



JOURNAL OF THE 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL
Year 75 No. 276 March 2024



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Canada – Adam & Cate Wagstaffe

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**
Mobile 0400 433 382

***Contributions and reports for the next Newsletter #277
are due to The Editor by 31st July, 2024.***

Vale

Evelyn “Mary” Wilkinson (Australia)

Beryl Orchard (Australia)

Joyce Humbles (United Kingdom)

FLIGHT REPORTS



United Kingdom Flight Report by Keith Wilkinson



We have some very sad news from England.

The wife of our squadron co-president Charles Humbles has died at the age of 103. Charles and Joyce had been married for a truly remarkable 83 years.

My wife and I were among the friends and family who attended the funeral service on Valentine’s Day at Hemel Hempstead

Crematorium. It was a very moving occasion especially when the gathering listened to Amazing Grace by Judy Collins and then filed-out to the music of the RAF March Past.

Charles – who now has a 24-hour carer - was there in his wheelchair and appeared to be holding up well, considering the circumstances. Joyce had been in good health for some time but in January developed breathing trouble and passed away peacefully in her sleep with Charles at her side.

She was given a beautiful send-off with a eulogy that reflected on the lives of this very special couple. They were married in 1940 before Charles joined 458 Squadron. They were separated for much of the war, which included his time working on the maintenance of the squadron's Wellingtons in North Africa.

They had actually been together as a couple since 1938. I imagine there are very few couples in the entire world that can match that. It was their love of ballroom dancing that brought them together. Both were silver medallists. Both were interested in gardening and golf – Joyce becoming her Club's first Lady Captain.

As I have reported in this newsletter many times, Charles and Joyce enjoyed a small daily gin and tonic. They were not big drinkers by any means but their little lunchtime tradition certainly didn't do them any harm. They both lived very healthily and happily beyond the age of 100, receiving cards from Queen Elizabeth 11 and, more recently, King Charles.

Shortly after the funeral, Charles reached his 102nd birthday. At his home, relatives presented him with a cake and he blew out the candle. I spoke to Charles that day by phone. He was in good spirits and reminisced a little about the war, reminding me that he had not just worked on Wellingtons but, in 1940, on "Battle of Britain" Spitfires and Hurricanes. Those of us who value our freedom owe so much to guys like him and we should never forget what he and others did in the war. Unsurprisingly, Charles told me he missed his beloved Joyce very badly.

I spoke recently with squadron co-president Bill Wake who is 101. He told me that in January he had a fall at home and knocked his head on the kitchen floor. He had tripped over a thin strip of metal which had caught the edge of his slippers. He was able to crawl to his phone to call an ambulance. In hospital he was given stitches which he described as “jolly painful”. Thankfully, when I spoke to him, he was back to his usual cheery self and we had a nice long chat, putting the world to rights, and such like.



Canada Flight Report by Adam & Cate Wagstaffe

ANZAC day, the Blue Puttees and 458th...Canada Connections



The Royal Newfoundland Regiment wearing blue Puttees.

“Puttees became part of the British uniform by the Boer War in the late 1890s, and the fashion slowly spread to other armies. Cheaper than tall boots or gaiters, they were a budgetary boon in outfitting millions of soldiers with footwear. Even the high-booted Germans turned to puttees when leather supplies ran short.

To wear them, troops folded trouser bottoms against their legs, and, starting below the top of their ankle boots, wrapped the nine-foot strips in an overlapping spiral from ankle to two finger widths below the knee, clockwise

on one leg, counter-clockwise on the other. They were tied off with attached half-metre tapes.”

The province of Newfoundland and Labrador is now an integral part of Canada but in 1914 Newfoundland was not part of Canada. It was its own dominion of the British Empire. When war was declared Newfoundland and Canada automatically declared war alongside the British and the call went out for volunteers. From a total Newfoundland population of 240,000 over 12,000 would enlist during the war.

The first 500 would form the core of the 1st Newfoundland Regiment (later and uniquely given the name change to The Royal Newfoundland Regiment). Newfoundland did not have an official militia since the later part of the 1800’s so equipping these new soldiers in the khaki uniforms of the dominion forces was a logistical challenge. When it came to the puttees due to a shortage of the khaki material on the island, a blue material (from the boy’s brigade) was substituted and so the nickname of “The Blue Puttees” became attached to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

On October 03, 1914, 538 Blue Puttees boarded SS Florizel, in St John’s harbour, bound for England and for more training.



*Blue Puttees
aboard the
Florizel. October
1914 (Rooms
provincial archives)*

While the regiment expected to be deployed to Europe, in mid-August 1915 the unit received word that it was going to Sulva Bay in the **Gallipoli Peninsula!** There they would join the 88th Brigade of the 29th Division of the British Army.



After sailing for Egypt

The Regiment, now 1076 strong, landed at Suvla Bay at 3am on September 20, 1915. A Lieutenant Owen Steele wrote in his journal:

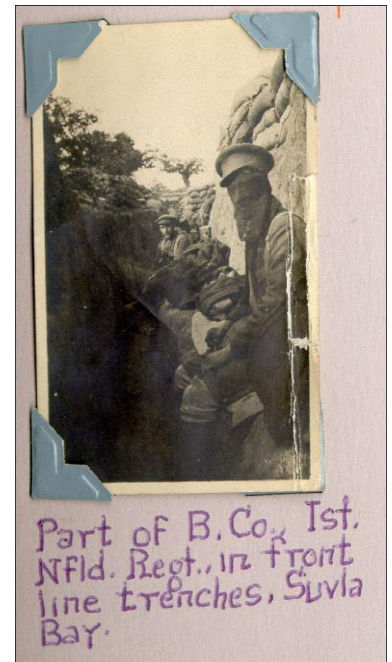
"The place where we are to land is shelled all day long, and the last Division which went there lost 1,200 men and 36 officers the first day, and that, without having fired a shot, nor seen a single Turk, so we have heard."

That would have been men from the ANZAC forces.

The Blue Puttees, also known as the Caribou Regiment because of their cap badge, fought alongside the ANZACs until the withdrawal from the peninsula in January 1916. Relative to the tragic losses of the ANZAC men, their casualties were very light (the most vicious and deadly fighting had passed). Some of those killed were buried in the Lancashire Landing Cemetery in Gallipoli.



Blue Puttees/ Caribou Regiment cap badge



Part of B. Co., 1st. Nfld. Regt., in front line trenches, Suvla Bay.



22 soldiers from the Newfoundland Regiment, Lancashire Landing Cemetery (CWG Commission)

The regiment was credited with taking Hill 10, a Turkish sniper stronghold (renamed Caribou Hill)



Lieutenant James Donnelly awarded the Military Cross for actions at Caribou Hill and for being part of the rearguard during the evacuation.



Gallipoli is listed on the Battle honours of the regiment

The regiment went on to fight in Europe, almost being wiped out on the first day of the Somme on July 01, 1916 at the battle of Beaumont-Hamel. Of the nearly 800 Newfoundlanders who went into battle that morning only 68 were able to answer the roll call the next day. Later the regiment saw action at Ypres and Cambrai. At the end of the war, of the 6200 men who served in the regiment, 3800 were either killed, wounded or taken prisoner.

Following the war, a series of Caribou statues were erected commemorating the places where the Blue Puttees had fought. It was named the Caribou Trail. The final one was installed, in 2021, next to Caribou Hill (Hill 10 cemetery) Sulva bay Gallipoli.



Caribou statue on the Caribou Trail.

Now that in itself is a fascinating connection between Canada and the ANZAC day history. But there is a little more to tell....

One of those brave Newfoundlanders who volunteered in WW1 and joined the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, the Blue Puttees, the Caribou regiment, was a

young man named Samuel Stanfield (service number 5126).



Samuel Stanfield. Photo taken from family tree on Ancestry.ca.

Name.		Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
STANFIELD Samuel		R. Newf'd R	Plt	5126
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.	
VICTORY				
BRITISH	Col/105A	46		
STAR				
Theatre of War first served in				
Date of entry therein				

Samuel Stanfield enlistment card from 1918

Samuel Stanfield was a fisherman, from a small village on the east coast of Newfoundland. He was not one of the first 1000 who fought with the ANZACs at Gallipoli (that really would be a scary connection). He enlisted in 1918 with the regiment and was sent to France, where he saw action during the last four months of the war and was demobilised in 1919 and returned to Newfoundland.



THE ROYAL NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT

ATTESTATION OF

No. *126* Name *Saml Stanfield* Corps *S.A.*

Questions to be put to the Recruit before Enlistment.

1. What is your name?	1. <i>Samuel Stanfield</i>
2. What is your full Address?	2. <i>Port Cove N.B.</i>
3. Are you a British Subject?	3. <i>Yes</i>
4. What is your age?	4. <i>23</i> Years
5. What is your Trade or Calling?	5. <i>fisherman</i>
6. Are you Married?	6. <i>no</i>
7. Have you ever served in any Branch of His Majesty's Forces, naval or military, if so,* which?	7. <i>no</i>
8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated?	8. <i>yes</i>
9. Are you willing to be enlisted for General Service?	9. <i>yes</i>
10. Did you receive a Notice, and do you understand its meaning, and who gave it to you?	10. Name
	Corps
11. Are you willing to serve upon the conditions as embodied in the roll of service to be signed by you if you are accepted?	11. <i>yes</i>

I, *Samuel Stanfield* do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements made by me to the above questions and to the conditions of service to be signed by me if I am accepted.

Samuel Stanfield SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT.

W. P. Thomas SIGNATURE OF WITNESS.

OATH TAKEN BY RECRUIT ON ATTESTATION.

I, *Samuel Stanfield* do make oath, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown and Dignity against all enemies, according to the conditions of my service.

CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE OR ATTESTING OFFICER.

The Recruit above named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.

The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.

I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly explained as replied to, and the said recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me at *Port Cove* on this *17* day of *May* 191*8*.

P. B. Dicks Lieut. Signature of Attesting Officer

Samuel Stanfield's enlistment application from May 17, 1918.

Later that same year he married Caroline Blackwood. They had four children Eleazer born 1920, Gladys 1921, Bessie 1924 and Warren 1927.

Times were very tough in Newfoundland during the late 1920's. The great depression struck early and hard. Because of the great unemployment, defaulting national government and very meagre welfare services, Samuel, along with thousands of others were forced to head to the United States in search of work. We do not know the exact circumstances, but Samuel died in Philadelphia Oct 25, 1929.

FORM 7

PLACE OF DEATH
COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA
TOWNSHIP OF 51
OR
BOROUGH OF
OR
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

REGISTRATION DISTRICT NO. 1
PRIMARY REGISTRATION DISTRICT NO.
FILE NO. 97275
REGISTERED NO. 22000
(If death occurred in a Hospital or Institution give its NAME instead of street & No.)

2. FULL NAME Samuel Stanfield
No. 863 1/2 St. 12 WARD

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

3 SEX M 5 COLOR OR RACE W 4 SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED M (Write the subject)

6 DATE OF BIRTH 008 1895
Month Day Year

7 AGE 34 Yrs. mos. ds. If LESS than 1 day how many hrs. or min.?

8 OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession or particular kind of work. Carpenter (b) General nature of Industry business, or establishment in which employed or (employer)

9 BIRTHPLACE (State or Country) Newfoundland

10 NAME OF FATHER Robert

11 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or Country) Newfoundland
Easter White

12 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Easter White

13 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or Country) New. Foundland

14 THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE
INFORMANT S. Raphaelus Stanfield
ADDRESS 416 Jun St. St. Phila. Pa.

15 FILED OCT 28 1929 LOCAL REGISTRAR W. Lawrence

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

16 DATE OF DEATH Oct 25 1929
Month Day Year

17 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT AN INQUEST WAS HELD UPON THE BODY OF THE ABOVE NAMED DECEASED ON THE ... DAY OF ... 19... THAT THE JURY RENDERED A VERDICT GIVING THE CAUSE OF DEATH AS FOLLOWS:
INQUEST PENDING
Gas Poison

SIGNED Fred Johnson CORONER
19 ADDRESS

* State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH; or in deaths from VIOLENT CAUSES, state (1) MEANS of INJURY; and (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal or Homicidal.

18 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE, (FOR HOSPITALS, INSTITUTIONS, TRANSIENTS OR RECENT RESIDENTS.)
At Place of death yrs. mos. ds. In the State yrs. mos. ds.
Where was disease contracted, (not at place of death?)
Former or usual residence 863 No. 5th Ward

19 PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL DATE OF BURIAL
Cem. New Foundland Nov. 2-1929

20- UNDERTAKER ADDRESS
J. J. ... 2127 W. Broad

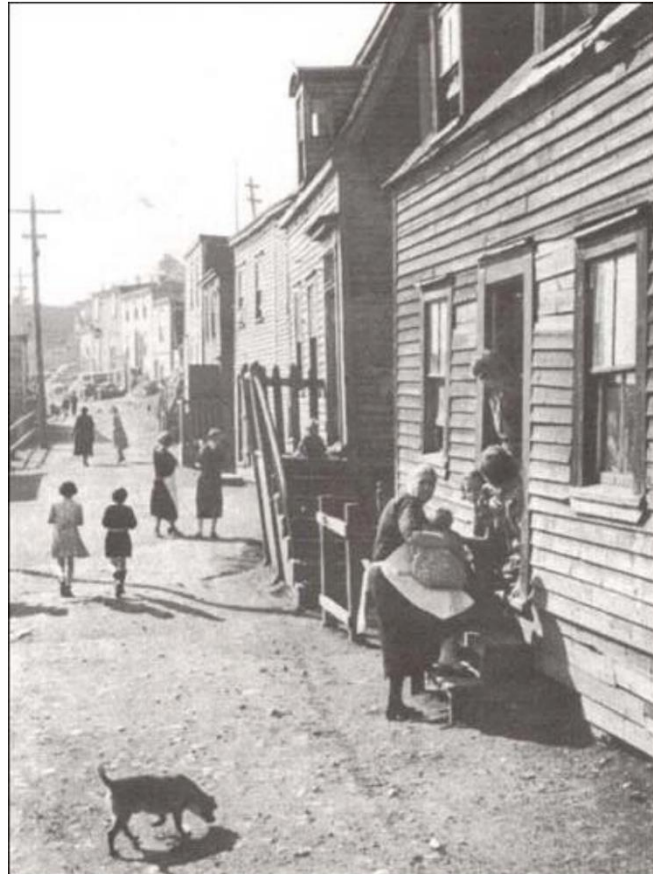
MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING
WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD
N. B. Every item of information should be carefully supplied. Age should be stated EXACTLY. PHYSICIANS should state CAUSE OF DEATH in plain terms, so that it may be properly classified. Exact statement of OCCUPATION is very important

Death certificate of Samuel Stanfield.

His death certificate lists cause of death as "Gas Poison" with an inquest pending. We cannot ascertain whether this was the cause of an industrial accident, domestic or even perhaps the result of post war complications from gassing during WW1. His body was returned to Newfoundland a week later.

For his widow Caroline and the four young children, the following 10 years must have been incredibly hard. The dominion of Newfoundland defaulted on loans several times, yet still refused to join Canada. People on welfare received meagre food rations, and malnutrition and starvation were evident.

“Who wasn't hungry in Newfoundland in 1934? At least one third of the population was out of work. Thousands of children stayed home from school because they had no shoes or proper clothing. Diseases—such as tuberculosis—caused by poor housing, lack of coal and hunger were common. The government was flooded with telegrams calling for help. People were starving in the outports. Whole communities had nothing to eat and no way of getting any food.



Credit: PANL, Gustav Anderson Collection.

Street Scene of poor housing, water and sanitation in St. Johns 1939

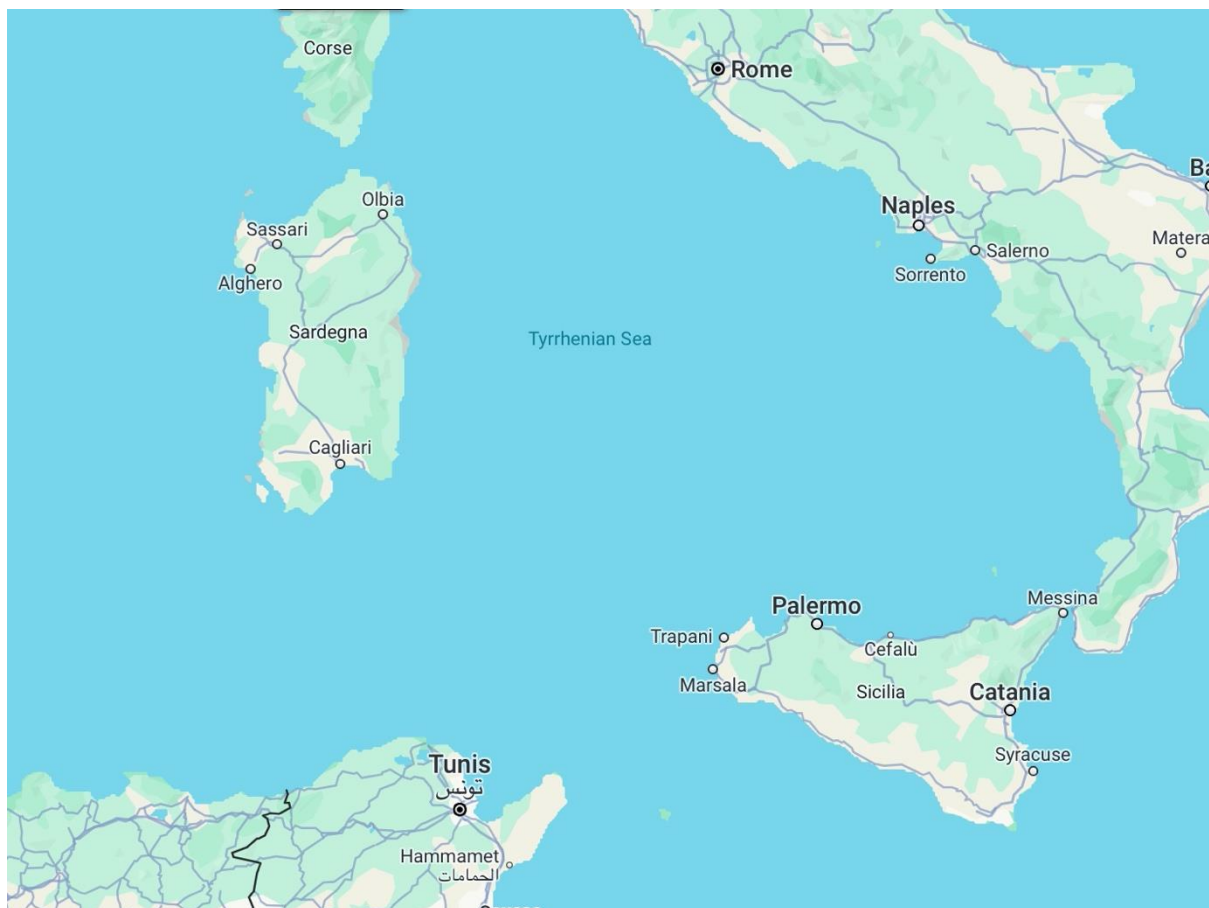
Sometimes men stole what they needed for their families. They threatened government officials. They broke into local stores. Small groups blocked roads in protest. Poorly paid woodsmen jumped trains and headed for home in despair. Their wages were so small they had no choice but to steal a ride.⁵ The telegrams warned of further problems. People begged for help” (Janet McNaughton’s essay in *Desperate Measures the Great Depression in Newfoundland and Labrador. Newfoundland and Labrador Adult Basic Education Social History Series*, Page 31.)

Caroline and her four children survived the depression and with the outbreak of WW2 in 1939 the economy of Newfoundland began to improve, primarily because of the influx of Military spending from both Canada and Britain, both recognizing the military significance of the most easterly ports and airports of North America. Newfoundland was still a dominion and not part of Canada, so when war was declared and recruiting began, the vast majority of young men who volunteered for the armed forces joined the ranks of the Royal Navy, the British Army and the Royal Air force.

One of those young men was Eleazer Stanfield, the first son of Samuel (Our Blue Puttee) and Caroline Stanfield (born 1920). Eleazer joined the RAFVR with service number 1365035.

Because he joined the RAF his records are not as accessible as those of the RCAF, so we do not know where his training took place and on what aircraft. We do know that in 1943 he was a Sergeant Wireless Operator/Gunner and we do know that he joined 458th RAAF in June 1943 in Protville Tunisia.

Eleazer crewed up with RCAF pilot Flying Officer William J. Markowsky (J/9250) from Saskatchewan, Canada. Eleazer Stanfield flew with Markowsky on five missions:



- June 23, 1943 in Wellington 'F' Anti Shipping 2015-0610 in the Tyrrhenian Sea
- July 03, 1943 in Wellington 'F' a "Goofington" 2100-0510 Anti Shipping patrol. Weather calm. No incidents
- July 08, 1943 in Wellington 'H' Anti Shipping 2115-0515, No Incidents

- July 12, 1943 in Wellington 'P' Armed Reconnaissance 2040-0545. No Incidents

And finally:

- July 15, 2043 in Wellington 'A' Cross-over patrol Straight of Bonifacio and south of Elba. "Aircraft Failed to Return"

DETAIL OF WORK CARRIED OUT
By No. 478 Squadron, R.A.A.F.
FOR THE MONTH OF July, 1944

No.	AIRCRAFT TYPE & NUMBER	CREW	DUTY	TIME		DETAILS OF SORT
				Up	Down	
15	Wellington	C. Markowski P/O. Leonard P/O. Filmer Sgt. Baggs Sgt. Stanfield	Captain 2nd. Pilot, Nav. WOP/AG.	2057	--	Cross-over patrol - Straights Bonifacio and South of Elba - failed to return.
15	B	Sgt. Stanfield Sgt. Leonard	Captain 2nd. Pilot, Nav. WOP/AG.	2059	--	Armed recon. North coast of S. Aircraft failed to return.
16	S	S/Ldr. Thompson Lt. Foiglester P/O. Constable Sgt. Tippet Sgt. Faulette Sgt. Udal	Captain 2nd. Pilot Nav. WOP/AG.	2136	0706	Bocco. East coast Sardinia. No incidents. Weather fine.
16	F	P/O. Davis Sgt. McCann Sgt. Braddock Sgt. Johnston Sgt. Barrant Sgt. Warren	Captain 2nd. Pilot, Nav. WOP/AG.	2030	0530	Crossover patrol - Corsica & Coast - weather good, sea on
16	L.	P/O. Reid Sgt. Morris-Jones P/O. Eggers	Captain 2nd. Pilot, Nav.	2230	0530	Anti-shiping patrol, No incidents.

As it turned out Markowsky and crew had been shot down attacking the convey.

Page No. 5

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK.

of (Unit or Formation)

No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	Reference to Appendix
Elle, Tunisia (cont'd)	July 14/15		<p>Aircraft "K" (Captain - P/Sgt. Bishop) arrived at the scene in time to see the M/V sink and also saw that one of the escorts was well on its way to the M/V. Aircraft "F" (P/O Lawson) and aircraft "A" at 0925 hrs. that it had sighted the convoy, no other aircraft. The missing crews are:</p> <p>Aircraft "F" - P/O Lawson, Capt., P/O Hazel P/O MacGillivray, W/O, P/O Page</p> <p>Aircraft "A" - P/O Markowsky, Capt., P/Sgt. P/O Milner, W/O, Sgt. Grigg</p> <p>2nd Pilot, P/O Sgt. Stanfield, W/O</p>	
	July 15/16		<p>between 2030 hrs. and 2230 hrs. of 221 Sqn. were despatched on armed recess. In most of Sardinia and Corsica--also the South West of Sicily. The Captains were P/Lt. Rodd, Lt. Col. Mackenzie, P/O and P/Sgt. Armstrong of 458 Sqn. and P/O Ferrar and One Wellington of 458 Sqn. (Captain) landed at base between 0530 hrs. and 0706 hrs.</p>	
	July 16/17		<p>Five aircraft of this Squadron and two of 221 Squadron completed offensive searches up the West Coasts of Sardinia and Corsica and in the area Corsica - Sardinia - Italy. The Captains were P/O Suddaby, W/O Elliott, P/Sgt. Graham, P/Sgt. Bishop, P/O Johnston of 458 Squadron, and P/O Painter and P/O Ringrose of 221 Sqn. No suitable targets were found and all our aircraft returned to base between 0544 hrs. and 0655 hrs.</p>	
	July 17/18		<p>Six Wellingtons of this Squadron with two of 221 Sqn. were despatched between 1826 hrs. and 2230 hrs. to carry out armed recess. in the Tyrrhenian Sea Coastal area. The Captains were P/O Price, P/O Nelson, P/O Quinlan, P/Sgt. Davis, P/Sgt. Armstrong and P/O Barker of 458 Sqn. and Sgt. Addison and P/Sgt. Woolf of 221 Sqn. Eight fighters were seen but there was no enemy shipping sighted. All aircraft landed at base between 0535 hrs. and 0620 hrs.</p>	
	July 18/19		<p>Six Special Wellingtons of 458 Sqn. with two of 221 Sqn. were despatched between 1758 hrs. and 2202 hrs. to carry out patrols round Sardinia and Corsica and between those islands and the West Coast of Italy. The Captains were P/O Johnston, P/O Graham, P/Sgt. Bishop, W/O Elliott of 458 Sqn. and P/O Ferrar P/O Hobbins of 221 Sqn. P/O Hobbins of 221 Sqn. sighted one M/V of 3000 tons near Elba. A</p>	

“RCAF pilot J/9250 FLGOFF William J Markowsky (21) was captured and transported to Germany. After initial interrogation at the Dalag Luft Oberursel near Frankfurt, he was given the POW No.1781 and sent to Stalag Luft III at Sagan & Belaria. He survived captivity and was released in April of 1945 and repatriated to Canada where he lived until his death on February 10, 1997.



RAAF 2nd pilot 402314 FSGT Edward Joseph Colclough (23) of Chatswood in Sydney, New South Wales was captured and transported to Germany. After initial interrogation at the Dalag Luft Oberursel near Frankfurt he was given the POW No.83651 and sent to Stalag IVB at Muhlberg, north of Dresden. He survived captivity and was released by the Russians in 1945 then repatriated back to Australia. He discharged from the RAAF on October 26, 1945 with the rank of Warrant Officer. Edward Colclough died aged 62 on April 16, 1982.

RAFVR Navigator 122961 FLGOFF Ronald Leonard was captured and transported to Germany. After initial interrogation at the Dalag Luft Oberursel near Frankfurt he was given the POW No.1779 and sent to Stalag Luft III at Sagan & Belaria. He survived captivity and was released in April of 1945 and repatriated back to the UK.

RAFVR Air Gunner 80384 PLTOFF Harry Whitby John Filmer was captured and transported to Germany. After initial interrogation at the Dalag Luft Oberursel near Frankfurt he was given the POW No.1773 and sent to Stalag Luft III at Sagan & Belaria. He survived captivity and was released in April of 1945 and repatriated back to the UK.

RAFVR wireless air gunner 1315620 SGT E J W Blackler was captured and transported to Germany. After initial interrogation at the Dalag Luft Oberursel near Frankfurt he was given the POW No.370 and sent to Stalag Luft III at Sagan & Belaria. He survived captivity and was released in April of 1945 and repatriated back to the UK.

