

DEAR FIREBALLER:

On 20-21 July, 1973, about 60 former members of the 457th Bombardment Group assembled on the Topeka, Kansas buncher beacon for the second post - World War II rendezvous of Luper's Super Troopers. The first reunion was held in 1971 in Bentonville, Arkansas. Both gatherings came about as a result of the efforts of a small but extremely dedicated group of our former squadron mates. The same individuals are still striving to contact many former members who have not yet been contacted. We are also collaborating with the Mayor and the City Council of Bentonville, Arkansas in an effort to acquire a surplus B-17 (probably from the U.S. Forest Service) for siting at the Bentonville Airport.

We wish to honor the officers and men of the 457th Bomb Group who lost their lives in service to their country and establish Bentonville, Arkansas as the permanent home of the 457th Bomb Group Association.

For this to come about, a majority of the present membership must vote affirmatively for the plan. A ballot has been included herewith for each member to vote yes or no, include any pertinent remarks on the ballot-questionnaire and post it at your earliest convenience. The results of our efforts to acquire the B-17 and the results of the balloting will be passed on to you in follow-on correspondence.

By-Laws were approved by the membership during the business meeting on 21 July, 1973, at which time the following officers were elected for the term 1973 through 1976:

William T. (Bill) Wilborn - President  
6507 East 66th Street South  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74133

Howard Larsen - Vice President  
1220 1/2 East First Street  
Topeka, Kansas 66606

Homer Briggs - Secretary/Treasurer  
811 N.W. "B" Street  
Bentonville, Arkansas 72712

Lourene (Mickey) Briggs, Bentonville, Arkansas, was voted honorary member and Group Association historian. Please send Data, Pictures, etc., for the Group book.

A note of appreciation would be welcomed by caretaker of Connington Memorial:

Mr. George Townsend  
6 Moyne\* Road  
Sawtry, Hunts  
England U.K.

Anyone knowing address of Frank Taylor, former Intelligence Officer - please send any information to Briggs.

It was discussed and approved by a majority vote to have a reunion every three (3) years. Bentonville was selected as the site for the 1976 reunion and Homer Briggs was chosen as 1976 Reunion Chairman.

Ken Rurode, 1971 Treasurer, turned over a \$25.00 balance to Homer Briggs. One Hundred Four Dollars (\$104.00) over and above our Topeka bills, was also turned over to Homer Briggs. This gives Homer \$129.00 with which to start work on our new plans. Additional funds must come from donations or new memberships in the Fireball Association. Our Association expenses will include postage, stationery, card files, printing fees, etc. Homer Briggs will publish an annual financial report.

Bentonville businessmen are truly supporting our Association. They have volunteered to donate bumper decals, membership cards, etc. I believe we have found in Bentonville an ideal home for the 457th Bomb Group Association and a place where we can all enjoy the scenic beauty of Bentonville areas and the graciousness of Bentonville's people.

In my view, every ex-Fireballer should read and perhaps own a copy of Ken Blakebrough's book, "The Fireball Outfit - 457th Bombardment Group in the Skies Over Europe". It is both an accurate and well written account of the 457th's two years in Europe. Ken deserves our thanks for an excellent book.

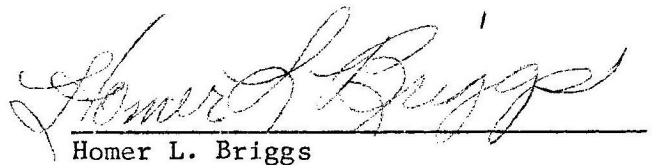
It can be purchased for \$3.95  
Sky Books International  
520 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10036

We have something good -- something of value going with our Association. We owe it to our former members to find them and give them the opportunity to participate. We want the wives and children to participate. Please fill out the enclosed information letter and drop it in the mail. We'll contact you and send you a current listing of all our members. Let's make '76 a real ball -- in fact, let's make it . . .

"BENTONVILLE FIREBALL '76"



W.T. Wilborn  
President



Homer L. Briggs  
Secretary - Treasurer

MINUTES  
1973 MEETING OF 457th BOMB GROUP REUNION  
Topeka, Kansas  
Saturday, July 21, 1973

The business meeting came to order with Ken Blakebrough of Lakewood, California presiding. Approximately 60 men attended. Mrs. Homer Briggs acted as Secretary.

Joel Apel, Sherman, Texas made a motion for future reunions to be held every three years. Tom Goff, Glen Burnie, MD, seconded the motion. Discussion ensued and a vote followed. The vote was unanimous for the 3-year plan.

Dave Kahne, Laramie, Wyoming, Committee Chairman to pick the 1976 location, asked the membership for suggestions. Suggestions included St. Louis, Missouri, Laramie, Wyoming, East Coast, West Coast, Michigan and Bentonville, Arkansas. Al Martinez, Cotati, Calif, made a motion to select Bentonville, Arkansas. Lamar Smith, Florence, Mississippi, seconded the motion. A Discussion followed, and by unanimous vote, Bentonville, Arkansas was selected to be the 1976 site.

Ken Rurode, St. Joseph, Missouri, made a motion that Mickey Briggs be designated an honorary member and Association historian. Tom Goff seconded the motion. The vote which followed was unanimous "for".

Vern Miller, Kansas Attorney General, former fighter pilot escort, was responsible for the Forbes Air Base tour and was voted in as an honorary member.

Nominations for Secretary-Treasurer were opened. Stanley Brown, Seattle, Washington, nominated Homer Briggs. Marshal Summer, Alfred, Maine, seconded the motion. Homer Briggs was unanimously elected Secretary-Treasurer and was the first elected officer for the group and the 1976 reunion.

Nominations for President: Ken Keyon, Iowa City, Iowa, nominated Ken Blakebrough, and he withdrew. Jim Franklin, Catlin, Illinois, nominated Bill Wilborn, Tulsa, for President. Harold Wiseman, Lima, Ohio, seconded the nomination. Bill Wilborn was elected unanimously.

Bill Wilborn took the chair and continued the business meeting.

Tom Goff, Glen Burnie, Maryland, nominated Howard Larsen for Vice President. Ken Rurode, St. Joseph, Missouri, seconded the nomination. Claude Gideon, Upland, California nominated Dave Kahne, Laramie, Wyoming. Joel Apel, Sherman, Texas seconded the nomination. Howard Larsen was elected Vice President by majority vote.

The By-Laws of the 457th Association which were drawn up by Ken Blakebrough, Lakewood, California, were read by the President.

Tom Goff, Md., moved to accept the By-Laws as written with the exception that the two year requirement be amended to read three years between each reunion. By motion, Ralph Coons, Plainfield, Ill., seconded the amendment. The By-Laws were accepted by unanimous vote.

Several members accepted responsibility for a state or area in which to find new members. The Membership Drive Area Managers list will be published and sent to all members. Stanley Brown, Spokane, Wash., made a motion that all members donate \$2.00 to defray future postage costs. Summer Marshal, Alfred, Maine, seconded the motion which carried by majority vote. The donation (\$104.00) was turned over to Mickey Briggs by Ken Rurode. Also, \$25.00 left from the 1971 reunion was turned over to Mickey Briggs by Ken Rurode, treasurer for 1973. Total funds on hand as of August 1973 was \$129.00.

A motion to adjourn was made by Joel Apel, Texas. Seconded by Stanley Brown, Washington. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned.