



JOURNAL OF THE 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL
Year 74 No. 273 March 2023



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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 #274
are due to The Editor by 31st July, 2023.***

VALE –

Audrey Christianson. See UK Flight Report



FLIGHT REPORTS

Canada Flight Report by Adam & Cate Wagstaffe

In World War Two 1,159,000 Canadians served in the armed forces. 44,090 deaths were recorded and of those 17,397 were Aircrew. 32 of those Canadian names appear on the Honour Roll of 458 RAAF. One of those was Flying Officer Frederick K. Verhaest.

I recently touched base with Della, whose husband Joseph was the great nephew of Flying Officer Frederick Kamiel Verhaest, who was killed during air operations with 458 Squadron.

Fred's parents were both born in Belgium and migrated to Canada in 1910. They resided in Kootenays, British Columbia and worked as dairy farmers. Frederick's parents would later move outside of



Frederick's Family: Bruno (Father), Adronie (Mother), George (Brother), Fred, Harry (Brother) Verhaest

Medicine Hat to start their own farm, in Whitla, Alberta where Fred was born February 27, 1919.

Whitla, in 1910, opened up to homesteaders and many families from Canada and the USA moved there to start farms. The 1930s saw many leave again as the depression devastated the area. Today Whitla is the site of the largest wind farm in Alberta.

Fred was very outgoing and enjoyed all types of sports, from Baseball to the very traditional Canadian ice skating, to even the occasional tennis and basketball. His dream was to become a teacher. This was a challenge initially as he was needed to help work the family farm. For a time, he was an Assistant Postmaster working from home before training at Calgary Normal University, followed by summer school to teach Physiology, Typing, Dramatics and Principles of Education.

Fred became a teacher in 1940 at the Foremost School Division in Alberta, but just one year into his dream job, he joined the RCAF as a Special Reserve. In his enlistment interview, the interviewer made note that Fred was a “a rather nice type lad, clean cut. Well Spoken. Should be good material for any air crew.” However, for some reason (likely a SNAFU) he was initially sent to No. 7 SFTS (Service Flight Training School) in Macleod Alberta where they had advanced twin engine trainers, before he had even opened a textbook or got close to an aeroplane! Three months later he was back in Edmonton, Alberta starting again at the No. 4 ITS (Initial Training School).



Though Fred's enlistment interview went rather well, the same could not be said for his report cards throughout his pilot training. The officers in charge of his No. 4 Initial Training gave him a 57% pass. They considered him below average pilot material and recommended him for Air Crew. Despite those remarks Fred was posted to No. 5 EFTS

to learn to fly Tiger Moths.

The Chief Supervisory Officer at NO. 5 Elementary Flight Training at High River Station in Alberta said Fred “was a slow thinker, low average flying ability, Ground School only fair. Should be finished, conduct very good.” Once again Fred overcame a somewhat negative report and was posted to No. 15 SFTS. (To give a sense of Claresholm Station Base in 1942 at any given time it consisted of 83 Officers, 1162 Airmen, 150 trainees and 63



civilians. In addition, there were 47 Avro Ansons and 70 Cessna Cranes; both twin engine trainers used for Bomber or multi engine pilot training)

The No. 15 Service Flight Training School said however that Fred was “a good average pilot who is safe and reliable. Judgement is fair and he possesses good air sense.” As he trained, and we suspect, the



need for ready and able pilots for the war grew, Fred’s skills and efficiency earned him his Pilots Flying Badge and a promotion from LAC to Flight Sergeant on November 6th, 1942 at Claresholm Station, Alberta. Although we do not have Fred’s Pilot Log Book we know during this time he would have

completed Instrument flying, Formation Flying, basic navigation and perhaps some bombing practice.

Very quickly after graduation and a very short leave, Fred was on a train east, first to Charlestown, New Brunswick and then to No. 1 “Y” depot Halifax, Nova Scotia, the embarkation depot for Air Force

personnel heading overseas. Dates on Fred's service record indicate he boarded a ship, either convoy or fast liner to the UK.

Once Fred arrived in the UK at the Training Pool he moved on to the Wellington Bomber and at this time became part of the crew that worked together on further training. Captain and Pilot F/O. Graham: 2nd Pilot and now F/O, Fred Verhaest: Navigator F/O Cundy: Gunner F/O Healey: WOP/AG Sgt Birchall and WOP/AG Roberston. Unusual to have such a senior ranking crew, with 4 Flying Officers.

For further training he completed the No.7 Coastal Training in Cumberland April 1943, The Torpedo Training in Turberry in May 1943, and the Ferry Training with 303 in Talbenny, South Wales. Fred and his crew departed for the Middle East and 458 RAAF Squadron on July 8th 1943, joining them in the tents, sand and flies of Protville, Tunisia.

Fred and crew flew their first mission on July 22 1943, taking off from Protville at 2031 in Wellington "K", returning 9 hours later at 0546 and reported "No incidents. Weather good. Sea calm." Their second mission on July 26 was not so successful. Taking off in Wellington "C" at 2110 for an "Armed Rover" to East Corsica they returned just over an hour later at 2148 reporting "Patrol not carried out. No further details found.

Just 5 days later, and less than two weeks from his arrival with 458 Squadron, Fred and his crew took off on Wellington "D" on their third mission at 2157. Very soon after take- off they suffered a



serious engine problem and turned immediately for base. The crew were ordered to jettison everything (including flares) to reduce weight. A Wellington on one engine with fuel for a 10-hour patrol was not a friendly aircraft.

Just before landing all crew except the two pilots moved to the centre section. On landing, control was lost, and "D" hit a parked aircraft. Both pilots, Graham and Fred Verhaest were killed. The rest of the

“I realize there is little which may be said or done to lessen your sorrow, but is my hope that these “Wings”, indicative of operations against the enemy, will be a treasured memento of a young life offered on the altar of freedom in defence of his Home and Country” – W.A. Dicks to Adronie Verhaest June 20th 1946.



F/O L. Cundy, Navigator with Fred Verhaest and crew, who was injured in the crash that killed Fred, was back flying on August 9th with none other than F/O "Brush" Downs, pilot (our subject in the December issue) and crew, including Co President Bill Wake. He continued to fly as Navigator with Downs and crew, including Bill Wake and on September 01 with our uncle John Michael Wagstaffe, back as second pilot. The very small world of 458 RAAF!!!



United Kingdom Flight Report by Keith Wilkinson



Audrey and Jack Christianson
at the Ritz a few years ago.

458 Squadron has lost another much-loved member of its UK family. I am extremely sad to report the passing of Audrey Christianson, the 96-year-old widow of 458 pilot Jack Christianson, who died in 2020. Audrey had been living in a care home and was quite settled and content with her new life there. But on March 13th she suddenly collapsed and died. The day before she had been laughing and joking with her family.

So, her death came as a shock but it was of some consolation to them that she appears to have gone without suffering. Audrey was the life and soul of any party and was full of fun. She was one of the best story-tellers I have ever met. Her fascinating tales about London in the 1930s and 40s could be utterly hilarious and also, at times, somewhat macabre, but they were always delivered with a great sense of humour and a happy sprinkling of playful mischievousness. She was a talented artist who had studied at Art School. She was an accomplished pianist and singer. She was employed in London theatres – on stage and in the wardrobe departments - and worked alongside many of the greatest stars ever to tread the boards. She was evacuated out of London as a schoolgirl at the start of The Blitz but returned to the capital when Hitler's notorious Doodlebugs were falling and causing devastation. She met Jack, a Civil Servant in Whitehall, when he returned home from the war and they were married in 1949. Audrey was a familiar face at 458 reunions and she attended the squadron get-together at Alghero in Sardinia. She had visited Australia at least a dozen times to see family members living there. Audrey amassed a collection of Teddy Bears and one of her favourites was Wellington – named, of course, after the aircraft

her husband flew in 458 Squadron. One of the people we know as the Greatest Generation, Audrey will be dearly missed by all of us who knew her and loved her.

