



JOURNAL OF THE 458 Squadron Council

C/- Rob Wilkinson
36 Finch Ave.
East Ryde
NSW 2113

Year 57

No 229

JULY 2007

Squadron President: Keith Cousins (NSW)
Squadron Vice-presidents: Canada Tom Lindsay
New Zealand Kevin George
U.K. Leon Armstrong

Squadron Treasurer: Frank Ward 50 Castle Hill Rd., West Pennant Hills NSW 2125

Squadron Secretary: David Longhurst 129A Darling Street, Balmain NSW 2041

Squadron Newsletter:
Editor: Rob Wilkinson phone (02) 9878 4518 email: robwilk@bigpond.net.au

Publisher: Eric Munkman Phone (02) 9972 0641

Flight Correspondents:

UK	Keith Wilkinson	23 Ferndale Pk, Tedmore, Stourbridge, W. Midlands. DY90RB
NSW	Eric Munkman	722 Lantana Lodge, Lantana Av. Collaroy Plateau, NSW 2097
QLD	Evelyn Lewis	5 Cupania St. Victoria Point, QLD 4165
WA	Ted Jewell	61 Wyaree Rd. Mandurah, WA. 6210
NZ	Kevin George	20 Kowhai Av. Kaikohe, N.Z. 0400
SA	Pat Cribb	2/20 Rochester St., Leabrook, SA 5068
VIC	Neil Dean	6 Margate Cres, Glen Waverley. VIC 3150
Canada	Bryan Quinlan	1460 Haywood Ave., W. Vancouver, B.C. Canada.

Post communications for Squadron Secretary to David Longhurst (address above), and for the Squadron (and NSW Flight) Treasurer to Frank Ward (address above)

For an explanation of the personnel changes, see p.2. "Minutes of Council meeting"

Have you notified Rob Wilkinson if you prefer to receive your newsletter by email?

JHW

At the NSW flight reunion in Wollongong in March, a Squadron council meeting was held. Here is a summary of the minutes.

458 Squadron Council - Special meeting, Wollongong, March 2007

Squadron memorabilia.

It was suggested that the photo albums, especially the wartime ones, should be updated by addition of members' names beneath each picture, where known. As the albums are in the possession of President Keith, he will probably be best placed to do this, in consultation with other members resident in Sydney.

On the matter of final storage of the memorabilia, it was decided that the President should once again contact the Australian War Memorial, and that progress should be reviewed in two years. Col Fereday offered his services as a Canberra - based contact person.

Newsletter. A review of its future, and finance available, was undertaken.

The treasurer stated that there were sufficient funds to print about another 6 issues-e.g. for 2 more years. As this could be extended by cost-cutting, it was decided that all newsletter recipients would be given the option to receive future issues by email, where practicable. A circular to that effect was included in the last newsletter.

Office Bearers	President	Keith Cousins was re-elected.
	Secretary	David Longhurst was elected vice Jim Whitem
	Treasurer	Frank Ward was re-elected.
	Editor	Rob Wilkinson was elected vice Jim Whitem,

Donation from Queensland flight. Evelyn Lewis announced that due to continued attrition of members, the flight would donate \$500 to the NSW flight for the newsletter costs, and \$500 to the Gallipoli Foundation. The president moved a vote of thanks to the Queensland flight.

It remains for me to say that it was not easy for me to offer to retire from squadron activities. The editing of the Newsletter, in particular, has been by far the most rewarding activity I have undertaken in the 25 years since I retired. While I am still fit and well, it seemed to me that it was time to pass my share of the responsibilities to two important members of the next generation. I wish David and Rob all the best in their new endeavours on our behalf.

Jim Whitem.

Wing Commander Norman Mulholland

I am in communication with Mrs Carole Hill, of 83 Calwalla Cres., Port Macquarie, NSW 2444, who is a second cousin of our first Commanding Officer, and who is carrying out research into his unfortunately short life. She is also in touch with Leon Armstrong and Eric Munkman. I have told Carole that the Newsletter welcomes such stories from the past, so we will have more to say in due course.

Bernie McLoughlin

I received a condolence letter from South Africa addressed to Helen McLoughlin, which I have forwarded to her. It was from Alf Rubidge, squadron member, and his wife Jean, who enjoy the newsletter. Thank you both.

Helen has replied to me in the following terms " how strong have been the ties between the members of 458 squadron over all these years. In the face of all the troubles of the world it is good to see something strong and good and lasting".

Len Netherway

I have heard from Len's son Mike who is seeking information, and asks: "I have an interest in my Dad's crash (3 August '43) – Dad was second pilot to John Douglas that night, and I'm close to locating the crash site off the coast of Sardinia".