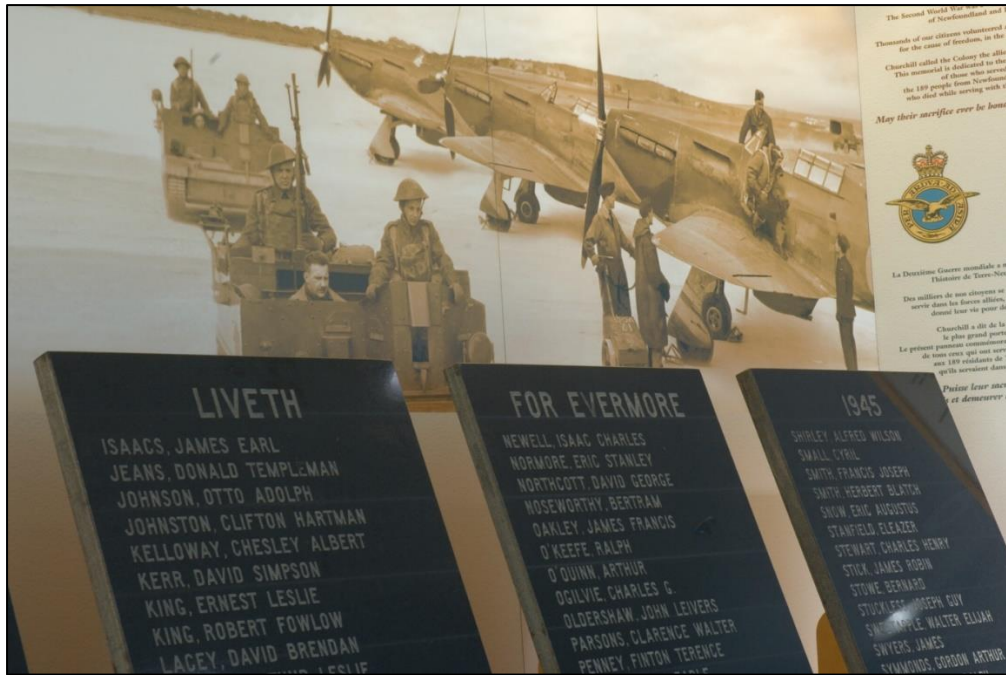
RCAF Wireless Air Gunner R/98819 WOFF II Thomas Eric Griggs (31) of Tisdale in Saskatchewan, Canada was KIA and has no known grave. He is commemorated on Panel 10, Column 2 of the Malta Memorial near Kings Gate, Valetta, Malta; and, on Page 166 of the Canadian Second World War Book of Remembrance in Ottawa, Canada.

RAFVR Wireless Air Gunner 1365035 SGT Eleazer Stanfield (23) of Port Blanford in Newfoundland, Canada was KIA and has no known grave. He is commemorated on Panel 10, Column 2 of the Malta Memorial near Kings Gate, Valetta, Malta”

(Source Paul McGuiness RAAF Archive. Aircrewremembered.com)

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT	Snow, Eric Augustus 125 Squadron, Royal Air Force	March 17, 1944
GUNNER	Snow, Francis Douglas 166(Newfoundland)Field Regt.,Royal Artillery	April 12, 1943
GUNNER	Snow, Harold Edward 100(Newfoundland)Field Regt.,Royal Artillery	April 22, 1943
LEADING SEAMAN	Spencer, Matthew Joseph HMS President, Royal Navy	January 24, 1944
ABLE SEAMAN	Squires, Henry George HMS Scotstoun, Royal Navy	June 13, 1940
LIEUTENANT	Squires, Richard Anderson Lord Strathcona's Horse	June 17, 1942
ORDINARY SEAMAN	Stacey, Leslie Joseph H.M Trawler Strathborve, Royal Navy	September 6, 1941
ORDINARY SEAMAN	Stamp, James Joseph HMS Jervis Bay, Royal Navy	November 5, 1940
SERGEANT	Stanfield, Eleazer Royal Air Force att. 458(RAAF) Squadron	July 15, 1943
ORDINARY SEAMAN	Stansbury, Cecil HMS Jervis Bay, Royal Navy	November 5, 1940
ABLE SEAMAN	Stares, Meschack Euan HMS Bluebell, Royal Navy	February 17, 1945
SERGEANT	Stewart, Charles Henry 101 Squadron, Royal Air Force	July 9, 1942
WARRANT OFFICER 2ND CLASS	Stick, James Robin Royal Canadian Air Force att. 145(RAF) Squadron	February 14, 1943
ABLE SEAMAN	Stone, Hubert Cecil HMS Victory, Royal Navy	May 15, 1944
ABLE SEAMAN	Stone, James Ashton HMS Stanley, Royal Navy	December 19, 1941

Eleazer Stanfield is remembered by the Government of Canada and The Government of Newfoundland as a Canadian who was killed in action while serving with the RAFVR in 458th RAAF squadron.



St. John's International Airport Memorial. You can just see Stanfield, Eleazer listed in the far right panel.

We do not have a picture to share of Sgt Eleazer Stanfield; member of 458th RAAF, son of Samuel Stanfield, Blue Puttee from the Royal Newfoundland Regiment of Gallipoli honour, but we are in contact with a distant family member, so we remain hopeful.

We would request an Asterix next to his name in the RAF section of the 458th honour roll, indicating that he is recognized by Canada as one of its own.

On April 25th we will be thinking of the history of ANZAC day and of Eleazer Stanfield 1365035 as well as the connections.....



Sergeant
ELEAZER (E) STANFIELD
 Media | Images | Documents | Français

Fullname: ELEAZER (E) STANFIELD
 Service #: 1365035
 Rank: Sergeant
 Unit: Royal Air Force
 Date of Death: 15 July 1943
 Cemetery: MALTA MEMORIAL

Sources:

- Veterans.gc.ca
- Rafcommands.com
- Aircrewremembered.com
- Therooms.ca
- Canadianfallen.ca
- National Archives
- Ancestry.ca
- Heritage.nf.ca
- Legionmagazine.com
- Findagrave.com
- Wasagabeachpark.com
- Ww2db.com
- Gov.nf.ca
- Cbc.ca
- Gallipoli-association.org
- Collections.mun.ca

- Scholars.wlu.ca
- Thebattlefieldtours.com
- We Find and Destroy by Peter Alexander
- 458th RAAF squadron records
- 458raafsquadron.org Cwg.org



Queensland Flight Report by Brett Taylor

The last few months have been rather quiet on the home front in Queensland and there is no communication to report. At the moment there are no plans for Anzac Day in Brisbane this year. In this report I want to again relay some information that my father left me. This time I want to focus on the support required to keep the aircraft and air crew operational, specifically what was required to move the Squadron from Alghero in Sardinia to Foggia in Italy. I have typed out below "Movement Orders" for 458 Squadron as the original is in poor condition. For more detailed information, I refer the reader to "We find and Destroy" Chapter XV. The orders were probably written about mid to late August 1944.

Intention It is intended to move No. 458 Squadron, at present under the Administrative Control of Headquarters, No. 328 Wing. Alghero, to Foggia, under the Administrative Control of Headquarters, No. 242 Group. The ultimate destination of the Squadron will be Ancona. Operational efficiency is to be maintained.

Execution The Squadron will be divided into three parties, mentioned hereunder and will move under their respective Officers as provided.

"A" Party by air. Officer i/c. S/Ldr R.C. Knight S/Ldr Taylor

"B" Party by train. Officer i/c. F/Lt J. Guthrie

"C" Party by road. Officer i/c F/Lt G. Vale

"A" Party consists of all aircraft and crews, together with F/Lts. Chest and Hervey, F/O Stratford and WO personnel as per Appendix "A" attached who are essential for the maintenance of the aircraft. An airlift of 36,000lbs has been granted, covering 8,000lbs, for essential technical equipment and 28,000lbs for the conveyance of the latter mentioned personnel and their personal equipment. This subsection of "A" party will be under the control of S/Ldr Taylor who will ensure that the aircrew take their own tentage and personal equipment in their own aircraft and the ground crew take their allocation of 13 tents in the D.C's provided. The date and time of this movement will be notified by Headquarters 328 Wing who will be responsible for the

efficiency of this movement, Sgt Allan is to provide sufficient pooling of utensils to maintain this party at Foggia, as well as to provide sufficient rations to maintain these personnel for a period of up to 6 days on the Wings location. He will give Cpl Rix specific instructions how this is to be effected before leaving.

