



## JOURNAL OF THE 458 Squadron Council Year 63 No 243 March 2012



**Squadron President:**  
**Keith Cousins (Australia - NSW)**

**Squadron Vice-presidents:**  
**Canada: Tom Lindsay**  
**New Zealand: Kevin George**  
**U.K: Leon Armstrong**

Squadron Treasurer: John Gibbins 6 Boronia Avenue, Turramurra NSW 2074  
Squadron Secretary: David Longhurst 129A Darling Street, Balmain NSW 2041  
Newsletter Editor: Roland Orchard. 78 Edward Road, Chirnside Park. Vic. 3116  
Phone (03) 9727-0106 email: [rjorch@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rjorch@bigpond.net.au)

Newsletter 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  
WA- Ted Jewell 61 Wyaree Rd. Mandurah, WA. 6210  
NZ- Kevin George 20 Kowhai Av. Kaikohe, N.Z. 0405  
SA- Pat Cribb 2/20 Rochester St., Leabrook, SA 5068  
VIC-Roland Orchard 78 Edward Road, Chirnside Park VIC. 3116  
Canada- Bryan Quinlan 1460 Haywood Ave., W. Vancouver, B.C. V7T 1V6. Canada.

*\* Post communications for Squadron Secretary to David Longhurst (address above), and for the*

*Squadron (and NSW Flight) Treasurer to John Gibbins (address above)*

*\*\* Have you notified Roland Orchard if you prefer to receive your newsletter by email?*

*Are there others in your family, or circle of friends, who would like to receive a copy by e-mail? Please advise the Editor – see address and e-mail details above.*

***PLEASE TAKE NOTE.....NEW EDITORS MAILING ADDRESS.  
ANYTHING THAT YOU WISH TO APPEAR IN THIS JOURNAL MUST BE  
MAILED OR EMAILED TO ROLAND ORCHARD (address above)***

***Contributions and reports for the next Newsletter are due to the new Editor Roland Orchard by 31 July 2012. Please feel free to mail or email in your stories, articles or enquires to Roland. All are welcome.***

**VALE:**

**Reg Priest.....SA Flight**  
**Colin Fereday OAM.....ACT Flight.**  
**Margaret Gannaway (Daughter of Ron)...WA Flight**  
**Richard W (Dick) Sladen.....Canada Flight**

**FLIGHT REPORTS:**

**New South Wales Flight report by David Longhurst.**

Just prior to last Christmas I received a phone call from RAAFA's President Gordon Johnstone in respect to an enquiry made by Tom Parkinson from Burradoo (near Bowral, south of Sydney in NSW Australia). Tom has a radio program on Highland FM called Swinging Sixties between 1-3pm on Fridays and he had tried to gain information about 458 Squadron via his broadcast. As a consequence a listener suggested he lodge an enquiry via the R.S.L (Returned Servicemen's League) website.

He did so on 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 2011, it read:

Hi. I have a friend in Canada whose Dad flew with the RAAF in WW2. His name is Sandy McGraw and he was the only Canadian in the 458th Squadron and was stationed in Italy and Gibraltar. He is now 90 and has often wondered if there is anyone left from his squadron. Is there a way that Sandy can find out more information and reconnect with any surviving members? Thank you  
Tom

The RSL contacted RAAFA on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. and Gordon Johnstone made the previously mentioned phone call and followed it up with an email containing the above information.

I contacted Tom Parkinson and during our conversation indicated that there was a 458 Squadron Association, which included a Canadian Wing. I also rectified the misconception that Sandy was the only Canadian member of 458. A few other minor issues needed to be resolved, his given name was Robert (not Sandy) and his surname was McGaw (not McGraw)! Whilst we were speaking I asked Tom to wait whilst I checked if Robert (Sandy) McGaw's name was on the Nominal Roll contained in "We Find & Destroy", it wasn't there, but I pointed out that it was after all a "nominal" roll. Tom asked if a copy of "We Find & Destroy" was available for him to purchase and send to Sandy for a Christmas/91<sup>st</sup> birthday present. By good fortune I had a spare copy of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition and my wife had it in the mail and WINGING its way to Sandy within 24 hours along with a 458 lapel badge and a copy of the April newsletter. I enclosed it as it contained an article headed Operational Record Book by Bill McFadden which provided details of the disbandment of 458 Squadron at Gibraltar on 9<sup>th</sup> June 1945 and it was quite likely given the details provided of Sandy's service that he was at the disbandment ceremony.

Earlier this year I received thankyou notes from both Sandy and his daughter Sheila. (What a great name for the daughter of a Canadian pilot who flew with an Australian squadron!)

So what appeared to be a difficult if not daunting task, with little prospect of success 63 years down the track, was actually pretty darned simple once Tom took the initiative and asked a couple of questions.

Bryan Quinlan, Canadian Flight, has "had a long chat" with Sandy and provided him with a couple of the last editions of the newsletter.

Welcome back to the fold Sandy!