Len trained in Group 55 of the EATS, gaining his wings in August '42 (Basic training in SA was at Parafield, Victor Harbour and Bradfield) then off to Holme upon Spalding Moor). Please send any information via the Editor.

Victorian Flight

I am in touch with Harry Ashworth, who has informed me that there are only four original members alive –the others being Ian Allison, John Bilney, and Jack Ellis.

The flight correspondent/president, Neil Dean, has been in hospital but has forwarded a short report for this newsletter.

Max Egan

I have heard from Max's daughter Marilyn Bell, who would like to hear from anyone who served with Max during his time in Canada, England or the Middle East. His plane was shot down and many of the crew died. Please contact the Editor if you knew Max.

JHW & RGW

FLIGHT REPORTS

UK flight by Keith Wilkinson

More sad news, I'm afraid. Kathleen Morris, wife of 458 pilot Ken "Morri" Morris, has died after losing her battle with cancer.

Kathleen passed away at St Gemma's, a specialist palliative care hospice at Leeds in the north of England. Her funeral, which was well attended, took place at St. Andrews United Reform Church in Roundhay.

Ken and Kathleen had been married since 1950 and met at the company where they both worked, the London and Scottish Assurance Corporation. Ken, the son of a cashier, worked in underwriting, and Kathleen was in the accounts department.

She had seen war service, joining the WAAF in 1942. She worked as a radar operator, on the look-out for German planes, at stations as far apart as Land's End and Norfolk.

Ken was a spare bod pilot with the squadron and so flew with various pilots and crews, including the Canadians Bryan Quinlan and Mick Reid, and "Curly" Davis. Sadly, Ken has also been suffering badly with cancer, and has impaired sight.

Reggie Bullen has written to me, after the rather gloomy last edition of the Squadron News: "It is sad to see how few of us there are left, but encouraging to remember the comradeship that has lasted so long."

Leon Armstrong is on another mission: this time he has been in touch with me, and many others, to try to find any surviving relatives of 458 Wing Commander Norman George Mulholland DFC who was killed in 1942, at the age of 34.

He has been contacted by Linda Dines from Beverley in Yorkshire who came across Mulholland's gravestone while visiting Catania War Cemetery, Sicily.

She has photographed the grave and wants to pass these pictures on to relatives. She has already established that Mulholland had a second cousin, still living in Australia, and photos are being forwarded.

But Leon wants to know - are there any more relatives out there? He's asking for them to get in touch with us here in the UK. (Leon's address 34 Highway Court, Howard Road East, Kings Heath, Birmingham B13ORQ, England).

Also - maybe you knew him on the squadron. Again, we'd like to hear from you here in Blighty. People like him, and the sacrifice they made, will not be forgotten. So, thank you Leon, and others like Eric Munkman, who are on the case.

Now - here's a cheery update on our plans for the next UK Flight reunion. Yes, it *is* going ahead, and it is going to be at Grange-over-Sands on the English west coast at Morecambe Bay in Cumbria in October.

We will be staying at the Graythwaite Manor Hotel. In April, while in the Grange area, my wife and I popped in for a quick recce (nosey) of the downstairs section of the hotel. It seemed packed full of traditional English olde-worlde character and charm, so we should be in for a good "do". If the weather is up the creek, well, at least there are log fires, and some splendid pubs not too far away.

If the weather's good, Grange is a truly spectacular setting - a bit of a hidden time-warp. Nothing much has changed here and a visit to the nearby railway station is like stepping back to the Victorian times with its stone architecture and decorative ironwork. The views from the platforms of the bay and its sprawling sands are breathtaking. So too are the distant mountains.

There are wonderful promenade walks, public gardens, the sounds of seabirds. And it overlooks the seaside village where I was born (so I am not biased then!)

I recommend anyone with a computer to take a peek at the hotel's website on: <http://www.graythwaitemanor.co.uk/index.htm>, or on <http://www.visitcumbria.com/sl/gransan.htm>.

If there are 458-ers up in the north of England in October, who don't plan to stay at the hotel - why not join us anyway for a meal, or a day-out, or a glass or two of beer. Please get in touch if this idea seems feasible. The more the merrier, as they say.

Canada Flight by Bryan Quinlan

From the heading it may appear to be a rowing story, however, rest assured, none of us are into such vigorous activity. Canes, walkers and wheelchairs rather than oars. On an encouraging note, the intended individual responded in all seven calls and, although everyone has their age-related problems, the general mood was upbeat and hopefully reflected in the following summary, presented in alphabetical order.

Ernie Ireland (87) Ernie celebrated both his birthday and Father's Day on 17 June with family members and is very happy living in an assisted living care centre. He is restricted to wheelchair mobility and an oxygen supply but says he has no complaints. Recently, he received an unexpected call from a long-lost friend who he joined-up with in 1941 and went through various stages of training until separated by overseas posting. A 66 year gap!

Tom Lindsay (90) Our Canadian Flight VP and nearby neighbor of mine no longer drives which restricts his outside activities, however, Tom continues to keep an active mind handling his daughter's investments via the computer, using his long experience gained during his career years.

Bert Markland (86) Bert advised that he had completely read the updated “We Find and Destroy” and noted that he was listed as in the RCAF, whereas he was actually RAF, no doubt because he moved to Canada. Recently, a message from Bert advised that he was being treated for stomach ulcers which he says are now under control. His main source of enjoyment is his close-by family members which include a bevy of grandchildren and great-grandchildren with some relaxation at the local casino where he is yet to strike it rich.

Jack Reynolds (88) Jack who was at Malta in the early days with the SDF flight and only briefly with 458 before completion of his tour indicated that he and wife Dorothy are relatively healthy but, like everyone else, not venturing too far from home base.

Tom Rowan (88) Tom is still actively engaged as the local pest control officer which includes rat control. I asked him how come rats had found their way to the northern part of Saskatchewan far from any seaport and was interested to learn that this is a Norway rat which has migrated across the country and is obviously a very hardy species and hugely reproductive. He also had a tale from the long-past when a local acquaintance was visiting the Victoria, B.C. airport, formerly a WWII RCAF station, and happened to stop in at a restaurant near the airport which used to be a favourite haunt for aircrew stationed there. On the walls were photos of wartime aircraft and a few of wartime aircrew. One was a photo of a crew in front of their aircraft in which he recognized Tom and which he photographed to take back. It turned out that it was the crew of a Wellington being ferried from the UK to the Middle East and Tom was assigned to fill-in with that crew for the flight. Some may recall, as I do, that after OTU we had to leave one W/AG for alternate transport to the M.E. because of weight restrictions and Tom was one of those separated from his OTU crew. So, although Tom, the ferry crew, or the Wellington were never at Pat Bay, they are part of the recorded photographic history of the period.

Dick Sladen (89) Dick is our only known remaining rep from eastern Canada and he conforms to the “limited activity” now prevalent with our age-group, with interests mainly centred on his daughter and grandsons who visit from their nearby communities.

Sid Winchester (92) Sid is the “grampa” of our small group and he and wife Joyce reside in a care centre. Sid was as upbeat as ever and we had a nice chat. He indicated he was having some memory problems and because of very poor eyesight was limited in travel and mobility but is well looked after by nearby family members.

Bryan Quinlan (84) I guess my old airforce nickname of “Junior” still applies – agewise anyway! Joan and I are relatively in good shape although Joan has disc problems which can be quite painful. We enjoyed a week in Palm Springs Calif., with our son and daughter-in-law, in April, and I resumed my golfing activities after a 10 month lay-off due to arthritic knees. Manage to play once a week now with the aid of a golf cart. Other than that, interest is mainly in graduating grandchildren and their progressive venture into the adult world. Best wishes to you all and hope your tumultuous and wide ranging weather patterns have returned to normalcy.

Queensland Flight by Evelyn Lewis

News time again. Sad to report that Peg Cuthbertson (wife of Gordon) 90 years old, passed away on 11 June at the Gold Coast. Peg Holliday (wife of Jim) is now in a tri-care nursing hostel, with her sister, in Logan Road, Mt.Gravatt.

Received a letter from Alan Atherton some weeks back. Alan has now retired to an RSL Retirement village after viewing a couple in Mackay and Gargett. His address is Unit 5, RSL Village, East Gordon Street, Mackay 4740. Sorry I was unable to answer your letter Alan – read on and you’ll understand.

I was in contact with Marg Kleckham of Seaforth (lately with her daughter in Canberra). Bet Crowley had passed on a phone number. We had a long chat, but she was not at all well and her eyesight had gone. Marg turned 89 at the end of June and remembered all Fred’s travels and exploits. Sadly, since that contact, Marg has passed away.

No other news of members – all those on the sick list have not greatly improved.

NSW held a mini reunion in Wollongong 11-16 March, and it was wonderful. Congratulations to Rob and David who organised it. There was so much to do and see in the 4 days. Lots of laughter and such great company. Thanks from the only Queenslander – I would not have missed it. Our last day, a happy one, was spent on a historic train ride, and I even had someone to wheel me along, as was wobbly on my legs. Thanks John Gibbins – poor John was suffering with flu. On the last evening (15th), we all gathered for dinner and had a reasonably early evening. All goodbyes, tears and “would there be another”? Clarice, my friend, and I departed for an early night. I awoke about 3am Thursday morning for a toilet break and next thing was floating through the air and hit the tiles, cut my head open, losing quite a bit of blood, and broke my shoulder. I didn't lose consciousness, and couldn't stand up, so edged my way over to the bedroom, pulled my handbag off the bed with my walking stick, pulled out the mobile phone and dialled 000. It wasn't long before the ambulance arrived, and they broke into the room. Clarice Middleton, my friend, and my sister, who lives in Wollongong, were contacted. I was taken to casualty at Wollongong Hospital and then on to Illawarra Private, where I spent a week before flying home to Queensland and to Greenslopes. They decided not to operate, but rather undergo physio for a further 12 weeks, and I'm still receiving that now at home.

Thanks to the Squadron members and ladies for all the lovely flowers and cards – Eric and Dorothy Munkman, Rob Wilkinson and David Longhurst, Laurie and Bet Crowley, Colin Fereday, Don and Bev Bitmead and many others. Also Bill and Gwen Johnson for visiting in hospital, Cecil Bevan at Greenslopes and May and Arthur Jones. One sister at Illawarra came up from maternity and wanted to know who Mrs Lewis was, as the phones never stopped, and when I received flowers from the Mayor, I think the whole hospital knew. Why not be someone special for a day ?

N.S.W. Flight by Eric Munkman

Had a phone call from Bill Laughlin recently, and he commented on the number of members dropped off the perch, so thought he would let us know he was still around. He is now 92 years young, keeping reasonably well and fortunate to still have his wife with him after 65 years of heavenly bliss. They have four children and nine grand-children. Bill went overseas October 1941 and returned 1944, served with the Squadron at Protville and Bone, and on return went to the Islands, flying Liberators. Thanks for the call Bill, and wish you, wife and family all the best in the future.

Congratulations to Rob Wilkinson & David Longhurst for the wonderful reunion they organised at Wollongong, also thanks to John Gibbins for his helping hand. Unfortunately, it ended on a sad note, Evelyn Lewis had a fall on the last night, which necessitated her spending a week in hospital, then being flown back to Queensland for further treatment to her broken shoulder.

Anzac Day 2007 has come and gone, under a cloudy and rainy sky, which I am sure brought about the poor attendance of 458 members. But, it didn't dampen the spirit of those who came along, and the spectators gave us a good reception. There were 13 who attended our luncheon at the Mandarin Club. The area designated to us was quiet, and the food and service was very good. The A.G.M. was held and the same committee was elected “God Bless Them”. I was unable to march, so the younger members of our Committee insisted I should be with the Squadron and they obtained wheel chairs for Don Bitmead and me, and our sons pushed us. So, come on 458'ers and let's make it a big effort next year, as time is running out.

We received an inquiry from Graham Christie, the son of F/Lt. Norman Christie (413962) whose name appears on Nominal Roll of “We Find and Destroy”. If any member can

supply any information on Norman's activities it would be greatly appreciated. Reply to me, Eric Munkman, at the address on the front of this Newsletter.

Congratulations to Bob Smith on receiving the award of Life Membership to the RAAFA for services rendered to the Association and 458 Squadron.

The organisers are at it again – and we're hoping for **another reunion in March 2008** – most likely in the Newcastle / Hunter Valley Region. Look for dates & details in the next issue.

John Gibbins (Committee member) is asking for your **HELP !** He writes:

“Currently the Executive of the NSW Wing of 458 comprises 6 squadron members and three non squadron members.

Squadron members – please approach your younger relatives (sons, daughters, grandchildren) to see if they are willing to join the Executive so that the Squadron/flight can continue to be functional. The duties are minimal; attend a bi-monthly meeting for two hours in the Sydney CBD. Matters dealt with include memorial services, transmission of relevant information from DVA, arranging Flight get-togethers etc.

PLEASE APPROACH YOUR RELATIVES AND ASK THEM TO HELP –IT'S IN YOUR BEST INTEREST. Contact Eric Munkman (9972 0641). David Longhurst (9810 4416) or John Gibbins (9449 3202)”

Keith Cousins has also penned some notes on the Wollongong reunion:

“31 persons attended and enjoyed the 5 day get together in NSW' third largest city.

On Sunday, we enjoyed pre-dinner drinks and a BBQ buffet & seafood feast.

