The Editor: G.P.O. Box 5289, Sydney, N.S.W.

Vol. 4, No. 15

April, 1953.

SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE.

ALL-AUSTRALIAN REUNION in Sydney: Over 100 attend.

Interstate and country members started to arrive in Sydney on the Thursday before Anzac Day. By Friday there must have been twenty or thirty of them. Our second C.O., Johnno (now Sqn/Ldr. L.L. Johnston, R.A.F.), flew up specially from Melbourne to be at the reunion. The first official function of the weekend was at the Cenotaph on Friday evening when 80 squadron members gathered in Martin Place, fell in in two ranks and marched to the Cenotaph where the N.S.W. President, Pete Campbell placed a wreath bearing the 458 emblem, a Winged Torpedo, and the squadron stood in silence for two minutes.

Immediately afterwards everyone moved round to 330 George Street for the Grand Interstate Reunion. We missed recording a few names but there were over 100 there including a few visitors. These were the names recorded:

H. Dorgo
J. Monday
T. Waldon
L. Doman
"Caesar" Baird
L. Johnston
Bill Bailey
Maca
A. Jollow
R. Ricketts
D. Pitmead
W. Archbold
T. Mitchell
Len Barton
C. Irwin
B. Lydon
Bill Carr
C. Campbell
B. Thompson
L. Wood
E. J. Baker
B. Menser
J. McGovern
J. Wren
Wal Clarke
V. C. Bartlett

J. Aitken
N. Griffiths
T. Moore
Russ. Wilson
B. Millar
Bob Bruce
A. Hamond
A. Ashton
C. Green
C. Green
J. Whitten
B. Wallace
R. Bailey
J. Wren
A. Dombkins

Ray Davies
Arthur Green
Harpo Marks
N. Spurling
A. Walker
P. C. Alexander
G. Dunby
J. Whitton
B. Wallace
F. Ward
J. Wren
R. Burgess

F. James
J. Payne
J. Holliday
J. Holliker
J. Holliday
W. Perkins
W. Perkins
W. Perkins

S. Ricketts
N. Walters
C. Warren
C. Nation
B. Baker
C. Hayward
C. Hayward
C. Hayward

Frank Hickey
C. Ruthven
Otto Mann
Dusty Miller
G. Orchard
F. Strom
H. Bryant
Jack Bevan

G. Nation

The N.S.W. Committee in making arrangements had guessed there would be a larger than usual attendance and laid on a larger amount of beer. But never has beer gone so quickly. In fact between 7.30 and 10.30 we went through four kegs.

Time off was taken for the members to receive and adopt the N.S.W. Committee's Annual Report and Accounts and to elect a Committee and Officers for the coming year. The N.S.W. President welcomed Johnno and the Presidents and visitors from the other States. During the evening the Victorian President (Jim Monday) replied on behalf of the visitors. The N.S.W. Committee for the year 1953-4 elected was:

President: Alan Piggott
Vice-Presidents: Pete Campbell, Alf. Hammond
Hon. Treasurer: Sam Barlow
Hon. Secretary: Peter Alexander
Members: Bob Bruce, Tony Harris, Eric Munkman, L. Doman, Allan Walker, Tom Moore, Black Jack Baker, Bert Thompson, Cy. Irwin, Goldy Bartlett, Fred Strom, Pool Walter, Graeme Coombes, Geo. Nation, Harry Dorgo,
Hon. Auditor: Doug Bennett.

Before leaving this account of the 1st. All-States Reunion (and of course it is never really possible in cold black and white to describe the spirit of a Reunion), we must
mention those who very much wanted to be there but couldn't make it and sent their regards to old friends. Padre McManus (on the Sick List in Melbourne), Padre Fred McKay who wrote from Alice Springs, Ernie Laming, who did his utmost to get down from Japan, Jack Robb, Stan Tararynski, Ken Cupper and Bluey Firth, Lofty Trewarthwaite and Ron Badger in Adelaide, Ian Shower in Fremantle, Bill Taylor, who sent good wishes as S.A. President, Brian Woodhead, George Riddoch who kept a fatherly eye on Race from Burram Barracks in Victoria, Frank Wilks in Toowoomba, Ken Crace, Gordon Saggotta, Eric Jewell, Snowy Moon, Lofty Kermot, W. Hurford and Jack Ind, Bernie Hughes, Jack Pemmill and Jimma in Hay, Len Stewart in Perth, W.A. Jack Carter telegraphed his good wishes from Palmwoods in Queensland.

