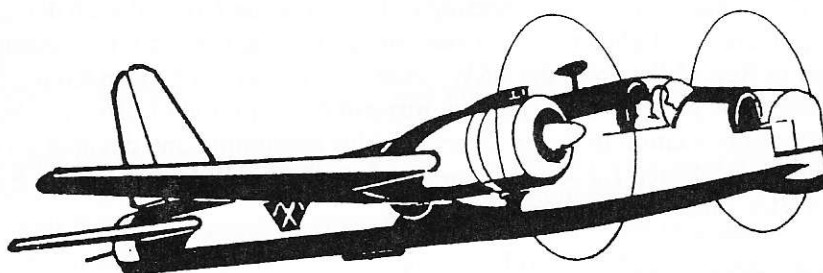


458

SQUADRON NEWS



RAAF

JOURNAL OF THE 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL, G P O Box 5289, SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA.
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458 SQUADRON COUNCIL

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ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL ALL-STATES REUNION, 2001

The 34th All States Reunion of 458 Squadron, RAAF, was attended by nearly 100 458ers, wives and friends. Port Macquarie was found to be an attractive, prosperous country town in an area which is prosperous and developing. The party stayed together in one large motel and living and eating breakfast and dinners together, reinforced the long standing Squadron cohesion. There were organised and comfortable bus tours around beautiful and scenic country of the Hastings and MacLeay River territory. While the country is dry, it is still beautiful and historic.

There was a brief Memorial Service attended by the Mayor and presiding officers of the local branch of the RAAF Association followed by a Mayoral reception.

The Squadron decided that it would hold another All States Reunion next year and Squadron Council is currently investigating possibilities.

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CORNSTALK COMMENTARY from Merv Hargraves.

The All States Reunion held last month at Port Macquarie was as usual a great success and enjoyed by those 458ers and spouses who attended, some ninety in all. It was a great advantage to be all accommodated at the El Paso Motel and to be able to dine together morning and evening.

There was good representation of members from NSW, our National President, Kevin George from NZ, Jim Palmer and Bill Kelleher from WA, Syd Bartram, Bert Ravenscroft, John Ringwood and Ruth Senn from SA., Roy Pearce, Bill Flenje and Rupert Pearce from Vic. Selwyn Foote, Bert Garland, Erle Hetherington, Peter Hagan, Eric Kelly, Jack Lewis, Eric Lloyd, Dud McKay and Cyril Murray from Queensland, also Col Fereday from ACT.

Sunday arrivals met over drinks and a light evening meal. Monday there was a bus tour of the Hastings Valley, Lake Cathie, North Haven, Laurieton, lunch at Timbertown returning via the Cassegraine winery.

Tuesday morning a memorial service was held at the local airport, followed by a Civic Reception and excellent lunch at the Council Chambers. On Wednesday we had a pleasant day on the river with a barbecue lunch and a tour of the canal developments on the river. Thursday two bus loads set off to tour the Macleay Valley, first to Kempsey then to Crescent Head for morning tea, after to South West Rocks for a very good lunch at the Country Club. Next on to inspect the Trial Bay Goal, convict built, also used to house internees during WWI. From there we had the added excitement of seeing several whales playing off the headland. On the return journey a visit to the Smokey Cape Lighthouse provided a wonderful view along the coast. Friday was a free day except for delegates. In the evening a formal dinner was enjoyed by all, winding up a very pleasant week. Unfortunately, due to heavy booking, there will be no Christmas luncheon this year. Also, because of the minimal return and extra work involved we did not have a Melbourne Cup Sweep.

Sad to report that Maisie Barlow, widow of Sam, passed away recently after a long illness.

As this is the last bulletin for this year we extend greetings for a Happy Christmas and a pleasant New Year.

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SANDGROPPERS SAY from Ted Jewell

I haven't much time to write this Newsletter as I have only received a note that the editor wants the news by November 5. I have to write this tonight in a hurry as early in the morning I am off for seven days holiday; it has taken a week to come from Sydney.

I have to report the passing of two of our Squadron Ladies, who were staunch members; Mrs Lily "Poss" Dale, wife of the late Tim Dale, Mrs. Alice Gannaway, wife of the late Ron Gannaway. Also a well known member of the Squadron, Ben Cormack, who passed away while watching TV – a heart attack they said.

I turned 80 last week on October 25, had a big party on the Sunday, still a bit of life yet “I hope”.

Our President Bill Clues has had a spell in Hollywood Hospital of several weeks, with a very high sugar level, he is home now but has to take it easy.

I feel very honoured to have been elected as a Squadron Vice President at the Council at Port Macquarie.

We have our Christmas Dinner for WA Flight on December 2, at Miss Mauds in Perth – should be a great day!