Monday, we visited Janet's Royalty Rooms (one of the largest collections of Royalty memorabilia) with the bonus Devonshire Tea. Lunch at Bulli RSL, then a beaut panorama from Stanwell Tops followed by a ride across the new Coalcliff suspended roadway.

Tuesday - to the Nan Tien Buddhist Temple, with a guided tour, vegetarian meal and origami class, where we all made a paper lotus blossom. That night, the Reunion Dinner was held, and addressed by Alex Darling, Wollongong Mayor. Speeches and a sing-along followed, led by an impromptu band of 458'ers.

Wednesday - a rail trip (Cockatoo Run) to Robertson, with beautiful views of the countryside and ocean. Several veterans and members enjoyed some barefoot bowls after lunch at the local Bowling Club. That night, an enjoyable meal together, before farewells.

Victoria Flight by Neil Dean

Due to the majority of our members being unwell we decided not to take part in this year's Anzac Day March. This decision was reversed a week before the big day when George Zagos (Vietnam vet) who usually carries the large photo of the Wellington on Anzac Day, and whose son is an air force cadet who assists in carrying the banner, volunteered to organise the pre-march arrangements. Roy Pearce stood in for me and led 458; we didn't have any other members, but fourteen relatives walked behind the banner, with brass and pipe bands away in the distance.

I travelled into the city to wave them off and then returned to the Melbourne Bowling Club in Windsor, where some of the marchers returned to have lunch, attended by thirteen people.

On 29 May we attended the Bentleigh Club for lunch, followed by the AGM. The election of office bearers resulted as follows:

President/secretary/treasurer – Neil Dean; Senior V.P. Jack Ellis; Junior VP John Bilney.

John Bilney had a long stint in hospital where he had a triple bypass and a kidney operation. He is now home and making progress. John and Marjorie have moved into a retirement village at Ferntree Gully. Yours truly is home and making reasonable slow recovery after five months in hospital.

In better news, Harry and Nell Ashworth are currently holidaying at Yamba in NSW and we trust that they are enjoying more sunshine than we are getting in Victoria.

Planned activities for the ensuing year are lunch at Manningham Club on 6.8.2007; lunch at Frankston RSL on 26.11.07; and, a BBQ lunch at the home of Margaret and Jack Ellis at Dromana on 2.3.08.

South Australia Flight by Pat Cribb.

The Memorial Service for all squadrons was well attended at the Adelaide Airport on Sunday, April 22, with many 458 members present. President, Colin Hutchinson, laid the wreath at our memorial plaque.

Marching for the Squadron on Anzac Day were eleven persons led by Col:- John Ringwood, Keith Grimshaw (accompanied by Pam Kelly, whose father was a Major in the British First Airborne), Alec McKinnon, Lyne Skinner, Trish Cosh, Rick Michell, Sharon Hobby, Luke Verrall and Michele Rowe.

Unfortunately, Reg Priest, in hospital, missed the march, but we are pleased to report he has now fully recovered.

Lunch followed the march with 30 present – apologies from Brian & Joan Woodhead, Monica Thom and Joan Dickson. Congratulations were extended to Syd Bartram, turning 91 in June, and Bert Ravenscroft, 90 in August.

Margaret Harden (daughter of John Excell) gave us the following interesting information to pass on :-

To obtain a copy of the full personal records of a former serviceman, apply to:
Personnel Records (RAN and RAAF)
Queanbeyan Annex 2, Canberra ACT 2607 Ph: 1-800-623-306

Margaret was both pleased and surprised at the information supplied so promptly for a small fee.

We had a nice letter from Jim Perry of Pt. Augusta, who, unfortunately, is undergoing some nasty medical treatments. We wish you well, Jim. Keep in touch.

The mid-year lunch was held on Thursday, July 5, at the Kensington Hotel.

Greetings to all from the S.A. Flight.

Western Australia Flight by Ted Jewell

I am not sure that I am in time for the newsletter, as I have only just come home from hospital. I had a turn at home and was rushed to Fremantle Hospital, where I was told I had a heart attack. After a few days, they said I had a blood clot, not a heart attack.

I have no news for now, but I had a letter from Henry Etherton about the luncheon on Anzac day, which I could not attend as I had an operation on my eye, and could not drive at that time.

Henry's Letter:

"I would like to thank Joan Clues and her daughters, Vicki and Jennifer, for their effort towards making the day what it was. Jennifer organised a wreath and attended the dawn service at King's Park, and laid it on behalf of 458 Squadron.

There were eleven for lunch and we all had a great day"