

CIRCULAR

458 SQUADRON NEWS



THE EDITOR.

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

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JOHNNO RETURNS TO AUSTRALIA.

Since our last issue, 458 in Australia has welcomed back its second Commanding Officer, first Squadron President, past President of both the Victorian and the U.K. Flights, Lewis Lea Johnston. He is settling in Queensland, at Southport, with his wife and daughter.

Johnno has just retired from the Royal Air Force in which he continued to serve after the end of the war. He arrived in Fremantle early in December and was welcomed by a party of 458ers, including Alec Barras. The Himalaya didn't go to Adelaide, but in Melbourne and in Sydney also, Johnno and his family were warmly received by 458ers. In Sydney they came to the Flight Christmas Social which had been arranged to coincide with their arrival (see News report further on).

Talking to members during the Social, Johnno thanked them for singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" and said he was particularly glad his wife and daughter were there--he hoped they were convinced. He was going up to Southport to engage in the cement business. "I've seen some of the Flights in Perth and Melbourne and it's very nice to see so many of you here," said Johnno. "I saw the Squadron Secretary at the ship this morning and didn't recognise him, wearing a hat. However, there we are at one of the best attended 458 Socials I've been to." Johnno went on to tell members about 458 affairs in other Flights, including the U.K.

Johnno during the War.

A 458 member who served under W/Cdr. Johnston on 458 during the war commented that he first remembered seeing Johnno, as a very young-looking Flight Lieutenant at Holme-on-Spalding Moor. Within a matter of weeks he was Squadron Leader in charge of a Flight and in a few months, after Wing Commander Mjllholland was lost in action, in command of 458 Squadron. Without Johnno's enthusiasm there would probably have been no post-war 458 organisation, since it was due solely to his determination that 458 was reformed as an operational Squadron after the dispersal that took place in Egypt after 458 left England.

By Train to Queensland.

After a couple of days with relatives in Sydney, the Johnstons went northwards by train to take up their home in Southport. They have been warmly welcomed by Q Flight. There is already talk in some quarters of a joint Queensland/N.S.W. Country Reunion in Southport in a couple of years time. (Q Flight report of meeting with Johnno appears below).

458 PREPARING TO GO WEST.

All arrangements for interstate members to travel to Perth in April for the All-States Reunion there at Anzac-time. From N.S.W., there will be a Convention party of at least ten, travelling by rail according to existing arrangements, and probably several other members travelling independently, with their wives. There will certainly be a party from Victoria, probably some representatives from the South Australia but, at present, no starters from the most distant State, Queensland.

A full and varied programme has been planned by the home State Committee in Perth and accommodation has been warmly offered to interstate members by members in Perth. It is expected that W.A. members from country districts, who have several times demonstrated their willingness to travel long distances to be at 458 functions, will be in Perth in large numbers for the Reunion week.

Details of the programme arranged by the W.A. Flight Committee

458 Going West.(cont.)

is a full and very varied one and includes a scenic tour, the Anzac March, Squadron Conference, a Squadron Ball, the Reunion, Anzac Golf, a Wreath-laying ceremony :all these things and the week-long company of old squadron friends not seen for many years.

Concession Fare by Air to Adelaide.

We are pleased to be able to announce that one of the interstate Airlines, which runs a Viscount service as far as Adelaide, is prepared to grant substantial fare reductions to members of 458 travelling to Perth for the Reunion. For a party of ten, the return fare would be £24-10-0 each; for 20 and over £17-10-0 return. Let us know if you are interested. Thanks to Jack Aitken for the organising.

NEW SOUTH NOTES.

from

Allan Walker.

Johnno in Sydney. N.S.W. Flight members were very pleased to be able to combine their 1957 Annual Christmas Party with a Welcome Home to Lew Johnston. We were able to do this at a very gay affair, held on the third floor at 330, George Street (venue of many a Flight Do) on 16th. December last.

