

CIRCULAR

458 SQUADRON NEWS



JOURNAL OF THE 458 SQUADRON COUNCIL, BOX 5289, G.P.O. SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2001, AUSTRALIA
YEAR 25 N° 100 AUGUST 1974 75c. per annum.

Jubilee Issue N° 100

WITH OUR BEST WISHES -

Peter Alexander EDITOR

B. J. Lewis N.S.W.

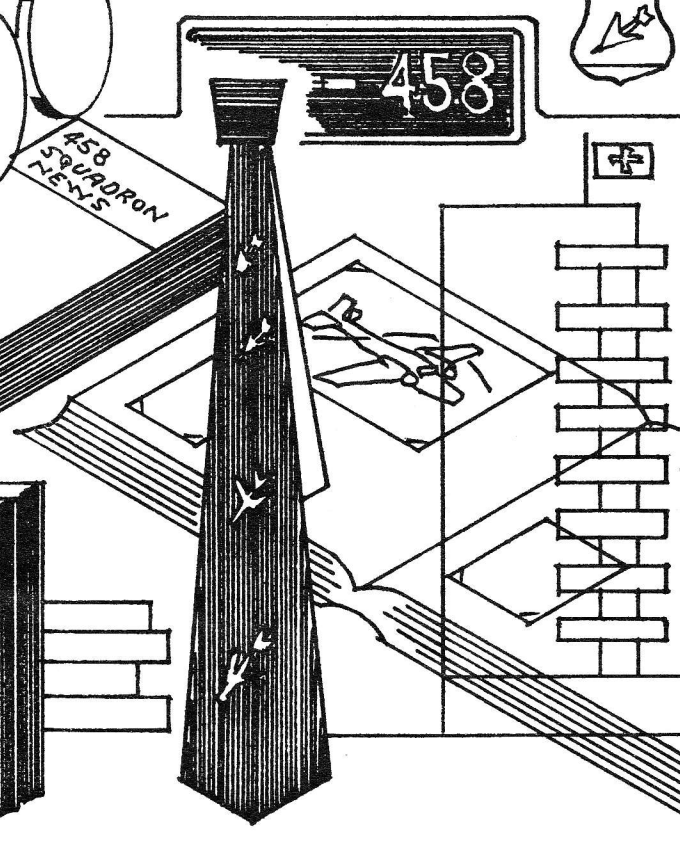
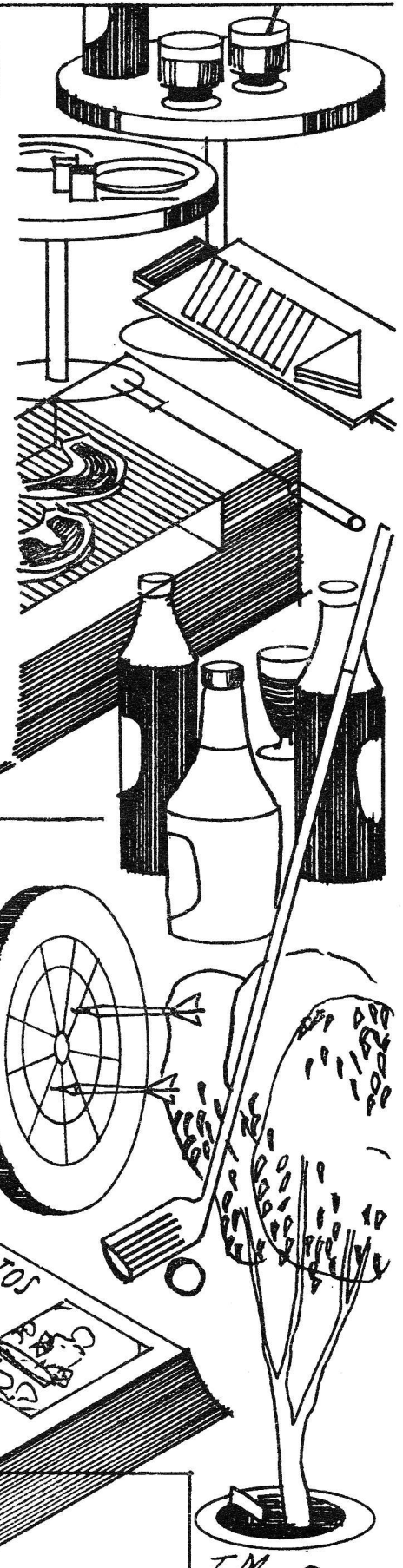
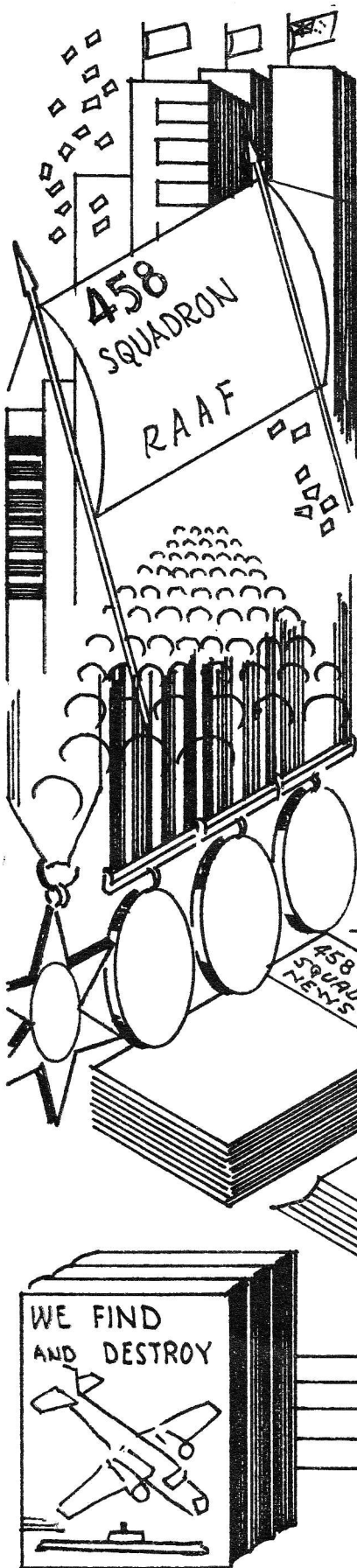
Jim Lewis VICT.