### **South Australia Flight report by Pat Cribb**

We regret to inform the friends of Reg Priest that he passed away on January 1, 2012. He will be sadly missed by us all, as are so many others gone before. With our numbers so depleted the time has come when there are no activities to report from S.A. Flight for the newsletter. The exception is the forthcoming lunch on Anzac Day at the Kensington Hotel, Regent St., Kensington, at 12.00 noon. In future Anzac Day will be the only gathering each year for as long as we have people interested. I will personally telephone those who came in the past to our lunches to get a group together for this Anzac Day lunch - April 25. This year there is no-one able to march - the first time since the war. So, this is S.A. Flight's last report for the 458 Squadron Journal. However, the Newsletter Publisher, Eric Munkman, has kindly offered to continue to send newsletters in the future (minus S.A.'s report) to those interested. I need to know who still wishes to receive them: please phone me, Pat Cribb - 83329231, so that I can pass on your names and addresses. If I do not hear from you I will assume you do not want any more contact. We wish the team undertaking the continued affairs of the Squadron our very best wishes and success with the web-site.

***[I (ed) am excited to report Part 2 of the SA Report as emailed to me from Pat.]***

Very pleased to report on our meeting at my home on Sat. when the future of S.A. Flight was discussed. We were pleased and surprised at the enthusiasm of Rick Michell (treasurer) and his sister, Trish Cosh, the children of Colin Michell, a wireless operator with 458 throughout the war. (Colin died some 45 years ago when Rick was 10.) They wish to encourage all next-of-kin in S.A., whose addresses I have from their past involvement, by sending out a flyer encouraging them to join again and support the future of our Flight. The memorabilia, such as the photos, the minutes of meetings beginning in the 1950's, records, and other papers were brought out and handed to Rick and Trish and they staggered back to their cars with arms full. They have used the services of an archivist, Helen Onopko, who has done the Michell family history (Michell wool company) and will get her to do the same with our records. So this is wonderful. They will get two copies done of the photos in the album and send one lot for inclusion on the website in due course.

**Cheers to all in 458. Pat Cribb**

### **Victoria Flight report by Roland Orchard**

On behalf of Victorian members I would like to pass on our condolences to the Fereday, Priest, Gannaway and Sladen families.

My brothers Jeremy, Chris and I visited Canberra between Christmas and New Year and were privileged to meet Colin Fereday. He proudly showed us the RAAF Memorial Grove located on Federal Highway, ACT. Colin helped instigate the restoration of the Memorial Park after it had been left derelict for a number of years. Have a look at it on this website for those with computers.

<http://www.act.raafa.org.au/memorial/index.html>

On the 26<sup>th</sup> February Jeremy and I went to RAAF Williams, Point Cook Museum Air Pageant 2012. Neil, Rod and Zac Flentje were also there. We endured the hot and gusty conditions to see a vast selection of types of aircraft flying and on static display. I think the highlight for any enthusiast was the Southern Knights displaying their precision formation flying in Harvards. I know dad trained on Harvards at Camp Borden, Canada, and I'm sure most of the 458 Veterans trained on them as well.

**ANZAC Day 2012** is fast approaching. Due to road works in Melbourne CBD, 458 will form up by 1000hrs at Linlithgow Avenue in the service road at the intersection of St Kilda Road Service Lane Eastern side. Look out for our banner. All are welcome for refreshments and light lunch after the March at Melbourne Bowling Club, 138 Union Street, Windsor. 3181. Vic.

### **UK Flight report by Keith Wilkinson**

It was with great sadness that we learned in the UK of the death of our good friend Colin Fereday. A few years ago, my wife and I visited Colin at his bungalow near Canberra – next to a Buddhist temple, I seem to recall. We couldn't have met a nicer man. I remember we chatted for ages about flying Wellingtons – and, in particular, how it was easy to land them too quickly and overshoot the runway. The reason he said pilots did this was because of the fear of the opposite problem – stalling due to lack of speed! Colin said he hadn't been on any detachments, like to Corsica. All those years on it was still a bit of a sore point with the guy. He thought it was because he “wasn't a drinker” – he didn't hang about in the officers' mess much. It was Colin's theory that that's where detachments were handed out. Colin had quite a sense of humour. He demonstrated to us his electronically operated armchair. He said he'd got it from someone who'd passed away and hadn't had much use out of it. The chair, he said, could tip you right out. And he showed us – rising it up vertically until it dislodged him. It seemed to amuse him quite a bit. But Colin wasn't one for just sitting around. He had this great big red Ford with a whopping four litre engine – 21 years old when we rode in the beast with him. He struggled to get in past the steering wheel, and told us he really ought to get a new motor as this was bad news for the ozone layer. He drove us to the outside of the Australian War Memorial which houses the Avro Lancaster Bomber -“G” for George. Then we went off to the Memorial Grove and the 458 Squadron memorial he looked after. We past a massive dead kangaroo lying by the road. Colin brought along some plastic bottles of water and we helped him to water the parched Rosemary trees. We looked at a seat which we were told was to be called The Fereday Seat. Then he took us to the local football club for lunch. He was a member and signed us in as his guests. There was a shiny sports car on show – the prize in a raffle. “Too fancy for me at my time of life,” said Colin. He was a real Aussie character and we will miss him.



Colin at the RAAF Memorial Grove, Canberra ACT. Australia. & The Colin Fereday Bench Plaque.



Here in Blighty there's not a lot of squadron-related activity. But we are still around as a UK flight – and that's what matters. It'll soon be Jack Christianson's birthday – 90 years old in May! Congratulations Jack.

### **New Zealand Flight report by Kevin George**

*No news from Kevin so I hope all is well in New Zealand.*

### **Canada Flight report by Bryan Quinlan**

COLIN FEREDAY WILL BE SADLY MISSED BY ALL WHO KNEW HIM AND WE GOT TO KNOW HIM IN CANADA DURING HIS ATTENDANCE AT THE WINNIPEG AIRCREW REUNIONS AND SEVERAL OTHER VISITS. A TRUE GENTLEMAN.

I HAD HOPED TO INCLUDE A REPORT BY NEWLY ACQUIRED FLIGHT MEMBER ROBERT (SANDY) MCGAW AND INDEED HE HAD INTENDED TO SUBMIT ONE VIA DAUGHTER SHEILA. UNFORTUNATELY, SHEILA ADVISED ME THAT HER DAUGHTER'S FIANCE HAD SUDDENLY PASSED AWAY AND THIS WAS UNDERSTANDABLY REQUIRING THEIR FULL ATTENTION.

I AM SURE THAT SANDY MUST BE ENJOYING CATCH-UP ON INFORMATION IN "FIND AND DESTROY AND SOME RECENT 458 NEWSLETTERS I FORWARDED VIA SHEILA.

JACK REYNOLDS SENT AN INTERESTING TID-BIT ON W/C WARBURTON, WHEN HE WAS HIS CO AT MALTA ON 69 SQDN SDF. WARBURTON, OF COURSE, WAS WELL-KNOWN FOR HIS LEADERSHIP ABILITIES AND VARIOUS ECCENTRICITIES. JACK OFFERS THE FOLLOWING:

"OUR CO W/C ADRIAN WARBURTON, DSO\*, DFC\*\* WAS THE ACKNOWLEDGED PR EXPERT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. AS SUCH HE WAS CALLED IN TO CAIRO FOR CONSULTATION FROM TIME TO TIME. HE DISLIKED THOSE DESK-BOUND WALLAHS AND TO EMPHASIZE HIS OPS CREDENTIALS, WORE EXTREMELY SHORT SHORTS, A TAILORED BUSH JACKET WITH POLISHED SILVER OVERSIZED DECORATIONS. HE WAS ENTITLED TO THE FLYING BOOT, (LATE ARRIVALS), CATERPILLAR (BAILOUTS) AND GOLDFISH (DINGHY ESCAPE). THIS WAS HIS UNIFORM FOR VISITS TO SHEPARDS HOTEL WHERE HE WAS SURE HIS TARGETS WOULD BE CONGREGATED. IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE, HE WAS A DAZZLER."

BECAUSE OF RECENT HEALTH PROBLEMS I WAS UNABLE TO CONTACT TOM ROWAN BUT CAN ASSUME THAT HE IS BUSY WITH HIS CURLING ACTIVITIES AND STILL ENJOYING MEMORIES OF HIS B25 FLIGHT LAST SUMMER.

TOM LINDSAY HAD NOTHING SPECIAL TO REPORT BUT ADVISED HE IS WORKING SLOWLY ON HIS STORY FOR THE NEW WEBSITE.

A CALL TO GRACE MARKLAND REVEALED THAT THERE IS NO POSITIVE NEWS ON BERT'S SITUATION AND NO REPORT WAS RECEIVED FOR DICK SLADEN.

YOURS TRULY HAS ENCOUNTERED A FEW HITCHES IN THE PLANNED PROGRESS ON REPORTS FOR THE NEW WEBSITE, WHICH INCLUDED TREATMENT FOR A STOMACH ULCER AND THEN A BOUT OF PNEUMONIA, INVOLVING A TEN DAY STAY IN HOSPITAL.

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Dick Sladen Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2012. Condolences to the Sladen/Lowry families from all members of the 458 Squadron Association.



VALE  
Richard W. (Dick) Sladen.  
1918-2012  
Dick & daughter Jay on his  
94<sup>th</sup> Birthday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

## **WA Flight report by Ted Jewell**

With a sad heart I report the death of Margaret Gannaway who died last month after a long battle with breast cancer. Margaret was the twin daughter of Ron and Alice Gannaway; most members would remember Flight Sergeant Gannaway who was with the Squadron from the start.

The coming of ANZAC Day will be as usual as other years. We don't have anyone able to front up on the big day. As far as I know there are only three of us left in W.A. Jim Palmer, Bill Kelliher and I.

We had a very enjoyable Christmas dinner in December, there were only about 12 present but everyone had a great day.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> March I will be having our usual BBQ at my place in Mandurah. Members have been coming down here for as long as I can remember. I rang Esme Nobbs the other day and she said that she was looking forward to coming. Nobby was here last year just before he passed away.