This Newsletter should be the last one of the year, so from everyone in WA Flight a very Merry Christmas to all 458 Members and a Happy New Year.

Before going to the Reunion I has been in contact with the wives of our very ill members. Jack Baxter is going downhill and most things for his health care have to be personally attended to. Bob Helyer with Alzheimers according to his wife does not recognise anyone nor take in what is said to him. Bob Coles after his stroke is confined to his room at home. Bill Chapman has had a Pace Maker inserted and goes along quietly. Jim Mackay cannot be without his oxygen beside him – it was good to talk to him on one of his better days. Harry Dorge intended to go to the reunion, but had a Pacemaker inserted a few days prior. He phoned me to say he had to cancel. Bernie McLoughlin is having trouble with his eyes and finds difficulty in seeing and reading. President Eric and Bernie will be attending a Royal Air Force Memorial Mass at St. Lucia on November 4. No news from other “Q” Flight members settled throughout Queensland. Regards to everyone – it was good to see so many at the Reunion.

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I have received another request too reactivate the 458 'grapevine', this time from Thomas Passerello of Lakefield, Ontario, Canada. His uncle was Thomas Peter Scandiffi a W/02 Observer/Navigator in the RCAF, who served with 458 in Malta and Egypt on torpedo Wellingtons. His nephew informs me that died (missing in action) on June 16, 1943, and is commemorated on the memorial at El Alamein. Mr. Passarelo is seeking information from anyone who knew his uncle and anything from Squadron records, to help him compile a family memorial archive. His address: 1123 Moodie drive, Lakefield, Ontario, Canada. KOL 2H0. Lastly we wish to thank Jack Baker who represented the UK flight at the Squadron Council meeting at Port Macquarie. Our numbers may be dwindling, but the Spirit is willing and 458 must never die. Our fraternal greetings to you all Norm.

[illegible]

There has been a change in the venue for our Annual General Meeting and Christmas Lunch, as the Royal Oak Hotel has not completed renovations. Make sure you come to the Kensington Hotel, 23 Regent Street, Kensington, on Sunday December 2, at 11.00 am.

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No news from NZ but the very successful Reunion at Port Macquarie does call for favourable comment. The 'all in' price for all meals and trips was a very good idea and great value for money. The management at El Paso were very kind to us and it may be difficult to find such accommodating people elsewhere for future reunions. Dining together day after day as we did, created a most congenial atmosphere which reminded me of good times spent in Squadron messes 58 years ago. Kind regards,
Kevin.

[illegible]

Congratulations are in order to Mick and Mary Reid on their 57th on October 28 and still very much in love and still as perky as ever – well, almost! Jack Hays keeps me well supplied with jokes via e-mail

Late submission from John Hays which may be of interest to some members. He advises that at a recent W/AG meeting in Edmonton, one of their members who had been a POW at Buchenwald stated that he had received a reparation payment of \$5000 from the German Government with another \$5000 to come. John noted that the member bought lunch for all attendees. Have you heard of anything of this nature? I certainly had not. Any ex-POW's in our membership? I will leave it to you as to whether you include this item in our report.

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Changes to RAAFA's annual pilgrimage to Point Cook and the Annual Ecumenical Church Service at St. Martins Church, South Yarra.

1. The RAAFA's Annual Pilgrimage previously held in November will now be held in March in line with the RAAF Anniversary and to coincide with events arranged there by RAAF Williams.
2. The 2002 Annual Pilgrimage in March will replace the Church Service previously held at St. Martins Church, South Yarra.

Congratulations to NSW Flight, to Pete Pettit and helpers for another great Reunion. The name badges, dolphins for the ladies, pelicans for the men and the map of the Squadron movements proved that Tom Moore has not lost any of his artistic talents. The Squadron mugs were a hit. The 6 Victorians were all

I have passed on to Christine Smith and Laurie Kew the best wishes from Grace Unitt and Laurie Crowley. Mavis and Mick Singe and Jim and Neil Dean regret their non-attendance.

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A402920 Sgt. Flecknoe "

Comments:- April 1943 Ops. Summary 458 Sqdn. – Malta Air Command advised No. 1269264 F/t. Sgt. Cousins, J.R., WOP/AG left for the UK on posting to home establishment, and yet is shown in the “missing” report above – is this another of the anomalies which have turned up over time in the official records? – or that he was posted back to 458? Also Peter Alexander’s 2nd edition of “Find and Destroy” omits Scandiffio from the casualty list – could this be due to the official transfer of the 458 Detachment to the 38 Squadron Detachment dated June 15? – and yet Sgt. Flecknoe is listed among the casualties. Hope this little information on Sgt. Scandliffio may be of some help to his relative(s). Keith Cousins.

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