



JOURNAL OF THE 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL

Year 71 No. 265 March 2020

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QLD, TAS, NT, ACT and New Zealand – Looking for volunteers.

* 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 e-mail? Please advise the Editor – see postal address above or email Roland at editor@458raafsquadron.org
Contributions and reports for the next Newsletter #266 are due to The Editor by 30th June, 2020.

VALE –

Moira Gray..... Victoria Flight

Grace Baker.....NSW Flight

FLIGHT REPORTS



United Kingdom Flight Report by Keith Wilkinson



Congratulations to our 458 President Leon Armstrong - who's been celebrating his 100th birthday. Up to 40 people attended a party for him at the care home where he's lived for the past three years in the English Midlands. On behalf of 458 Squadron, I popped open a bottle of

Champagne for him, and he thoroughly enjoyed his glass of bubbly. Leon's family gave him a lovely cake to mark his centenary. Leon has two children - Paul and Mary - plus six grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. The former 458 Squadron Leader had a huge smile on his face as the cake was brought into the room while family and friends sang Happy Birthday. As is the custom in the UK, Leon received a birthday card from The Queen. He also got a card from Therese Coffey, Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions. Leon who



had two brothers and two sisters has outlived all his siblings and has been in good shape for his age. A Londoner all his life, Leon moved to

Birmingham for family reasons and his wife died there some years ago. Son Paul said: "He's in pretty good health, a bit wobbly on his feet, but he's quite lively. He's happy at the home, is quite sociable and goes out on trips."



Victoria Flight Report by Roland Orchard

It saddens me to inform members of the passing of Grace Baker, wife of Black Jack Baker. After Jack passed away in March of 2017, Grace moved back to the UK to be with her family. She passed away peacefully with her family by her side in Essex, UK, October 2019. (Photo - Jack & Grace Baker



seated. Jeremy Orchard, Charles and Pat Baker - taken in 2012)

Condolences to Charles, Pat and Chris and family.

I am also saddened to report of the passing of Moira Gray. Moira and her family were very much a part of Eric Jewell's life and very much considered family in spirit and love. Condolences to Peter and the Gray family.

I'm sure we are all aware of the ongoing Covid-19 crisis. I believe that due to this, all ANZAC Day Marches have been cancelled in all Capital Cities of Australia except for South Australia, Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. The latter 3 States will be making their respective decisions in due course. As far as Regional marches

are concerned please keep an ear and eye out for your local media releases on what is happening in your area. We can all hope and pray that everyone keeps safe and adheres to the rules our respective governments have put into place. Keep well and safe everyone.



New South Wales Flight Report by Stephen Bruce

We had a follow up with NSW Squadron members in December after November's joint meeting in Canberra to put recommendations on how to modify our national and state organisations which we all realise is a somewhat onerous task which will take some extra time and efforts to bring to fruition.

On 3rd March NSW members Bev Bitmead, Peter Bitmead, Jenny Higgs, Beryl Dodds, Ron Munkman, Rob Wilkinson and myself convened at Nth Ryde RSL for a meeting and a little lunch to plan and discuss activities for upcoming 2020 Anzac Day march and annual meeting to be again held in The Castlereagh Boutique Hotel. As is the normal practice we guessed and second guessed the number of attendees we could expect and how to ensure the luncheon event



would be up to our expectations given some costing considerations. In the end we just said let's just ensure we cover our costs and enjoy what has become an enjoyable yet sombre day without any surviving members in attendance.

We were proud to award Bev Bitmead, wife of the late Don Bitmead, life membership of 458 squadron for her

continued commitment (refer to photo) Bev sitting with a Kalori (truth stick) along with her certificate.

It is a great pity that with the



global health crisis taking such a serious turn that all our Anzac Day Celebrations will preclude us from gathering on 25th April, 2020



South Australia Flight Report by Rick Michell

Roland, thought you might be interested in this article (refer to Emails on page 8) sent last night from Robert Forgan, re the report. All I can say is we had an enjoyable lunch for our Christmas get together and regrettably there will be no Anzac Day lunch this year as the Kensi will be closed on Anzac Day We are hoping to have our mid-year lunch on the 2nd or 9th of July, subject to restrictions. We wish everyone the best in these trying times.



West Australia Flight Report by Nick Bertram

No report from WA, this edition, however Nick wishes everyone well during these trying times.

458 Squadron Photo Memories

LAC Kemp Oliver Beach 32477

Thanks to Thea Harrild, Kemp's granddaughter, we have copies of 2 of 3 photo albums Kemp had collected from his 458 days. Kemp passed away in 1970 and his wife Joan, in 2014. One of the albums is missing however Thea and her family are busy hunting for them. Cheers Thea!



Above & Left -
Kemp (left in both) with mates, Nurn Gurhardt & Rube Johnson in front of B24. Fayid, Egypt, circa 1942



Left-ANZAC Day Malta, 1943.

Emails

27/2/2020 - Subject Leon Armstrong

Dear Roland, thank you for sending me the December Newsletter which has just arrived. I will take it in to my father when I next visit him. I hope you are keeping well have not been affected by the terrible fires and the floods that have affected large parts of Australia. On a smaller scale we are now subject to widespread flooding in the Midlands where I am based, and in South Wales. The River Severn takes water from the Welsh hills down to the Bristol Channel and the nearest town to me, Worcester, has been badly flooded with the highest ever recorded level. Further upstream the towns of Bewdley, Ironbridge, and Shrewsbury are inundated. Worcester has great historical significance. 'Bad' King John, of Magna Carta fame, who died in 1216 is buried in Worcester Cathedral. Also, the Royalist Army of King Charles II was defeated in 1651 at the Battle of Worcester, during the English Civil War, by Oliver Cromwell's army. Dad's birthday party was a very enjoyable occasion and we were pleased that Keith Wilkinson and his wife were able to attend. Dad received a birthday card from the Queen to wish him well on his 100th birthday. He has to get to 105 before he gets another from the monarch! I think Keith will be sending you some photographs for you to put in your next Newsletter if you wish to do so. With best wishes, Paul (Armstrong)

Happy 100th Birthday Leon. From all 458ers around the world-editor.
29/2/2020 Subject – Thank you.

G'day Roland. Thank you for sending the December issue of the 458 Squadron News. I wish also to advise you that Grace, my father Jack Baker's wife, has died, in England. She passed away

Emails – continued

peacefully last October at age 96 with her English family at her bedside in Essex. This completes an era for us as Jack died in March 2017 at age 98. Pat and I had only seen her 5 weeks earlier in her Nursing Home while we were on a trip to various parts of Europe. Very sad but ultimately inevitable. Our son Chris continues to flourish, he has entered his third year at Luke USAF Base in Phoenix, Arizona. For 2020 he is the Senior National Representative (SNR) of the RAAF pilots, instructors and maintainers at the base. At the end of this year the RAAF presence there will be concluded and all remaining service personnel, including Chris, will redeploy to Australia. At this juncture all ongoing training associated with the F35 will be done in Australia. Thank you. Keep up the excellent work. Best regards. Charles (Once again, condolences to the family and great to hear about Chris, Charles – editor)

22/2/2020-Website Form-Online Enquiry

Name Peter Laming

Enquiry Hi,

Please put me down for Newsletter etc. My son Barry, obviously beat me to it last ANZAC day. Maybe we will both make it this year. I now live in Wodonga, after 20 years in Darwin.

(Nice to hear from your Peter. Look forward to meeting you and Barry ANZAC Day Melbourne 2021-editor)

14/2/2020 – Subject – 1 WAGS Website

G'day Roland. My brother, resident in Ballarat, rang me yesterday to tell me there was an item in the Ballarat Courier about the establishment of a No.1 Wireless Air Gunners School website. <https://www.1wags.org.au/>

I haven't had time to check it out yet, but I did put Dad's name and number in and it came up. Mum's family all lived in Ballarat in that era and Dad was living in Melbourne when he enlisted.

They sent him to No.1WAGS for his basic training, and it was while he was based in Ballarat, he met Mum -----and the rest is history!!!!!! Hoo roo, Chris. (Wurr)

(Great website Chris. Worth a look by everyone as I'm sure many of our 458 Veterans attended 1 WAGS Ballarat, Victoria -editor)

Emails – continued

From: Rob Forgan. 30 March 2020

Dear Rick (Adelaide), Rob (Australia) and Keith (UK), 458 Squadron Association members. Earlier today I received the underlying welcome email from Georges Dennebouy of St Malo France. Georges was kind enough to send this rare photo of the crashed and burnt out Wellington bomber that came to grief near the villages of Golleville and Colomby, south of Cherbourg in the harsh European winter of 1942. One of Georges colleagues, Mickael Simon located the photo in the British archives earlier this year. The team of 4 amateur aviation archaeologists and historians had persisted and hoped to locate some photos taken by the occupying German forces at the crash site but as the email suggests this 2020 find draws this aspect of their research into R1785 to a close. I thought you might appreciate a copy of this email for your interest and the photos for your archives. I hope this email finds you and surviving members of 458 well. **Regards Rob Forgan**, Mount Gambier, South Australia (nephew of W.W “Wally” Forgan RAAF)

From: Georges Dennebouy

Sent: Sunday, 29 March 2020

Subject: Picture of The Wellington-R1785



Dear friends, during our researches about the Wellington, we learned that a people of Golleville gave a picture she took to a British officer who came to Golleville after war for enquiries about the Wellington shoot down and crashed in this village.

Claude, Mickael, Claire and I thought that this picture was still in the archives of the Royal Air Force. But it was not possible to have a look to this archive. The archives of the RAF are progressively transferred to the British archives. On February, Mickael, as every year went to London for his researches and he learned that the file about the Wellington was now at the British archives so he

asked to have a look to this document. And he found the picture of the Wellington. We send you this picture, it's your picture. We think that now we will not be able to find more information about the Wellington that we found. **Amitiés, Lest We Forget Mickael, Claude, Claire, Georges.**

ERIC J JEWELL AWARD FOR 2020 – UPDATE



With the unexpected and tragic effect of the corona virus around the world, and the need for 'physical distancing', 458 Squadron will be looking for alternate ways to support cadets across the country. Perhaps aeronautical or aerospace computer software geared to individual use could be one of the options. An application from a Victorian Squadron is aligned to this theme. If you or someone you know has a 13 to 17 year-old son or daughter aspiring to become an Air Force Cadet, then please go to the 458 Squadron website and collect the application form (<https://www.458raafsquadron.org/eric-j-jewell-award>). Applications close the day after Anzac Day 2020, and the winner will be announced on 31st May, 2020.

AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADETS
REACH FOR THE STARS

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](#)

STOP THE PRESS: WE HAVE UPDATED OUR HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE!

By Vic Flight Treasurer Jeremy Orchard

After eight years of solid use, it was definitely time to upgrade the tools used to produce and publish the wonderful tri-annual 458 Squadron Newsletter. These tools also assist with conducting many aspects of the running of the Association. And in the tech world an 8-year-old personal computer is long in the tooth, meaning it was rapidly reaching the end of its usefulness.

The Treasurer, ably assisted by the Committee, submitted two grant applications in 2019. I am very happy to announce that both were successful!

We received \$2217.60 to buy a new laptop computer complete with up-to-date operating software. It has much faster processing speed and can even be used to run a Wellington flight simulator because it is a gaming laptop! This funding was gratefully received from the Anzac Day Proceeds Fund, a Veterans Grant



from the Victorian State Govt.

We received \$918 to buy a new Inkjet printer (we had considered a LaserJet which can print faster but the cost of ink per year would be twice what we are paying now). These funds were gratefully received from the Australian Government's Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans & Community Grants program. (note that our 8-year-old inkjet printer malfunctioned and so needed to be replaced).

458 SQUADRON CAPS AND POLO SHIRTS

NOW AVAILABLE

Baseball style caps and Polo shirts with embroidered 458 Squadron Crest. The embroidery is high quality with 22,000 stitches 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, Victoria Flight Historian.



Polo Sizes

LADIES	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30
<u>BUST</u>	46	48.5	51	53.5	56	58.5	61	63.5	66	68.5	73.5	76
<u>SP LENGTH</u>	62	64	66	68	70	72	73	74	75	76	78	79

Mens/Adults Shirt Sizes

ADULTS	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL	4XL	5XL
<u>CHEST</u>	53.5	56	58.5	61	63.5	66.5	70	73.5
<u>SP LENGTH</u>	70	72.5	75	77.5	80	81	82	83



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>



Expression of Interest / Save the Date for 458 Squadron Association 2021 Reunion

During these uncertain times I believe we need to have an element of positivity in each and every one of us. With that in mind, we are still planning the 2021 Reunion and would encourage one and all to look ahead with a renewed sense of positivity and consider attending next year's function. Something to look forward to and a short break from our day to day activity to re-acquaint, reconnect and remember our loved ones. The 3 "R" s - Re-acquaint, Reconnect, Remember. 😊

Proposed Dates –

Friday 9th July – Tuesday 13th July, 2021.

Proposed Location-

Williamtown/Newcastle, New South Wales

Detailed Itinerary to be Advised

A group tour of RAAF Williamtown to coincide with the 80th Anniversary of 458 Squadron and Centenary of the Royal Australian Air Force is proposed. Also, a day trip to local tourist destination.

Expression of Interest for 458 Squadron Association 2021 Reunion

Name. _____ number of attendees _____

Contact Details (phone/mobile or address). _____

I **would like to attend** / **am unable to attend** this proposed Reunion in 2021.

Please circle your choice of wishing to attend or not.

Please cut on the above dotted line and post your expression of interest to
Editor (Roland Orchard. 78 Edward Road, Chirnside Park. Victoria. 3116)
or scan/copy and email editor@458raafsquadron.org