Meanwhile, I have spoken recently to Squadron Co-President Bill Wake and he cheerfully described himself as “a bit stiff...always a bit stiff first thing in the morning”. Not bad for a 100-year-old former rear gunner! He still gets out and about, meeting friends and going shopping.

And congratulations to our Squadron Co-President Charles Humbles. I chatted with him on his 101st birthday and wished him many happy returns on behalf of the squadron. Amazingly he and his wife Joyce have had their 82nd wedding anniversary. Joyce will be 103 years old in July and still refers to Charles as her toy boy. In February Charles had a new battery fitted to his pacemaker. He says there was a shortage of NHS hospital beds so he had to have the operation and return home on the same day. “It was freezing cold and the ambulance came at 6.30 in the morning,” he said. “It took two hours to get there because they had to pick up another patient. And then they brought us home at 4 p.m. after they put in the new battery. I’d had the other one for eight years.” The couple say that despite the huge spike in gas and electricity bills in England, they have kept their house warm in the cold winter and didn’t turn down their heating, like some pensioners. They have also continued with their daily routine – a glass of gin at lunchtime. It seems gin has helped keep them going but they attribute their longevity to having had a physically active life. They were ballroom dancers, played lots of golf and enjoyed working in their garden.



New South Wales Flight Report by Stephen Bruce

Dear 458 Clan, just a short note to remind you of this year’s Sydney March details. We should form up around 10:am facing north in Castlereagh St probably between Market and King St. We are very much at the rear of RAAF this year so I would guess we will be marching much later than usual. Look

forward to seeing you all there followed by our gathering at The Castlereagh Boutique Hotel. Please advise if you can attend in order that we can provide a number to the hotel. NB: website at <https://www.rslnsw.org.au/> contains march map.

Rob Wilkinson's Surprise 70th Birthday Party.



The surprise event went off very



well indeed. The speeches were great. Rob's elder sister Jan delivered a very moving account of Rob's early days in Hobart. Rob's wife Carolin along with their son Alex and daughter Alana provided further insights into Rob's life to date.

Guests from all over

Australia along with well-wishers from his old friends from his AFS (Australian Field School) exchange program to the USA in 1971 sent congratulatory video messages for the day and his childhood mate of 68 years attended from Hobart as well. His efforts in supporting charitable organisations through Rotary and local community organisations were recognised by dignitaries in attendance. The second photo is where Rob's sister Jan was delivering her speech. Our group photo left to right Stephen and Anita, Ian Dodds, Rob Wilkinson, Peter Bitmead, Beryl Dodds and Ron Munkman.

Best Regards, Stephen Bruce, Secretary 458 Squadron



Queensland Flight Report by Brett Taylor

I have just volunteered to be the Queensland flight representative so let me introduce myself. My name is Brett Taylor, son of Squadron Leader G.E. (Bill) Taylor 407690 who served with 458 in North Africa and the invasion of Italy. I have lived in Brookfield, Brisbane for the past 30 years with my family having grown up in Adelaide. I studied geology and worked in many parts of Australia and the world.

As long as I can remember 458 was part of my life as a young boy in



Photo 1 Squadron Leader Bill Taylor

Adelaide. Dad was President of the 458 Association there for some time so we always attended the Anzac Day Parade and other events like family picnics at a local park. I remember so many of those men from 458 that served with him.

Over the last year or so I have been laboriously translating the diary my father kept throughout his 5 war years as a legacy for my sons. Once the original is completed, I will provide an edited version of this for the 458 association servicemen's stories

website. I have included a few excerpts here.

I first made contact with Roland Orchard in March 2022 and was



Photo 2 Meeting Roland, Jeremy and Chris in Melbourne

amazed to find that the 458 association was so active. Unfortunately, it was too late to attend the 80th Reunion Anniversary in Williamstown as my wife and I were about to leave for the UK for overseas to visit our son and our new grandson. However, I subsequently met Roland, Jeremy and Chris Orchard last December in Melbourne. Bill had talked to me about their father Gordon who was his squadron leader in Bone in 1944 and we had an interesting morning talking about 458 Squadron history.