I had my Granddaughter down on holiday from the mining town of Port Headland. When the family first went there about 10 years ago they bought a house for \$400,000. They later bought another house for \$1.5million so they leased the other house to BHP for \$2,500 a week. Now they have been offered \$1.4million for the same house. They earn good money in the mines but it costs plenty just to live.

Vera Etherton has now moved into a nursing home in Red Cliff, a suburb of Perth.

### **QLD Flight:**

*Anyone from QLD interested in mustering up some family support and submitting a report would be more than welcome. I believe the hanger doors are still ajar ☺  
Please contact Roland Orchard. (Editor)*

### **Eulogy – Colin Fereday OAM**

I am John Fereday, Colin's third child, and will talk briefly about his life. First I would like to say on behalf of his five children who are here today, just how fortunate we are to have Colin as our father, he was the most supportive, caring and strong person you could hope to have as a father, who always loved his family and put others ahead of himself.

Dad was born in Caulfield Victoria in 1917 and was 95 when he died. His mother was Norwegian and his father was Australian of English descent. He had a sister Aileen and Brother Norman.

He lived his early life in Caulfield, his father worked for the post office, his mother was a stay at home mum and they didn't have a great deal of money. As kids we used to visit his parents (our grandparents) in Carnegie and we used to love going there, Grandma would prepare a fantastic spread for us kids – cakes, softdrink, chips, lollies – it was heaven. Dad had a sweet tooth, he used to love cakes and we always had deserts after meals at home – it's not hard to see where this came from.

He was involved in sport and the outdoors from an early age, and right through his life he has been very fit. When he was a boy his mum would worry about him swimming in Port Phillip Bay, as he used to swim long distances between bays. I remember when we went to the Olympic pool in Canberra as kids, Dad swim lap after lap freestyle in a very relaxed style. He also played cricket, tennis, Aussie Rules football, hockey and rowed for Richmond rowing club. In the 1930s he went skiing at Mount Hotham in Victoria in places accessible only by horseback.

He went to school at Malvern Grammar where he had a four year scholarship, but he left early when he turned 15 because it was the time of the depression in the early 1930s and to help his family he got a job with the Victorian Railways. Realising he was in a dead end job, he went to evening college and got his leaving certificate. In 1936 he started a commerce degree part time initially in Canberra then at Melbourne University, while he worked – at this point in time at the sales tax office. In 1937 and 1938 he was in the University of Melbourne Rifles, a type of Army reserve but his experiences of walking miles soaked to the skin with a rifle and shivering in a tent lead him to be attracted to the more glamorous airforce. So when the war broke out in 1939 he went to enlist in the airforce. Unfortunately his job at the sales tax office was a reserve occupation and his application was refused. He personally went to see the Minister for Air to plead his case but it was still refused. He wasn't happy about this and in November 1941 he quit his job at the sales tax office and enlisted in the airforce and was accepted.

His training ran for over a year and a half, he trained initially in NSW at Narrandera and later in Canada where he received his wings, then on to Britain and the Middle East.

This initial training didn't go well. His first flight was in a tiger moth and he thought he was going to fall out because his harness was too loose, and his instructor thought he had no feel for a plane and didn't teach him. Dad borrowed a book on flying, read it and fronted for the test. He went okay, except of a loop the loop manoeuvre which gave the examiner a big fright, but he passed this stage and his confidence grew. So much so that he participated unofficially with some other airman in the Narrandera air show, which raised a few eyebrows.

Dad was in the RAF Coastal Command flying Wellington Bombers in 458 Squadron. They operated most of the time in the Mediterranean doing torpedo drops, bomb drops and depth charge drops when they were protecting shipping convoys. He was the pilot and the planes had a crew of 6. He really liked his crew, they worked well and one incident in particular he never forgot and it still troubled him years later. On return from a bombing run, a bomb had caught under the plane (hung up), they were not aware of this and when they landed the bomb went off. Two of his crew were killed and others badly injured. I believe he lost two other crew from shots fired from enemy aircraft. He received a Mention in Dispatches which a bravery award, for removing an unexploded bomb off the runway, putting it onto a truck and taking it into the country to get it safety away. I believe he injured himself trying to get it off the truck as it was too heavy, luckily for him and us it didn't go off.

During this time he met a lot of people who remained his friends for life, and in later years he travelled back to these places and stayed with people he met during the war. As an example of this - whilst in Scotland he and another Australian airman stayed



with a Scottish family who had volunteered to put up airmen in their house. In this household there were three children including two girls aged 6 and 8. When he was in Egypt recovering in hospital after an incident, (I'm not sure what that was) he sent these girls some kangaroos he had made out of leather and small items of jewellery. He saw them again years later, when they were considerably older as they had both retired, and they still had the things he sent them when he was in Egypt.

Dad completed his airforce duties and was discharged in June 1945 and returned to work the Taxation Office. Around this time he went skiing at Mount Buffalo and met Greg Buckeridge who had also been in the airforce. Greg invited Dad to play tennis at their house where, occasionally an attractive young woman, June Buckeridge, Greg's sister would come by, she never stayed long as she was working as an air hostess with ANA airlines (later became Ansett). On one occasion she had a bad tooth and had to take some days off work to get it treated, and Dad seized his opportunity and asked her out. They got married in December 1946. Mum was a lovely woman and they were very well suited.

They initially lived in the Melbourne suburb of North Balwyn. Dad completed his Commence degree in 1948, and Bruce and Alvie were born whilst they were at North Balwyn. Dad received a promotion and moved to Canberra in 1954 (I believe it was the Treasury Department), and built a new house at Reid which was the family home for 50 years until dad moved into the Morshead retirement home several years ago. Dad was very handy and created the garden, it was like an orchard, with apples, peaches, nectarines, tomatoes and sweet corn, laid the concrete for the paths, drives, build a workshop and shed, he could put his hand to anything.

While in Canberra, I was born followed by Stuart and then Peter. Our life as children was idyllic. We were a close family, we always ate together at mealtimes, always had dessert after dinner (Dad's influence), stricter than these days but very supportive. Dad took an active interest in our schools and was involved in the P&C meetings, helped with homework, he was involved with Community such as Rotary and the Air Force Association back then as well, mum stayed at home and looked after the family. In those days Dad would not stand for any nonsense from anyone, and that included neighbours and teachers on one or two occasions who he would confront. I have a vivid memory from when I was very small, a magpie was terrorising kids in the area, so much so that they were afraid to go to school or would run onto the road trying to get away from it. One morning dad decided he'd seen enough so he went outside and chased the magpie up the street, it was on top of the telegraph poles and dad couldn't reach it, but he certainly knew dad meant business and wasn't someone to mess with.

We were a single income family, but dad managed to send us all to private schools in our high school years, and we always went away for holidays in the school holidays, usually Melbourne at Christmas to see the relations and the south coast at other times.

There was a sad time when my mother died of breast cancer in April 1978. Peter was only 14, but Dad made sure that everything carried as normal for Peter, including going on holidays – they went to Heron Island and to Mexico, and he still just as supportive and caring for his other children.



This is the time he started to move into a new phase in his life by increasing involvement in the community and various charities. This included volunteer work on the RAAF Memorial Grove on the Federal Highway on the outskirts of Canberra and volunteer work for the Ryder Cheshire Foundation. He also started to travel overseas, particularly to places he had been to during the war and renew friendships he had during the war, friendships he said lasted forever. He had an interest in our family tree and met up with the Atthorpe society in England which was related to a branch of the family, and went to various airforce reunions. He also took up social activities including square dancing, clogging and became an active member of the Dante Alighieri Society and learnt to speak Italian.

Around this time there were a few widows Dad knew, who he liked and was interested in, but he never married anyone else, although he has expressed some regret in more recent years about not showing more pluck and remarrying. His love for June however was never diminished.

My father received an Order of Australia Medal in April 2001 for his service to the community for many years, including his involvement in the Ryder Cheshire Foundation, the RAAF Association, volunteer work at the Sir Leslie Morshead Veterans and Aged Persons Home in Lyneham, zone leader for Neighbourhood Watch, member of Lions and the Square Dancing Society.

Dad has always marched in the Anzac day marches in Canberra every year, more recently he has attended but watched from the sidelines.

Gradually over his later years his age and declining health slowed him down but he was always thinking about his family. The final straw was when he developed cancer of the oesophagus. In spite of this he was quite cheerful and seemed to be his normal self when we saw him at Christmas and was more concerned about us than himself. He was particularly sick just over two weeks ago and I saw him with Alvie and Bruce and Alvie's friend Karen and he seemed happy that we were there and was more concerned about us. He knew Stuart was overseas and returning in weeks' time, and he did get to see Stuart – Stuart will be talking about this soon.

Dad had a remarkable life, many things I only learnt this week when researching for this eulogy, as he was always such a modest person and didn't say too much about his past. He leaves behind his five Children, eleven grandchildren and three great grandchildren, all of us proud to have been part of his life.

#### **Tribute to Colin Fereday OAM by Wendy Whitem-Trunz**

I attended Col's funeral this morning at St John's Anglican Church where Col had been a warden, and there is a plaque on a pew there, in remembrance of his wife.

*The Anglican Church of St John the Baptist (consecrated in 1845) and its historic precinct is one of Canberra's treasures. The Church, graveyard and Schoolhouse Museum predate the nation's capital by 70 years and they are living reminders of our pioneering farming community.*

Maybe I can give those who were unable to attend today a flavour of the ceremony and the measure respect for Col that we share with others who were there today.

I brought with me the squadron wreath of red white & blue flowers and it was placed in front of the coffin. I have been promised a photo.

