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## 454-459 SQUADRONS ASSOCIATION ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE

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**Web site:** <https://www.454-459squadrons.org.au/>

**Facebook:**

-  Public: <https://www.facebook.com/454459squadrons>  
Private: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/348000605705789/>
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### APRIL 2021 BULLETIN

*[this Bulletin is only available online]*

### YOUR COMMITTEE

Hon. Secretary – Rick Capel	Nephew of Cam Stephen - 459
Treasurer – Michael Antonios	Son-in-law of Bill East - 459
Julie Parsons	Daughter of Jim McHale - 459
Pamela Antonios	Daughter of Bill East - 459
Jenny Huxley	Daughter of Bill East – 459
Jill Lord	Daughter of George Gray - 454

# APRIL 2021 BULLETIN

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# MESSAGES FROM THE HONORARY SECRETARY



## Anzac Day Sunday, 25<sup>TH</sup> April 2021

Dear Members

We wish to advise that the RSL, in line with the recent relaxation of COVID restrictions in NSW, is now allowing descendants of veterans to attend the Sydney march and form behind our respective banners.

This is great news for us. We can now reverse our previous advice which was we could no longer participate. Now we can!

Should you wish to attend the march please advise no later than **14th April 2021** with names and phone numbers of each person in your party. One of the two conditions for allowing us to march is that we provide a list of those attending to the RSL prior to the march purely for COVID tracing purposes.

Our form-up location is on the west side of Elizabeth St, just north of Martin Place. They want us to be there by 8.40am. The march is simply heading straight down Elizabeth St before dispersing at Liverpool St. There will be an 'Eyes Left' as an Act of Remembrance adjacent to the ANZAC Memorial.

It is too late to organise our usual lunch at Kittyhawk this year but as an alternative, we are planning a more casual affair at a very reasonably priced restaurant known as 'The Malaya' at King St Wharf. Here there will be no cover charge but they just need to know numbers to help them arrange tables for our area. Hoping that there will be more than 8 of us attending, The Malaya provides a banquet menu for the whole party at \$65 per head plus a 15% surcharge given that it is a public holiday. Drinks are extra. The Committee however would like to cover the cost of the banquet surcharge for all of you who are attending.

Please let us know by the **14th April 2021** so that we can finalise the arrangements for the march and the lunch.

The address for The Malaya is 39 Lime St, King St Wharf. After the march we can walk down King St and cross over on the foot bridge to the Darling Harbour side where we will find the restaurant. (It may be an early lunch depending on the kick-off time.)

Thank you for your forbearance as we, your committee, work to ensure the 454/459 members are lined up for the Anzac March this year. We look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible in defiance of all that Covid-19 has done to us over the last year. Stay safe and start planning to be there!

Below are the RSL COVID conditions:

- Stay home if you're feeling unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 or have had symptoms of COVID-19 within the 72 hours prior and have not received a negative COVID-19 test result. Stay home if you have been to a location on a date and time that NSW Health has issued a self-isolation and get tested immediately alert ([nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates](https://nsw.gov.au/covid-19/latest-news-and-updates)) or if you have been directed by NSW Health that you must self-isolate
- Practice physical distancing when queuing in form up area, whilst marching, and in the dispersal area
- Face masks are encouraged when it is hard to maintain 1.5 metres of physical distance
- Participants must stay (within) the form up area once onsite
- Participants must leave the dispersal area immediately once dispersed
- Follow signage and the directives of staff, police and marshals at all times
- Practice high-level hygiene, including washing your hands and/or using sanitiser regularly, coughing or sneezing into your elbow and refrain from shaking hands with fellow veterans
- It is recommended that participants carry a small bottle of hand sanitiser
- Consider downloading the COVIDSafe app ahead of the day

For more information about Dawn Services, Marches and Commemorations in all other NSW locations, please visit the NSW Local ANZAC Day page here.

Kind regards

Rick Capel  
Hon Secretary

## All Anzac Day events 2021

<https://www.rslnsw.org.au/commemoration/anzac-day-2021/local-dawn-service-march-and-commemoration-services>

## Dress code and wearing of medals

<https://www.rslnsw.org.au/commemoration/anzac-day-2021/general-anzac-day-information/>

## Join our Committee

We are seeking new committee members to join us and provide fresh input into how we can keep the Association relevant to new generations of descendants. If you are interested in helping out, please [let us know](#).

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Association is thankful to all our members and descendants who have continued to provide financial support over the past years. This valuable support allowed the Association to

- Coordinate and commemorate ANZAC Day and its associated activities
- Create and update our website and promote the Squadron history and its members
- Produce and distribute the annual Squadron bulletin
- Support some of our veterans and families

Without the continued financial support, none of these initiatives would be possible.

The annual subscription fee of \$30 remains unchanged and can be made online at <https://www.454-459squadrons.org.au/subscription>

We respectfully request your continued financial support through regular subscription.

Naturally if you have any queries, please feel free to contact us through our website <https://www.454-459squadrons.org.au/contact>

Thank you once again for your support.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions we ask that **no cheques or cash be posted**. If you could please use electronic banking.

- PayPal subscriptions: can be made by following this link <https://www.454-459squadrons.org.au/subscription> or
- Electronic transfer to:  
St George Bank BSB: 112 879  
Account Number: 067 706 091  
Please make sure you enter your name in the “Description field”.

Thank you.

# ABSENT COMRADES



It is with regret that we have been notified of the passing of the undermentioned member:

Date	Member	State	Sqdn	Notified By
22 Apr 20	Kevin O'Brien	QLD	454	His grandson Patrick

## TRIBUTE

### **Warrant Officer Kevin O'BRIEN**

459 RAAF Squadron

Service No. 426901

Date of Birth: 13 July 1922

Place of Birth: Gympie, QLD

Date of Enlistment: 15 August 1942

Date of Discharge: 6 December 1945

Date of Death: 22 April 2020



### Crew

- Pilot – Ron Barton
- Navigator – Bernard (Bunny) Rabbits
- WAG – Kevin O'Brien
- WAG – Harold (Blue) Munce

<https://www.454-459squadrons.org.au/obrienk>

## A story from Kevin O'Brien's dairy

### HOLE-Y HELL

"There were plenty of stories exchanged and remembered yesterday 19th May 2006, when Jimmy, Blue and I met at our annual reunion. I had bought the book "Alamein to the Alps" and took a page I copied to show Blue. On page 146 it related how we had twice received direct hits with shells that failed to explode. In both cases we sustained huge holes in the tail plane, and thereby hangs another tale.

I was sitting in the turret alarmed by what I could see and hear and feel outside when this great hole appeared and an 88mm shell exploded above us.

As though that was not enough there was only the thinnest of the leading edge of the tail plane left intact. I expected the whole thing to tear off at any time and did not take my eyes off it all the way home - to Hell with the fun in the Sun!

Another time I had been watching out the bottom hatch to see that all five bombs had left us. When I returned to the wireless I heard Blue (from the turret) asking Ron if all the controls were working, "Why?" asked Ron", because we have just had a shell through the tail again, replied Blue. Obviously, Jerry was making a habit of this thing and we waited anxiously for the third time (un) lucky but fortunately it didn't happen.

We had a couple of very good "erks" looking after our aircraft C-Charlie - Jim and Roly - and they almost always had it airworthy when we wanted it, which I liked a lot - I always felt safer in C-Charlie - (but not totally safe).

Someone mentioned that a shell through the tail of your aircraft would have scared them to death. Well we were at least apprehensive every time we went out I can tell you. Everyone in the truck on the way to the aircraft was pretty quiet, but on the way back there was always lots of loud excited talk about what we had been up to. "

## THE ODE



"They shall grow not old,  
as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them,  
nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in  
the morning  
We will remember them."

## OUR WEBSITE

Our website <https://www.454-459squadrons.org.au/> is gaining popularity with over 200 daily visitors from many parts of the world. As you'd expect, most of the visitors are from Australia, UK, US, Italy, France and Greece

To keep the memories alive, we're constantly updating our website with new stories, pictures and memoirs from various members who have been kind enough to share this valuable content.

We encourage our members to check out our website and share any historical information you may have of the 454 and 459 Squadrons..

### Facebook

Our social media channels on Facebook has been an amazing instrument that brought many of the descendants closer to each other. In case you want to check them out, we have

- A public Facebook page that is accessible to all Facebook users <https://www.facebook.com/454459squadrons/>
- A private and exclusive Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/348000605705789/> accessible only to approved members and descendants of the 454 and 459 Squadrons (i.e. it's not viewable or accessible to the public). This private group has grown over the past year where we now have over 70 members and descendants who have joined. So, if you haven't signed up for this, we'd love for you to join us.

### Reminder:

If you need to contact us, please use the Contact Us page <https://www.454-459squadrons.org.au/contact>

# PHOTOS FROM 2020 ANZAC DAY

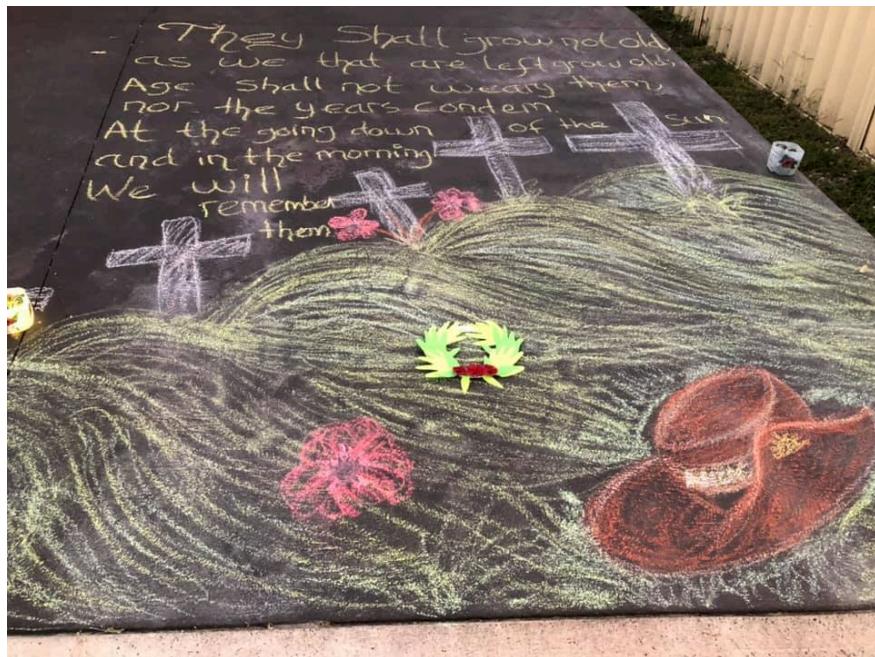
*The Antonios household Anzac Day dawn 2020*



*Photos from Val Street (via Facebook)*



Photos from Jane Ellul (via Facebook)



*Photos from Kerri Woodroff (via Facebook)*

