

CIRCULAR

458 SQUADRON NEWS



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15th. ALL-STATES REUNION IN APRIL.

Planning completed in Sydney.

For the 15th. time in the post-war years, members of 458 Squadron, with their wives and families, are about to gather for an All-States Reunion. This time in Sydney where the first All-States Reunion was held back in 1953. The idea was Jim Holliday's and it has been continued regularly since:--initially at yearly intervals, more recently biennially. The most recent A-S.R. was in Adelaide in 1969.

Members come from all the States and from country areas. The chance of going to an All-States Reunion is one of the privileges of having been a member of 458 Squadron. One of the traditions associated with these Reunions is that no member--whether from interstate or the country--is ever called a "Visitor". He is a Squadron member and never a visitor at any 458 function. Already it is known that many interstate members and their wives are coming to the 15th A.S.R.

The Programme.

This is, in brief, what is planned:

Friday April 23rd. Interstate and Country members and wives welcomed, at the Air Force Club, 213, Clarence Street, Sydney. 8.0 p.m. onwards.

Saturday April 24th. 9.15 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. 458 Squadron Conference. Delegates assemble at 213 Clarence Street. After the Conference, at 12.30 sharp a wreath will be placed in remembrance of the 458 Dead, in the Memorial Room of 213, Clarence Street, by the Squadron President. Non delegates, wives and families, will be there.

Afternoon--Free time.

7.45 p.m. Dinner-Dance at Grace Brothers, Silver Room, Chatswood.

Sunday April 25th. 9.30 a.m. Squadron members gather for the Anzac March--Hospital Road, Sydney. Squadron Ladies watching the March will meet at a place to be arranged.

12. Squadron Ladies to lunch at the Summit Restaurant, The Tower, Australia Square. This is a (slowly) revolving Restaurant high above Sydney with a superb view.

After the March, Squadron Members assemble for the All-States Reunion at the Great Southern Hotel, George Street, Sydney.

Evening--Free time.

Monday April 26th. For the golfers, the Anzac Cup, to be played at Asquith Golf Club. Hit-off 8.30 a.m. For others, sightseeing to be arranged.

Q. Flight Quotes (cont.)A Retiring Flight.

There are a few retirements in the air. On 11th. December, Eric Lloyd, member of the Legislative Assembly for 21 years, publicly announced his retirement. He will not seek re-indorsement. Eric states that 12 months ago he received a set-back in health when he had an incipient nervous collapse. Medical advice urged him to retire from politics. Eric was for many years Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary party for Labour in Queensland. In 1957 he clashed with the Queensland Central Executive and in 1966 he was deposed as Deputy Leader.

Eric has worked hard for ex-service personnel. He was the drive behind the establishment of the Gaythorne Ex-Services Club, of which he is currently President. Eric is leading a spartan life. Because of his illnesses doctors have ordered him off grog and cigarettes. In 458, Eric was a foundation member at Holme-on-Spalding Moor and became Squadron Navigation Officer when the Squadron moved to the Middle East. After his tour he trained as a pilot and served in the Pacific Sector. Jim Munday's brother was his navigator. At the close of hostilities, Eric had the rank of Squadron Leader and had been awarded a D.F.C.

Bill Snowden is considering retirement. Bill and Mrs. Snowden recently returned from a prolonged holiday in England, their home country. Bill says he's getting close to the three-score years and five and looks forward to the quiet potter round the garden.

Charlie Richardson's story is different. Company policy requires retirement at 60. Charlie will be that in a few weeks time. (Charlie is probably our oldest ex-pilot). Fit, well and active (in fact, he's so active he makes you tired (watching him), Charlie is seeking an outlet for his energies. Wear out, not rust out, that's Charlie. From our experience with Chas. as Flight President for some years now, we consider the company is making a mistake and that Chas.' retirement will be the company's considerable loss.

A Day to Remember.

February 3rd., 1971, will be another remembrance day for Kath. and Eric (Digger) Kelly; for on this day was born to them a bouncing baby girl of 9 lbs. and some ounces. The baby joins a lovely and loyal family.

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CROWEATER COMMENTS.

from Lofty Trewartha, 60, California St.,
Nailsworth, S.A., 5083.

Pat Enright.

Pat is fighting fit again after his big operation. Arn. Scholar recently spent a few days south and dropped in to see Pat. and Joyce.

Jack Riseley.

Jack informs me on the blower that he cannot claim to be 100 % fit but is happy to be able to report a considerable improvement, and is back at work again.

Bert Ravenscroft.

Being pensioned off by the Shell Co., Bert has gone back to work again for his old firm where he served his apprenticeship. Bert and Lorna have been holidaying at Kangaroo Island and catching a few of those deep sea whiting.

The immortal words of Winston "We shall fight on the beaches, etc.." remind me of the equally immortal address to the Squadron by Butch Power at Williamstown in 1941 when he called on all those that had lost equipment to report forthwith to the Stores Section. Watched closely by a lone W.A.A.A.F. from the Orderly Room Butch added as an afterthought: "And especially those "of you that have lost your cap, field service." Unfortunately, Butch got carried away by the occasion and described that piece of headgear by a more popular name. Never have I seen a W.A.A.A.F. take off so fast.

All the best.

VICTORIAN VIEW. from Frank (Shorty) Wilson, 29, Taylor Ave.,
Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

New Secretary.

You will note that the position of Secretary/
Treasurer of Victoria Flight has changed and dropped back in my
lap. Bill Carr found he could not devote the time necessary to
do the job. Will members please also note my new address for
correspondence and the News.

Ron Russell has also moved and is now at 25,
Harcourt Street, Doncaster West, Vic., 3108.

On behalf of the President, the Committee and
members of the Victorian Flight I send you (the Editor)
congratulations on the honour of O.B.E. bestowed on you by
Her Majesty the Queen.....

All the very best for the New Year.

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CORRESPONDENCE: Letters to the Editor.

From Les Cook, St. Mary's Cottage, Roelcliffe, Boroughbridge, York, England.

This completes a letter of which the first half was published in the last issue.

.....Each issue of the Squadron News seems to record the passing of one
of our old comrades. I seem to recall that you were one of the youngsters
considering the age of some of the older men---who were quite old enough to be my
father. I know that those of them who survive must be old men---and yet some of
them are the ones who keep the flag flying by taking office in the various Flights.

I note that Johnno Johnston is asking for anecdotes and other items of
interest which have come to light since you completed the magnificent job you did
with "We Find and Destroy". I know that Kev. Guiney keeps in touch with you, as
does Shorty Wilson, and I would expect them to have something to say about our
'Concert Party' which grew to a musical trio---started in Alghero by Kev., Harry
Wise and myself. We were even booked for a broadcast from the Rock---but the
disbanding of the Squadron killed that ! What about Digger (Watts) who drove
the captured German petrol bowser and who had the monkey called "Mac". I
travelled with Digger and a S.A.A.F. sergeant (borrowed from 38 Squadron) when we
left Bone and embarked at Bizerta for Sardinia. What a trip!

One more thing. I live only some 12 miles from Harrogate where
there is the Airmens Regional Cemetry and where are buried all airmen who died
in Yorkshire. I hope to trace a list of the dead to see if there are any from
458 Squadron in which case someone might like a photograph.

All the very best to you and all our old comrades.

Sincerely, Les Cook (Compass Basher)

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From Bob Osborne, 253 Remuera Road, Remuera, Auckland, 5, New Zealand.

Dear Peter,

I see it is time for me to renew my subs and I cheerfully add a
cheque for the appropriate amount and would be pleased if you will pass it on to
the Treasurer. I have no doubt he will receive it with acclaim and perhaps
alter my address to the land of the low white cloud.

We have arrived and are still full of the idea of opening an Art
Gallery (The Osborne Galleries) in a private house. The business of doing this
is so new to the authorities here that our permits are held up by the local
Council because they have no precedents to follow. And this fact is not helping
the timing of everything as they, like others, have minds that grind exceeding slow.

Correspondence (cont.)

We have bought a big (5,000 sq. feet) old house and two of the ground floors are big enough for us to start. Will have them sanded and polished and throw a few rugs around. This, plus proper lighting, should make a decent and somewhat personal Gallery. The next thing is to find artists who want to show. Somewhat difficult as most of the decent ones are tied up already. The establishment costs are frightening: the first quote for painting the outside is in the order of \$3,000! Then, heating, lighting, sanding, advertising and everything else! No doubt we shall survive....eventually.

.....Everyone seems very kind and helpful though and it is our own fault if we don't make a go of things. Have high hopes and confidence that things will turn out trumps. No real news. My best wishes to all the 458 team.

yours sincerely,

Bob.

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EX-SERVICEMEN ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL.Conference at Vienna.

Ex-Servicemen (Veterans, to use the international term) have their international organisation. This is the World Veterans Federation to which the many Ex-service Associations (not individual veterans) belong. Over 50 countries have joined and the Associations which are included (some of) the Australian bodies.

W.V.F. held its triennial General Assembly late last year in Vienna. Australian servicemen were represented by two ex-airmen:—Peter Alexander, as the Australian member of the W.V.F. Council, and Tom Marsh who is a Federal Executive member of the Air Force Association as well as a prominent R.S.L. personality. They found their meeting, strenuous debates and warm fellowship with the senior ex-servicemen from five continents most stimulating.

There was a substantial agenda on ex-service matters, support for the United Nations, etc. If matters on the international level (W.V.F. does not intervene in national matters) seem rarified sometimes, there were some of very close interest. Two things particularly, amongst much of surpassing interest, remain in this writer's mind.

Firstly, there was the proposal for a Standing Committee for Veterans in Asia and the Pacific. A body to promote liaison, knowledge, organise projects of ex-service benefit in the area—to which Australia belongs. This was approved in principle on our motion but not until after some searching discussion on its feasibility among delegates from the area. There was a real contest for the votes of Asia. Putting the idea into effect may involve us of Australia in detailed responsibilities—and opportunities for service.

Secondly, we had a talk by an Austrian medical specialist on prosthetics about a plastic artificial arm containing (battery-aided) circuits which, by contact only with the arm stump, however short, will pick up micro-currents still flowing from the brain which would have moved the original arm. The artificial arm will itself obey these impulses. Its wearer can work at drawing boards, lathes, etc. This seemed to us of surpassing value and we have done our best to encourage its use in Australia since our return.

This writer returned home via Oberammergau, Budapest, Athens, Istanbul, Teheran, Delhi, Nepal, with a few days in each place. In Delhi and Nepal (Khatmandu) he had useful discussions with Indian and Gourkha ex-servicemen on their views and problems. Problems they do of course have.

Generally, the opportunities that flow from Australian membership of W.V.F. for Australian participation and influence on the world scene are considerable, and are a challenge to us all. P.C.A.

AIR FORCE CONFERENCE IN CANBERRA.

On the Australian Federal level, ex-service matters of Air Force interest to ex-servicemen, were discussed at the biennial Federal Conference of the Air Force Association in Canberra during November, 1970.

Delegates came from all the Australian States and were of course the senior men from each State. The Federal President (Air Marshal Sir John McCauley) presided and a very famous Australian airman in the person of Air Marshal Sir Richard Williams was also a delegate. Sir Richard was the founding Chief of Air Staff of the R.A.A.F. at its formation 50 years ago. He is an alert and active 80.

Interest of the Association is focused on two main areas---the remaining needs of ex-airmen for rehabilitation, pensions, war service homes:---and the support of the Air Force, its Defence needs, its traditions---after 50 years at least as historically outstanding as those of any fighting force that has ever existed. The Conference agenda shewed this interest. Some time was devoted to discussing the role and purpose of the A.F.A. in this present day and age, the 1970s.

In detail, some of the decisions made were to support the following.

- a) a second War Service Homes loan for those whose family or business needs force them to move is to be advocated with the Government;
- b) similarly, advocacy for W.S.H. rights for unmarried eligible ex-servicemen;
- c) regular and automatic updating of pensions rates;
- d) a rationalised Australian Aircraft manufacturing industry;
- e) amendment of the Aged Persons Homes Act to benefit Service Pensioners;
- f) intensive tuition in English for immigrant children to promote earlier assimilation

and many others:---there were over 80 agenda items. One of the Repatriation Commissioners was present when Repat. matters were discussed. The Governor-General officially opened, and all members of the Air Board attended the opening of, the Conference.

458 member Graeme Coombes was present as Federal Treasurer, and was honoured by the Conference with the award of a Certificate of Merit for his services. Peter Alexander attended as Federal Secretary. Another friend of 458 and longtime reader of the Squadron News, in the person of Doug Orchard (O.B.E., D.F.C.) was also there---as one of the South Australian delegates. He was a Wellington aircrew.

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THE R.A.A.F. JUBILEE YEAR.

All 458ers served in or in association with the R.A.A.F. and will take pride or interest in its achievement of 50 years.

The Force was formed on an Australian Flying Corps nucleus on March 31st, 1921, grew during the interwar years and played a proud part in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Pacific as well as at home, in W.W.II. Through the Empire Air Training Scheme, etc many Australians served with Bomber and other R.A.F. Commands. Three Australian airmen won the V.C.---R.H. Middleton, W.E. Newton and Hughie Edwards, of whom only the last named survived (he is now a senior office-bearer of the A.F.A.). The R.A.A.F. continued on to service in Korea and, now, Vietnam and is a skilled, highly equipped, professional service.

Both the R.A.A.F. and the A.F.A. have a year-long programme of events. There will be a special stamp and special R.A.A.F. glassware, books, etc. But it is to be hoped that individual Unit Associations and airmen will themselves celebrate the anniversary. While the Force may sometimes have seemed far more remote and impersonal than the Squadron and the Crew, still we were all part of the Force and entitled to share pride in its deeds and to rejoice in its Jubilee.

H.R.H. Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, is to visit Australia for the Jubilee celebrations in Canberra, Richmond, Adelaide and Perth.