Next Morning: 458 Squadron Marches.

The Three State Presidents attending—Jim, Monday from Victoria, Charlie Warren from Queensland, and Pete Campbell of N.S.W. carried the 458 Banner in the March from Macquarie Street to the Domain, by way of Martin Place and George and Park Streets. Johnson commanded the squadron again, marching immediately behind the Banner and giving the "eyes Right" at the Cenotaph. He was followed by 70-plus members. Squadron-member Dick Golley gave the A.B.C. commentary, being stationed with his microphone on the Park balcony near the Town Hall, and 458 were not without mention. From the Domain members made their way to the Lord Mayor of the Hotel Australia where quite a few cold beers were downed. Later we moved to the Air Force Club for some pies and more beers, and in fact a resumption of the reunion which terminated only later in the evening. The Club was full of 458 blue badges and the Federal Secretary of the Air Force Association was heard to comment on our numbers. During the afternoon an Australian Conference of delegates representing all the mainland states was held. This Conference and its decisions is reported below in this issue.

The following day: Golf and the struggle for the Anzac Cup.

Sunday saw the scene shifted to Campbelltown Golf Club where 40 members and friends played golf and competed for several prizes. To quote a few it was their first encounter with Campelltown Creek. The newly-elected N.S.W. President, Alan Piggott, with habilis confidence, went round 18 holes with only three bogeys. "Ourselves we sank our usual five points in the creek. The Anzac Cup (like the President's Cup a handicap event) was won by Tom Mitchell with a nett 56 and Barry Baines from Wingham was runner-up and won a prize presented by the Golf Club. Other prizes were won by Cy. Irwin, Mrs. Ruthven, and several visitors. After the golf was over the festivities continued until, in the words of the very attractive printed programmes for the Anzac week end which San Barlow prepared and numbers all received, "at some hour later 458 Squadron steel down till next time".

UNITED ORGANISATION for 458 SQUADRON. Conference decisions.

At 3.0 O'clock on Anzac Day the first All-Australian Conference of 458 Squadron met in the Committee Room of the fifth floor of 350 George Street with delegates or proxies from all the mainland states. Victoria was represented by its President (Jim, Monday) and Secretary (Bill Carr) with committee member Shorty Wilson. Queensland by President Charles Warren and Secretary Jim Holliday. Pete Campbell and San Barlow represented N.S.W. Bert Thompson and C.C. Nation were proxies from S.A., and Eric Murck and Alan Piggott for W.A. Pete Alexander acted as Conference Secretary and the Chair was of course taken by W/Gnl. John Johnston. Conference, on the motion of Jim, Holliday, decided to set up an All-state Committee to act for the Squadron in such matters as demand unified action and, specifically, in dealing with the R.A.A.F. ex-service men's organisations, housing and repatriation, the squadron history and publication of 458 Squadron News. There was some discussion on the name of the central committee. Queensland delegates pointed out that the word Federal carried unpopular connotations in some states. No one really liked the words National or Central for various reasons. Finally, on the Chairman's suggestion, it was decided to use the name "The 458 Squadron Council". The Council is to be located in Sydney and to have a President, a Vice President/Secretary, an Honorary Treasurer, one member resident in each state and a proxy delegate resident in Sydney appointed by each state committee to act when necessary for the state members of the Council. The Squadron in the U.K. is being invited to appoint a representative. The Council may of course meet in any of the states.

Conference then elected the Council officers as follow:

Squadron President: L.J. Johnston
Squadron Secretary: Peter Alexander
Squadron Treasurer: San Barlow.

State numbers and proxies will be appointed in the near future by the state committee. Matters of any sort of purely State interest will of course continue to be handled by the State officers and committees. Conference then adopted the N.S.W. Squadron Banner as a standard design approved by the policy of 458 Squadron News and heard a report on the progress of the Squadron History placing on record its appreciation of the efforts of the Victorian
Secretary in obtaining and having copied the official R.A.A.F. records of 459 Squadron. It was reported as possible that the History could be finished this year. Delegates also discussed where next year's interstate reunion should be held and decided that, irrespective or not the Queen would be in Melbourne at Anzac Week end, the reunion should be in that city or in Brisbane. Numbers will be notified in good time. The conference finally recorded its thanks to the R.S.W. Branch for all the reunion and associated arrangements.

What were the outstanding features of the conference? The strong policy leads that came from the Queensland delegates the able chairmanship of Johno. Johno incidentally, upon his election to the Squadron Presidency, remarked, "The A.O.C. told me in 1941 that I'd be doing this job after the war. I don't know that I believed him." The conference made one thing very clear—we are still one squadron.


from: Pete Pettit.

The long-awaited reunion has at last been held! We got away to rather a bad start on the...... Manager of the pub where the booking was arranged had double-booked the room. Never he did have the grace to arrange alternative accommodation for us at another pub. The only trouble was that the directions he gave for finding the blessed place were literally miles out and most of the job arrived up to two hours after the time stated in the revised notice I had to send out. I suspect one or two blokes are still wandering about Victoria between Victoria Street and Horseferry Road.

Those present besides yours truly were: Leo Armstrong, G. G. Brown, Steve Search, George Morrisman, Syd. Thomsett, R.G. Springall, Harry Eastwood, H.W. Hamlet, Barry Wykes, Michael Moxon, H.M. Salley, harry Bishop, Geoff. Barrett, Bob Havers, Dick Rutter, W. Richards, David Davey, and Sid. Albert. Not such a bad roll-up all things considered. We had several apologies. I think we can be reasonably pleased with the result. Leo Armstrong had the thing publicised somewhat and this had the effect of bringing a very decent letter from A.V.W. Tuttle who commanded the Wing in North Africa in 1943.

The meeting passed well enough. We unanimously decided to call ourselves the 459 Squadron Club (Pom. ie. Branch) — surely appropriate enough and asked W/Cdr. Dealing to be President. They appointed me Secretary for the ensuing twelve months and elected the following Committee:— Leo Armstrong (Hon. Treasurer), Hugh Hamlet, Michael Moxon, Harry Eastwood, George Morrisman. So you can consider the organisational side under control. We have tentatively decided to hold the next reunion in six months time, probably in Manchester.

A.V.W. Tuttle's letter was:

"Dear Mr. Pettit I notice on reading the Aeroplane of the 13th February that No. 459 Squadron, R.A.A.F., is having a reunion of ex-members on 28th February. Unfortunately I was never lucky enough to serve with the Squadron but when I commanded No. 328 Wing in North Africa and Corsica in 1943 I was lucky enough to have the squadron under my command. I shall never forget the squadron not only for its work but also for its spirit. I should be very glad if you would give my best wishes to all ex-members.

yours sincerely,

Geoffrey Tuttle.

(McKee's Air Force is glad to hear from A.V.W. Tuttle and grateful for his good wishes.—— Editor.)

Personalities.

Clauo Bourque is still with the R.C.A.F., having a permanent commission, he has been stationed in Paris as Public Relations Officer, and expects to return shortly. He is married, with a son. He asks to be remembered particularly to Bob, Halyar and Gordon Orchard.

Ron Hille recently became engaged. Our good wishes to you, Ron.

Dorothy Reynolds has a son, Albert David.

Brian Lord has moved to his new home at Herne Bay, where he is hard at it.

Arnold Acton. Arnold has recently returned from W.A. to Yanderra where he is dealing in Grinkle Bush for export. Arnold took part in all events of the recent Anzac Week-end. He is married with a daughter and building himself a new home.

Henry Etherton is at Geralton in W.A. where he is doing well.

Noel Spurling has moved to Sydney where he is doing a course in French polishing.