The following is a snapshot of my father's life with some selected details during his time with 458. He was born in Adelaide in 1911 and he joined the RAAF in December 1940 training in Pearce, then Cunderdin and Geraldton, Western Australia. He became a



Photo 2 Learning to fly in a Tiger Moth



Photo 1 The Hotspur glider Bill flew from UK to Ireland with Army top brass.

commissioned pilot officer in August 1941 and was posted to the UK travelling across the Pacific, North America then the Atlantic to arrive in Scotland in November 1941. On hearing that there would be a delay in a posting to an operational unit, he decided to fill in the time by volunteering for a glider course. Churchill wanted to develop the ability to attack using glider borne troops, after German parachute and glider borne assaults in the invasions of Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, France and mainland Greece.

To his “horror” he discovered once accepted, he was locked into the first glider training course and was part of RAF 296 Squadron and the Glider Exercise Unit. He ended up learning how to deliver troops into a field using gliders with minimal warning. He trained many army pilots on how to fly gliders into a field in formation, at heights below hedges or houses to maximise a surprise attack. Hotspur Gliders that carried 6 troops were mainly used.



Photo 3 Bill with his all Australian crew in Bone

In June 1943 he applied for a transfer to Coastal Command and was posted to Northern Ireland for training on night torpedo Wellingtons. His crew was made up of Bernie McLoughlin (second pilot), Tom Phillis (navigator), Roy Schoppe, Bill Horton (W.O.P's) and

Dick Hatton as rear gunner. More training followed at Talbenny, Wales with Air Sea rescue in the Atlantic, including some real rescue missions. He was then transferred to North Africa and in August 1943 flew a new Wellington Mark XIII out west around France and Spain to Ras El Mar, Morocco delivering the aircraft to Fayed east of Cairo. This mission was followed by a night torpedo course at Shallufa and by early January 1944 he joined 458 Squadron in Bone. The Squadron was equipped with Mark XIV Wellingtons fitted with Leigh lights, which are searchlights controlled in the front turret by the second pilot to illuminate a submarine during an attack. John Dowling was the C.O. and by mid-month Bill was Deputy Flight Commander under Squadron leader Gordon Orchard.

Bill's diary describes many operations over the Mediterranean. He describes many aircraft equipment failures, crashes and aircraft just not returning, together with shocking weather including rain, strong cross wind, hail, snow, mud and icing conditions. He reports that the aerodrome in Bone was built for fighters, so the hard standings were too small for Wellingtons which had to turn on locked tyres. This severely reduced the life of tyres and undercarriages of the aircraft.



Photo 4 L-R Bernie McLoughlin second pilot and Bill flying a "Wimpy".

The extract below from his diary, illustrates the result of urgent “swamp” action to find a reported submarine, using untested equipment resulting in him crash landing his Wellington in Bone on 18th March.

“My second pilot, Bernie McLoughlin was in hospital, so I had Joe Bartlett as second dickie. We took off fully laden with overload tank and 16 depth charges in light wind conditions about 10 pm. After about 20 minutes my Radar Operator Snow Hortin, said that the radar was not working. I told him to keep trying to get it to work when Roy Schoppe told me that the wireless was out of action. The lights in the aircraft then went out so obviously something was amiss. The greatest sin is to be late on patrol so to make sure that we were not at fault, Roy searched all of the fuses with the aid of a torch, but to no avail. We had no choice but to return to Bone. As our radio was out we could not contact base. On arrival back at the drome, they switched off all lights as an enemy attack was possible. We fired a Very light and the landing lights were turned on indicating a landing in the opposite direction to my take off. The flaps would not work, so Joe tried to pump them down by hand but only managed 40 degrees. As a result, we were overshooting. I opened up the motors to go around again, but the motors coughed and appeared to lose power. I closed the throttles and we went hairing down the runway with no hope of stopping. I turned off the runway and pulled up the undercarriage. We finally hit a pile of rubble and the undercarriage collapsed and the aircraft broke in half. Why we did not catch fire is a mystery with the depth chargers and 900 gallons of petrol on board. The aircraft had just arrived from England and had not been checked by our ground crew due to a swamp operation at the time. Subsequently it was found that the flap jack was broken and generators unserviceable. Due to ground controller panic, I was brought in downwind adding to my troubles. The aircraft had a broken back, so it was off to the Maintenance Depot. We were lucky.”



Photo 5 QF278 taking off in Bone in wet conditions February 1944. Piloted by Mel Priest.

Bill was included in a detachment to Malta in April 1944 which he describes as expensive. Six aircraft “pranged”, mainly it seems due to equipment failure, weather conditions and an aerodrome with a quarry at one end.

He then took five aircraft to Grottaglie in Italy where he says all of the Squadron “worked like slaves”.

“We arrived back in Bone for a swamp and last night I was 200 miles out when my starboard engine lost a magneto. Got home alright, but it isn’t funny. Pitch black night and your aircraft vibrating badly isn’t my idea of a pleasant way to spend a night.”

In June 1944 he was promoted to Squadron Leader and the Squadron moved to Alghero, Sardinia, mainly for the invasion of France. He did a bombing run over Vada Ligure near Genoa and suffered considerable anti-aircraft flak.

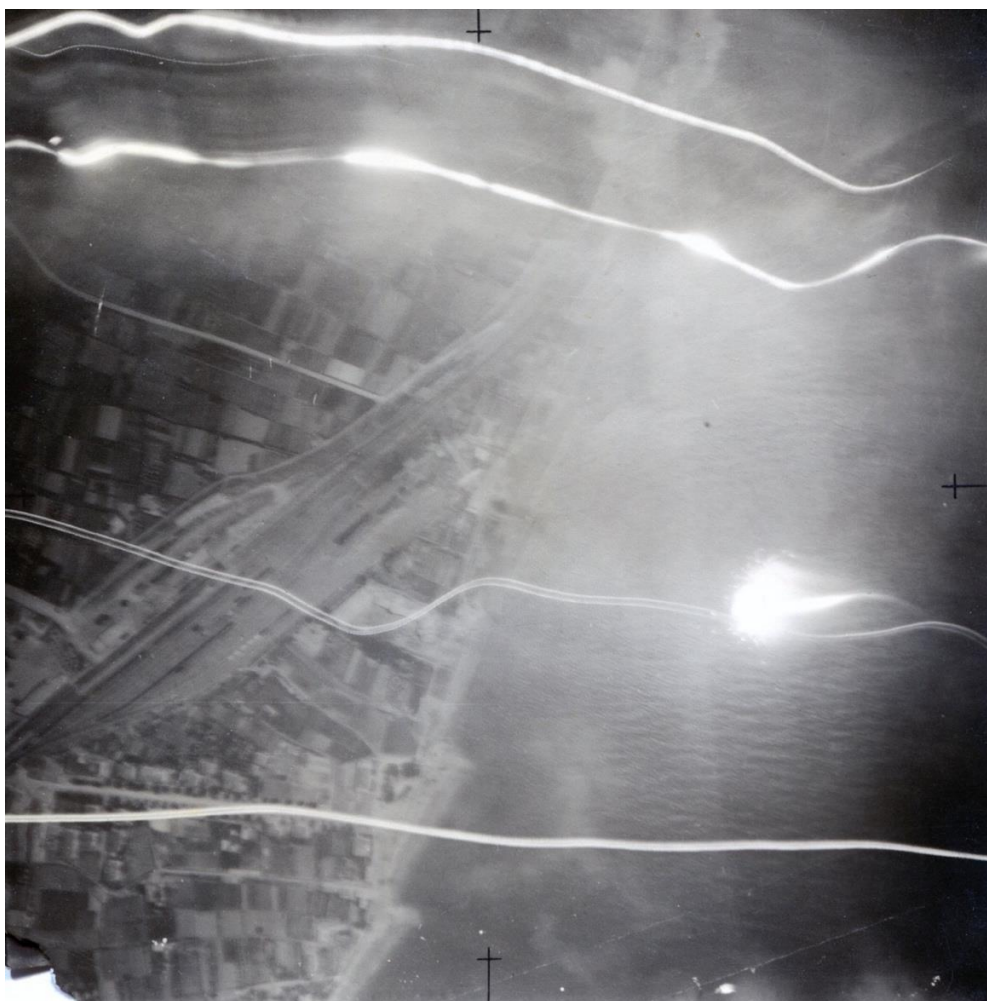


Photo 6 Photo of the flak over Vada Ligure. Fuel tanks were the target.

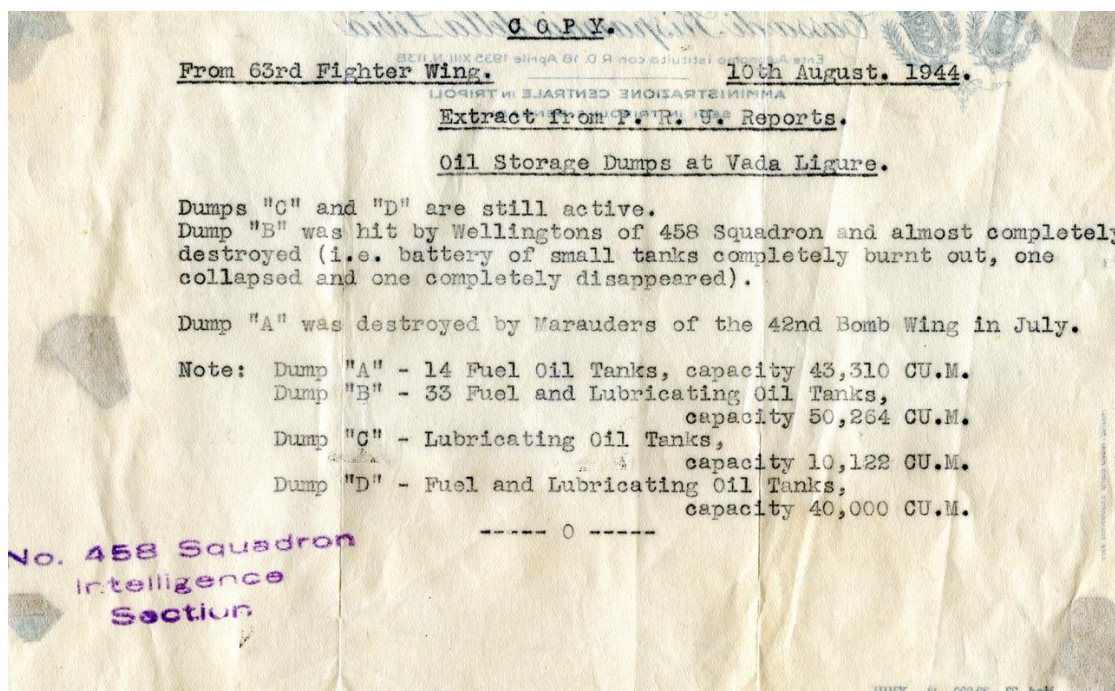


Photo 7 The 458 intelligence report after the attack.

By September 1944 the Squadron moved to Foggia and then Ancona on the Italian Adriatic coast. He again reports atrocious weather conditions of rain, sleet and snow resulting in a general muddy mess. Around this time Wellingtons of the Bomber Wing at Foggia were averaging 1.7 landings per tyre presumably due to aerodrome conditions. Bill assumed his Wellington aircraft would have been suffering the same limitation. In November he noted that bad weather conditions again caused a number of the American Bomber Group aircraft crews to end up in the sea. Bill was asked to supply "Wimpys" to search for them, but with cloud down to 400-500 feet and two water spouts with associated flying conditions, the downed airmen were not found.

By April 1945 his tour expired, and Bill returned to the UK and eventually to Adelaide by late September of that year, where shortly after he married Madge Smith, my mother.

Before the war he studied to become a Land Broker on conveyancing work and was employed in one of the big law firms in Adelaide. He also studied accountancy but that was interrupted by the outbreak of the war. On his return to Adelaide after the war he started a small real estate business utilising his Land Broking experience, but he also became an Auctioneer and Valuer to expand his business, which he ran successfully until age 72 years.

In conclusion I encourage and welcome all relatives of the men who served with 458 Squadron, to contact me and tell their stories in order to expand this association in Queensland.

I can be contacted on btaylorc6@gmail.com



South Australia Flight Report by Rick Michell

There is not much news from SA Flight. We are fast approaching ANZAC Day and we are encouraging those that are able to march, please do. We are once again having our ANZAC Day reunion lunch at the Kensington Hotel, 23 Regent Street, Kensington, at noon. Everyone is welcome and please let Dave Cosh (0417867277) know if you are planning to attend the lunch. Our mid-

year lunch will be held on 6th July, 2023, at noon, also at the Kensington Hotel. Wishing all the Members a very Happy Easter. Rick Michell.



Victoria Flight Report by Roland Orchard

ANZAC Day 2023 is nearly upon us so I hope everyone can make a special effort to attend if not the Melbourne CBD march, one that is close to your home. If you are planning to attend the Melbourne CBD, form up is 10:30am and step off at 11am. Location of form up is Flinders St. east of Swanston St. on the northern side of Flinders St. Look out for the 458 Banner. For all other Victorian Regional ANZAC Day Services please refer to your local RSL or visit the rslvic website on the following link.

<https://rslvic.com.au/local-anzac-day-services>

As usual, the AGM will be held at the at Jardin Tan Café, Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra VIC 3141, opposite the eastern entrance to The Shrine of Remembrance.

On 18th December, 2022, Jeremy and Chris Orchard and I had the privilege to meet Brett and Denise Taylor at a café in Glen Iris, Melbourne. Brett is the son of 458 Veteran Squadron Leader William (Bill) Taylor. We welcome Brett as our Queensland Flight Correspondent. See his QLD Flight report.

Emails To Editor

Sent: Friday, 3 February 2023 6:16 AM

Hello - I have these (2) original photos of a 458 flight crew and their Wellington and was wondering if your organization was wondering if you would like to have scans for your site? If so, please confirm where you would like me to send the scans.

Hope you find this of interest.

Sincerely,

Howard Sheely

Annapolis, Maryland USA

(2) photos - Flt. Lt. Suddaby & crew and their Wellington in Tunisia, 1943



WELLINGTON MK XIII as torpedo bomber Tunisia 1943 (PROVILLE)
(carrying 2 torpedoes)



*Flt Lt J. L. Suddaby & crew at the end of tour of Ops. Sept 1943
in front of Wellington Mk XIII at Protville Tunisia*



BRITISH OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH NO. CM.5036 (X)
AIR MINISTRY PHOTOGRAPH : CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED

TORPEDO CARRYING WELLINGTONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Torpedo carrying Wellingtons operating against Axis shipping in the Mediterranean. Phases of a typical torpedo attack.

Picture shows:- 1 CAUSE. A Wellington flying on a level course while dropping its "tin fish"

14/5/43.

The following photo is from the 458 Squadron Operation Records which lists this operation on 23/24 April 1943. Take note Suddaby's crew. Apart from Suddaby himself, his crew are not listed on the 458 Squadron Nominal Roll.

If anyone knows anything further about Flt Lt Suddaby and/or his crew, please contact the Editor. editor@458raafsquadron.org

His crew are listed as follows: -

Sgt. Beardsall 3089355. 2nd Pilot.

Sgt. Dunne. M.J. R.79035. Navigator.

Sgt. La Palme. G. R.92558. Wireless Operator.

Sgt. Evans. CP. 1293185. Special Equipment (Radar) Operator.

Sgt. Griffen. NJ. (no service number listed) Rear Gunner.

DATE	AIRCRAFT TYPE & NUMBER	CREW	DUTY	TIME	
				UP	DOWN
23/24. Apr.	Wellington. H.	122617. F/O. Suddaby. J.L. 1227435. Sgt. Beardsall. 3089355. Sgt. Dunne. M.J. R.79035. Sgt. La Palme. G. R.92558. Sgt. Evans. CP. 1293185. Sgt. Griffen. NJ.	Captain. 2nd Pilot. Navigator. W./Optr. S.R./Optr. R./Gunner.	2020.	2215.

Ed. It is people like Howard with whom we all should be appreciative by sending The 458 Association snippets of information, or in this case photos, of our glorious 458 Veterans. Howard bought these photos on eBay as he is an avid collector of WWII photographs, especially RAF and Commonwealth units and was generous enough to contact us and give us scans of the Suddaby crew. Howard lives in Annapolis, Maryland, USA. **Thank you Howard!**

From: MELANIE Coles Vlieghe
setthemfree@virginmedia.com

To: "editor@458squadron.org"

Date: 16/02/2023

Subject: Research

Hello. I am doing some research on RAF/RAAF pilots in WW2. I am trying to find some information on Wing Commander Norman George Mulholland, who was C/O of 458 Squadron. I have accessed some useful information from service records and Activity Reports. However, I am wondering if you have information about whether he has any surviving relatives, as I do not know if he was married or had children. If you can help me in any way, I would be grateful.

Many thanks

Mrs Melanie Coles De Vlieghe

Ed.- I have had some great information from Neil Flentje to pass on to Melanie, however if anyone else knows of Wing Commander Mulholland's surviving family members, I am sure she would appreciate an email with further information. (thanks to all others who responded. Melanie specifically asked for any surviving family members.)

DONATIONS.

We acknowledge the generosity of Cecelia and Adrian Temple and Dane Clarke for their very kind 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 & 458 Squadron Association Website management by [*Potentweb](#)

Discovering 458 memorabilia on the Internet.

by Neil Flentje son of Flying Officer WM (Bill) Flentje

Since I have started to appreciate the service my father and his fellow 458ers did during WWII, I have become interested in learning more about what they did and how they did it. And to that end the Internet is a handy tool to use, especially collecting memorabilia and the like.

Firstly, the Squadron Books written by Peter Alexander. All three editions of *We Find And Destroy* come up from time to time on Ebay, mostly it's the third edition but sometimes the earlier editions are sometimes available. You can also try Abe Books at <https://www.abebooks.com/>.

There are currently 16 copies for sale at that site.

Lapel Badge: I recently purchased a 458 Squadron lapel badge online from the UK, it differs a little bit from the one my dad had but both were manufactured in Sydney by Millers. The UK badge has a half moon back clip to suit a button hole whereas my Dad's has a safety pin style attachment to position anywhere on one's clothing.

Pictured below UK on left, Aus on right. Maybe when the badges were available to members, you had a choice?

Plaques: I also picked up a 458 Squadron emblem plaque also from the UK, It differs quite a bit from the New Zealand produced one which we have in Australia. The UK one is bigger in size both the wooden plaque and the Squadron emblem, as you can see from the photograph below (The UK one is on the left).



Paintings I also purchased a print of a painting completed by Tom Moore of a Wellington with Leigh Light deployed.



Also, I recently bought a set of 4 placemats/posters of the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Squadron for an All States reunion in South Australia (1991).



In closing if you are interested in finding memorabilia, the internet is a good place to start, you never know what becomes available from time to time, you need to stay vigilant. There is even an perspex observation window from the top of a wellington for sale for \$303. If all else fails please buy an item from our own Memorabilia Shop via our website:

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