As most Squadron members are aware, Johnno has completed his duties with the R.A.F., and has decided to go into business in his native State--Queensland. He arrived in Sydney with his wife and daughter on the morning of the 16th. December and, after stopping over for our Christmas Party, proceeded on to Queensland. Johnno looked well and, to our memory, had changed but little. It was very nice to see him, and we wish him and his family all the very best for the future. Members and friends present at the party included Bill and Emmy McBride, Sam Barlow, Cy. Irwin, Peter and Rita Alexander, Bill and Joan Cotton, Des. and Betty Dover, Alf. and Enid Hammond, Frank Hickey, Doug. and Elsie Beigh, Maiseie Kerr, Yvonne Crompton, Kemp and Joan Beach, George Bradd, Deb and Pat Lyndon, Cec. Nation, Allan Walker, Brian and Dot Lord, Alan, Kitty and Dorothy Piggott, Ray and Verdie Davies, Stuart and Iris Ricketts, Graeme and Dulcie Coombes, Sid and Merle Bowen, Eric and Dorothy Mankean, Henry and Mrs. Bryant, Norm and Nell Mathieson, Kev. Nagle, Freddy Strom and Edna Johnston.

Brian Lord won first prize (a Christmas cake) and Cy. Irwin second (a bottle of wine) in a raffle.

Ernie Laming in transit. On Monday, the 13th. January, we gathered as many Flight members as we could at rather short notice at the Air Force Club, Sydney, for a brief re-union with Ernie Laming, 458's second W.O.D. Ernie was on the way north to Queensland ---ultimate destination, we believe, R.A.A.F., Malaya. Ernie has a couple more years of duty with the R.A.A.F., having postponed his recent retirement plans. Those who came along to say Hello included Peter Alexander, Bob Bruce, Tony Harris, Cy. Irwin, Freddie Strom, Jock McGowen, Sam Barlow, Bob Lyndon, Kemp Beach, and Peter Pottit.

We wish Ernie--a much travelled R.A.A.F. member-- good luck in his new location.

Annual Reunion. The N.S.W. Flight's Annual Reunion, involving the election of officers for 1958 and the presentation of Accounts will be held on Friday, 11th. April on the third floor, 330, George Street, Sydney. We are of opinion that Reunions are synonymous with Anzac time, and that the most propitious time for holding a Reunion should be, if not on Anzac Day itself, then as close to that day as can be arranged. In fairness to the not-inconsiderable number of Flight members, including several Flight officers, who are making the journey to Perth for the All- States Reunion, and to allow them to be present, we are holding the N.S.W. Reunion on the 11th. April. We are looking forward to a good roll-up of 458ers on the 11th. April.

The Annual Squadron Ball. The 9th. Annual Squadron Ball of the N.S.W. Flight will be held on Friday 30th. May, 1958 at the New Commodore Restaurant, Goulburn Street, Sydney. Members will be circularised with details.

Joe Fenwick. We very much regret to inform members of the very sad loss suffered by Joe Fenwick, of Seaforth, N.S.W. in the recent passing of his wife. She leaves three young children. Joe, who was a member of Jock Thompson's crew, will be well remembered by Squadron members, and we extend to him our sincere sympathy. 458 was represented at Mrs. Fenwick's funeral by Frank Ward, a member of the N.S.W. Committee.

Other Personal Notes. Peter Alexander has moved into a new home in Chatswood---congratulations, Peter; Allan Walker sends regards to Bernie Hughes and Ken Mercer; Dud. McKay was down from Queensland on holidays and gave us a call---sorry we weren't in, Dud Terry Waldon sends best wishes from Crafston---thanks for the gift, Terry.

Olympic Films Showing--for Legacy. As reported in the last issue of Squadron News, the N.S.W. Flight has decided to organise an affair yearly in support of Legacy.

See South Notes (cont.)