He is living in Hurstville. Noel wants to be remembered to Randy Carpenter.

Peter Baille is now in the Building Trade.

Frannie Ridge and his wife have a daughter (Patricia),

Arthur Green is a Spring Manufacturer in Melbourne. He has a son studying Pharmaceutical Chemistry. Arthur wants to be remembered to Roy Hansell.
Downhill who came down to the Reunion from Humula where he has a property, recently hurt his hand badly enough when a concrete wall collapsed on it. He says it, temporarily, impeded his dealing of Contract Bridge hand.

Henry Bryant who is 2 I.O.Maintenance (Motors) for Associated Newspapers in Sydney, now has two children, a boy and a girl.

Gordon Orchard who was one of those who made the journey up from Victoria, is in the Printing business in Geelong with his brothers who are all ex R.A.A.F. men. Orchard recently spent 18 months in Britain and Europe. Most of us seeing Orchard for the first time since the War found him looking if anything younger than he did ten years ago, and certainly very fit. While in Britain he met Les Jones (of the crew that walked back from Tobruk).

Dick Cattanach is in the Advertising Display business in Sydney.

Joe Fenwick is building a house in the Seaforth area and studying Accountancy. Married, he has a son.

Frank Hickoe is with the Valuer General’s Dept. in Sydney. Both Frank and Joe ask to be remembered to Jock Thompson and G. McRae.

Nancy says she did write to Bill Stapleton and while he knows Bill said nothing about answering such a letter nevertheless he, Maccy, thinks an answer was implied. He says Fred Ayres will write the next letter. (Editor’s note. We could be wrong but we feel that most of the work of this correspondence is being done by Bill Carr and ourselves).

Guy Johnston in England, is working for the Bishop of Selby. He would like to hear from his old crewmates.

Fred Sturon anticipates finishing his course with the Teachers’ College in 1954.

Len Barton who is still in Sylvan, is planning a trip to Europe next year.

Lotty Travers has in Adelaide asks to be remembered to Jock McGowan.

Jock McGowan has moved into a house in Rosehill, Sydney.

L. Johnston is now, we learn, resident in Melbourne. Will he please advise his new address?

Jub. Barking is in the Garage business in Gloucester, N.S.W. He was a country member at the Anzac Get-together.

Bill Bailey has a fuel business in Melbourne. He was in Sydney for the Reunion.

Kev. Quayle drove up from Melbourne in one day to attend the Reunion and the March.

Jim Tren has retired from the Electrical trade and living in Stanmore.

Russ. Wilson has been doing some taxi-driving as well as Electrical work. Russ, who has two sons, says his wife is a keen reader of the Spm. News.

Shorty Wilson another Victorian member who came up, Shorty is Engineering Instructor with A.M.A. at Essendon. He has a son and a daughter.

Charlie Green is with the P.N.C. in Sydney.

Jim Ramney is moving to a new home in Geelong.

Jim Holleya the Queensland Secretary, who contributed so much to the success of the first Interstate Reunion and Conference, works with the Health Education Council in Brisbane, which involves him in much travelling.

Q-FLIGHT COMENTARY

by Jim Holleya

The Squadron Christmas Party went off very nicely, thank you! 26 answered the Roll Call and they were amply supplied with throat lubricant. The location was an ideal one, being down the Domain, full Tiger Moth hops from the nearest outpost of civilization. Bernie McLoughlin received so many approving pats on the head for arranging it that his few remaining hairs suffered a severe setback.

During the night, the Flight gave the Committee the green light to call for nominations for Associate members. It also received with acclaim the news that 3 May Flight had donated a cup for golfing competition among Queensland Flight and decided to hold this some time in May or June. Personal news includes: Lock Stacey has sold his business in Dubbo and is now in New Zealand. We have yet to learn if his migration is permanent.

To Mr. and Mrs. Clive Wyman, an infant. Ken Cahill has now a garage at Beaumaris.

It is hoped to have an extra Reunion on Saturday August 8th, with an intervening episode, to wit, a golf tournament, some time in May or June, whether you are a golfer or not you must attend this sporting event of the year.

458 and the SANDROPPERS

Len Stewart in Perth
... (continued)

Editor's note:— If the report of the Perth Reunion comes in on time, we will include it in the "Stop Press". But anyhow, we want to express everyone's pleasure that 456 in the West is again "airborne", and our certainty that members in Port Adelaide and also in the Anzac Day have enjoyed their Reunion.

PERSONAL PORTRAITS Three Presidents.

The SQUADRON PRESIDENT. Members who served with 456 in England, Egypt or Malta need no introduction to L.t.(Johnn) Johnston, recently elected first Squadron President. He came to 458 at Holmoe-on-Spalding Moor, at its formation in September 1941, as a young permanent R.A.F. officer, and stayed with the Squadron through its various adventures for a couple of years, until he was succeeded as C.O. by Colonel McKenzie. Born in Queensland, he had joined the R.A.F. shortly before the outbreak. At Holme he took command of "B" Flight and as a Flight Commander took a leading share in the ops of that snowly winter and, incidentally, in the perils and pleasures of operating Pratt Whitney engine engines in cold weather. When W/Cdr. Malholland was lost near Malta, Johnston took over the Squadron with the rank of Wing Commander.

After the Squadron's move to the Middle East it was split up among various non-squadron detachments and there was some danger that it might not be reformed. This danger was averted by the personal efforts of W/Dr. Johnston who succeeded after some months in getting the detachments brought together in Egypt as 458 Squadron, stationed at Shallufa. He retained command for about two years until his tour expired in Malta. He has stayed with the R.A.F. and is at present attached temporarily to the R.A.A.F. as Squadron Leader, in Melbourne where he is living with his wife and daughter. 456 welcomes him back to command. His personal attachment to the squadron is as strong as ever.

What the moral is, if any, we don't know, but it is to be noted that both the Squadron President, Johnn, and the Squadron Vice President/Secretary, Peter Alexander, are Australians—by birth who served with the R.A.F.

The retiring N.S.W. PRESIDENT. Pete Campbell was a pilot with the Squadron in the North African to Italy period. In peacetime he is a Company Secretary. The marked progress of 456 during the three years of his Presidency in N.S.W. (until his recent resignation) is some evidence of his services to 456, which have been of the first order. His quiet dignity, friendliness and business acumen have combined to make him one of the best Chairman the N.S.W. Committee could have had, and the success of the Committee's work and its freedom from any trace of discord are substantially due to Pete Campbell. He remains with the Committee as Senior Vice-president.

The incoming N.S.W. PRESIDENT. Alan Pegott was a ground staff member of 458 in Holme till near the end of the Squadron's active service. On the resumption of 456 activities in Sydney after the war he took a prominent part and was one of the first committee members. He represented 456 with the Air Force Association and rose to high position in that body, being a proxy Federal Councillor and a State committeeman. He now brings his considerable drive and ability to the not-easy task of succeeding Pete Campbell in chairing the N.S.W. Committee and guiding 456 policy in N.S.W. His many old friends will be behind him.

An Evening in the Mosque.

Early March saw a visit to Sydney by two well-remembered members from other states. Bill Kallith was over for about a week from Western Australia, and John Carney from Melbourne for about the same period. The N.S.W. Committee organised an Evening-in-the-Mosque in their honour and about 30 of their friends were able to spend an enjoyable few hours in their company. Neither have much changed since we saw them last. Bill is with the W.A. Main Roads Dept., and John with Greater Union Theatres on the Advertising side.

The Wearing of the Badge!

One of the many cheerful features of the Anzac Week-end was the strong feeling of squadron unity which pervaded it. This was in some degree aided by the fact that nearly everyone wore his 456 badge. Which reminds us that we met Squadron Member Dick Hasley at the Sydney Cricket Ground some weeks back. He was doing the A.B.C. commentary on a cricket match and we observed that he was wearing his badge. If Dick continues to do that when, and of course if, we have television, then the 456 badge is going to be extremely well-known.
Letters to the Editor.

Dear Peter, I feel I must write a few lines to express my warmest thanks for the hospitality extended to me over Annec weekend by the Committee and members of the N.S.W. Association. May I also congratulate you all on the excellence of the arrangements and the success of their outcome. The warmth of friendship amongst ex-458 moved me considerably and I count the weekend as one of the best of my life... I have recorded a long list of my old mates with whom I spoke - some a few words, some many. I think I missed a few - I'm sorry but hope to make amends at some date in the not too distant future...... Staying at Jack Baker's home, having four of us (Dick Boydell, Jack, Chas Green and myself) who flew together present meeting all the other chaps and so on added up to a wonderful experience for me. Warmest greetings to all. Orch. Goulburn, Vic.

Dear Peter, Many thanks for your letter and enclosure, I was very pleased to receive them. It was only a stroke of luck that I happened to attend the first 458 Reunion. Being a member of the Air Force Association, they sent me the Air Force News, and one month there appeared a small advert regarding the said reunion so I wrote on the off chance, and that started me on the trail. It was a very pleasant evening. I am in constant touch with John Dandy whom you probably remember, he is married and has a daughter. I returned to my old firm, Gilbey's who are as well known in Australia as here. You want to try our gin, Peter, it's good stuff! Please remember me to all who knew me and give them my kindest regards... Wishing you all the best.


Dear Peter, Thank you for the bundle of "gum" which came in today's post about the Squadron 'DO' How I would like to be part of it - but as my programme works out it is absolutely impracticable. Please give my sincerest regards to all the chaps and I shall look forward to sharing the fun of a Reunion someday. Maybe you could all come to Alice Springs for a real "do" sometime. Cheers to everybody.

Fred Makay (Papa) Australian Inland Mission, Alice Springs.

Dear Peter, It looks as though I will not be able to take it for the 24th...... Once again I would apologise for my absence, although my thoughts will be with you all more than ever.

Yours sincerely, Ernie Lening, Iwakuni, Japan.

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CRICKET CONTENTS.

With all the things of a non-cricket nature which have been happening lately, I suppose I must think myself lucky to have half the space I normally regard as my right. Though as a matter of fact I have less than usual pleasure in describing the last two games of the past cricket season. One was a return game with the Air Force Club, the other a return with the Armidale Old Boys team. Both games were convincingly lost. The game with the Club should have been won, since the 458-opening bowlers, Owen Crompton and Frank Ward were very accurate and hostile and tied the Club down to about 25 runs in an hour. Thereafter, with the aid of some lucky mis-hits the Club took 458 bowling by the scruff of the neck and made 217, and very fast. The squadron batsman were many of them exhausted with bowling and didn't do themselves justice. 458 made 104. Scores with the Old Boys were 458 I23 runs, the Old Boys 196. For 458 Barcy Crompton top-scored with 40, and Cy Irwin made 31. The O.B.'s bowling was easily the most hostile we had encountered this season, and it was an excellent, if often painful, experience for our batsman to meet it.

Air Force Club.

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V. 458 Squadr

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TORTHOCONC EVENTS.

Members in Victoria will have been advised by the Victorian Committee or union arrangements in Melbourne and can look forward to the usual enjoyable and well-organised evening among their friends.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL SQUADRON BALL, Sydney.

The N.S.W. members Annual Ball will take place at the White City Ballroom on Friday May 29th. (8.30 On). Tickets at £5- each may be obtained from the N.S.W. Secretary.

This function as members who have been to the previous years' Balls know is always as enjoyable as it is successful. There is something about dancing in company with old friends and their friends that makes the evening something more than a dance. As many 458 members as possible should be in it. Tables can be reserved. Dress is optional but you are invited to make an appearance in your dinner or evening attire.

Authorised by the Editor, F.C. Alexander, C.P.O., Box 5289, Sydney, N.S.W.

To The N.S.W. Secretary,

Box 5289, C.P.O.
Sydney, N.S.W.

Please send me tickets for the 4th Annual Squadron Ball at the White City ballroom on Friday May 29th. I enclose

Name: ............................................................
Address: ..........................................................

Please reserve me a table for people.

Phone No. .................................