

JOURNAL OF THE 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL

Year 70 No. 263 August 2019
Squadron President:
Leon Armstrong - U.K

Squadron Vice-Presidents:

Bryan Quinlan- Canada Jack Christiansen- UK Charles Humbles- UK Bob Springall- UK

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CANADA- Bryan Quinlan. 1460 Haywood Ave., W. Vancouver, B.C. V7T 1V6. * Mail all communications for Squadron Secretary to Stephen Bruce (address above), and for the Squadron (and NSW Flight) Treasurer to Beryl Dodds (address above) ** Have you notified Editor 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 email? Please advise the Editor – see postal address above or email Roland at editor@458raafsquadron.org

Contributions and reports for the next Newsletter #264 are due to The Editor by 30th November, 2019.

VALE -

Keith Cousins.....NSW Flight. Steve Search.....UK Flight



Vale Keith Marnock Cousins.

21/3/1921 - 23/4/2019 458 Squadron President November 2005 - April 2019.

Keith Marnock Cousins, a former President of the Squadron, passed away peacefully at Beecroft Nursing Home on 23 April 2019 aged 98 years. He was born in country NSW at Narrandera on 21st March 921 and was one of 5 brothers and a

sister. All 5 brothers served in WW2 but Keith was the only one to volunteer for the Air Force. Prior to enlisting in the RAAF in 1941 Keith was employed by the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney and it was his knowledge of figures and maths that saw him train to become a flight navigator initially with 216 Squadron RAF. His initial training was in Scotland flying Lockheed Hudsons and Douglas Dakotas. While in the UK following his training he joined 458 Squadron and was posted to the Middle East where he saw service in Egypt, Malta, Gibraltar and Crete (and I think Tunisia). Most of his flying in those years was on Vickers Wellington Mark IV bombers. Keith subsequently saw service in the Pacific and Australia with 43 and 34 Squadrons, RAAF flying Sunderlands and Catalinas. After the War he served in Japan in 1946 as a Flight Lieutenant where he met his wife Cassie who was employed as an officer with the American Red Cross. His love of all things to do with flying continued after the War when he jointed QANTAS Airways and flew with them for 30 years rising to the position of Chief Check Navigator. During his period with QANTAS he flew on a wide variety of aircraft including DC4's, DC9s, Flying Boats, Super Constellations, Electras and Boeing Jets. Keith was the Navigator on the first Boeing 707 jet to fly nonstop from Seattle to Sydney in the early 1960's and followed

that up by being the Navigator on the first Boeing 747 Jumbo to do he same flight in 1969.

Keith is survived by his 2 sons, Glenn and Ian, and his 4 grandchildren.

(above written by Keith's son, Glenn)

Dear 458 kindreds. Our deepest condolences to the family of Keith. What a very sad loss and somehow (as happens) sadly untimely. Your Dad was a very special Dad. Also, for me, It feels like the end of an era. Yours, **The daughters of Peter Alexander... Deb, Julie and Melanie.**



Vale Steve Search.

20/9/1922 - 18/9/2018

The following is as excerpt from an email sent to the editor by Steve's daughter, Brenda Fordham "Steve joined the RAF when he was 19 in 1941 as soon as he was able. He did some training in Scotland and then sailed on the Stirling Castle to South Africa

for more training. Originally I understand he trained as a pilot but when he heard that he was to be posted to the Far East he wasn't too keen on that and he was able to "remuster" (whatever that meant - but he assured me it was a common practice if postings were not to one's liking). Anyway he then went on to train as a navigator. (It seemed to me as if he spent the early years training)

He qualified as a navigator and never looked back. His crew consisted of six who flew the Wellington. They were himself, Ken Crago (with whom he kept in touch until Ken died about 15 years ago) Jack Ellis, Bob Jacklin (whom he stayed in touch with until his death a few years ago) and two other lads who he referred to as Kev and Nev. This crew flew largely around the Mediterranean on night time

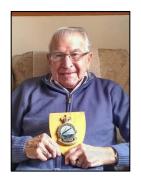


missions. They also spent a large part of their time flying from Foggia in Italy. Dad used to talk about fond memories of Foggia. He also spent some time in Jerusalem but I believe this was mainly when they were allowed some leave. Egypt also came up

in several conversations but as Dad was getting quite muddled as he grew older I am very confused as to the years when he was in North Africa, Jerusalem and Italy. I just remember him saying that he "enjoyed his time in 458" and he would always remember his buddies from those days. His medals and the Union Jack flag and 458 badges etc were displayed at his funeral and we were all very proud of him that day."



Steve Search's Crew –
(This photo taken on first day of ops for Steve)
F/Sgt Ken Crago (W/O),
F/Sgt Bob Jacklin (2nd Pilot),
F/Sgt Steve Search
(Navigator) (3rd from Left) F/O Jack Ellis
(Captain),
F/Sgt N. Vance (SE Operator) and F/Sgt Walsh
(Rear Gunner)







1. Steve in 2013. 2. Bob Springall & Steve November. 2013. 3. B Flight Gibraltar 1945. Steve is 3rd row 5th from the right.

This 458 Squadron B Flight Photo is available in our Memorabilia Shop on our website https://www.458raafsquadron.org/memorabilia-shop

APPOINTMENT OF OUR NEW 458 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

It is with great pleasure to announce the appointment of **Leon Armstrong-UK** as our 458 Squadron President. Leon has been the Association's Vice President for many years. Squadron Leader Leon Armstrong served as 'A' Flight Commander of 458 Squadron from early 1944 and finished his tour of duty with 458 at Gibraltar.

APPOINTMENT OF OUR NEW 458 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION VICE PRESIDENTS

It is with equal pleasure to announce the appointments of our new 458 Squadron Vice Presidents.

Bryan Quinlan - Canada

Bryan served as a pilot with 458 Squadron in 1943 and has been our Canadian Correspondent with the 458 Association Newsletter for 22 years.

Jack Christianson – UK

Jack served as a Pilot with 458 Squadron. Jack was involved in the 2^{nd} D-Day landing in southern France, August 1944.

Charles Humbles - UK

Charles served as ground crew/mechanic with 458 Squadron from Holme on Spalding Moor, UK to Gibraltar.

Bob Springall - UK

Bob served as ground crew LAC with 458 Squadron from Foggia, Italy to Gibraltar.

FLIGHT REPORTS

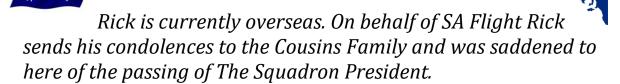


NSW Flight Report by Stephen Bruce

No report from NSW Flight.



South Australia Flight Report by Rick Michell



United Kingdom Flight Report by Keith Wilkinson

The decision in Australia to appoint a new President and new Vice-Presidents for the 458 Squadron Association has gone down really well here in the UK. In fact I struggle to find the words to describe the appreciation of those at the receiving end of these honorary titles. In my opinion it was a brilliant idea and it has meant such a lot to the veterans involved. As reported elsewhere, the British recipients are: former 458 pilot Leon Armstrong (President), former pilot Jack Christianson (Vice-President) and Charles Humbles, a long-serving ground crew member (Vice-President). Letters from the squadron association have all been forwarded to the men's home addresses. All three are now in their late nineties and I assured them that this was an honorary title and it wouldn't involve them in any work. They would not have to travel to Australia! I didn't speak directly to Leon, but his son relayed the details and told me he was really pleased to accept the position. He said his father still spoke with clarity and much fondness about his time with 458 Squadron and also his months in America training to be a pilot. It will be Leon's 100th birthday this coming Christmas. I did have quite long chats with Jack and Charles and it quickly became clear how much this gesture from you guys in Australia meant to them...so "good on you" for putting it into fruition. Not long ago Jack received the Legion of Honour from the French government for his part in the liberation of France through the many sorties he flew with 458.

He'd been overjoyed to receive that accolade on behalf of the rest of his crew (all of whom have now sadly died). But he told me that because of his great affection for 458 Squadron, the Vice-Presidency would mean even more to him than that. "I am very



delighted to be nominated," he said. "I will certainly treasure this." This came on top of some wonderful personal news for Jack and his wife Audrey. They recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. (See photo of Jack & Audrey at a recent trip to at RAF

Cosford.) When I spoke to Charles, the excitement in his voice was palpable after he opened Roland's letter of confirmation. He said it was absolutely wonderful and he was very pleased. Charles's dedicated war service was really quite remarkable and his links to 458 Squadron go right back to the very beginning – at Holme-on-Spalding Moor. He was regarded as something of a "trouble shooter" for the RAF - working as ground crew on the engines of the Wellington bombers. He also flew a lot and he was closely acquainted with some of the leading air crew figures – like Bruce McKenzie and Wing Commander Mulholland (both of whom died in tragic circumstances). He said he was treated by them with great courtesy for looking after their aeroplanes. He met Bruce McKenzie at a reunion after the war, and shortly before he was assassinated. Like Jack, there has also been some good news for Charles. He and his wife Joyce have just celebrated an incredible 79 years as a married couple. These days on each anniversary they get a card from The Queen. The couple met during the war when they were both talented medal-winning ballroom dancers. We wish Leon, Jack and Charles all the very best and thank them wholeheartedly for their sterling wartime service. These titles are in recognition of their significant contribution to the war effort.

*Editor's note – Bob Springall a 458 Veteran who also resides in the UK has also been appointed Vice President. Bob's son, Tony, emailed me recently stating that Bob is honoured to be selected as Vice President.



Canada Flight Report by Bryan Quinlan

No report from Canada.

(Ed-Congratulations on your appointment as 458 Squadron Vice President, Bryan.)

ANZAC Day-RCL Branch Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, BC, Canada. By Diane Atherton.



The Host Royal Canadian Legion Branch was 256 Nanaimo this year. Well attended and great venue and Service with a slide show produced by one of their Canadian Members as the back drop. We had the





pleasure of the company of sailors from HMNZS Te Kaha, there were no Australian service



people in the area and the Consulate



didn't have anyone to send.



Cheers. Diane Atherton (Alan (Snowy) Athertons daughter)



Victoria Flight Report by Roland Orchard



On behalf of all Victorian members we were all saddened to hear of the passing of our President Keith Cousins just prior to ANZAC Day. He was a much loved personality and was always quick to recall stories of his RAAF and QANTAS days. Rest in Peace Keith.

Representatives from Victoria Flight, Jeremy Orchard, Neil Flentje and Roland Orchard attended Keith's funeral at St John's Anglican Church, Beecroft, NSW, on Saturday the 4th May, 2019. Our hearts went out to the Cousins family on this very sad



occasion where we heard remembrance eulogies from Keith's sons Glenn and Ian.



Keith lived a long and eventful life, nonetheless, will be missed by all.

(thanks for the photos Neil Flentje $\ensuremath{\textcircled{\sc o}}$)

Melbourne ANZAC Day 2019

We had another excellent turn out for the ANZAC Day March in the CBD this year. Those who marched were: Jane Foster, Karen Ganley, Barry Laming, Neil Flentje, Joe & Gillian Somers and their grand-daughter, Peter & Sue Jackson, Chris Wurr, Brian Paroissien, his son Nigel Paroissien & daughters Elise and Rochelle, and niece Olivia, Roland Orchard and daughter Emily, Chris Orchard and Jeremy Orchard. Thanks also to the 5 Cadets (from 403, 404, 405, 416 and 417 squadrons) who carried the picture of the Wellington and the Banner.







https://www.458raafsquadron.org/fileadmin/filemount/Anzac Day 2019/458 Squadron
Association AGM 25 April 2019.pdf

I would like to congratulate Leon Armstrong for the appointment of President of 458 Squadron Association. Further congratulations for the appointments of our combined Vice Presidents Bryan Quinlan, Jack Christianson, Charles Humbles and Bob Springall.



Hello, My name is CPL Barry Laming (pictured left) and I'm an army reservist serving in the 5/6 battalion of the Royal Victorian Regiment (5/6 RVR). Im also the grandson of





WO1 Ernest Laming (458 Squadron Warrant Officer Discipline). I have recently returned from exercise Talisman Sabre and have a couple of photos that I can share. Please see the attachments and feel free to post them on your site and in the printed magazine.

All the best, Barry Laming.

Editor's note - As previously mentioned Barry marched with 458 Squadron on ANZAC Day in Melbourne. Thanks for sending this email and photos, Barry. We all thank you for your service.



Left- Barry Lamming is front and centre of photo. Flanked by, from left Karen Ganley, Peter & Sue Jackson, Barry, Chris Wurr & Jane Foster.



Above- 460 Squadron trails us as we march up the Forecourt of The Shrine of Remembrance. We had 3 Australian Air Force Cadets & 2 Army Cadets assisting with our banner.

458 SQUADRON REMEMBERS.

By Michael & Margaret Sampson (Margaret is David Watts' niece)

In Memory of: DAVID MAITLAND WATTS

Flight Sergeant 402425 Royal Australian Air Force

who died on Wednesday 12 August 1942. Age 23.

Cemetery: ALAMEIN MEMORIAL. EGYPT

Grave or Reference Panel Number: Column 266.

Photos below. L-Margaret Sampson (David Watts' neice) at the Alamein Memorial, Egypt. R-Column 266 with WATTS D.M inscribed above 'SERGEANT'

(Very difficult to see but his name is there.)





After our Egyptian bus tour, we organised a private El Alamein WW2 Memorial Day Tour from Cairo on Sunday 28 April 2019. The journey took 3 hours each way with a Service Centre stop along the way. Once we left the chaotic Cairo city traffic, we travelled on six lane toll roads through farmland belonging to private companies, then through the desert, to El Alamein. We first explored the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's El Alamein War Cemetery and the El Alamein Memorial. Our main objective was to find Column No. 266 where Margaret's relative, David Maitland Watts, a member of 458 Squadron, is remembered. His Wellington was lost on a mission from El Shallufa to Tobruk on 12 August 1942. The walls of the cloister are filled with the names of those with no known graves. We wandered through the cemetery looking at so many graves from Australia, Britain, New Zealand, and South Africa. - A moving experience. There is also an "Australian Memorial" to the

Australian 9th Division. We were the only visitors to the cemetery. A very friendly and helpful gardener pointed out the location of the Australians. Then we visited the nearby Egyptian Military Museum. The Museum has well-presented and interesting outdoor and indoor displays, highlighting the different countries involved in the African Campaign.

"The cemetery and memorial were designed by Sir Hubert Worthington, the Commission's Principal Architect for the cemeteries in North Africa, and the memorial was unveiled by Field Marshal Montgomery on 24 October 1951. The memorial cloister, some 80 metres long, is entered through three arches leading from the forecourt, and at each side of the forecourt broad flights of steps lead to the flat roof of the memorial, from which there is a view of the cemetery, the surrounding desert and, to the north beyond the road, the sea. Above the arched entrance to the cloister the dedicatory inscription reads:

Within this cloister are inscribed the names of the soldiers and airmen of the British Commonwealth and Empire who died fighting on land or in the air where two continents meet and to whom the fortune of war denied a known and honoured grave. With their fellows who rest in this cemetery, with their comrades in arms of the Royal Navy and with the seamen of the Merchant Navy they preserved for the west the link with the east and turned the tide of the war. 1939-1945

There are 7,367 burials in the cemetery, of which 821 are unidentified by name. The names of a further 603 men, whose remains were cremated, are commemorated on the Cremation Memorial within the cemetery. The Alamein Memorial bears the names of 11,874 soldiers and airmen who have no known grave. "



Left to right: Pilot Officer (PO) W. Gengos, second pilot; 400354 Sergeant (Sgt) A. L. Opas, wireless operator; 402596 Sgt M. D. Hart, wireless operator; PO R. B. Harris, RAF (regarded as one of the best navigators in the Squadron); 406326 Sgt A. R. Downe, rear gunner; 402425 Sgt (later Flight Sergeant) David Maitland Watts, captain, (lost on operations over the Middle East on 12 August 1942). Photo taken C.1942-02. 458 SQDN. Holme on Spalding Moor UK.

Emails

SENT-Fri 05-Apr-19 9:27 PM



Dear Roland. Pleased to meet you. My name is Nick Hayes, and my connection with 458 Squadron RAAF is via my great

uncle Sgt William Wallace Forgan, KIA 9/2/1942. These days I fly Airbus A320 in Japan. Kind

of odd to do a walk around or look out the window and see the Rising Sun next to my aeroplane's registration after years of "VHxxx"! I'm keen to know a little more about the aircraft markings that Wally Forgan and his



William Wallace Forgan 1940

crew flew that night they did not return. I understand that it was Vickers Wellington IV serial R1785. I'm keen to know the squadron and aircraft call sign for Wally's aircraft. From what I've learned, RAAF 400 series squadrons followed RAF convention and marked the serial on two vertical surfaces usually near the vertical fin, and on an upper and lower wing surface. However the serial usually differed from the squadron codes and aircraft designation painted in large letters either side of the fuselage, eg Dambusters Lancaster AJ for 617 squadron and G for George for the famous Dams Raid leader.

I can see from the archive photos in North Africa, that 458 Squadron did not seem to paint the 458 squadron code "MD" on the fuse. But it did paint a letter designating the aircraft, such as "G" or "A" or "X". Is there a historian or similar enthusiastic



William Wallace Forgan at Parafield with instructor, 1936. A/C is a de Havilland D.H.60G Gipsy Moth

person that might know the answer? **Nicholas Hayes**

(Ed-Can anyone help Nick? Great to meet you too Nick!)



Nick with Tiger Moth- March 2019.

Emails-continued

SENT-Fri 12-Apr-19 5:41 PM

Hi Roland. **Kim Temple** here. I haven't had any correspondence for a while now and wondered is our subscription due for the



458? Mum and dad (Cecilia & Adrian Temple) send their regards. I have attached a couple of pictures of a 458 sign that has been restored for us by my next door neighbour. Ian, who is a history buff and actually has a DeHavilland Dove in his back yard, has researched the 458 and can't

believe what they actually did. If you ever want to check out some history right around the corner, this bloke's quite amazing with Aviation. The sign was made by my cousin about 35 years ago for my granddad. The sign will return to Mum and dads and eventually come back to me. Well we remember they live on. **Cheers Kim.** (Ed-Thanks Kim-great plaque!)

SENT- Wed 24-Apr-19 9:19 AM. From Charles Baker G'day Roland. Thanks for sending the latest 458 Squadron News. I note with interest your attendance at the recent Avalon Airshow. Pat and I were there too (both days) but unfortunately we did not see you. What a surprise! Maybe it was the hot weather or the other 100,000 people getting in the way. We also were stoked by the displays, particularly the Hornets, F22, and the F35. I have now attended every Avalon since 2003. I don't know if I've mentioned it before but our son Chris is flying the F35 and has been since January 2018. He wasn't at Avalon but a couple of his buddies brought the two F35s down from Williamtown where they are now based. Chris has been instructing on the F35 for the past year or so at Luke USAFB in Arizona. Pat and I were able to visit him there last August and were privileged to get up close and (almost) personal with the aircraft. We saw much flying during

our visit and you could hear the aircraft from his house which is about 15km from the base. He even has his name on an F35 now. Well, tomorrow is ANZAC Day. I am planning to march with 458 in Sydney as I usually do. It's good to see a few people and to feel



that one is showing respect and appreciation for what our forefathers did and endured and to not take our relative freedom for granted as many seem to do. I will be sending by mail a small contribution to the squadron. Keep up the great work with the journal

and associated matters. All the very best to you and your family. **Best regards, Charles (and Pat)** (Ed-Thanks Charles & Pat. We are proud of your son's service as, no doubt, you are.)

SENT-6 May, 2019 1:20 PM

Hello Roland Orchard, My name is Valma Mitchell, widow of Warrant Officer Thomas Gordon Mitchell, who served with the 458 Squadron (433124). Sadly, he passed away in 1991. Naturally I, and our son Peter, are both interested in any news of the Squadron and anything that concerned him and his fellow fliers. We moved from Sydney to the Gold coast in 1990 and he died six months later. I lost touch with the members in Sydney, and I am sure a good number of them would have died since. Thank you for taking the time to contact me. With regards, Valma Mitchell (Ed-Thanks for email Valma. It was great hearing from you. Email any time ©)

Editor- It was nice to receive an email, on June 8th 2019 from Dr Ian Glaspole, grandson of 458 Squadron Commanding Officer Jack Dowling. (CO - Sept. 1943 – July 1944) (Keep in touch Dr. Glaspole –Ed)



458 NEWS

DONATIONS.

Thanks for the very kind and generous donations to 458 Squadron Association. If you wish to donate please see the donation page on our website or contact the editor. These donations help in ongoing costs of the 458 Squadron Newsletter Publication, projects such as the recent 458 Cap & Polo Shirt & 458 Website management by *Potentweb

458 SQUADRON CAPS & POLO SHIRTS

I am pleased to announce that baseball style caps and polo shirts (male and female style) with the 458 Squadron badge are now available through our website www.458raafsquadron.org
Many thanks go to our Victoria Flight Historian Peter Hedgcock who did all the groundwork for this project. Excellent job, well done! Thanks Peter. For more information see our website and/or article further into this newsletter edition. Please note- cap is one size fits all. Shirt comes in various sizes and colours. See article Page 18.





NOTE FROM EDITOR –It is very important for me as Editor of this great Newsletter to be able to keep contact details up to date. The Association would like an up to date number of surviving 458 Veterans and Widows. My main concern at this stage is that an Australian 458 Veteran has not come forth recently. I simply don't know if there is any surviving in Australia. Please contact the editor (my address details on page 1.) Thanks for everyone's support. All postal/email details will be held in the strictest of confidence by the editor.



THE 2019 ERIC J. JEWELL AWARD

The 2019 Eric J. Jewell Award was presented to twenty-one Cadets from 303, 304, 305, 307, 314, 315, 318, 322, 324, 330, 331, 336, 345, 507, and 508 Squadrons, and to three AAFC staff attending the 103rd International
Four Days Marches Nijmegen, in the Netherlands, during the month of July.





The group, alongside many other military participants from around the world, will follow the **green** arrow sign posts, covering about 40 kilometres each day, with a total of 166.6 km over the four days. Their itinerary separately includes visiting Arnhem, located about 25 km north of Nijmegen. Nearly 75 years after *Operation Market Garden* during World War II, they will be crossing the rebuilt <u>Arnhem road bridge</u>. In September 1944, the British 1st Airborne Division and



the Polish 1st Independent Parachute Brigade were given the task of securing this bridge which spans the Lower Rhine River.

Cadets and staff will be proudly wearing the **funded team shirts** with

Four Days Marches patches, and the **FLGOFF Eric J.**

Jewell patch (the same as those worn by the cadets in 2018) near to heart on the left side of the chest. Each participant has been kitted with two shirts to alternate over the four days of the march.



458 Squadron CAPS and POLO Shirts

Once again many thanks go to the 458 Squadron Association Victorian Flight Historian Peter Hedgcock, Vice President (Victoria Flight) Neil Flentje and NSW Flight, for enabling this project to proceed. We are proud to announce the availability of baseball style caps and Polo shirts with embroidered 458 Squadron Badge. The embroidery is high quality with 22,000 stiches for each badge. The cap is one size fits all and many sizes available for the polos. See example photos and size details below. 7 colours available. Royal Blue, Navy, White, Red, Maroon, Bottle(green) & Black. Example colour given here is Royal Blue. Thanks to our model Peter Hedgcock.



Caps – AUD \$32:00 plus Packaging & Postage Shirts - AUD\$45:00 plus Packaging & Postage.

NOTE-PACKAGING & POSTAGE COSTS MAY VARY DEPENDING ON DELIVERY LOCATIONS.

See our Memorabilia Page on our website.

https://www.458raafsquadron.org/memorabilia-shop