Sgt Wise (Discip N.O.) will ensure that he has 6 copies of the nominal roll of the 70 Maintenance personnel.

“B” Party consists of 3 Officers and 168 other ranks with their personal equipment. This party is to parade outside the Airmen’s mess at 0430 hours on 3rd September, 1944, and be prepared to move off immediately. A baggage party consisting of 1 Sgt and 12 men will remain to attend to the transportation of this Party’s kit. This kit is to be conveyed direct to Sassari where it will link up with the Main Party. F/Lt Guthrie is to report to F/Lt Smith, the Embarkation Officer, at Cagliari and proceed under that Officer’s instruction from then on.

F/Lt Guthrie is to ensure that the party carried 3 days bulk rations.

The following documents are to be carried.

- i. Four copies of Form 2066*
- ii. Eight copies of the Nominal Rolls*
- iii. A movement order*

“C” Party will consist of all Motor Transport and personal essential to M.T. namely 2 Officers and 53 other ranks, under the control of F/Lt G. Vale. This party is to move in convoy and be prepared to move by 2359 hours on 2nd September, 1944, with M.T. laden to capacity.

W/O Bailey is responsible to ensure that:

- i. Sufficient Arms are drawn to protect the convoy and issued to each driver.*
- ii. That all petrol tanks are full to capacity.*
- iii. That water bowsers carry sufficient water for the convoy.*
- iv. That 1 petrol bowser carry M.T. fuel to refuel the convoy as and when necessary.*

- v. That a breakdown party is detailed and proceeds at the rear of the convoy."
- vi. That the slowest vehicle is placed at the head of the convoy."

The Appendix A referred to in the orders is shown below.

NOMINAL ROLL.

GROUND FORCE IN-L PROCEEDING BY AIR

APPENDIX 'A'

(72)

<p><u>Armoury.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A.11755 Sgt. McLaren. ✓ 546719 Cpl. Thomas. ✓ A.20755 Cpl. Wilson. ✓ 992188 LAC. Milner. ✓ 1096266 LAC. Taylor. ✓ 1477982 LAC. Meynall. ✓ 912914 LAC. Ware. ✓ 1480688 LAC. Westerman. ✓ A.117292 LAC. Simpkins. ✓ 1448974 LAC. Anton. ✓ 1105125 LAC. Council. ✓ 1155820 LAC. Barrett. <p><u>Inst. section.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A.33964 LAC. Griffiths. ✓ A.17156 Cpl. Stewart. ✓ A.20475 LAC. Piggott. <p><u>Elect. section.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A.18730 Cpl. Pollock. ✓ 1643543 AC. Mercer. ✓ 1436073 LAC. Newsom. ✓ A.18550 LAC. Tillack. <p><u>S.E. section.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ R.102078 Cpl. Holtzman. ✓ 1270820 Cpl. Bushell. ✓ R.92439 LAC. Ireland. ✓ 1343124 LAC. McLeod. ✓ R.154432 LAC. Knopp. ✓ R.128818 LAC. Mauro. ✓ R.142893 LAC. Berry. <p><u>W.T. section.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 553740 Sgt. Gattee. ✓ 1220656 Cpl. Alexander. ✓ 1095196 Cpl. Niddrie. ✓ 1232538 LAC. Garside. ✓ 1037144 LAC. Tory. ✓ 1279795 LAC. Facey. 	<p><u>"A" Flight.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A.38273 Cpl. Davis. ✓ A.18822 LAC. Hunter. ✓ A.18765 LAC. Boyer. ✓ A.22133 Cpl. Lewis. ✓ A.26002 Sgt. Exeeli. ✓ A.5220 F/S. Percy. ✓ A.22301 Sgt. Warren. ✓ A.8187 Cpl. Farrer. ✓ A.10155 Cpl. Meredith. ✓ A.26203 Cpl. Ravenscroft. ✓ A.26631 LAC. Both. ✓ A.30258 LAC. Browne. ✓ A.16237 LAC. Simpson. ✓ A.21255 LAC. Burgess. ✓ A.11403 LAC. Paulet. ✓ A.22177 LAC. Foote. ✓ A.32477 LAC. Beach. ✓ A.19032 LAC. Guthbertson. ✓ A.14933 LAC. Ridge. ✓ A.26225 Cpl. Bartram. ✓ A.1332 Cpl. Kappler. ✓ A.8224 Cpl. Atherton. ✓ A.22280 Cpl. McQuaid. ✓ A.14784 LAC. Bartlett. ✓ A.15551 LAC. Baillie. ✓ A.18805 LAC. Rabone. ✓ A.14083 LAC. Taylor. ✓ A.24207 LAC. Penahan. ✓ A.15015 LAC. Fabian. ✓ A.15305 LAC. Kerry. <p><u>ACH/G.D.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 98802 Sgt. Wise. ✓ 989049 LAC. Hatton. ✓ 1135845 LAC. Griffin. ✓ 972517 LAC. Hailey. ✓ 1513598 LAC. Hailey. <p><u>Cooks.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1130444 Cpl. Rix. ✓ 1137759 LAC. Gollring. ✓ 1750044 LAC. Phillip. <p><u>Nursing orderly.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1225830 EAC. Richards. <p><u>Clerk.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A.71417 LAC. Carter. ✓ Cpl. Hyde 1405673 ✓ Cpl. Gray 1095057 ✓ LAC. Lindsay R136113
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23 etc
 3 office
 6 New lower bay

STORES
 ✓ FIS BARNETT
AIRCREW
 ✓ SGT FRANKUM
 ✓ SGT FRANCIS
 ✓ W/O CARRY

So to recap the move consisted of something like 293 men, 12? aircraft and crew, 36,000lbs freight, all vehicles and equipment, by air, train, road and ship. The complete disjointed move appears to have taken about 4 weeks.

In his diary on 8th September Dad reported that all the aircrew and some tradesmen were in Foggia but the road party was still in Cagliari waiting for a ship. The ship party was in the Base Personnel Depot in Naples but all the tentage was in Cagliari so they had to stay in Naples.

Dad was in charge of the Rear Party (B?) and their movement was made more protracted as the D.C 3's, probably operated by Americans, would not accept loads to their capacity of 5,000lbs. After some haggling 3 more D.C.3's were arranged.

I have included photographs below from Dad's photograph album taken around this time.



Convoy for Falconara.



Crew enjoying a cuppa and photo op in Falconara. My father standing in the centre and Tom Phillis his navigator second from the left.



Motor Transport crew snowball fight. Dec 1944 Foggia



Wet aerodrome conditions Falconara



Armoury crew in Falconara preparing to load.



Damaged Ancona Cathedral.

So my question this week is, does anyone recognise any other men in the photograph of the men stopping for a cuppa in Falconara, or in the Nominal Roll.

I can be contacted at btaylorc6@gmail.com and welcome any communication.

Happy Easter!



Victoria Flight Report by Roland Orchard

It is with great sadness I inform members of the passing of our dear beloved Mother Beryl Orchard, much loved wife of 458 Squadron Veteran S/Ldr Gordon Orchard (dec). Mum left us peacefully on Saturday 6th January, 2024, leaving behind 7 Children (1 dec), 15 Grandchildren (1 dec), 9 Great Grandchildren. Mum was 92. Our beautiful much loved English Rose, will be missed. Thanks for all of your messages of sympathy.