W. Drewartha S.A.

Jim. Ho Widay Q'LD.

Sid Thompson U.K.

A. G. Blues W.A.



T. Moore.

This issue completes twenty-five years of continuous issue of 458 SQUADRON NEWS. No issue has been missed in the series of 100. Many of the Squadron's members have contributed their unstinting efforts in the course of the quarter century. Some of their names appear on the special Front Page of the Jubilee issue. Some are not with us but have flown on ahead. But whether their names appear or not, everyone involved has grudged not one iota of the effort which has, through the NEWS, contributed to the continuing life of 458 SQUADRON, and to the great richness of friendship which this has offered those who served on the Squadron--and to their wives and families.

100 continuous issues is an achievement (which, we suspect, few other units have attained) and we felt it ranked for a special Jubilee effort. We are very grateful for the kindness of the distinguished people and friends who have sent the kind messages which appear below.

THE SQUADRON PRESIDENT (SYD BARTRAM) WRITES TO YOU-----

On the occasion of the 100th. issue of our Squadron News, I would like to commend our worthy Editor for his long and continuous service in the interests of 458 Squadron generally. Without this service it is doubtful whether we would have achieved the 25 years of continuous news, and the comradeship that is so important to all the members and associates of 458.

My congratulations and appreciation also to the many people who have contributed so much in time and effort to make this wonderful organisation something to be proud of.

It is with deepest regret that from time to time I read of the passing of our members or their loved ones, and I sincerely hope that the people who are left gain some strength and comfort in their sorrow from the unity of our Squadron.

In conclusion, may I send best wishes to all with the hope that our Squadron may continue in the same spirit for many more years to come.

MESSAGES TO 458 SQUADRON.

FROM HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH.

The QUEEN sincerely thanks the members of the 458 Squadron Branch of the Air Force Association for their kind message of Loyal Greetings on the occasion of the 25th Jubilee of 458 Squadron News. Her Majesty much appreciates this message and sends her warm congratulations to all concerned.

FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF AUSTRALIA, His Excellency SIR JOHN KERR.

I am most happy to send a message of congratulations on the occasion of the special Jubilee issue of "458 Squadron News".

It is a fine achievement for a quarterly publication of this kind to have appeared regularly for twenty-five years without missing an issue. There must undoubtedly be a very strong feeling of comradeship among former members of 458 Squadron, R.A.A.F., to enable such continuity of publication to be maintained. Congratulations to all concerned.

yours sincerely,

John R. Kerr.

