

457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION
The Fireball Outfit
811 N.W. "B" Street
Bentonville, Arkansas 72712

Dear Fellow Fireballer:

Several months ago, it was decided that April 1974 would be the target date for releasing our next Fireball Newsletter. Although we have not received as many newsy items as we had hoped for, we have collected enough information to justify the publication and mailing costs associated with a total membership contact. Enclosed find address list.

This newsletter has been constructed along functional topical lines in the hope that it will be more useful to you as a future reference. All recommendations as to further newsletter improvements will be appreciated.

BUSINESS:

Membership - Members who have paid their 1973 Fireballer Club membership fee (\$7.50) but have not yet received their membership cards should notify our Secretary, Homer Briggs as soon as practicable.

The 1973-76 fee of \$7.50 for Fireballer membership is used to defray postage, printing, bumper stickers and auto decal costs. A current financial statement for the 457th Group Association is included in this newsletter. . . See attached.

Please fill out the Fireballer Questionnaire and send it in--regardless of your intentions to join the Fireballer Club. We value your vote and want you to receive all newsletters concerning the 457th Bomb Group Association.

B-17 Acquisition Efforts:- Homer Briggs has been working for months with the Bentonville, Ark City Council, the Ark Congressional representatives, the Air Force Museum and several private and municipal agencies who own and/or operate B-17 aircraft. The 457th Bomb Group Association is trying to locate and acquire a B-17 for siting at the Bentonville, Ark Municipal Airport.

There are basically two options open to the Association. We can acquire a privately owned B-17 within two years at a "scrap rate" price, or we can continue to work with the Federal government in an effort to have one assigned to us through the Air Force Museum. We are presently working on both leads. Of course, the City of Bentonville will be the legal custodian of the aircraft and will sponsor the aircraft as part of the 457th Bomb Group Memorial site at the Bentonville, Ark Municipal Airport. In order to buy a privately owned B-17, (at scrap rate) donations would be required. The Association has already received a number of donation offers from several prominent Bentonville merchants. As soon as an estimate of 1976 scrap cost is established the feasibility of a private purchase will be ascertained.

A MUST:

To buy Ken Blakebrough's Book (THE FIREBALL OUTFIT), write to:
ISBN-0-8168-9754-9

Aero Publishers, Inc.
329 Aviation Road
Fallbrook, California 92028
(include check or money order for \$3.95)

PERSONNEL:

The addresses of ROBERT QUIERY and JOHN GAMBRELL were inadvertently misplaced after the first reunion. Your help in finding these two Fireballers would be appreciated.

Fireballer E.T. "KNOCK" NAVERSON'S address is 6066 Ansbury Drive, Dayton, Ohio 45424.

To write to our Connington, England Memorial Caretaker ...

Membership Drive Pledge:

I WILL TAKE A POSITIVE STEP TO CONTACT AT LEAST ONE FORMER 457TH BOMB GROUP BUDDY OR ACQUAINTANCE BEFORE 30 JUNE 1974.

- The Bell Telephone System will help
- Chambers of Commerce will help
- VFW, AMVET and American Legion Units will help
- Local newspapers (letters to the Editor) help

In four short years, we have had two reunions. The first one in 1970 began with three. In 1973, we had over 60 in attendance. We now have over 400 names on our list and we are growing.

The goals of the 457th Bomb Group Association are to honor our fallen comrades, our distinguished group and the part the Fireball Outfit played in perpetuating our way of life. Moreover, as members, we expect in the three years ahead to experience satisfaction, indeed joy, from the warm personal relationships that will come from new and renewed friendships within the Association. The effort you expend in finding an ex-Fireballer will be self-rewarding. Our 1976 goal of one thousand (1,000) members is not unrealistic. Let's all try to find and report TWO more potential members.

DECEASED MEMBERS: Ned Yelick Leroy Watson Mike Keller

TRAVEL: DAN GRAHAM, Indianapolis, Indiana, has been working on plans for a charter flight to England. He has recommended abandonment of plans for 1974 and believes a trip can be planned for 1975.

Mr. W.G. "BILL" ROBERTIE, President, 2nd Air Division Association, P.O. Drawer "B", Ipswich, Mass 01938, has written to us on several occasions concerning the 2nd AD Association and their plans for charter flights to London in '75. 457th Association members may be able to "piggy-back" on the 2 AD charter flights if we cannot raise a sufficient number of participants within our own group. According to BILL ROBERTIE, a three week sojourn including three nights in London and all transportation costs run about \$560.00. The escalation factor for '75 could be considerable, but the charter approach is certainly a great deal less costly than the ala-carte approach. We will continue to monitor this activity.

DOCUMENTS: 457th Bomb Group Memorabilia

Three separate Reunion Books are in work and a B-17 documentary. We need more inputs (photos, letters--news clippings, official correspondence, etc. Dig into your old trunks and foot lockers. In order to protect your interests, we recommend that you send us copies of your documentary data (Xerox copies, photostat, etc).

QUESTIONNAIRE/BALLOT VOTE RESULTS: Only 65 questionnaires returned thus far. Voting on the Ballot...57 as of April 15th. Vote to endorse City of Bentonville's plan to acquire surplus B-17 for siting at Memorial Airport FOR--54, NO--2, UNDECIDED--1. Endorse plan to designate Bentonville as Nat'l Headquarters--with EACH REUNION to be held in DIFFERENT LOCATIONS - FOR--54, NO--2, UNDECIDED--1. Endorse plan for 457th to purchase/install exact replica of Glatton, England monument at proposed Memorial Site in Bentonville - FOR--48, NO--4. Interested in proposed flight to UN Kingdom in '74-'75 FOR--31, NO--19, UNDECIDED--7. In favor of establishing fund to defray cost of bringing official caretaker of Glatton, Memorial to US to attend '76 Reunion ---- FOR--46, NO--8. In favor of financing - FOR--22, direct contributions, FOR--20, an assessment from Association's general fund, UNDECIDED--12.

Fireballers --- let us hear from you !!!

PRESIDENT

William T. "Bill" Wilburn
6507 E. 66th St. South
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74133

VICE-PRESIDENT

Howard Larsen
1220 1/2 W. 1st St.
Topeka, Kansas 66606

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Homer Briggs
811 N.W. "B" St.
Bentonville, Arkansas 72712