Photo below was taken on Mum's 90th Birthday.



Rest in Peace Mum. Now with your beloved Gordon and Felicity.

If Roses Grow in Heaven
By Dolores M. Carcia

If roses grow in heaven
Lord, please pick a bunch for us
Place them in our Mother's arms
And tell her they're from us
Tell her we love her and miss her
And when she turns to smile
Place a kiss upon her cheek
And hold her for a while
Because remembering her is easy
We do it every day
But there is an ache in our heart
That will never go away



ANZAC DAY 2024 MELBOURNE CBD

Our step off point will be on the Northern side of Flinders Street, east of Swanston Street. (same as 2023) Look out for the 458 Squadron Banner. Please click on link below for Form up map.

[Form-Up-Map-200324.pdf \(rslvic.com.au\)](https://www.rslvic.com.au/Form-Up-Map-200324.pdf)

Important Note: - RSL Victoria has requested form up time at 9:45am for a step off time of 10:50am. Yes, form up an hour and 5 minutes prior to step off. This, no doubt, is to prevent the early step off issues we experienced last year resulting in some of our members missing the march. Our post march lunch and AGM will be held at the usual venue, Jardin Tan Café, situated on Birdwood Avenue, over the road and east of the Shrine of Remembrance. In the same precinct of the Melbourne Observatory.

Warrant Officer John (Bert) Herbert O'Leary

Article by Roland Orchard



I am pleased and excited to announce that we recently learned of John (Bert) O'Leary, a surviving 458 Squadron Veteran. Bert is alive and well living at Vasey RSL Care in Frankston South, Victoria. Bert's

son, Mark, contacted The Association via email. Bert enlisted in the RAAF at the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne on 18th February, 1943, just over one month after his 18th birthday. He had previously applied for RAAF Air Crew on the 11th December, 1942, at the Melbourne Recruiting Centre, Russell Street at the age of 17 years 11 months and completed his Medical Exam a day after his 18th birthday which is on 14th January, 1943. He trained as a Wireless Operator/Air Gunner in Sale, Victoria, Australia. Bert embarked Melbourne 29/1/1944 and disembarked UK 12/3/1944. After further training in the UK, he embarked UK on 21/8/44 disembarked Egypt 7/9/44. After completing more training (and unfortunate incident in Palestine-read on for more), Bert and his crew joined 458 Squadron at Gibraltar on 23/3/1945 (page 782 of the 458 Squadron Operation Records) where he served with The Squadron until it was disbanded on 9/6/1945.

Berts crew were as follows-

Pilot- F/L K.G Rosen 420276
2nd Pilot F/O S.L Cookes 429927
Navigator F/O D.W Roberts 428791
Wop/AG F/Sgt J.H O'Leary 430574
Wop/AG F/Sgt F.E Reed 430699
Wop/AG F/Sgt S.J Hamilton 427827

On Saturday 23rd March, 2024, Jeremy Orchard and I met Bert at Vasey RSL Care, together with Bert's sons Mark & Paul, Bert's grandson John and Viviann.



L-R Mark, John, Jeremy, Roland, Paul and Bert (seated). Photo thanks to Viviann Birch.

Bert regaled stories of his time in the RAAF and time with 458 Squadron. Prior to joining 458, Bert and the crew he was flying with at the time were training in Palestine and had a narrow escape after a crash landing just after take-off, due an engine fire probably caused by faulty electrics. One of the landing gear couldn't be lowered. After the Wimpy had come to rest Bert made quick exit via the astro dome and the crew ran from the wreckage (as you would). Bert spent a night in hospital with relatively minor injuries. The following day the crew were instructed to get back up in another Wellington however the RAF pilot refused and was subsequently charged with lack of moral fibre and demoted. Bert never saw him again. The fact of the matter was, this RAF pilot had enough skill to bring the stricken

Wimpy back safely and saved the lives of his crew. In this day and age it seems extremely harsh to charge this young pilot however during WWII 'lack of moral fibre' was the charge delt out in these types of circumstances. Sad, but a reflection of the times.

Bert also spoke about the time he and his crew, whilst with 458, were dispatched to the western approaches to Gibraltar to escort a surrendering U-Boat back to the docks at Gibraltar. His Wellington was fully armed on this 'op.' When Bert and his crew went to inspect the U-Boat after landing, he duly noted all guns were aimed at it.

After the Captain formally surrendered to the "powers that be" there was an air of relief that it went off without incident. Bert also noted that he didn't think much of the U-Boat. It was small and very dirty. Bert also described the inadequacies of the Leigh Light. This light was lowered from the bottom of the fuselage of the Wimpy and was designed to illuminate the enemy on the approach to drop a torpedo. Apart from the fact that the light would make the Wellington a perfect target to shoot at, Bert stated that when the light was lowered it made the aircraft shudder terribly and cause a huge amount of drag which would inevitably slow it down.

Bert recalled when 458 Squadron pilot Leonard Theile starred in a stage performance of 'French Without Tears' which thoroughly entertained the troops. As Bert said, it was very boring on 'The Rock' as there was nothing to do so this play was what they all needed to relieve the boredom. F/L Leonard Theile, professionally known as Leonard Teale, later became a star of Television and film, notably in 360 episodes of Australian TV serial Homicide, playing Detective Sgt David MacKay from 1965 – 1976.

Bert also spoke of La Linea, Spain. La Linea bordered with Gibraltar and surprisingly, Spain permitted visas to personnel serving on The Rock to visit their local villages. Bert mentioned that he *was not* a "La Linea attendee." If you read about the antics that the military personnel got up to in the Squadron History book We Find and Destroy, I do not blame you, Bert!

Thanks, Bert, for sharing your stories with us and thanks to Bert's sons Mark and Paul, grandson John and to Viviann. It was a pleasure to meet you all. Jeremy and I came away from this meeting with Bert and his family in awe of a man who gave up so much at such a young

age, all those years ago. To find out about and meet Bert, a World War II and 458 Squadron Veteran was such a privilege. Truly, Bert is part of the greatest generations in world history.



Bert O'Leary second from Left. Bert's mate Bill Philips third from left visiting the Pyramids, Egypt. Others unknown.



West Australia Report by Nick Bertram

No report this edition.



New South Wales Flight Report by Stephen Bruce

ANZAC DAY 2024 SYDNEY CBD

This year's march and function are fast approaching. There are some amendments to order of march this year which means we will revert to a later march off from our location, this year in Phillip St. facing north towards Hunter St at 11:15am ish. As usual we will be marching within the air force contingent.

We should still arrive around 12noon at our meeting destination, The Castlereagh Boutique Hotel. Please advise your ability to attend either the march and /or the function afterwards as soon as practical. For those new attendees please feel free to bring photos of your relatives and if you have not already viewed our website then check out www.458raafsquadron.org where you will be able to locate all sorts of historical information covering the squadron's activities during WW2 and beyond.

As 2025 marks the 80th Anniversary of the cessation of the second world war we can discuss a reunion opportunity that may eventuate in Malta in October, 2025. Look forward to you and any extra family attendance on the day as always. See the following link for the NSW RSL 2024 Sydney Anzac Day March Map.