FROM THE GOVERNOR OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, His Excellency Air Commodore H. I. EDWARDS, V.C.

It gives me considerable pleasure to send a short message to members of 458 Squadron.

Your Squadron had a most illustrious record in World War II and its strong sense of comradeship and esprit-de-corps has been made apparent by the fact that your quarterly paper "458 Squadron News" has been kept alive for twenty five years through the devotion of Peter Alexander. This is a tribute to the feelings inculcated in you in those desperate days of World War II.

Messages to 458 Squadron (cont.)

I only hope your paper will be in circulation for another twenty-five years and on receiving the publication I hope you will feel proud of the occasions you spent together, and wherever you may be I wish you luck in your callings.

(Note: Hughie Edwards is the only living Australian-born Air Force V.C. winner).

FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA, The Hon. E. Gough Whitlam, M.P.

I am delighted to send my congratulations to members of 458 Squadron on the occasion of the Jubilee Issue of their quarterly newsletter. It is a remarkable tribute to the traditions of the squadron and the bonds of comradeship among its members that their publication has continued to appear regularly for so long. Your journal sets an example to all former members and serving members of the R.A.A.F. I wish you well.

FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA, the Hon. Pierre Trudeau, M.P.

I am very happy to extend warm greetings to the former members of 458 Squadron, R.A.A.F. through the Jubilee Issue of 458 Squadron News.

It is one of life's paradoxes that events as inhumane and chilling as war should also be occasions for the kinds of deep and lasting friendships that you have maintained over the years. It is this spirit of friendship --- of kindness, understanding and concern which forms the basis of our ultimate victories.

May you in your daily lives continue to share your goodwill with those with whom you come in contact.

FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND, the Hon. Norman Kirk, M.P.

My congratulations to the former members of 458 Squadron, R.A.A.F. on the occasion of the Jubilee Issue of "458 Squadron News".

It is now nearly 30 years since 458 Squadron saw active service, yet its members still maintain the strong links of camaraderie forged in those days of strife.

The fact that this newsletter continues to appear regularly after so long says more than mere words can tell about those men who flew and serviced the Wellington bombers of 458 Squadron.

As the years take the toll of the Australians, Canadians, British, and New Zealanders who made up the Squadron, the task of keeping contact and maintaining the bond becomes harder. But the officers of the Squadron Council are proving equal to the task.

I sincerely hope that the "458 Squadron News" will continue to appear for many years to come, as long as there are men of 458 to read it.

Note: All the distinguished men who sent these messages personally signed them--as, indeed and of course, did the distinguished writers of the Squadron and other messages which follow.)

FROM THE RT. HON. B. M. SNEDDEN, M.P., Leader of the Australian Opposition.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to extend to you and to all those who receive "458 Squadron News" my congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of the Jubilee Issue. Your record of 25 years of unbroken publication reflects the proud spirit and morale that was so important to our fighting forces in World War II. With best wishes for the future.

FROM THE HON. R. O. HEALEY, M.L.A., N.S.W. Minister for Youth and Community Services--- who is a 458'er.

One hundred issues equal to 25 years of 458 Squadron News is a memorable milestone. The hours of compilation, duplication, folding, putting in envelopes, addressing and stamping, thousands of them, all to maintain communication with former members. It was a long time ago but we have maintained our links and memories. Thanks in great measure are due to Pete Alexander for his tireless efforts.

I have been lucky in these 25 years and am now Minister for Youth and Community Services in N.S.W. Greetings to Buck Pederson in Adelaide,

Messages to 458 (cont.)

Bill Hurford in Melbourne, Pete Hemingway in Canada, and Frank Wilson in Sydney. Recently ran into 2nd. Dickie Cliff. Jones at Coogee Bowling Club.

Regards to all I knew in 458. My ministerial car has the plate number MY 458-- a gesture of remembrance.

FROM AIR MARSHAL CHARLES READ, Chief of Air Staff, Royal Australian Air Force.

On the occasion of the Jubilee Issue of '458 Squadron News', I extend my congratulations to the Branch Executive and members in maintaining contact and achieving 25 years of publication. From such a sound foundation I hope that your strong sense of comradeship will continue to prevail for many years to come. My best wishes to all from both myself and on behalf of all presently serving members of the RAAF.

FROM AIR VICE MARSHAL BILL TOWNSEND, Federal President of the AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION.

There are very few ex-service organisations who can give claim to the proud record of 458 Squadron News.

To have maintained continuous quarterly publication through a twenty five year period is a great feat indeed.

In addition to the Executives concerned those whose, perhaps more humble, tasks of preparing the material and ensuring prompt publication, are to be congratulated on this Silver Jubilee.

FROM BARRY BROOKE, N.S.W. State President of the AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION.

It is a great honour for me as President of the N.S.W. Division of the Air Force Association to have been asked to write a message to the former members of 458 Squadron R.A.A.F. for publication in the Jubilee Issue of "458 Squadron News".

The Squadron was one of the earliest R.A.A.F. Squadrons to take part in the Air War over Europe before being transferred to the Mediterranean theatre where it also served with great distinction until the cessation of hostilities in 1945.

The "458 Squadron News" has been published quarterly for the past 25 years and has provided an important means of communication between members of the Squadron, enabling them to maintain contact and continue the friendship which originated during their service days.

On the occasion of the publication of the Jubilee Issue of the Squadron News, I send to all former members of 458, wherever they may be, my best wishes and heartiest congratulations on 25 years of achievement.

FROM BILL KEYS, National Secretary of the RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE.

Heartiest Congratulations to the Executive and Members of 458 Squadron branch of the Air Force Association on the occasion of this Jubilee Publication of 458 Squadron News. It is quite a remarkable effort to have sustained a Unit magazine over this period without missing one issue.

Your comrades in arms in the Army and Navy are proud of you.

* * * * *

FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICERS AND PAST SQUADRON PRESIDENTS.FROM LEW JOHNSTON, 2ND. C.O. and 1st. SQUADRON PRESIDENT.

What a magnificent achievement ! Twenty five years of continuous publication and all due to the continuous consistent effort of the editor. It is not as though you merely sat down and wrote the pages yourself four times a year and then had them printed. You had to motivate some half a dozen correspondents every three months to produce your copy. Fortunately there were other blokes like you, dedicated to keeping the Association alive and the copy kept coming in.

Your first Issue must have been August, 1949. I can't say I remember Issue No.1. I doubt if I received it:--I was then at Kinloss in Scotland. However, I do recall subsequently receiving the Squadron News--reaching me in various parts of

From the C.O.s and Squadron Presidents (cont.)

of the World and being astonished to find that activities had continued in all States and the U.K. I think the Squadron News was largely responsible for this continued activity in that each member received news of happenings in his own locality as well as news of old mates spread all over the globe and was motivated to renew contact.

The years have taken their toll and many of our staunchest supporters are no longer with us. Another 25 years of publication of the Squadron News would appear a tall order but, after all, Peter, Issue No.1 in 1949 wasn't certain of reaching 100, so let's start 101, hopeful that the Squadron News will go the distance required of it by a vigorous 458 Association. Who knows, one day we might reach the magic number---Issue 458. Johnno.

FROM BRUCE MCKENZIE, M.P., 3rd.C.O. and 9th.SQUADRON PRESIDENT.

It gives me very great pleasure to send a message to old 458ers in this Jubilee Issue. As one gets older thoughts are liable to turn back to exciting interesting, amusing, difficult, enjoyable, by-gone times. My best recollections of 458 Squadron days, however, whether at Shallufa, Malta or Protville, was the esprit-de-corps, the way you pulled together and the deep loyalty to each other. Woe betide any outsider who attempted to belittle anyone on the Squadron for the wrath of all would descend on him.

This spirit of comradeship and mutual support seems to have lasted with the memories! I hope all we oldies can continue to remember for at least another 100 issues.

That thought leads me to say how grateful I am personally to Peter as Editor for the tremendous feat of producing this publication for twenty five years, thus enabling so many of us to keep in touch.

FROM AIR COMMODORE JACK DOWLING, 4th.C.O.

Here's a cheer to all the members of 458 Squadron. It is indeed a long time since I saw many of you but I have followed you all in our newspaper which has bridged the gap of time which has separated many of us. This is our Jubilee year and you should all feel very proud of yourselves for having made a contribution which has kept the Squadron alive for 25 years.

FROM ERN. LAMING, Squadron D.W.O. and 12th.SQUADRON PRESIDENT.

Once again our Squadron has made history and I have been given the honour to pass greetings and salutations to all who served with it. Best wishes to all I would particularly like to hear of or from Arch. Fell from New Zealand.

FROM HARRY ASHWORTH, 10th.SQUADRON PRESIDENT.

Many thanks for the opportunity to send a message or two in the 100th. issue of 458 Squadron News. Firstly, I would like to congratulate you and all the other members who have made it possible to reach this stage in Sqdn. history.

I would like to send greetings to Arthur Lehdey, Alex Glassford, any ex-members of Stan. Slater's crew and Bob. Drinnan's crew---also Bert Frankum of U.K.

FROM BILL TAYLOR 6th.SQUADRON PRESIDENT and S.A.FLIGHT PRESIDENT

Congratulations on the 100th. issue.

This makes one ponder on the last 30 years; from the initial meetings of the Flights, our picnics, golf and tennis matches, dances, Father Christmas acts, Anzac Day marches and luncheons, the Squadron History, "We Find and Destroy", interstate conferences, meeting pals from other States; and, above all, the magnificent comradeship that has kept us together.

To a very large extent this has been due to the tremendous and unflagging interest and energy displayed by Peter Alexander and the co-workers in gathering news of members, writing, editing, keeping changes of addresses, producing and posting the Squadron News. All members of 458 S.A. Flight join me in thanking Peter and his team. Please keep it up.

FROM THE FLIGHT PRESIDENTS.FROM ERIC MUNKMAN, N.S.W. Flight PRESIDENT.

I would like to offer my heartiest congratulations to our Editor, Peter Alexander, for the fine achievement he has made with this 100th. edition of our newsletter. To all who have over the years contributed, I say thank you for helping with this essential link which binds our Squadron.

Being one who has been involved over the years in getting the newsletter out, I look back to the time when we did our own printing at Sam Barlow's place and we used to spend quite a bit of time mopping up spilt ink, and with quaffing a few ales, and it was early hours next day when we finally wended our ways home. Nowadays we are fortunate in being able to have our news printed and our assembly line is much more efficient.

Please keep up the good work, Peter, and Secretaries in all States keep those news items rolling in.

In closing I would like this opportunity to say hello to all my fellow members and hope I shall have the pleasure of saying hello personally to many of you in the West next year.

FROM KEN MORKHAM, VICTORIAN Flight PRESIDENT.

It gives me great pleasure to write a few words for the 100th edition of the 458 Squadron News sheet.

Firstly, I write to congratulate the Editor, and all those who have kept the newsheet going from its inception up to and including the 100th edition and trust that we will all have the pleasure of reading the news for many years to come.

I make this personal plea to all members when receiving the memorable 100th. edition and after reading the same to spare a moment in silence to remember those who have gone to rest in peace; and, as a final thought, to think of the amount of work that has gone into the production of the News over the years. A group of people produced the news by taking an active part in production and by supplying the news (it did not happen on its own).

We can all play our part to keep the news sheet going in the future by paying our subs. and contributions. It's worth while chaps. The news sheet must be the longest running R.A.A.F. Squadron news, to my knowledge. See you in Perth next year.

FROM BILL CLUES, WESTERN AUSTRALIAN Flight PRESIDENT.

100th. Issue ! What a remarkable achievement ! Congratulations to our editor who has so ably helped to get these issues to press, and also to the backroom boys and our Flight Scribes--for without this team effort where would the Squadron News be to-day ? Still getting off the ground I fear. The Flight in W.A. is held together by a hard core of stalwarts who regularly attend, maintain interest, and keep the Flight alive.

Over recent years, we have paid more attention to our Ladies and the younger generation and have found that they have made a great contribution to maintaining interest in the Squadron and its activities.

My previous remarks are substantiated by the fact that we look forward with great optimism to the 1975 All States Reunion which even at this early juncture looks like an unqualified success.

FROM CLIVE WYMAN, QUEENSLAND Flight PRESIDENT.

I look back over the years to the time when you and some of the N.S.W. Flight came to Brisbane and originated the formation of Q. Flight of the Squadron. I must admit that at that stage I wondered if there would be any growth or continuity.

History has proved me wrong and I feel that the greatest factor in integrating 458 Squadron in Australia and overseas has been the regular appearance of the Squadron News.

How each member of the Squadron can show appreciation I do not know, but as the President of Q. Flight, I say "Thank you" on behalf of all members in this State to you and your helpers and congratulations on the forthcoming one hundredth

issue of the Squadron News.

By asking you to insert this letter in that issue, I do, on behalf of Q.Flight extend our greetings and well wishes to all members of the Squadron wherever they may be.

To do this on an individual basis would extend this letter into book form but, as a Flight President's prerogative, I would like to say "Hello" to my crew, Bob Low, Cy. Irwin, Don. Brandon, Sammy Simpson, and Frank Ward.

FROM MICK MASON, UNITED KINGDOM Flight PRESIDENT.

I am honoured to be granted the privilege to pay tribute to the centenary issue of our beloved Squadron News and to be given the chance to say 'How do and hello' to all the bods. Members of the Pommie Section of 458 and I remember so well because the information in the Squadron News keeps fresh in our minds the whereabouts and names of old comrades who we could so easily have forgotten. We are grateful for the continued contact and we eagerly await its arrival so that we can sit down and devour every word completely.....

The years have rolled by but our memories, assisted by the Squadron News, remain undimmed..... We have a few stalwarts, Harry Bishop (Treasurer), Sid Thompsett (Secretary), Leo Armstrong, Pop Angers, Charlie Humbles and myself..... My thanks to them for supporting us in clinging to the Brotherhood revived so long ago by Pete Pettit, and Johnno Johnston at the Feathers Hotel in Westminster.

On behalf of all the Pommie 458ers I send our sincere wishes for continued success to the Squadron News and to you, Peter Alexander, and your committee our thanks for keeping our memories alive.

* * * * *

FROM OTHER SQUADRONS AND FRIENDS.

FROM JACK DOYLE, PRESIDENT, 3 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION.

On behalf of all members of 3 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION please let me congratulate you and your committee on the issue of your one hundredth news sheet over a span of 25 years.

I know that all our members would back me in this message because all committee members well know of the difficulties and frustrations associated with producing a regular newsheet and equally well all members know how eagerly they look forward to getting a newsheet. Press on to that second century !

FROM ART. WHITMARSH, VICE PRESIDENT, 460 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION,

It certainly does not seem over thirty years since we were neighbours at Brighton to 458 at Holme-on-Spalding Moor--when the old "Fickle Finger of Fate" decreed the inevitable Air Force posting, sending us to Lincolnshire just to change aircraft whilst our neighbours were to enjoy (?) the sun, sea and sand of the Mediterranean, and the Wimpeys.

On a recent Squadron visit to the U.K. a remark was made to me regarding the number in our contingent from Australia--and "just how easily the intervening years since '45 could be 'rolled back'". I think the whole success of any Squadron Association is a regular communication between the members--even if it is only to remind the stragglers that they owe a couple of bucks in back dues!

Therefore on behalf of 460, I would like to convey our sincere congratulations to 458 in achieving the twenty five year mark in their publication, and trust we can offer them again at the half century.

To the members that have been and are now responsible for the production, my personal congratulations and hopes that the results and support received justify the time-consuming efforts.

FROM DOUG. WHEELER, HONORARY SECRETARY, 463-467 SQUADRONS,

On this memorable occasion, the printing of the 100th edition of the quarterly newsletter of 458 Squadron branch, the Committee and members of the 463 & 467 Squadrons branch of the Air Force Association take the opportunity of extending their congratulations and best wishes. We are only too well aware of the time and effort involved in such undertakings and in retaining the interest of members for such a long period.

From Other Squadrons and Friends.

FROM STAN.ERMAN, PRESIDENT, POLISH Branch, AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION,

The Committee and members of Polish Branch wish to take this opportunity to congratulate your Branch on its splendid work over the past 25 years and, in particular, on its achieving the 100th. edition of "458 Squadron News", under the editorship of Peter Alexander, O.B.E.

Peter's work in the Association, on the Federal level, has been an inspiration to us over the years, and we are proud too of his friendship and unfailing interest in the Polish Branch. Wishing you every success in the future.

FROM OTHER FRIENDS.

FROM DON.BRANDON, Q.FLIGHT.

Nearly thirty years ago I was introduced to a Squadron whose fame and record was well-known to Airmen throughout the Middle East and the European Theatre of operation. I was proud to join 458. In retrospect it was the 'Squadron' I met and since then I, like many others, have been meeting the blokes that made the 'Squadron'--a great bunch. For all these years we have communicated--our 458 Squadron News. Our State and National gatherings have been enjoyed by all associated with those "Blue Orchids" of years ago. We in Queensland wish to thank Peter Alexander and his helpers for continuing to provide this media over those years and we hope they will continue for many years to come.

FROM JIM PALMER, ko ionup, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

As the all important Jubilee Issue of the Squadron News is due, I felt it was time I passed on what 458 news I have. Firstly I noticed with regret the passing of Marj. Trewartha. Our sympathy to Lofty and family. (Ed. In that all 458ers join)

Don. Tunney, with us at Shallufa and Malta and Grace are on a world tour.

Tony Main has sold his farm at Borden and now lives at Albany.

Our main interest these days is Kay's (our daughter's) nine month old son. They gave him the names Peter Alexander, sounds familiar. Best wishes.

FROM JUDGE BERNIE McLOUGHLIN, Q.FLIGHT.

I suddenly realised I have not paid anything for my 458 News for ages. With the 100th. issue approaching I thought I should rectify the matter.....Do you think you could let me have two copies of the historic 100th. issue for each of my two children. With best wishes for the next 100.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

As ever, our Flight Correspondents did not let us down but duly forwarded the usual interesting news items about their Flight and their members.

However it is apparent that the special items associated with the Jubilee Issue are not going to leave enough space. The News items will not be forgotten but will add to what we have for the next Issue. The remaining space in this copy should it seems to me be given to two main items. The first is a sad one. An old mate (not so old as the years go) in the person of Stuart (Trapper) Currington died recently. It is fitting that his Squadron paper should record something of his life--and this we asked Doug (Dutch) Holland to write, which he has done.

Secondly, while we have had very gracious messages from the Heads of Government or State of four of the countries from which our main Squadron membership came--the British Isles, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand--it was not possible for us to print the equivalent from the fifth country--South Africa. This, in a way very acceptable to us, we can compensate for. Through Lock Simpson, we have heard from a South African 458 voice long unheard--from Ralph Duffey. His letter we therefore publish. He speaks in effect for our South African mates who politics and law can not change from being 458ers and our old friends and companions.

V A L E T E .

STU. (Trapper) CURRINGTON.

We advise with deep regret the passing, after a severe illness of our old friend. He passed on at his home town of Peak Hill early in July. His close Squadron and post-war friend Doug. Holland writes:

I first met him at Morecombe in England. From there we went to the Middle East and after touring sundry transit camps, turned up at 458 in Bone in April '44. He flew as a Second pilot and finished his tour at Foggia. From there he went to O.T.U. in Palestine until the end of hostilities.

After the war he returned to the family property at Peak Hill where he spent some years (at one stage he was running about 5,000 turkeys). About ten years ago he secured a job with Dalgetys in the Northern Territory. (He obtained this job by replying to an ad. for someone who could fly and start immediately. Unlike many of us, he continued his interest in flying throughout his life. Anyway he left Peak Hill and affairs there to his brother Allan). As you probably know he became ill in Darwin, and was flown to Sydney for treatment about last Xmas and then returned to Peak Hill.

My contacts with him over the years have been intermittent. Two occasions stand out. One was when I was Best Man at his wedding in 1949; and another when he crash-landed a Cessna 150 on our property. The aircraft was a write-off, but both he and Margaret emerged without a scratch. I finally saw him in Peak Hill Hospital a few weeks before his death. He would have been 51 in August. (We had a joint 21st. birthday party celebration on the Squadron). He is survived by his wife, Margaret, and two sons, Miles, working in Darwin; and David at School in Bathurst. Also his brother Allan (Peak Hill Paper Shop) and sister, Megan.

I attended his service at Peak Hill which was very impressive. The local R.S.L. did him proud and from the size of the Service just about everyone from Peak Hill and many from other parts were there.

458 Squadron has sent its sympathy to Margaret--and will hope to keep in touch with her.

FRANK KEITH.

Frank was not, in wartime, a member of 458 but served with the R.A.F. on 14 Squadron--our near, Marauder, neighbours. Coming to Sydney, he joined with us on Anzac Day, both marching with 458 and attending the ensuing Reunions. He thus became a de facto 458er. It has always been this writer's view that airmen could still be 'posted' to 458 Squadron--as a living post-war Squadron.

Frank was on holiday in Hobart when he died. He left a widow, Peggy, three children, and a grand-daughter.

Our sympathy to his family and with them, too, we hope to maintain contact.

x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x
x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x x

FROM SOUTH AFRICA--RALPH DUFFEY WRITES TO LOCK SIMPSON, from Siteki, Swaziland.

Thank you for your letters and Xmas greetings over the years which have been welcome and appreciated. There are no excuses, except that at the legal game one is fixed with so many issues one gets down to personal correspondence. I can give you a brief summary after the war years.

On leaving 458 I was to do a course on Liberators but first flew back to South Africa and found that I had been promoted to the rank of Captain from Lieutenant while with 458, although the news never came through.... However collected a nice sum in extra pay. Then instead of returning to the Middle East, I was offered a senior post at George Training Centre in South Africa for Bomber pilots, with the rank of Major. Refused this and wangled my way out of the Air Force into law.

I then commenced practicing as an attorney and notary in a large coal mining and farming area about 100 miles from Johannesburg. This proved very successful and Olga and I built up the family to three. Gavin born just before I went north; qualified at 21 as a B.A., Ll.B with honours in all subjects. In fact shared 1st. place in South Africa with one other student. He did not become a barrister

From South Africa (cont.)

as I had planned but joined the legal commercial world and is now a senior Executive in a vast mining corporation. Has a lovely home outside Johannesburg and three lovely daughters. My others were daughters, both happily married, and the grandchildren amount to 7. No 8 expected.

In 1959 as a passenger, not driver, I was involved in a nasty motor crash and so ill for three years I had to give up law... Then started up again in 1962. I intended retiring last year to Natal South Coast, but was persuaded by the Chief Justice of Swaziland---an independent multiracial African State bordering on the Eastern Transvaal to accept the position of senior Regional Magistrate. Have been set up in a beautiful home and garden of about 4 acres, so may spend another year or two there before finally retiring to a life of fishing, Bowls and Golf. Not easy though as capital means nothing with the rising cost of living. Olga and myself both now 60 and keeping remarkably fit. Am at present relaxing at Crocodile in Eastern Transvaal for a few days..... Still the good old scotchdrinker but in view of age very much in moderation as compared with our good old days.....

Quite often I meet with old friends of the S.A.A.F. and relive the war over a few spots. What wonderful days they were ! I shall never forget my Aussie friends and the times we had. In fact until about a year back they regularly sent me the 458 Squadron Newspaper. But like a naughty boy I never paid any subscriptions and they must have given me up as a dead loss. (Editor: Not so. We do not cut any 458er off for being unfinancial--for reasons this letter will illustrate. The (naughtiness consisted in not giving us a changed address). However I closely followed the progress and fates of old friends.

I take a keen interest in protecting all species of game in Swaziland where they are in abundance but still do a good bit of shooting during the winter season when old kudu, wildebeest, impala, waterbuck, etc, have to be culled. My eyesight good and still considered an excellent shot. We have some really fine safaris--plenty of Biltong, which as far as I remember you and the Pommies do not eat. All for now Olga and I wish wish you and yours good health, wealth and happiness.

yours sincerely, Ralph.

A COMING EVENT FOR OLD SOLDIERS--and OLD AIRMEN.

From 11th-15th. August 1975, the Returned Services League of Australia, with the warm support of other Australian ex-Service bodies, will be host to a World Assembly of War Veterans in Sydney. 15th. August is the 30th Anniversary of the end of W.W.II.

Invitations to the Assembly have been extended to veterans of every country without restriction and the organisers hope for an attendance of something like 10,000.

There will be an interesting programme--official opening at the Sydney Opera House, an Australiana Day, a Veterans Symposium, a Pageant, much hospitality and of course the availability of the Australian tourist scene.

Peter Alexander, as the Australian Council member of the World Veterans Federation, sits on the organising committee..

458ers, particularly overseas, might consider making this a date. Further details from Box 5289 G.P.O., Sydney, Australia.

SOUVENIR COPIES OF THIS ISSUE ?

Some extra copies of this Issue have been specially printed and are available at 50c. each from the Squadron Council, Box 5289, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W., 2001, Australia.

EDITORIAL.

Well, there it is. For my part, I have enjoyed the 25 years, as I have indeed enjoyed the whole ex-service scene. I personally have had a very much richer life (not in dollars, I assure you) from having these friendships and activities than I could possibly have had as an accountant or a public servant (tho both of these I have enjoyed too). I hope, I believe, other 458ers involved in the quarter century's events, will feel similarly. Also for my part, we shall do our best to take Art. Whitmarsh up on those further congratulations at the 50 year mark.
Peter Alexander, Editor.