The service began with the tolling of the church bell (95? times). Christian symbols of candle, baptismal water, Bible & cross were placed on top of the Air Force flag draping the coffin. John and Stuart Fereday delivered the eulogy on behalf of the family, followed by Air Marshal David Evans Ret'd. RAAF. Canon Sibley assisted in the service. The Pilot's prayer was read. Everyone spoke highly of Colin as a father, family man, RAAF pilot, professional and volunteer during a rich and full life. They spoke of his many qualities all which we all have experienced over the years – loving (to family and always remembering his dear wife whom he lost over 30 years ago), deeply Christian, caring, putting others first, courage (carrying a live bomb off an airstrip; landing with a hung bomb that subsequently exploded killing two crew), enthusiastic, effervescent, modest, full of integrity, a natural gentleman, passion for travel, affection for his lady friends, & a sweet tooth. They told stories about his being refused entry into the Air Force because he was in a protected (tax) job, and Narrandera adventures when learning to fly. He was a man of many interests - various sports (swimming, hockey, and tennis), P&C Assoc., line dancing, student of Italian, Rotary, Lions, Ryder-Cheshire Foundation, RAAFA and more. His great recent legacy of course is from his involvement over many years, as a founding member, in the creation and maintenance of the RAAF Memorial Grove on the Federal Highway just outside of Canberra.

I spoke to the Fereday family (including Peter), and passed on the condolences of our 458 squadron members, especially from those who had wanted to but couldn't attend. The weather was terrible, so your decision(s) not to drive down was a good one. John Fereday promised to send me his Eulogy for the 458 newsletter and a photo of the wreath.

I was proud to be able to represent 458 today and fortunate to have known Colin. I met Colin in recent years about the time I assisted in coordinating the "Final" Reunion in Canberra, and quickly developed a deep affection for him. We had a strong friendship. After he went to live at Morshead Home, I would take him out to dinner/lunches to interesting/favourite places, ceremonies or just visit him from time to time... A sweet sherry was always on offer at any time of the day and he would regale me with stories. I have been to the Memorial Grove with Col on many occasions and will always associate it with him. He was not strong enough to attend my dad's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in November, but we did visit Col together a few days later, and he was the same old Col despite his illness – thinking of others, full of hope and a warrior to the end. He will be missed by many.

Colin is still with us... Last week on Tuesday morning Colin did us a good turn, looking down from heaven, and prompting us to share the news of his passing with my dad who had not been on email. Strangely, my brother & I couldn't contact dad so I called the neighbour (with key) to investigate. Dad was found lying on his back after a fall, unable to get up and with no way to contact anyone. Fortunately, this time he didn't have to wait until evening or later to be

discovered. The ambulance was called, and dad was hospitalised for a week – rest and recuperation mostly,  
No major injuries. The lesson to be learned/actioned is to get a sensible level of regular help at home and to always wear an alarm. I trust all 458ers do this.  
As previously mentioned, the family had asked for a donation in lieu of flowers – here are the details for your consideration.

The Cancer Council ACT

5 Richmond Ave, Fairburn ACT 2609 *or* PO Box 1243, Fyshwick ACT 2609

Ph 6257 9999

Cheers,

**Wendy Whitem-Trunz**

**Vale Colin Fereday by John Gibbins**

Colin first came to my attention when Wendy Whitem-Trunz and I were asked to organise the “Last Re-Union in November 2005’.

For my part, the first contact with Colin was by phone, his quiet, precise articulated voice offering suggestions on sights we might visit, suggesting that High Commissioner of Malta should attend, and the correct protocol and in general being there to answer any questions.

He played a leading roll the site-ing of the 458 Squadron Plaque at RAAF Memorial Grove on the Federal Highway

Meeting him was a pleasure; a small rotund gentleman with much receding hairline, carrying a cane, a smile and that soft voice. He invited me and Glenys to his home for afternoon tea, the presentation of which would make some women envious. Tea, cake, sandwich and of course a sherry. With assistance from the Whitem-Trunz family, he attended many a function after 2005 I will remember Colin affectionately as a gentleman and a great supporter of the 458 Squadron.

**VALE Mr. Colin Fereday.OAM**  
**A Day at the RAAF Memorial Grove.**





Thanks to Colin for the installation of the 458 Squadron Plaque at the 'Grove'



Colin's dream for the Memorial Grove was to install a BBQ and also elevate the "Lookout" area so the vista of Canberra City can be restored after it was blocked out when the new highway was constructed. Let us hope that his dreams will be realized in the not too distant future.

**Roland Orchard.**

## **ARTICLES OF INTEREST.**

### **458 Squadron Website:**

The NEW Website is off to a flying start! The building phase is well underway and the 'go live' date will be about a week before ANZAC Day, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2012. (Fingers crossed) We have employed the services of Potent Web, who designed the impressive website for the B24 Restoration Australia. (See [www.b24australia.org.au](http://www.b24australia.org.au))

Our website name selected is

**[www.458raafsquadron.org](http://www.458raafsquadron.org)**

Also, the 'recruiting' call is going out to all Flights who would like to be your Flight's website representative. You will look after things like posting your upcoming commemorative events and activities, photos, etc. to your Flight's own web pages, on the 458 Website. This person can be a Veteran or family member. All training of how to add info, photos, etc. to the website will be provided. Please have a think about participating in this activity. It won't be hard and probably would take no more than a couple of hours a month. The hard part of building the site is nearly finished, now it will be up to us all to add the content and bring it to a standard that reflects the heroic past of 458 Squadron and its members.

Please forward all your ideas – we would love any input for the website, feedback and website rep nominations to the Newsletter Editor, Roland Orchard.

**Jeremy Orchard (Victoria Flight Secretary/Treasurer)**

### **GREAT FEATURE ON THE 458 WEBSITE**

One of the many great features on the website is the Nominal Roll, the same that appears in the Squadron History. When viewing the Nominal Roll, our intention is to be able to click on each name which will open up a separate page telling the story of that particular Veteran. (This can include written text as well as pictures)

At this early stage, if you want to be included in this fabulous feature, please write an article about yourself or your father, grandfather or great-grandfather and send it to me, via the address on the front page. (Preferably on a word document and attach to an email. If you are unable to email then written is great as well). You may write as much as you like and include war time service as well as pre & post war life. Pictures are also welcome.

Wouldn't it be fantastic if each and every name on the Nominal Roll had a link to their story which all members could access and read about? These are exciting times with the upcoming web site. We have received all of the

hardware – laptop, printers and scanners and all of the software that goes with them. This will help manage the web site and also start an endless archive for all photos, articles and anything 458 in general. I must admit to feeling very privileged to able to manage all of this equipment and together with the website project committee I'm determined to make sure we use the hardware to the best advantage for all 458ers. With this in mind I am asking every one of you to please send me any of your thoughts, ideas, project ideas, pictures, articles....the list can go on, so we can take full advantage of this equipment. The only limitations to the applications of all of this, is our own imaginations.

*Roland Orchard*

### **Embroidered patch of the 458 Squadron Crest is now in stock**



Figure 1 Electronic design



Figure 2 Embroidered design

The 458 embroidered patch (shown in Figure 2) is now available for purchase, at the very economical price of \$10.50

We hope you find that it closely expresses the spirit of 458, and all who served.

Figure 1 shows the design approved in 2008 by the Chief of Australian Air Force to be copied into slate onto the floor of the St Clement Danes Church in London.

Victorian flight members may wish to collect your edition at the upcoming Anzac Day parade, otherwise send your requests in writing or email to Chris Orchard, 44 Herrington Turn, Caroline Springs, Victoria, 3023, email: [cnorchard@bigpond.com](mailto:cnorchard@bigpond.com) (cheques payable to 'Chris Orchard', or bank account details can be provided for direct deposits).

Other mementos, including earlier 458 crest designs, are being considered for re-production in the future. Best regards to all, and happy 2012!

Thanks to Mr Hal Coffill (Harold Norton COFFILL, service no. 412484), c/o Condobolin, NSW, who has purchased a badge already and donated \$10 to 458 Sqn Association. His letter was a lovely surprise, and ends with "old age is really a nuisance. However they tell me it doesn't last long?"

**Chris Orchard, Victoria Flight**



## **YOUR HELP WOULD BE APPRECIATED (Editor)**

Request to anyone who knows **Neil McPhee, Bob Dengaard, Arthur Jones or Barbara Kelly**. Please contact them and ask them to contact me (Roland Orchard – Editor - [rjorch@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rjorch@bigpond.net.au) or mailing address 78 Edward, Road, Chirnside Park, 3116. Victoria) when I tried to email the November Newsletter, their email addresses, as listed below, were rejected for some inexplicable reason.

**Neil McPhee**     [neilmac@alphalink.com.au](mailto:neilmac@alphalink.com.au)  
**Bob Dengaard**   [bobgengaard@hotmail.com](mailto:bobgengaard@hotmail.com)  
**Arthur Jones**    [ajon3505@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ajon3505@optusnet.com.au)  
**Barbara Kelly**   [barb0073@optusnet.com.au](mailto:barb0073@optusnet.com.au)

On this note, please contact me (Roland) if you know of anyone who is not receiving the 458 Journal and should be. I hope everyone bears with me while going through this transition of changing Editors.

### **Thanks to John Gibbins for the following 3 items.**

#### **1.Returned Servicemen- What you are entitled to get from DVA.**

All our members are getting 'on' and should have the following safety devices. Vital Call—a device set up in your home so that if you have a fall, get ill, need assistance, you can press the emergency pendant and be in contact with the emergency response team within minutes.

(Most falls happen in or near the bathroom, others get stuck on the ground out the back)

Two members recently had falls in or near their bathrooms- one lay naked for 24 hours, the other jammed against the closed door.     **FORGET YOUR PRIDE--get one now.**

Devices to assist in getting socks / shoes on. / Pick up good from the floor etc.

Why struggle bending down to get you socks and shoes on / or picking up that scrap of paper from the floor?

Ask DVA for that equipment now.     **WHY WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE** to do it  
Going into a retirement Village- or hard to get around for any long distance. (Shops-neighbours etc.)

DVA will possibly provide you with the appropriate electric buggy.

Don't depend on someone assisting you- get mobile and 'Taxi' around the corridors.

#### **2.Wives –Family and family-carers of our veterans**

*(This article is applicable to Australian Veterans. Please check your UK, Canada or New Zealand Government Veteran Department for any similar information.)*

Eventually we are going to lose our loved one- here is some information to assist you. You have to notify DVA of the veteran's death as soon as possible.

This allows the State Office of DVA to notify the Aust War Graves which will contact you about your wishes regarding burial; i.e. placement of grave, placement of ashes in a crematorium or alternately in AWG garden of Remembrance.

A payment to the surviving spouse/partner of a TPI member is equal to 12 weeks of the disability pension.

In case of a widower or single pensioner "the estate" will receive 14days pension after the date of death.

The Australian Flag is allowed to be placed on the coffin- the flag commencing from the head and going to the feet.

You RSL, Legacy, Squadron Social worker can assist in any of the above, alternatively for more information obtain a copy of 'Planning Ahead' from DVA or your RSL.

### **3. Australian Flag.**

If any state Branch wants a new 'Australian Flag', contact your local State or Federal representative of Parliament.

Explain in writing that it is for the 458 RAAF Squadron- for use at ceremonies etc. And you will be given one. You can front their office with the letter and obtain the flag

#### **Thanks Jeffrey Ayres (Grandson of Fred Ayres Snr) for this information from the DVA.**

I came across this Certificate of Appreciation & thought you could use it in your 458 Squadron newsletter. Anyone who fought from WW2 onwards can get it. I just got one for my grandfather & think it is really nice. All you have to do to apply for it is to prove who it is for (just need there service number & maybe a copy of some sort of service document.) Take it to your Federal Member & within the week you'll have it. See below for the link to the certificate on the DVA website or contact your local DVA Office for a copy of the form.

<http://www.dva.gov.au/dvaforms/Pages/keywords.aspx>

Look for Form Number DO755 under heading of 'Appreciation.'

### **NIGHT-STOP AT CLEOPATRA'S WEEK-ENDER**

By Keith Cousins

Early morning of 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1942, an orderly thrust his head through the flap of our tent to advise that my presence was required to join the crew for a trip requiring a night-stop, to bring the usual gear, tooth-brush, blanket, etc., and to "not forget the 'eating irons' ". These latter were essential, for, if passing through an outpost landing field and expecting a meal, one could be refused simply because the local establishment would not be equipped to provide for itinerant travellers, nor have sufficient water to wash the eating equipment if provided.

The tent was part of 216 (RAF) Sqdn's main base, situated about 25kms. NW of Cairo, on a portion of the Nile's plain, bounded on one side by a small Egyptian village, another side by a plantation of palms, a third side housed an asylum, and the fourth plain desert. 216 Sqdn's role, having been based in Egypt since WW1, had since 1940 been reduced from bombing to general communications, troop-carrying, etc., and was now equipped with Bristol "Bombays". What was the connection with 458 RAAF Sqdn? It had been jokingly referred to as the "League of Nations Squadron", in particular the aircrew. Basically, manned with RAF, but counting South Africans, New Zealanders, Canadians, Americans – "Yanks in the RAF", and a good number of RAAF, mainly sergeant wireless/airgunners together with a couple of pilots and observers. We even had a Russian, a civil engineer, affectionately known as "Timoshenko", who was responsible for keeping the landing ground reasonably flat and free of rubble for aircraft to land safely.

The prospect of a flight was good for the morale. Any chance of being posted to an operational training unit (OTU) had become remote with the stripping of many aircraft from the OTU's in Kenya and Rhodesia for transfer to our Russian allies, who were under massive onslaught by the enemy at the time. Since completing training at Parkes in October, 1941, my log book recorded little more than 100 hours, so the chance of using a pair of dividers and endeavouring to read a map once again was something not to be missed. After rolling up the usual grey blanket, water bottle, and toiletries, "eatin" irons, and most importantly, the "desert passport", the rest of the crew were joined at the Flight tent for briefing. The "desert passport" mentioned was an essential piece of survival gear if one were to make an unscheduled stop in the



desert, and issued to all crews. This small piece of paper on a linen backing, printed in Arabic and English, promised a downed airman's rescuer (most likely a Bedouin) a suitable reward upon the stranded airman's safe return to British forces. The chances were that a wandering Bedouin confronted with this document could not read anyway, but it was well known on the desert "grapevine". The promise of a financial reward did not mean much to the Bedouin – after all where could it be spent! The supply of good quantity of tea – "shai", however, was a great incentive. Hence this small piece of paper was of great value to aircrews and Bedouin alike.

Briefing for this trip entailed an en-route call at Berg-el-arab, just over an hour's flight to the north-west, to pick up supplies and mail for our destination, Siwa oasis. Locating Berg-el-arab presented no problem. Although but a spot on the map, it was on the railway line from Alexandria to Mersa Matruh, was quite close to the Mediterranean coast, and the landing ground was close to the railway station, which consisted of a goods yard and a clearly printed sign. A couple of boxes of ammunition, a single mail bag, and some provisions were loaded. It was clear that we were not supplying a large land force.

Our main purpose was to retrieve a wounded pilot who had been rescued by Bedouins, and transport him to hospital in Cairo for proper medical treatment. Locating Siwa oasis, no coastline, mountains, rivers, towns, railway lines, etc., offering map-reading clues, no radio direction finding aids, no provision in a "Bombay" for astro-navigation, offered somewhat a challenge. The topographical map however, showed a road leading from Mersa Matruh to Siwa, and as it turned out, proved very useful.