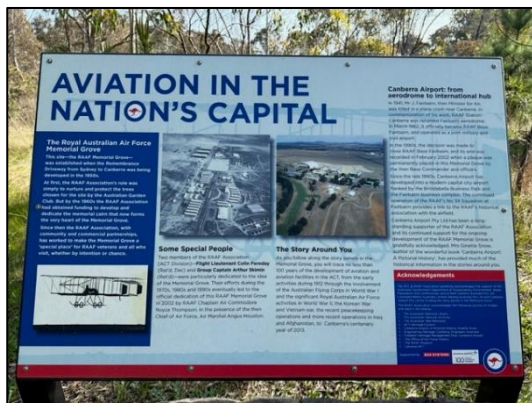
[2024 RSL NSW Anzac Day Map V4 Feb6](#)



Canberra Flight Report by Wendy Whittem-Trunz

Wendy recently visited RAAF Memorial Grove on

Remembrance Driveway/Federal Highway, ACT.



The Late Colin Fereday OAM, a well-respected 458 Squadron pilot, organised and helped set up this area to commemorate the history of the RAAF in the ACT. This included laying memorial plaques to a number of RAAF Squadrons including, with the help of Colin, 458 Squadron (see photo). Well worth a visit when next in Canberra. Let's We Forget.



458 Squadron Plaque at the RAAF Memorial Grove, ACT.



South Australia Flight Report by Rick Michell

We are meeting at the Kensi Hotel on ANZAC Day at noon. All SA Flight members welcome. Please contact Dave Cosh.

144087 F/O Tatt, Ernest Edward

by Dane & Lynne Clarke (UK)



Menu	COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES	Search
<p>FLYING OFFICER ERNEST EDWARD TATT</p> <p>Service Number: 144087</p> <p>Regiment & Unit/Ship Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 458 Sqdn.</p> <p>Date of Death Died 17 October 1943 Age 21 years old</p> <p>Buried or commemorated at MALTA MEMORIAL Panel 6, Column 2. Malta</p> <p>Country of Service United Kingdom</p>		

Whilst we were researching our family tree, my wife Lynne found a cousin, Ernest Tatt, who was killed in action in WW2. Flying from Malta, the Wellington bomber they were in was lost off of the coast of Tunisia. We are visiting Malta (on a day trip) from the UK on Armistice day this year (2023) to pay our respects. He is named on the war memorial there. It is the least we can do to honour these

brave young men. Everyone has been so helpful, from yourselves to the RBL in Malta. **Kind regards Dane Clarke**

Dane and Lynne visited Valletta, Malta on Armistice Day, 2023, and sent me (ed) these wonderful photos. Thank-you Dane & Lynne (ed)



458 SQUADRON RAAF WORLD WAR 2 FATALITIES

Date of Death: 17 October 1943 Source: AWM 64 1/280 AWM 237 (63) Commonwealth War Graves records

Aircraft Type: Wellington Serial number: Radio call sign: FU – C Unit: 458 Sqn RAAF Summary: Wellington FU – C took off from RAF Bone, Algeria, at 1713 hours on 17 October 1943 on a U boat hunt north of



Cap De Fer. A message was received from the aircraft at 1926 hours WJR 'returning to base with engine trouble' position 37.40N 06.00E. Nothing further was heard and the aircraft failed to return. Base called for some considerable time without success. ASR operations commenced. At 2057 hours a message was received from a 38 Sqn aircraft 'over burning wreckage 37.39N 06.52E.'

Crew:

RAAF 403915 WO W J Duode, Captain (Pilot)

RAF Flt Sgt W H Milne, (2nd Pilot)

RAAF 406591 WO C C Dacey, (Navigator)

RAF FO Tatt, E.E (Navigator)

RAAF 409686 Flt Sgt G J Gebbie, (Wireless Operator)

RAF Flt Sgt W B Ralph, (SE/Operator)

RAF Sgt R Musgrove, (Rear Gunner)

All the crew lost their lives and their names are commemorated on the Malta Memorial, which is situated in the area of Floriana, and stands outside the main entrance to Valletta, Malta.

LEST WE FORGET

EMAILS

Sent: Saturday, 9 September 2023 10:24 AM

To: editor@458raafsquadron.org

Subject: Website Enquiry

name: Emma Preston

enquiry: Hello, my name is Emma Preston, I am the granddaughter of, John William Earnest Preston. Squadron 458 RAAF. I was hoping to find any information regarding John that will point me in the right direction to search. My son, Justin is asking questions about his Pop. They never met, I did attend John's funeral while I was pregnant with Justin, however I did not know I was carrying at the time. I've just started my search, I have very little information, unfortunately my family is far and few and have no records in their possession and what had been kept has been lost over time. Any information would be much appreciated. Thank you. **Emma Preston**

date: September 9th, 2023

Reply by ed-Sun 17/09/2023

Hello Emma

Nice to hear from you. I hope you are well.

There are two references to your Grandfather in the 458 Squadron History book, "We Find and Destroy". 2001 Edition, authored by Peter Alexander. Page 176, describing Flying Officer John Preston as the Equipment Officer. A very brief note telling of the hardships of transporting 458 Squadron from Italy to Gibraltar.

The second notation mentioning your Grandfather is on page 178. This brief note states he joined 458 Squadron at Foggia, Italy, and remained with the Squadron when 458 was disbanded at Gibraltar in June, 1945. This note goes on to mention that he was a quiet but popular member of the Officer's Mess.

Further quotation from the book,

"He (now promoted to F/Lt) caused some degree of consternation at Gibraltar by holding the first ever kit inspection and nobody was fully certain what he should have. Men did not know what uniform and sundry clothing had been originally issued and what he had since 'acquired' or disposed of illegally. However, no one seems to have

come to grief over Flight Lieutenant Preston's kit inspection, which accompanied by Warrant Officer Laming, he carried out on 6 April, 1945."

It seems that we can glean from the 458 History book that he joined the Squadron at Foggia, Italy in late 1944 early 1945, he was the Squadron Equipment Officer and at some stage while with the Squadron was promoted from Flying Officer to Flight Lieutenant. There are no other references to him in the book unfortunately. Emma, unfortunately, I don't have any other information about your Grandfather. Over the years of the 458 Squadron Association, the veterans did not collect individual stories of the men who served on The Squadron. I did, however, find his Service Record on the National Australian Archive website.

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ListingReports/ItemsListing.aspx>

Note that there are two John William Prestons. One born in the UK in 1912 but served with the RAAF but only in the UK and the other, I presume is your Grandfather born in 1917 in Sydney and there is a very small reference to him serving in the Middle East but does not specify 458 Squadron. However, this service record shows that he was an Equipment Officer. So, I put two and two together and hopefully came up with four, being your Grandfather. Notably, there are two photos (mug shot types, which was typical of the time) of him; one on page 12 and one on page 14 of his Service Record. A reminder how young these guys were that had the courage to go off to war half way around the world.

Sorry there is no other information about your Grandfather, Emma. At least you can tell your son Justin that his Great Grandfather was a hero in the true sense of the word, serving his country with honour during the Second World War.

Cheers for now Emma. If there are any more questions you can think of, don't hesitate to email. Our Newsletters are published 3 times per year and you can see them on our website.

If anyone has more information about F/Lt John William Earnest Preston please let me know. Peter or Barry Laming, do you recall your Dad/Grandfather talking about John? (Ed.)