

CIRCULAR

458 SQUADRON NEWS



The Editor:

G.P.O.Box 5289, Sydney.

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SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE.

Preparations for ALL-STATES REUNION.

The South Australian Committee has announced tentative arrangements for this year's Anzac Reunion. Squadron members from all States will be visiting Adelaide in April to attend the fourth Interstate Get-Together.

South Australian Committee-member Bruce (Flash) Thomas recently visited Sydney and discussed arrangements with the Squadron Secretary.

These are the plans:

Friday April 20th.	Interstate Members welcomed....Entertainment by local members;
Saturday April 21st.	Informal gathering at a Local Hotel in the morning; Squadron Conference-afternoon; Dance-Evening;
Sunday April 22nd.	Golf.....Reunion;
Monday April 23rd.	
or	Excursion to the Barossa Valley (the Wine Growing area of S.A.);
Tuesday April 24th.	
Wednesday April 25th.	Anzac Day Reunion.

Bruce Thomas stressed that accomodation was a difficult problem in Adelaide and the S.A.Committee was most anxious to know the E.T.A. and E.T.D. of all members wanting accomodation in Adelaide. Deadline for notifying the S.A.Secretary is March 15th. Each member wanting Hotel accomodation reserved should send a deposit of £2.

From all present information there will be a big influx of 458 Squadron into Adelaide for the Anzac Get-together. Mostly, of course, from Victoria, the neighbouring State, but also a fair representation from other States. The three previous All-States Reunions, held in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne in 1953, 54 and 55 have shewn how successful and stimulating such ambitious functions can be and considerable interest has now been aroused, not only among 458 members but also among ex-R.A.A.F. personnel generally.

NEW SOUTH WALES FLIGHT NEWS.

from

Allan Walker.

The Christmas Party. The Social Evening held in December in the Air Force Club Rooms at George Street, Sydney was well attended and well enjoyed. Among those present, it was nice to see Les. and Edna Piggott, once again attending a Squadron function.

During the evening, presentations were made to Dorothy Minkman (by Peter Alexander) and to Peter himself (by Sam Barlow). Congratulations to all.

A Raffle was held and the winner of the first prize was won by Ray Davies, whilst Ron Hills won the Consolation prize.

We also discovered some hidden talent: Frank Hickey obliged with a Charleston solo.

We have received a request to hold Social Evenings more often - we'll see what can be done!

N.S.W. Flight News (cont.)

Annual Reunion and Election of Officers. The N.S.W. Flight is holding its Reunion and Annual Election of officers on Friday March 9th at 330, George Street, Sydney. Members are requested to note this date and for anyone unable to attend, nominations for the Committee can be made by mail.

Richmond Cricket Match. The Cricket match against the R.A.A.F. Station is to be played this year on Sunday 26th. February. (Brian Lord and Geoff. Burgess, please note). The score so far in these games is two wins each side, and the Squadron players are this year looking forward to another keen struggle. Those wishing to play should get in touch with the Team Captain Cyril Irwin at UW 1981 or 17, Vincent Street, Canterbury; or, of course, Box 5289, G.P.O. Those able to attend as supporters are invited to come along and see the Squadron team in this, as it were, "Fifth Test". We think this would be a good opportunity for Curly Wilson to come down and see us---how about it, Curly?

In this paragraph, we wish to mention that we have been advised that the Memorial Tree planted in memory of the Squadron Dead (at Richmond Station) some years ago by Pete Campbell, our President at the time, has failed to survive. We are taking a replacement tree---donated on this occasion by President Peter Alexander---with us on the 26th. February and we understand that the authorities at Richmond have chosen a new site for the Squadron Tree---one nearer to the Station Chapel, which, incidentally, was not in existence when the original tree was dedicated.

The Squadron Ball. In this regard we are just getting in early with the announcement that the Squadron Ball (our 7th. Annual is to be held at the Pickwick Club on Friday July 6th. .

In conclusion, we wish to acknowledge Christmas Greetings and New Year wishes from Squadron members far too numerous to list in detail. To those members, their wives and families we say many thanks and every good wish to you all.

One last plug: Don't forget the Reunion---Friday the 9th. March at 330, George Street.

REPORT FROM "Q" FLIGHT.

by

J.E. Holliday--Secretary.

The highlight of the social whirl of "Q" Flight took place on Saturday, 3rd. December, when its Annual Christmas Social was held. The venue was the A.T.C. Mess at Perry Park. It can be claimed to be the most successful yet because:

- (a) there were 104 persons in attendance (being 49 couples and 6 un-attached males);
- (b) there was a Dance Band in attendance;
- (c) everyone enjoyed themselves and showed reluctance to go home even when dawn broke through the local mist.

Of course all the males present were not 458 ers. The members took the opportunity to bring friends along to enjoy what has become one of the most looked-forward events in the Annual "Q" Flight programme. Despite the Heat, there was always a full attendance on the dance floor and the discarding of coats and the assuaging of thirst offset the slight distress brought about by the delightful exercise of dancing. The highlight of the evening was a most delicious supper, the richness of which was equalled by the plenitude.

There were the usual raffles of dressed fowls. Yours Truly remained true to his unbroken record in winning one.

The immediate activity on the horizon is the golf day to be held about the second Sunday in March at Oxley Golf Club. This will be a purely masculine affair and after the good time the wives had at the Xmas Social there should be much letting off the chain.

Preparations are being made for the usual March on Anzac Day with a keg afterwards at the A.T.C. Mess.

458 IN BRITAIN.

Leo Armstrong has advised us that the U.K. Flight is to hold its Annual Reunion in February 23rd. We shall look forward keenly to news of it. "Johnno" Johnston, the U.K. President, has conducted preliminary negotiations for the weaving of material for a 458 Squadron Tie in England. We have seen the design, based on the Winged Torpedo, and like it very much. Plans and proposals will, no doubt, be put before the Adelaide Conference for a decision.

Popular and well-known N.S.W. 458er Alf "Slappy" Hammond has recently spent a holiday travelling through Victoria to Adelaide with his family. He met many 458ers. He writes to me: Called at Gundagai and met Len Adams, who is doing very well in the Garage business. He also owns real estate at Gundagai and a garage and holiday flats at Burrill Lakes. He would like it mentioned that he has a labour shortage in his workshop if any 458er is interested. Then we went via Shepparton and Bendigo to Melbourne, where we settled at Greenacres Caravan Park, Springvale. Called at St. Kilda and woke Yank Martin out of bed at 11 a.m. He is the same old Yank Martin of Squadron days. He was our guide and showed us everything of importance in Melbourne, not forgetting Young and Jacksons. You couldn't have a better guide. Met Norm Cugley who is foreman-mechanic at Atlas Motor Auctions. He is building a home at Colac. Went to see Jim Munday at his Warehouse. He looked impressive behind his desk, with Managing Director on the office door. It was only a matter of minutes before we, Yank, Jim, Norm and self were having a noggin together at a local saloon. Had lunch with Jim at the Hardware Club, where Yank warmed up to more hair-raising experiences.

Then, on to Murray Bridge, via Ararat and Ballarat. There, after getting the information from the local milkman, we located the Excells. After a chat with Mrs Johnny and her two children (she admires the Squadron News very much and whoever calls she feels she knows them at once from the News) we called at Johnny's bicycle shop and then much nattering about 458 days. Johnny looks very fit and is doing well. Then on to Adelaide via Mt. Lofty and eventually found Bill Taylor. The telephone started ringing and in a matter of minutes I found myself in a saloon and around me were Ron Badger, Mel Priest, Bob Drinnan and Bill Taylor. Then Ron Badger made us adjourn to his Motor Bike Shop nearby. After several more ales and many more experiences narrated we had to say Good Night. Rang Sid Bartram but he was playing Bowls so I missed him. Went to Victor Harbour and on our way called on Jack Parkin. Jack has a mixed farm and looking fit as a country squatter.

Called at Lofty Trewertha's home and met his good wife, Mother and many children, where once again the Squadron News was mentioned, that although never having met you (the Editor) they feel they know you. After more West End beer and many more experiences told, Jack Parkin and family arrived to spend the day with the Trewerthas. Lofty told me he is now a Customs Officer, having sold his taxi and hirecar, and was quite happy in the Service. He also plays the piano accordion and wanted to put on a "Do" that night to show us how good he was, but unfortunately time would not allow.

Then on to Mildura where, that day, I intended to do 300 miles, but after meeting Roger Rodwell, his good wife and family, it was impossible, and they wouldn't hear of our leaving that day. Roger has a Fruit block at Merbein. Grapes and Citrus Fruits, and doing well. Roger hasn't changed since Squadron days.

After sampling many grapes, the local came into view, and many more experiences were related. That night both families went swimming, including Roger and myself, how I don't know, but much fun was had by us all.

I passed on Bob Drinnan's message to Roger Rodwell--"Remember Rome?" I must also recall that Bob Drinnan insisted on handing me the wherewithal to buy Bob Lyndon a drink when I got back to Sydney.

On our way, once again, to Robinvale where we met Dave Firth and Ken Cupper, who both have fruit Settlement blocks, grapes and citrus fruit, and their properties adjoin.

We had lunch with the Firths and felt most honoured, as the meal was fit for Royalty. Thanks again to Mrs. Firth who is a charming hostess. Dave has a very nice family. His son works with Dave.

After lunch, the Cuppers arrived with their two sons and Ken with his arms full--Victorian Bitter, I think it was. It was very nice too to meet Mrs. Cupper.

Lots more talk about the old Squadron days over a bottle or two. Also, once again the Squadron News was mentioned at Robinvale and Merbein, how much it was appreciated, and how they all look forward to receiving the next copy. All the good wives admit to reading the News first.

Dave Firth has a message for Sam Barlow that the parcel (a Cup I think, like the Arridale Trophy) was eventually returned to Tom Burgers via Arthur Green from Melbourne, with a few hundred miles extra up.

Dave Firth and Ken Cupper are both most interested in the proposed Reunion in Newcastle, and would like all the details as soon as possible.

All the people I have mentioned would like to be remembered to their old friends of 458 Squadron.

And so, back to Sydney via the Murray Valley Highway, and home.

Wonderful time !!!!

Regards,

Slappy.

THE NEWCASTLE REUNION.

We are not yet in a position to announce details of the projected Newcastle Reunion but sincerely hope we can do so before much longer.

Talking of Country Reunions, we have noticed that there are quite a lot of 458ers in the CAIRNS area now.....???????

THE SQUADRON HISTORY.

The writing of the first draft of the History is complete. However, we could use a lot more 'Personal Interest' stories than we have got. If you know a story of Squadron life which should go in, send it to us and if it isn't already in, we're almost sure to use it. Don't worry about the laws of libel--we'll take care of that! This could be your last opportunity to make sure the History has all the things it should have. So, take up your pen to-night and drop the Squadron Historian a line at Box 5289, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W. The ball is at your feet.

ANNUAL SUBS and ANNUAL FEES.

A gentle reminder may not come amiss here. Annual Sub. to 458 Squadron News is 5/- payable to your Flight Secretary, or direct to the Editor who will adjust finances with the Flight. Also, if your Flight asks you for an Annual sub towards 458 activities, how about coming good with it?

Addresses of Flight Secretaries:

N.S.W. Allan Walker, Box 5289, G.P.O. Sydney;
 Victoria Arthur Green, 57, Woodlands Avenue, Pascoe Vale South, Victoria;
 Sth. Aust. John Ringwood, 290, Beaumont Road, Beaumont, South Australia;
 Queensland. Jim Holliday, 43, Stella Street, Holland Park, Brisbane, Queensland;
 Western Aust. A. Power, 145, Geldercliffe Street, Scarborough, Western Australia;
 United Kingdom Leo Armstrong, 47, Rutland Road, Wanstead, London, E.II, England.

PERSONALITIES.

Geoff Wright is now permanently stationed in Sydney with Qantas;
Hal Coffill has been ill. Our good wishes to you, Hal;
Jock McGowen has a new job in Sydney, connected with the Sale of cellophane bags;
Bert Ravenscroft is Depot Superintendent for Shell at Port Vincent, South Australia;
Peter Alexander; to Rita and Peter, a daughter (Julie Caroline);
Dud McKay: Dud and Enid and their four girls have recently paid a visit to Sydney to see their family. Q Flight hopes to see them in Brisbane;
Graeme Coombes has moved from Warwick Farm to Chatswood, Sydney;
Reg 'Tex' Hansell. While paying a visit to Concord Repat. Hospital a party of N.S.W. 458ers found Reg there with a knee injury. He is progressing and we expect to see him at the forthcoming Sydney Reunion;
Bert Sleight is in charge of a Radar Station in Leicestershire, England;
Harry Bishop is working with a Wine Firm in London. He frequently visits Spain to taste the Sherry for them, or so we are told;
Ken Rosen is running an Air Charter Service in Western N.S.W.;
Dave Benson Inglis is now Safety Officer with Qantas in Sydney;
Horrie Campbell is dairy farming at Tintenbar in N.S.W.;
Freddie Stron has been posted to Narrabri in N.S.W. by the Education Dept;
Owen Crompton who has been ill was a welcome returner to the 458 Cricket team recently;
S. Cook is now at Augustine, S.A.;
Noel Moody is with the Zinc Corporation at Broken Hill;
Ross Burgess has recently been living in Sydney, doing an Inspector's course with the Dept. of Labour and Industry;
Les and Edna Piggott were at the recent N.S.W. Social. They have an adopted baby son;
Frank Crowley sends his regards to all 458 from Cairns; Christmas Greetings also came to Q Flight from Jim Plunkett of Cairns and from Gordon Postle;
Bert Garland sends personal greetings to Ian Higlett, to which Jim Holliday adds his own.
"Johnno" Johnston also sent Christmas Greetings to Q. Flight from No. 64 Group Reserve Centre, Rufforth, England

Christmas Greetings. The Editor acknowledges with much appreciation Christmas Greetings from the following members and their families: Gordon Orchard, "Johnno" Johnston, Owen Crompton, Mel Priest, Dud McKay, Tony Harris, Jim Holliday, Laurie Crowley, Allan Walker, Eric Munkman, Peter Campbell, Geoff. Burgess, Al. Wheat, Graeme Coombes, Bob Osborne, Stan Parker, Wal Clarke, Jim Palmer, Ken Mercer, Alan Piggott, Ross Burgess.

SPLICE THE MAINBRACE - OR SYDNEY TO HOBART IN FIVE DAYS

"Let go for'ard", "Let go aft", "Release the topping lift", "Take in the slack on the mizzen" - these were new words of command I learnt during the five days we took to Hobart.

We left Sydney in fine weather and joined the fleet in the harbour. The start was a magnificent sight and it was a thrill to be beating down the harbour with the bows cutting the water, the sails full and everyone on deck to watch the contestants tack out the Heads.

When outside, we began to take stock of the situation and met our fellow travellers. We were thirteen on the motor yacht "Lauriana", a 70 foot luxury craft owned by Sydney builder, Jim Samson, an ex-RAAF type. Our crew comprised a University lecturer, a master painter, a dentist, a manufacturer, a photographer, an ex-sailor as cook, an engineer, a business man, a Quantas radio operator and myself. Cruising down the coast on Boxing Day, it wasn't long before the yachts began to spread out. The big ones - Kurréwa, Solo, Even, and Defiance close in shore, the others further out looking for good winds. By the end of the first day we had settled in, knew each other and were enjoying the job of learning how to handle a big yacht beating southwards into headwinds.

For the radio cover we were to provide I had installed a Collins ART.13 transmitter and BC.348 receiver for contact with the yachts and for our broadcasts back to Sydney via O.T.C. We had three schedules a day with the yachts at 0830, 1330 and 1930 and broadcasts at 10 a.m., 3 p.m. and 9 p.m. After passing through two or three rain squalls on Boxing Day, we then sailed in overcast weather against headwinds. During the day and night we often sighted yachts on the horizon and by using our motor, we were able to catch them up and identify them. In this way we were able to keep track of those craft not equipped with radio. After the first day we pushed ahead of the fleet to reach Montague Island well in front and spent a couple of hours preparing lines for some fishing. When we were abeam of Montague, "Wyn Marie" of St. Kilda, Melbourne, called us up on R/T and came alongside with a dozen or more beautiful "Kingies". We put the lines away - we had our fish. Each morning the "house flag", a yellow foaming pint on blue background, was hoisted and the bar was open. A steward of the day was appointed and we retired to the cockpit for a small session. The "frig." was well stocked as we put 16-dozen on board before starting out. We kept our radio schedule all right and plotted the positions of each yacht on special charts from which I compiled my summary for broadcasting. However during our trip south severe electrical storms washed out R/T and we had to resort to 2 or 300 groups on the key. Sending was easy but when O.T.C. came back, I found old RAAF procedure wasn't much use. However we had a mixture of Q and X signals plus a little plain language.

Things were fairly quiet for a few days and our daily routine didn't vary much. We often saw sharks and schools of porpoise and land occasionally. The trip across the Bass Strait was reasonably calm - there was a heavy swell and "Lauriana" rolled a lot but it wasn't too bad. We had a good deal of rain and believe me, it can be cold at night at the wheel with wind and spray lashing you. Friday morning dawned bright and sunny and found us in the lee of Schouten Island off Tasmania. We dropped anchor and out came the fishing lines again. In about 15 or 20 feet of water we set our lines with fresh meat as bait. Within an hour we had between 40 and 50 beautiful flathead on the deck. Healey landed the first fish and was well on the way to winning a sweep for the most fish when skipper Jimmy Samson said "We're in for a blow boys, let's get out of here". Well we did but just as we left Schouten, a yacht called "Lullaby" called us and as we had all sails set, we had to bring them in and turn about. We found "Lullaby" and the crew kindly presented us with 30 or more beautiful "crays". Just as we took them on board we noticed four or five yachts, spinnakers flying, heading south. We hoisted sail again and set out after them. Then the blow struck and throughout the day and night we forged ahead in rough seas. The sky was dark and the rain set in. We couldn't see the Tasman Light and it was dangerous to enter Storm Bay as we ran the risk of collision with the competing yachts. We rode out the storm and at 4 a.m. made our way to the Iron Port at the mouth of the Derwent. By now the wind had dropped and we used our motor to get to Constitution Dock. Already there were "Even" and "Kurréwa". During the day thousands of people came down to watch the yachts arrive. As soon as we docked we took on board a couple of dozen "Cascade", broke out the cooked crays and after scraping off five days' beard, we set about meeting our fellow yachtsmen. The celebrations went far into the next day and Hobart made us welcome.

It was a wonderful trip - I'd go again - and ----- I wasn't seasick.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letters to the Editor.

From Ken (Chico) Mercer, Firgrove House, Godalming, Surrey, England:

Dear Peter, Hope everything is O.K. Did you have a good Christmas, plenty of grog and the like? What do you have for Christmas Dinner out there, Kangaroo Cutlet or Rabbit Pie?

I've just heard from Jim Perry and his wife who are both well. Jim now plays the Trumpet in a dance band. So don't be surprised if you begin to hear funny noises---it's only Jim either playing the Lost Chord or finding it!

..... I am still trying my utmost to win my fortune in the Football Pools but so far have only managed a few pounds up to yet but when I do get the Jackpot, be prepared for a visit from yours truly. I get the Monthly News Letter still and find it very interesting. Business is still very prosperous and improving.....Still keeping your hand in at Bridge, Peter? I almost forget how to play....

yours very sincerely,
Ken.

From Dick Watson, Djakarta Raya, Indonesia.

Dear Peter, Sorry to be late with my Christmas Greetings.....but despite the lateness the greetings are just as sincerely meant and I am sure that 458 will go on to bigger, brighter and more "liquid" affairs in 1956.

I do appreciate the "News" and read it with great interest from beginning to end. Life up here is most interesting despite the problems which occur in the smooth running of one's business. The Australian papers report rather extensively on Indonesian Affairs but, I regret to say, not very accurately.

I hope to be in Australia during 1956 and will definitely take the opportunity of contacting you and the 458 boys. All the best...

Sincerely,
Dick Watson.

From Guy Johnston, Rectory Cottages, Bolton Percy, Yorkshire, England.

Dear Editor,

Firstly, may I say Thank you for all the 458 Sqdn. News you have sent to me. It gives great pleasure to read all the news and to hear what other 458 ers are doing. As yet, I have not been able to attend the Reunions we have had over here but hope to one of these days. Ex-Sgt. L. Cook--he was a Compass Swinger-- lives at Pontefract, 15 miles away and we have met at our homes and spend enjoyable times together. He has two boys, 4 years and 1 year and I have two boys, 6 years and 5 years.

Enclosed are two postcards of the Memorial that was unveiled recently to all members of Commonwealth crews who died while serving in this area. I was not at Holne-on-Spalding-Moor when 458 was there (I joined you at Protville)--but there are the names of the men who died, printed in the Book which was compiled with the Memorial (in York Minster--Ed.). If anyone would like details, or these cards, I would willingly let you have some. Once each year, I have to visit Holne, and the graves of members of the R.A.A.F. there are very well kept. I don't know if this news can be passed on to any relatives but it is just a thought---later there is to be a leaflet issued giving details about the Memorial--would you like one sending? When I went to the Minster--especially to see if 458 were on, the book of names, which is kept in a locked glass case, was open showing 458's men's names--quite a coincidence!!

I would be pleased to hear from Chas. Richardson, Lock Simpson, Bill Honan or Ned Kelly. All the best,

yours sincerely,

Guy Johnston.

From John Dandy, 22, Ludlow Avenue, Luton, Bedfordshire, England.

Dear Peter, I am pleased to receive the Issues of Squadron News from time to time, and it occurs to me that I now owe a further subscription. If you will kindly let me know how much is due, I would be pleased to make arrangements for the appropriate remittance to be forwarded. I hope it will be possible to obtain a copy of the Squadron History when this is published.....I believe some reference has been made in the past to a car badge being available. I would be pleased to have details.

You will be interested to know that I met Geoff. Barrett recently on the occasion of the Alamein Reunion. He is quite fit and still working for W.A. Gilbey, the Wine and Spirit people.....With very kind regards,

John Dandy.

