

The Fireball Outfit
811 Northwest "B" St
Bentonville, Arkansas 72712

Dear Fellow Fireballer:

January 1975

We are now on file as a Non Profit Organization. By-Laws have been printed, which will be given out at the next reunion. Some of the men's letters came back, but we gained some new names. List now stands 425 good addresses. Area men have several hundred to trace.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Please, if you have a blank questionnaire - fill it in - whether you become a paid Fireball member or not. If you do not have one please send to me for one. Those men attending the Bentonville '71 and Topeka '73 reunions, that have not sent in your questionnaire - please do so! These are kept in a permanent file and a permanent card file has been set up for information to be handed down to the next Secry-Treas. This is very helpful in keeping in contact with men, not just members.

MEMBERSHIP:

If you did not attend the 1973 Topeka reunion and have not paid \$7.50 and received your Fireball membership card - do so at once. The money is spent on tracing new members, postage, printing and etc.

Why not each one of you contact your State American Legion, and other State Veterans offices and ask that a notice be posted at the State meetings telling of our Home office address and asking all men to contact. If you have a person's hometown - - write to the Alumni Association, the hometown newspaper, Clerk of his county, your Chamber of Commerce offices often have telephone directories that have been known to have good addresses.

HISTORIAN:

Mickey (Lourrene) Briggs writes: R.D. Bisagno, Augusta, Ks, donated his collection of Photo Lab pictures, which being mounted on large sheets of poster boards for display at our next reunion. Harry Foyle, NJ, donated a framed picture of the Philadelphia Record newspaper of 1945 - showing the Queen Elizabeth returning to the New York Harbor. Clayton Bejot, Neb, has sent copies of Whitehall Theatre, Embassy Theatre, and many other papers from that area. Sid Hammer, DDS, NY, sent Connington Airfield articles sent to him recently from Townsend telling of the airfield going in at the old strip. Many have sent things and they have all been mounted and preserved for future times for the men to look at. Many men, during 1970 - 1971 have sent interesting letters and accounts of things that happened over there. These have been kept, since then we haven't received too many of these letters -- wouldn't you like to write us some more? We have a letter and some interesting data from A.P. DeJong, Lt.Col.,R, Neth AF, The Hague, Netherlands. Keep sending things in to keep for the Group.

A MUST !!!

Again I suggest you get a copy of Ken Blakebrough's Book

"THE FIREBALL OUTFIT" (ISBN-0-8168-9754-9)

write to: Aero Publishers, Inc.

329 Aviation Road

Fallbrook, California 92028 (include check or money order for \$3.95)

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Fern and I belatedly thank all who sent the nice "Thank You" notes for the Topeka Reunion - which we cherish, also to all those who helped us make the reunion a success. As we know, our association needs funds to operate, for such things as postage and incidental expenses. So -- let's all mail our dues to Homer & Mickey Briggs. There are many of the 457th we have not located. If each one of us 'members' could locate ONE, our membership would double!!!! What a reunion we will have in Bentonville, Ark, in '76. That is just next year, so plan to attend.

I have been assisting Homer in searching for a B-17 as a memorial to our departed comrades. If anyone knows where we might obtain one -- write to Homer or to me, and we will go to work on it.

HOWARD LARSEN
Vice President

NEWS:

Please send any interesting news for the group to us to be printed in our newsletter. If you have any suggestions - send them in to be used in our next letter, let's hear from you.

SEPT 1974 -- Dan Graham, Indianapolis, married Norma Wallace. They have already signed up for the trip to England.

Stopping to see us in '74: Howard, Fern - Larson, Topeka, Kansas
Earl, Elaine Pledger, Ark.
Clifford Digre, and wife, Minn
son of Clayton Bejot, Neb.

KEEP COMING: Retired Major General USAF, Leroy H. Watson, Beverly Hills, Ca, sent a donation to our memorial fund in memorium of his son of the 457th outfit:
"Col. Leroy H. Watson, Jr."

8th AF NEWS: Homer has given his name to the newly formed 8th AF News, a service for England based 8th AF Units (WWII) & Joined his list for a dollar. Our group name with Homer's name and address is in his paper and we have already found a new man from this. If you are interested in this News write to Lt Col N.H. Woolnough, 7752 Harbour Blvd, Miramar, Fla 33023 for full information. We can also publicize reunion plans in this paper. He has sent 10 National publications telling the existence of the 8th AF Clearing-house. The 2nd Air Division Assn sends us a copy of their newsletter each print out, many interesting readings in it. They will print an item in their apper to help us find our men. We have like-wise agreed to send any name we come across that is 2nd Div that does not know of them. The more contacts we made the more men we find. We have found 4 men for them. President's address: William L. Brooks, 350 Norton St, Boulder, Colo. 80302.

JIM YOUNG'S REQUEST: 8th Air Force historian interested in preserving personal mementos such as squadron patches, group unit histories for future generations. He is AF 59 to 64, now Active Reservist T/Sgt, Would appreciate any help. Address: 800 Liberty St, McKees Rocks, Pa 15136. Bernard Bains, 29 Western Ave, Peterborough, England PE1 4HS, wants to contact any 401st BG or 351st (Folebrook). He is member of Historical Society in England.

B-17: Our own Bentonville Bicentennial committee (Homer & Mickey are on it) along with City Council endorses and agrees to donate the ground, necessary concrete pads, partial maintance with chain-link fence security. Bentonville will sponsor the aircraft as part of the 457th Bomb Group memorial site at city Airport. It will be 1 of the Bicentennial projects. A Bicentennial celebration, memorial or whatever, will be set up at the time of our July '76 Reunion. We are eligable, with city as sponsor, to apply for Bicentennial funds, but we must have proof of matching funds. We need to set up a special fund for our B-17. It may cost salvage metal prices, also we may need over-head protection. Homer has also promises of local donations, which will be held in separate funds. The plane is on flying status at present. All donations will be put into the B-17 Memorial Fund, set up at the Bank of Bentonville, Bentonville, Ark. Receipts for your tax purposes can be made to you. We are incorporated as a non-profit organization. If this is not used toward the plane, all monies will be refunded.

WHY BENTONVILLE ? ? ? ?

You are wondering why put at B-17 at Bentonville for our group? NO REASON ... Homer Briggs just pushed the idea brought up at Topeka and asked our city to endorse us, after we found it was hard to get one on our own. Nearly all those who have voted .. have voted YES ... also to make this Nat'l Hqts. This means ONLY Membership lists - papers - such, all Reunions will be voted on to be held at different cities - different years.

REUNION - - - - 1976 -- JULY

ATTENTION LADIES !!!! Wives, children .. all are included in all reunions. The ladies, kids, teenagers have also enjoyed being with new found friends. Activities will be planned for them, also.

SAD NEWS: Mrs. V.W. "Kris" Krysiak wrote: Kris had severe heart attack and died on November 23, 1974. She sent his photos that cover planes, instrument panels, plane plants, and mementos to the 457th Historian Book. These cover from 1918 to the 60's, including Air Force Years 1942-45 in England.

ADDRESSES: Enclosed is a page to be added to your address lists. These are additional and any changes. Please keep your address list. Any self-addresses stamped envelope would be appreciated. This is a tremendous lot of work. If you have any names or addresses, current or old please pass them on so we can trace.

ENGLAND - TRIP - 1975

All interested parties wanting to go to England as a group please take notice ! ! ! ! !
 After MUCH investigating this was our best and cheapest offer:
 YOU MUST MAKE YOUR OWN RESERVATIONS Also, let Homer know that you plan to go.
 We want to try to go as a group -- you, your family and who ever. PLEASE, contact both
 at once !! 60 seats will be held for a certain amount of time. However, more are
 available at this date. When you write GRUNINGER'S TRAVEL AGENCY, they will send you all
 the information on hotels, side trips, etc. BE SURE to say you are in the 457th Bomb
 Group that is going as a group on May 27, 1975...to London, return June 18th. Minimum
price \$339.00 - via Pan Am (each person). Departure direct from Indianapolis. Requirement
 is that you book at least 80 days PRIOR to departure....making March 30th deadline to
 book, deposit required at this time. Bal is due not later than 60 days before departure.
 GRUNINGER TRAVEL AGENCY, 6101 North Keystone Ave, Indianapolis, Indiana 46220. We
 possibly will have a private bus leaving Bentonville, could pickup any possible passengers
 between us and Indianapolis. Maybe others could do the same in their area. Please let
 us know YES or NO so we can cancel the holding of seats. Especially those who have
 indicated they had wanted to go. We have found that a family group picture and passport
 can be obtained, inquire at you County Court House. No shots are required.

BUMPER STICKER enclosed. These will, hopefully, be displayed on your bumper and more folks
 will come to the reunion & also maybe a 457th fellow will stop you and give you his name
 and address to add to the list!!!! To obtain additional, send a self-addressed envelope
 with 20¢ postage for each additional bumper sticker ordered.

REUNION '76 ... we will work tentatively on the dates being within the first 2 weeks of
 July '76, with activities beginning early in the week, and closing earlier than a Saturday.
 We will have at least 4--days of activities. Please write your suggestions and let us
 work on them. We have been requested to have a banquet with dancing following. We have
 so many talented people who have volunteered already. We have just learned that a large
 Motel is being planned across the hiway from our Holiday Inn, we hope this will mean that
 all our reunion attendees can stay closer together this time. Also, many have suggested
 that reunions be held closer together than each 3-years. Think on this .. and also
 WHERE WILL THE NEXT REUNION BE HELD ? ? ? ? ?

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Homer L. Briggs
 811 Northwest "B" St
 Bentonville, Ark 72712
 HISTORIAN
 Lorraine (Mickey) Briggs

VICE-PRESIDENT

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

PRESIDENT

William T. 'Bill' Wilburn
 6507 E. 66th St South
 Tulsa, Oklahoma 74133

If you have not returned your questionnaire please fill out and send it in ! ! ! !

DATE: _____

NAME: _____ (Nickname) _____

ADDRESS: _____ Former Rank _____

_____ Sqdn No. _____

Telephone: _____ Retired AF Rank _____

Wife's Name: _____

Return to: 457th Bomb Group Association
 811 Northwest "B" St
 Bentonville, Arkansas 72712

NOTE: If you know the address or telephone No. of any non-affiliated ex-Fireballers,
 please send a note on them. We will attempt to locate them through our area
 contact men. Our goal is to reach 1,000 members before our '76 Reunion.

Please send names of deceased men that have not been listed with us since the war.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____