The first of these is a showing of films of the 1956 Melbourne Olympics. The date is Wednesday 26th March. Would members desirous of seeing these films please contact the N.S.W. Flight Secretary.

FROM SYDNEY TO PERTH BY TRAIN.

A meeting, at Squadron President Sam Barlow's flat, has finalised arrangements for the N.S.W. Party to the Perth All-States Reunion. There will be ten in the party, which is travelling, as a Convention, by rail. They will leave Sydney on April 19th (Saturday) at 8.20 p.m. on the 2nd Division. The journey is to be First class as far as South Australia, thence, on the Transcontinental, 2nd Class as far as Perth. It will take four days each way.

The party is: Sam Barlow, Eric and Dorothy Munkman, Fred Strom, Cy. Irwin, Maisie Kerr, Yvonne Crompton, Alf and Enid Hammond, and Peter Alexander.

They are anxious to see as many 458ers as possible wherever possible and wherever the train stops. Particularly they want to see as many as possible in Perth. Timetable is:

GOING.			RETURNING.		
April 19th	Albury	7.30 a.m.	May 1st (Thursday)	Leave Perth	6.55 p.m.
20th	Melbourne	11.30 a.m./8.0 p.m.	2nd	Kalgoorlie	8.20 a.m.
21st	Murray Bridge	6.10 a.m.	3rd	Adelaide	5.55 p.m.
	Adelaide	9.0 a.m./1.30 p.m.	4th.	Melbourne	9.0 a.m./
	Port Pirie	4.40 p.m./5.30 p.m.			6.30
22	Kalgoorlie	8.0 p.m./9.40 p.m.		Albury	10.20 p.m.
23 (Wedns)	Perth	11.0 a.m.	5th. (Monday)	Sydney	10.55 a.m.

Other N.S.W. members may be travelling independently. No doubt Victoria and South Australia will be there. This is going to be a major 458 effort of initiative, faith and friendship.

NEWS FROM SOUTH AUS.

from

Ron Badger.

Well, here we are again, but first up we must apologise for missing out in the previous issue. Radio on the blink, too many kilocycles, autocycles, etc.

Reports on our recent Do s.

There was the Bucks Dinner, held at the Iotanic Hotel, where we had quite a good muster for a good show. Jack Parkin and Pat Enright came in from the Bush, while, from interstate, we had Jack "Rainmaker" Aitken, also Ron Redpath. Ron had been over for the car racing at Collingrove, finishing up quite successful, too.

Next was the Annual Childrens' Picnic, held once again at National Park. The weather was kind and all who attended had an enjoyable day; the giant griller coped with stacks of steaks, chops and snags. Father 'Flash' Christmas made a call to present all the Kiddies with a gift.

Harry Wise, from the U.K., (ex-orderly Room), was present with his wife and family. They voted it champion. Harry is out here with the R.A.F. and living at Elizabeth.

New Flight Officers. In December, the General Meeting was held at the R.S.L. Bill Taylor and John Ringwood decided to rest from their offices, after both doing grand work. Special mention must go to Bill Taylor, who has been our State President for ten years, being a tower of strength. However we can rely on both to be around when there is work to be done.

Positions now held are:---

President.....N. (Lofty) Trewartha,
 Secretary.....Arnold Scholar,
 Treasurer.....Bruce Thomas,
 Committee; Bill Taylor, Sid Bartram, H. Bartram, J. Ringwood, M. Priest,
 Ron Badger, J. East, Nick Bertram, Brian Woodhead, C. Hanlon, Jack Parkin, Ken Russell, Reg. Priest.

The Tape recording of the U.K. Reunion was played, which tendered greetings to several local members.

Perth Reunion. So far no certain starters but there are some probables. All interested members please let the S.A. President know.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS. The EDITOR was delighted to have and now acknowledges, on readers behalf, Christmas and New Year Greetings to 458 from the following members and their families: Sid Thompsett (for the U.K. Flight), Ken Mercer, Alan Piggott, Yvonne Crompton, Tony Harris, Geoff. Burgess, Allan Walker, Stan Parker, Mick Mason, Stuart Ricketts, Jim Palmer, Harry Baines, Ernie Luning, Jim Holliday, Ross Burgess, Cec. Nation, Arthur Green, Graeme Coombes, Nick Bertram, Pete Campbell, Eric Munkman, John Pennell, Bob Bruce, Eric Purcill, Jack Ind.

LEGACY. At its recent General Meeting the S.A. Flight voted to donate £ 25 to Legacy. This is another in a series of such donations by the Flight.

PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS.

CHARLIE WARREN sends best regards to HARRY BAINES and regrets he missed him when he called in at Wallabadah on Friday 24th. January;

DON BRANDON is a sailing enthusiast and often has trouble in choosing between sailing and Q Flight Committee meetings;

BILL ERNST strong rumour has it that Bill collected £500 in Queensland's Golden Casket (State Lottery);

JACK LEWIS An ardent fishing enthusiast, makes his own rods. His efforts with fibre glass rods are better than any factory manufactured product;

LISLE "WOZZLE" WURR on vacation in Adelaide from school-teaching in Melbourne met the Adelaide boys for a few "Quickies" before carrying on to a further line-shooting contest;

GORDON CUTHBERTSON, with his wife and family, also visited Adelaide from Victoria for a short stay. Cuthy downed a few with some of the locals and put them up to date on several of the Vic. lads;

LOFTY TREWARTHA, the newly-elected S.A. President, reports meeting HOWARD GAVIN (now Wing Commander) travelling by ship to Melbourne after completing two years service in England;

"SNOW" DICKSON has been laid up with a broken leg for some time. ERIC COX is still in Birralee. We hope they'll be back to normal soon.

JACK IND accompanied by Mary, has been touring in Queensland. We understand he was going to look up "Snowy" Atherton and "Dicky" Bird;

JACK ELLIS is flying with Middle East Airways and is living in Beirut, where he has a flat.

LAURIE CROWLEY, whose Airline interests in New Guinea have been both extensive and prosperous in the post-war years, now has a Cesena aircraft. He now has other commercial interests in New Guinea;

ERIC MUNKMAN is playing regular cricket these days, and is doing extremely well, principally as a medium-pace in-swing bowler. He has already taken his 50 wickets for the season. Recently, when his side needed time to avert a defeat, he batted for 70 minutes, scoring 19 runs in the time. McGlew isn't the only one !

TO MEMBERS OF 458 SQUADRON---A great comfort during our sorrow were the expressions of sympathy conveyed to us in many ways. We deeply appreciate your thoughtfulness and thank you most sincerely. Cec. Nation and Alma's daughters, Lois and Herna.

Q FLIGHT NEWS.

from

Jim Holliday.

We've quite a lot of news this quarter.

Johnno's Return. Lew (Johnno) Johnston's back in town, returning to civvy life after a career in the R.A.F. "Johnno" was appointed "B" Flight Commander when 458 was formed at Holme-on-Spalding Moor. After W/Cdr. Mulholland disappeared off Malta, "Johnno" was promoted to W/C. and O.C. He was responsible for the re-formation of 458 as a Torpedo Bomber Squadron in the Middle East.

A Queenslander by birth (from Winton in the West), "Johnno" is making his residence with Mrs. Johnston and daughter Lea at Southport, veteran city of Queensland's fabulous Gold Coast.

Q Flight bade "Johnno" welcome back at a small reception at the A.T.C. Mess on Friday, January 24th. The reception grew out of a Committee meeting to which we invited as many bodies as time would permit contacting. Unfortunately we picked the Friday night of Foundation Day week-end and apologies were abundant. However there were a round fourteen of us, including Kenny Cahill, Johnny Rosenberg and Paul Hinsley. We're planning a Golf Day in March and, of course, there'll be Anzac Day in April, so there'll be at least two opportunities for the forgotten and the apologetic to offer the warm hand of welcome.

"Johnno" brought us news of the U.K. Flight and did much to clarify our ideas about the "Bring Out a Briton" Scheme.

Well, "Johnno", it is good to see you back in Australia and Q. Flight speaks for the whole of 458 in wishing you, Mrs. Johnston, and daughter Lea, a successful re-entry into civvy life, good health and prosperity, and wants you to realise that there are 500 blokes willing to put a shoulder to your wheel.

Q.Flight News (cont.)

Ernie Laming's Visit. A surprise telephone call came from Ernie Laming, at Amberley, on posting from Woomera to Malaya. We took the opportunity to invite Ernie to the A.T.C.Mess to meet the boys gathered to greet "Johnno". It was nice to see you, Ernie and we hope to see more of you.

Christmas Social. Despite the oppressive heat, 105 members, wives and friends cavorted at the A.T.C.Mess on 30th. November on the occasion of our annual Xmas Do. We had fun. We had games. We danced. We supped. In between these preoccupations we also drank, and raffled fowls. A GOOD night, ending about 3.0. a.m. We've got even better ideas for next year.

Perth Conference. It looks as if no one from Queensland will be able to make Perth. It's regrettable, but there it is. However, Q.Flight wishes the Perth Conference every success, and its organisers and visitors a happy re-union.

Future Events. Golf Day, at Oxley Golf Club, probably on the third Sunday in February. Of course, there will be the Anzac March and the reception after. Of these two events, every member will have due and timely notice. Our next Committee meeting is on Friday evening, 21st. February at the A.T.C.Mess. All members within the vicinity are cordially invited to attend.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letters from our Readers.

To the N.S.W. Secretary, from Howard Prout, Broken Hill, N.S.W.

Dear Allan, I look forward to receiving the Squadron News--and how it brings back memories, when one reads the names of those with whom he was so closely connected.

I would like to get over to one of the Re-unions, but unfortunately Broken Hill is right off the beaten track--however, perhaps one of these days the pleasure will be mine.

In the meantime, I take this opportunity to wish all members of 458 a very happy Xmas and a prosperous New Year,

from Howard Prout.

To the Editor.

From Mrs. Pearl Beaumont, Elsternwick, Victoria.

Your Squadron News came here for my son-in-law, Jack Ellis, and as I am interested in the R.A.A.F., having had a son in it, I read it before re-addressing it to him, and noticed that you have the necktie of the Squadron and would be most appreciative if you would send one to him by airmail, as the surface mail is not very frequent to Beirut. Jack is flying with Middle East Airways,

yours truly,

Mrs. Pearl Beaumont.

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

Dear Peter, ... Writing to my friends seems to be a thing of the past, just never seem to find time, isn't it disgusting. Only hope my letter will be more interesting after such a long wait.

Am just having a few days in bed after a dose of Asian Flu.....

How many 458ers are around that I would know? Hank Ewens, Dave Kessler, Jimmy Wren, Ernie Mercer, all electricians? I often write to Jim Palmer and Jim Perry. Unfortunately owing to business and other engagements I haven't been able to attend one Reunion yet, but I will. I want to hear these recordings, I'm sure they will bring back very happy memories. Do you ever meet up with Cpl Davis--also "Doc" Kenny Cahill?

I am just having my bungalow built out at Witley, that's a little country place about two miles from here, hoping to move in Jan/Feb..... Everything happens at once. Regards to everyone,

yours sincerely, Ken.

THE FRANCE and GERMANY STAR.

458 ers who served with the Squadron Detachment at Salon in the South of France should be entitled to this medal. We understand that some members who were there have, however, not succeeded in establishing their claim. At request, the Squadron Secretary has taken the matter up, through a 458er who works with the

The France and Germany Star (cont.)

Department of the Air. It appears that the Department will give every consideration to applications from those entitled to the Star, if the application is made in the form of a Statutory Declaration to the effect that the applicant served with the Squadron in France. The Declaration should be something in this form... "I, John Smith, of (address), do solemnly and sincerely declare "that I served with the Royal Australian Air Force, as a member of No. 458 Squadron, at "(place) in the south of France in the period..... I apply for issue to me of the "France and Germany Star. I remember that the following other people also served "with 458 Squadron in (place) at that time. My service number was...."

Stating that the other members were present will help those members to obtain the Star, we are told. The Declarations can be sent through the Squadron Secretary.

BRITISH BULLETIN.

from

Sid. Thompsett.

Johnno Johnston sailed from our shores with his wife Mollie on the S.S. Hinalaya on 15th. November. You couldn't help but like him. A great loss to us.

While on the subject of people arriving in Australia, you might like to know that Harry Bishop's sister (Mrs. Gutteridge) sailed in the Strathmore with her husband and five children. They will be living at 39, Travers Street, Darlington, Adelaide, S.A.

I had a letter from Bob Osborne a few weeks ago, saying he was in London, and Harry Bishop and I went up to town and had a very enjoyable night with him. It might be easier for anyone visiting London to telephone me, rather than have to write, so--my number is Hither Green 6653.

At our last reunion we made another tape. Mick Mason will finish it off and we will send it off to you in time for the April All-States Reunion. If I may stick my neck out here, I am saying here and now that this tape is a real cracker. I hope you do manage to get it played at the Reunion, and if possible can we have another one from you all out there, it is so good to hear some of your voices again.

I have heard from Bill Prater, who is in the R.A.F., at Biggin Hill as W/O Signals, and also from Ken Pond. Bill Prater has asked me to pass on to you the address of a friend of his who was on 38 Squadron who relieved us at Foggia and might be glad of a chinwag with the Squadron boys. He is Terry Fitton, 103, Royal Parade, Parkville, Melbourne, Victoria. Do you accept non-Squadron members at all?

Ken Pond, who lives at Garshalton (31, Lavender Road, Carshalton, Surrey) would like very much to hear from his ex-crow mates, i.e. Trig McPhee, Willie Hull and Ken Everett.

Our next Reunion is May 10th. We were hoping to get it on April 26th to coincide with the All-States but alas the Feathers is a busy place for reunions and you need to book about a year in advance.

I don't know what your weather is like at the present, but here it is freezing cold and we around the London area are the only ones free of snow and from the weather forecast to-night, that won't last much longer.

Cheerio and the best of good health.

CRICKET COMMENTS.

by

"Run to Cover".

No, I am not dead and neither has 458 in N.S.W. ceased to play cricket. I have merely been crowded out. Congratulations to those who went to Orange and to those who are going to Perth. But surely it is time the cricketers had a fair go.

It is true that, for no good reason that is apparent, fewer matches have been arranged. However there has been enough to report if there had been space provided.

Matches to date this season have been against Rose Bay R.S.L., who, cricket apart, entertain us with lavish hospitality; against Campbelltown R.S.L. who are our old friends and provided the most scorchingly hot (over 100°) weather with bush fires around that I ever want to play cricket in. We played on with determination, won, drank luke-warm beer, got home at length and felt thoroughly ill. And against R.A.A.F. Station, Richmond. The Station teams change in personnel each year--of course--people get posted--but always provide a good days cricket and a good days return to the R.A.A.F. for our members. This years team was a serious collection of keen cricketers--very pleasant young chaps. They gave us a good game--also in overly muggy weather--and entertained us afterwards at the Sergeants' Mess Beer Garden. We entertained the mosquitoes. We took the cricket seriously too, as it deserved, and successfully resisted the temptation to 'give everyone a bowl'.

Features of the play in the three games, as they come to the memory, I have described below the scores:

