



THE 457th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION NEWS

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BENTONVILLE, ARKANSAS 72712

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REUNIONS
 EIGHTH AFHS: Oct 4-9 1994 San Diego, Ca.
 Town and Country Resort.

MINI-REUNION

A history of the 457th Bomb Group is being compiled. If anyone knows of the Silver Star Award being conferred to anyone other than Major Hozier, Major Stann, Captain Syptak, Sgt. Paul Birchen or Dave Foltz, would you please let Homer Briggs know?*

EXPLANATION and/or APOLOGIES from your EDITORS

Never did we dream there would be so much interesting coverage of the Mini-Reunion in Peterborough and the Memorial Dedication in Dayton. It was MASSIVE. We planned on a 10-page report, as you will note, due to the change in date of the Inactivation of the 457th Operational Group made by them, from the date we sent to you on the card. To achieve the notification in this Newsletter [we hope] it required first-class postage to all current dues-paying members, which limits us to 10 pages. Those who are not current in dues will receive this issue by 3rd Class, as normal.

We have already started printing the "over-flow" material that has accumulated, and will publish the "Big" Newsletter in early November. Please bear with us and do not become upset if your article is not in this edition. Hopefully the postage problem will be resolved by that time as we are planning to [1] go to the 9-digit Zip number and [2] go to the bar-code on the envelope, both of which will save us a considerable amount in postage. Even though this issue is small in pages please don't forget:

RENO IN 95 NOVEMBER 12-15.

THE PRESIDENT SEZ:

Dear Fireballers;

I wish you all could have been present for the dedication of our Memorial Bench to the United Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Field on August 17. Thanks to Chairman Dale Jeffers, the whole affair was outstanding. We were delighted to have Lt. Col. Billy Osborn, Deputy C.O. of the 457th Operations, attend the dedication and the 12 crew members he brought with him. They all came over to the Motel Tuesday evening to join us in having a few "cool" ones. It turned out to be a great evening, with war stories galore. Col. Keller will be leaving for another position soon after the Inactivation Ceremonies and Billy is scheduled to take command and "Turn out the Lights". We wish them both the best of luck and plan on keeping in touch with them.

Everyone is invited to attend the Inactivation Ceremonies for the 457th Operations Group on Wednesday, September 28, at 1:00 P.M. on the KC-136 Flight Line at Altus Air Force Base, Altus, OK. Our own Homer Briggs will represent us in the ceremonies. There will be a reception afterwards. Interesting coincidence: The old 457th and the new 457th will have been in Active duty about the same amount of time. If you can make it, close by lodging is the Best Western Motel (1-800-528-1234) or the Ramada Inn (1-800-228-2828). Sincerely hope this info reaches you in time as we just learned for certain the closure date will be the 28th.

Now let us turn our attention to the much talked about Glatton Marker. We have received many suggestions from the members about where to put it, for which I appreciate very much. Bernie Bains, Craig Harris and Leon Zimmerman have all sent pictures of possible locations, plus the pictures of both the Polebrook and Deenthorpe Memorials. One of the most mentioned locations is to put it on the Highway to Peterborough near the entrance of the old Base. Bernie B. writes "this two lane highway is to be improved and upgraded to three lanes, which will mean different exits to the villages". It is difficult to imagine what would happen to our marker while this work is going on, and especially, where it would end up when the work has been completed. We have talked about locations closer to the runway. In each of these cases we have realized the need for a strategically placed number of signs guiding visitors to the marker. Also, I am wondering who would maintain these signs in the future.

We have talked about our very dear Connington Church yard. We certainly have a wonderful Memorial there now which raises the question "do we want another one there?", and of course the same "Sign Problem" would exist there. As many of you know, the old Church is in a deteriorating condition and is going to require

extreme renovation some day if it remains intact. Who is dedicated enough, and young enough, to monitor all the Marker needs if this renovation is to take place several years in the future?

Everyone has good ideas, but there is no overall consensus of where to locate the Marker. May I try to sell you a plan? This is not my original idea, but is one suggested by a dedicated and hard working member ... Dave Summerville. "WHAT IF" we placed it in or near the "Town Center" of Peterborough or perhaps close to the Cathedral entrance, it being one of the main attractions in Peterborough. The more I think about these two locations, the more logic it has and appears to solve many of the problems we have. Let me list some reasoning:

#1... We were the closest American Air Base to Peterborough during WWII. We developed close ties with many Peterborough citizens, many who remember us well. Several married Peterborough Girls ... including one of our Directors, Joe Falcone.

#2... Our "Main Man" Historian, Bernard Bains, wrote me that it was a splendid idea, and told me if we have some support for this location to: "Please let me know and I will contact the present Mayor who has already promised her support for our Memorial Project".

#3... Thanks to someone in our Mini-Reunion's visit to the Mayor's office ... and I believe it was Rex Burke ... we would be WELCOME in this location. Most of the suggested locations would require permission from either a Government entity or an individual land owner... which is not particularly easy to come by. And it might require a deed to the property to guarantee permanency, which is also not easy to come by. The Town Centre dates hundreds of years back and is watched over by a city particularly proud of its historical heritage.

#4... The problems of accessibility would be solved. No directional signs would be necessary. It would be available for many more people to see (or use) and these are only some of the advantages.

At my request, Bernie Bains has investigated what it would cost to build a Memorial Marker such as Deenthorpe and Polebrook and the Mason who built the Deenthorpe Memorial estimated the cost at \$13,900.00. Dodds Monument Co. of Xenia, Ohio, who built our bench, said they would duplicate it for \$3,300.00, including crating, and would deliver it to wherever we say in town. It weighs 950 pounds. My thought is to use our bench, attach a Brass Tablet (such as they use in making historical markers) on the backside of it ... which would give some detail of our World War II record. I am investigating the price of the tablet and will have that info for you very soon. It would be a First-Class Memorial and with some utilitarian value in the Town Centre location.

Will you please sit down right now and write me of your reactions to such a plan? We will not proceed until we hear from a majority of you. Also in your thinking, please do not forget that we will be asking for donations when we are ready to start this project.

Most Sincerely,

Billy Hightower, President

INACTIVATION CEREMONY

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE



You are cordially invited to attend the

*Inactivation Ceremony of the
457th Operations Group*



Wednesday, the twenty-eighth of September 1994

1300 hours

KC-135 Flightline

(In front of Bldg 188)

Uniform: UOD

RSVP by 22 Sept 94

(405) 481-6096

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE



**457TH OPERATIONS GROUP
ALTUS AFB, OK**

TO:

Enclosed for your convenience are two
toll free numbers for lodging in Altus.

Best Western - 1-800-528-1234

Ramada Inn - 1-800-228-2828

Hope to see you in September.

Bill K. Orlean

ED NOTE: We trust that you will all receive this change of date in time to change your plans. When we sent you the Postal Card notification on the Memorial Bench dedication and the 457th BG Inactivation, the last word we had at that time was September 30th. As you can see, the Inactivation Ceremony will take place on September 28th. We apologize for this rescheduling but that decision was out of our hands. Sincerely hope you were not inconvenienced.

1994 MINI REUNION - JUNE 3-6 - PETERBOROUGH, ENGLAND

by Leon Zimmerman

Arriving from different cities and towns across the U.S., twenty nine was the final count that represented the American delegation of the 457th Bomb Group Association at the Bull Hotel in Peterborough, England on June 3-6, 1994. This group was warmly welcomed by the wonderful F.O.T.E. people that at maximum strength numbered eleven, and led by the irreplaceable Bernard Bains. We were certainly made welcome, and treated with great care by the Bull Staff that set the perfect tone for the reunion.

Several of the Americans arrived well before the Reunion dates, and used the Bull Hotel as their headquarters to foray into the English Countryside and cities to relive old, and create new, memories. Some stayed on after the meeting to continue their adventures.

The real effort started on June 4th, made more interesting by the decision of President Clinton and Prime Minister John Major to showcase their trips by being the program at the D-Day 50th Anniversary Memorial Service at Cambridge American Cemetery and Memorial. Greatly increased security made the departure time much earlier than originally planned and at 06:55 Gordon Townsend arrived with his bus and, with a good sense of humor which made the early hour more acceptable. Our arrival was greeted by many more people than were ever seen here before, and with skies threatening a little rain, were lined up to go through metal detectors, and ladies bags, as well as camera and other items which were painstakingly searched.

The arrangement at the Memorial was different than in the past to accommodate the speakers and the extra large crowd of visitors. Previous visits used the "name" wall as the focal point, but events this year were at the edge of the cemetery. This new arrangement made for grand entrances for the speakers and other V.I.P.'s. The seating was excellent and our group was very close to the speaker's platform. Security was everywhere, civilian, military, and sniffing bomb dogs. Other than the fact that this all takes time, it was quite impressive. At 10.45 the program started, and once underway was moving, impressive, and well executed. Wreaths were laid on short wire stands in a long row partially circling the outer border of the cemetery. It was my privilege to place the 457th wreath, which again was a very emotional time. The climax was as always with the B-17 fly-over escorted by a P-51 and a Spitfire. Of interest to men of our age, they had provided Porta-Johns that were of utmost importance after this long security check and service.

With military types, beautifully dressed ladies, and civilians scaring everywhere, the most important suddenly became the simple British staple, the umbrella. The departure of the huge noisy helicopters brought welcome

silence to a most impressive and beautiful place. After a little wait, Gordon appeared with our warm, dry, coach and we were off to Duxford. with that sense of pride, reverence and gratefulness that always enters as you gave your final view of the resting place of our comrades who gave so much.

Duxford was great as always, and it seems like they just add more all the time. They now have a train that takes you around the entire static display area and during our ride a P-47, a P-51, and a Spitfire each put on a wonderful private air show for us. One would land, and the next would be come airborne. It went on all afternoon in spite of the light drizzle. The ride home was in the rain, but spirits were high and the Bull was warm and inviting. A little refreshment, a good dinner, and a long first day was complete.

June 5 began bright, sunny and at a leisurely 09:30 hour. Gordon appeared exactly on time, a quick body count showed no casualties, and we were off to Connington, Glatton Station, the site of the old base. For the first timers, as well as former visitors, it's a great, strange and emotional dream. *Is it really true that we were here a lifetime ago?* We walked the site that was once our brief home, with only the water tower standing as a reminder. A lovely little village of neatly kept homes now occupy our former well trod areas. We were looking for a possible site for a marker to show to future visitors that, indeed, the 457th had been there. We stopped at Connington Church where the F.O.T.E. people had cleaned the monument that stands in the churchyard, and the 457th Memorial looked wonderful. Herbert Barte gave the prayers and Ras Clausen laid the wreath for our private dedication in the little cemetery in the churchyard. We were welcomed to the now tower area of the now Peterborough Airfield by a handsome young RAF member who cleared the field of local traffic and arranged to have us "fly" the old runways. After some good-natured arguments about what was where, etc., we motored on to Sawtry for a Pub lunch in the garden and bright sunshine. Just a perfect Sunday brunch, complete with a slightly sinful desert.

The afternoon was spent at Burghley House just a short distance away. Burghley House is just about as grand a home as one could imagine. One's mind conjures up just how well the Chancellor of the Exchequer was paid, or what his system of collection must have been to amass this grand estate. We had the unexpected pleasure of being there the day of a Jaguar Car Festival. There must

have been 150 Jaguars of every possible vintage. Also, it was a display of Jaguar parts for sale at unbelievable prices. The event was capped by a regimental band that marched and played just the way it should be in England. The bright red jackets of the band uniforms were outstanding.

Our ride back to Peterborough was winding because Bernie and Gordon had planned a route that took us by several bases, now abandoned, that had impressive markers to show what Group had been based at that sight. The 351st memorial at Polebrook was outstanding. It will not be inexpensive to do something this grand, but it was most impressive. Along the roadside was a simple sign directing us to where the memorial stands. It certainly seems that a similar sign could be arranged on the A-1 as you pass our old field.

June 6 was another beautiful morning that began with that delightful breakfast at the Bull. The very civilized hour of 10:00 had the entire contingent following Bernie to the Mayor's office for a lovely reception, coffee, cakes, photos and a pleasant time with a very gifted "Beadle", (assistant to the Mayor). The new Mayor is a very attractive lady that has changed tradition by requesting to be addressed as "Madame Mayor". Tradition has it that the Mayor, man or lady, has formerly been addressed as "Mr. Mayor".

A lunch for some, a visit to the Cathedral for others, moved us to the Peterborough Museum which is closed on Monday, but not to the indispensable Mr. Bernard Bains. Bernie's connections opened the Museum just for us, and as a bonus, the Director was our tour guide. It is a very impressive collection even for veteran museum goers. The bone carving by prisoners (Norman Era) from the bones of their meat rations was worth the whole visit for me.

Monday evening the stall of the Bull outdid themselves. The room was beautiful, and the dinner, from starters thru the Scottish beef tenderloin, (author's choice) and it was impossible to resist the dessert-trolley, which was simply perfection. In addition to all of the above, John Walker provided a great wine in abundance for all 38 of us.

For our use during any breaks in our days at the Bull, Bernie had obtained the use of a well designed room to display the many notebooks of material that the F.O.T.E. people have so painstakingly compiled. New items have been added, and Michael Jackson, F.O.T.E.'s newest member provided all of us with copies of detailed maps of the original base. During our visits to the memorabilia room, it was always nice to have the expertise of John Wilson and John Walker there to answer the inevitable questions.

What wonderful hospitality and the return of long ago memories afforded us at this most wonderful 1994 Reunion in Peterborough, and "our thanks" to the F.O.T.E. members who made it all possible.

ATTENDEE's to MINI-REUNION

BARTE, Herbert Yonkers, NY
 BENNETT, Alex, Janet Y Gordon.. Springfield, VT
 BLACKMORE, James & Marilyn Prescott, AZ
 BURKE, Rex. Rosalyn & Fessenden San Jose, CA
 BYRD, John Huntington, NY
 CAMPBELL, Harry & Doris Staten Island, NY
 CLAUSEN, Ras Orlando, FL
 FLUMAN, Will & Phyllis Boiling Springs, PA
 GRAY, LLOYD Amsent, CT
 HEDGE, Willard & Irene Doctor's Inlet, FL
 Kabine, William & dght Kathy Rothrock LaPorteTX
 Mc QUEEN, Vivian Ogallala, NE
 MILHAM, John Richmond, VA
 NIELSEN, Donald & Sandra Glendale, AZ
 SHARKEY, Douglas & Sondra Ogallala, NE
 WYMAN, Richard & Virginia Maitland, FL
 ZIMMERMAN, Lee & Helen Jackson, MI

ENGLISH HISTORIANS & F.O.T.E.

BAINS, Bernie & Sadie
 JACKSON, Mr. & Mrs. Michael
 TOWNSEND, George
 TOWNSEND, Mr. & Mrs. Gordon
 WALKER, John & Maggie
 WILSON, John

"THANKS" - FROM BRITAIN

Many years ago in the years 1939-1945, I was a small boy living in Atherstone, 50 miles west of Glatton. I saw American aircraft flying overhead and with fellow friends would look up in sheer amazement at the large formations. Now fifty years on that interest still remains with me. My brothers and I visit many of these old bomber bases, and we photograph, and soak up the nostalgia of those war years. I would like first on behalf of the British people, wish to thank all of you veterans, from the bottom of our hearts, for the sacrifices you made to us in those war years. We all here are eternally grateful to you all. Would it be helpful if I sent a few photo's of Glatton as it is at this time? I write to several of your service people who were at nearby bases. Any information you could give me of your service days at Glatton would be appreciated. Signed: Robert Fletcher .. 66 Mill Farm Park .. Nuneaton .. Warwickshire .. CV12 9SE .. England.

PAID YOUR DUES?
 2yrs \$25.00

Thousands gather to

by ANTHONY BARTRAM

THE might of Whitehall and the Whitehouse were reunited this weekend to pay tribute to the allied forces who fought in the D-Day landings 50 years ago.

President Bill Clinton's first official visit to Britain, commemorating the Normandy landings which eventually liberated Europe from the Nazis, could not have begun at a more fitting place - the hallowed US cemetery at Madingley, near Cambridge.

He joined Prime Minister John Major, dignitaries from both sides of the Atlantic, and hundreds of World War Two soldiers, sailors and airmen and their families, at the remembrance service on Saturday.

President Clinton spoke of the D-Day veterans' "stories of valour that will never fail to amaze us all".

He said: "The generation that won World War Two completed their mission, whether or not they walk among us today."

"After looking down in sorrow at those who paid the ultimate price, let us lift our eyes to the skies in which they flew and once commanded to send them a sign of our own, that we do remember and honour them."

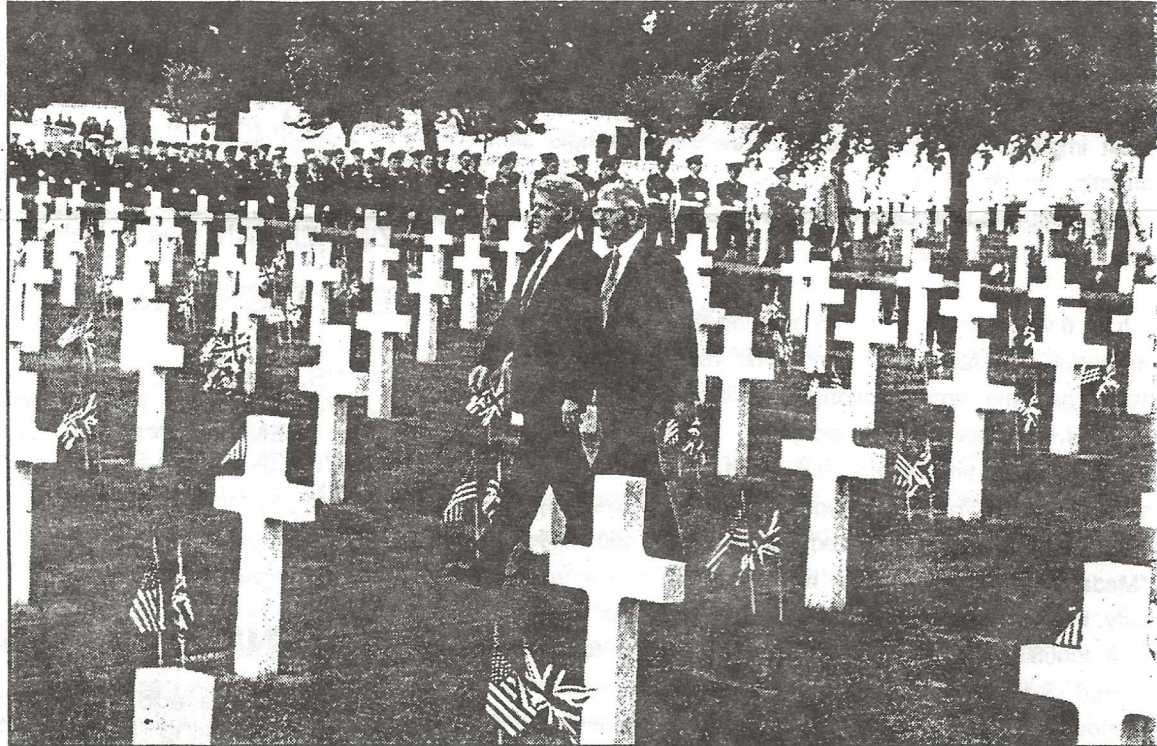
Both the President and the Prime Minister spoke of the special bond forged between Britain and America half a century ago.

Mr Major quoted Sir Winston Churchill, saying: "Our comradeship and brotherhood in war was unexamined."

President Clinton said the courage of the British troops was an inspiration to his countrymen and that those stationed in England "never felt far from home".

Almost 3,812 American servicemen and women, killed in World War Two are buried at Madingley, Europe's largest US military cemetery, and the names of a further 5,000 are commemorated on its 470ft "Wall of the Missing" - their remains were never recovered.

Saturday was a day when world leaders, dignitaries and top-ranking British and American officers serving their countries today could only stand in awe of those who gave so much.



TRIBUTES: Bill Clinton and John Major walk through the US war graves at Madingley. Below, the two leaders talk of the special bond created between the UK and the United States (Photos by STEVE DANIELS)



Those who paid the ultimate price and have been laid to rest at Madingley and their comrades who returned to remember the terrible cost of war.

Veterans move to scene of fighting

THE eyes of the world were today on Normandy's beaches, where, 50 years ago, thousands of young men perished in the biggest invasion of all time.

After two days of commemoration in Portsmouth, the veterans, most now in their 70s, once more poured into northern France.

The mood was sombre as graveyards became the focus for old comrades making personal pilgrimages to remember lost friends.

World leaders also honoured those who gave their lives in Operation Overlord.

And the French weather office predicted suitably gloomy weather to match the occasion.

Low cloud, rain and sea drizzle were forecast for most of today, with dry weather likely only after the main ceremonies were over.

Yesterday, the heroes of D-Day witnessed the pomp and splendour of commemorative displays and a massive armada which set sail from Portsmouth for northern France.

The Royal yacht Britannia, surrounded by almost 2,000 yachts,

speedboats, dinghies and D-Day landing craft, led the way as a 21-gun salute boomed and two vintage biplanes flew overhead.

About 40 miles out to sea, veterans on board the Canberra cast wreaths into the water and a Lancaster bomber flew overhead, sending two million poppy petals into the sea in tribute to the dead.

Today's remembrance services in Normandy were the poignant climax of a weekend of memories for veterans paying homage 50 years on from the day when so many friends were lost.

Omaha Beach - the scene of the bloodiest fighting on June 6, 1944 - saw President Bill Clinton and French Premier Francois Mitterrand honour Overlord's fallen soldiers.

The centrepiece of the British remembrance was at Arromanche.

There the Queen witnessed a parade of veterans and a fly past of Allied aircraft old and new.

Away from the set-piece events, townspeople and villagers throughout Normandy paid their own tributes to their liberators.

457TH BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL BENCH DEDICATION

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB MUSEUM, DAYTON, OHIO - AUGUST 17, 1944

ROLL CALL !!!!

NAMES	GUESTS
Auten, Russell	Cincinnati, OH
Barnes, Glenn	Belvedere, IL Son
Berrier, Howard.....	Valparaiso, IN Frances
Bolier, Earl	Brooklyn Ctr. MN Helen
Briggs, Homer	Bentonville AR Son/David
Briggs, Mickey	Bentonville AR G/D Alexa
Buxton, Reg	Mesa, AZ Betty
Byrd, John	Huntington, WV
Camp, Terry	Ft. Worth, TX
Campbell, Cal	Watertown, MA
Davidson, Bill	Watertown, MA
Day, James	Sandoval, IL Marjorie
Detro, Dwain	Brookville, OH (351st BG)
Diehl, Maurice	Rockford, IL
Doerr, Jim	Gibsonia, PA Jean
Falcone, Joe	Walpole, MA Iris
Ferrel, Thomas	Port Ewen, NY
Gibbs, Richard	Vermillion, KS Barbara
Goff, Tom	Glen Burnie, MD
Gougarty, Tom	Dayton, OH Helen
Harris, Craig	Durham, NC Bobbie
Heekin, Francis	Cincinnati, OH Eleanor
Hightower, Billy	New Braunfels TX
Howell, James	Marietta, PA Jayne
Huels, Robert J	Versailles, OH Florence
Jeffers, Dale	Fairborn, OH Rissa
Daughters-	Valerie/Karen OH
G/Daughters-....	Alta/Katherine OH
Kabine, Wm R.	LaPorte, TX
Karl, Russ	Peru, IL Ella
Kaufman, Charles	Lancaster, TX Bonnie
(brother of Robert).....	TX
Krause, Glenn	Gallen, MI Ida
Kravetz, Frank E....	Pittsburgh, PA Ann/Helen
Macke, Joe	Dayton, OH
Marsden, Clem	Ames, IA Ethel
Marx, Shirley	Evansville, IN Lillian/Lind
McDonough, Owen	Altoona, PA Marian
McGraw, Earle	No. Olmstead, OH Helen
McMahon, Larry.....	Hubbard Lake, MI Lucille
Mattox, Robert	St. Joseph, MI Marian
Mellenthin, ...S.	Huber Heights, OH Steve/Son
(Son & G/son of 457th Pilot)....	OH
Morse, Bill	Lake Ann, MI Erika
Oren, Daryl	Dayton, OH Dt/Rebecca
(cousin of Dan Graham, PP)	IN
Owsley, Dee	Florissant, MO
Papianni, Tony	E. Syracuse, NY Sarah
Priest, Cedric	Sabetha, KS Alice
Prisk, Robert	Sacramento, CA
Reich, Homer	Seville, OH Charlene
Reppa, Edward	Westland, MI
Roe, John, Jr.....	Vandalalia, OH Bettie
Rurode, Ken	St. Joseph, MO
Schroeder, Neil	Monument, CO
Schwab, Del	Rosford, OH Helen
(son Neptune & wife)	OH
Sitek, Bernie,	Feeding Hills, MA Elda
Silverman, Jerome	East Meadow, NY
Stein, Frank ..	Columbus, OH
Vargo, Stan	W. Palm Beach, FL Shirley
Windland, Dale	The Plains, OH
Wranesh, John	Ann Arbor, MI Barbara
Zeiler, Don	Pittsburgh, PA Marie
Zimmerman, Leon	Jackson, MI Helen

NEWS RELEASE !!!!

457th Bomb Group Association

The 457th Bomb Group Association will dedicate a marble Memorial Bench at the U.S. Air Force Museum at 10:00 A.M. on August 17th, 1994. The Group flew more than 200 combat missions over Germany during WWII, in the B-17 four-engine bomber called the "Flying Fortress". Its membership includes many highly decorated combat veterans.

The dedication ceremony will be under the auspices of the Air Force Museum, and will include a color guard from the Huber Heights VFW, a chaplain from WPAFB, and speakers from the 457th Association. Officers, Directors, Historians, and the Founder of the Association Homer Briggs, and his indispensable wife Mickey, will be in attendance. President Billy Hightower will be in charge of the dedication and the presentation of the bench to the Museum. The public is invited.

The local liaison officer for the 457th B.G. is retired Lt. Colonel Dale S. Jeffers of Fairborn, and the Museum official contact officer is Mr. Bob Bobbitt.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION MEMORIAL BENCH DEDICATION THE U. S. AIR FORCE MUSEUM 17 AUGUST 1994

0600: REVEILLE

0630-0730: BREAKFAST. Recommend Bob Evans, next door to Days Inn.

0800-0900: THE B-17. We're going through it! Sit in your old crew seat! Report to main Museum entrance, extreme right door (Handicapped door), press red button, and another button for the inner door. Craig Harris in charge of traffic control.

0900-1000: FREE TIME. Late breakfast, browsing, bookstore and memorabilia shop. NOTE: If you make any extensive purchases, you may want to buy a FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP, which entitles you to a SUBSTANTIAL DISCOUNT, plus QUARTERLY MAILINGS of the FRIENDS BULLETIN, AND A GREAT AIRPLANE CALENDAR.

1000-1030: THE DEDICATION CEREMONY. Refer to your Blue Sheet. (Copies of the Dedication speech available)

1030-? GROUP PHOTO at the B-17. You may order copies from the photographer. He uses a special camera which may take pictures three feet long, in perfect focus.

7-1130: PHOTO SESSION AT THE BENCH. Individual/crew/party. Your Camera, or available Photographer.

1130-1300: LUNCH AT THE MUSEUM CAFETERIA.

1300-1800: FREE TIME. Note IMAX theater schedule--a MUST if you haven't seen it. All Museum exhibits. You may drive your car to the Annex-- See the Independence (Truman) and the Columbine (Eisenhower) and others.

1900-2400: DINNER. Wherever you like, and TAPS.

YOU'VE COME TO THE END OF A PERFECT DAY

[Ed note: We trust this list is complete. If, however, you are not on these lists and you should be, or if you are on these lists and shouldn't be ... please advise us SASPO and we will make the correction in the next Newsletter.]



THE

457th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION



"THE FIREBALL OUTFIT"



DEDICATION OF THE 457TH BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL BENCH

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE MUSEUM

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE - DAYTON, OHIO

AUGUST 17, 1994 - 10:00 A.M.

Dedication Ceremony

Welcome by Museum Official.....Mr. Robert Bobbitt
 Posting of Colors.....Huber Heights VFW POST
 Invocation.....Chaplain David E. Broyles
 Brief History of the 457TH Bomb Group.....Dale Jeffers, Chairman
 Unveiling of Memorial Bench.....Homer Briggs, Sec-Treas
 Presentation of Bench to Museum.....Billy Hightower, President
 Acceptance by Museum Official.....Richard L. Uppstrom
 Benediction.....Chaplain David E. Broyles
 Sounding of Taps.....Air force Band of Flight
 Retiring of Colors.....Huber Heights VFW Post
 Picture taking is invited

PRESENTATION OF MEMORIAL BENCH

to

U.S. Air Force Museum - Wright-Patterson AFB - August 17, 1994

by

Billy Hightower, President ... 457th Bomb Group Association

"THIS MEMORIAL IS IN RECOGNITION OF THOSE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE 457TH BOMB GROUP WHO GAVE PART OF THEIR LIVES TO HELP KEEP US A NATION OF FREE PEOPLE. WE ESPECIALLY DEDICATE IT TO THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THIS STRUGGLE ... AND TO THEIR FAMILIES AND LOVED ONES WHO STILL MISS THEM.

WE, OF THE 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION HEREBY ENTRUST IT TO THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE MUSEUM, FOR THE BENEFIT AND KNOWLEDGE OF THOSE FUTURE GENERATIONS OF VISITORS WHO COME HERE FROM AROUND THE WORLD. MAY IT SERVE TO REMIND THEM OF OUR PRICELESS AMERICAN HERITAGE AND THAT SOMETIMES SACRIFICES MUST BE MADE TO MAINTAIN IT,

ON BEHALF OF THE 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION, AND THE 457TH OPERATIONS GROUPS AT ALTUS AIR FORCE BASE IN ALTUS, OKLAHOMA, WE ARE DELIGHTED TO OFFICIALLY PRESENT OUR MEMORIAL TO THIS WONDERFUL MUSEUM.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH".

PRESS RELEASE

457TH B.G. ASSOCIATION DEDICATES MEMORIAL BENCH

In near-perfect weather, 116 members, wives and friends of the 457th Bomb Group Association gathered today to present to the Air Force Museum a granite bench memorializing the Group.

Robert Bobbit of the Museum's Public Affairs Division welcomed those present, after which the Colors were posted by members of the Huber Heights, Ohio VFW Post.

457th Bomb Group Association president Billy Hightower described how the Memorial Bench project was initiated by Memorial Chairman Dale Jeffers and himself and complimented the hard work and the high skills of Dale Jeffers in bringing the project to fruition.

Dale Jeffers welcomed those assembled and recognized Association officers and past officers, directors and past directors who were present, and presented his family to the Group. Special mention went to the men from the 457th Operational Group, Altus AFB, Oklahoma and to Jerome Silverman for his key role in resurrecting the idea of the bench to a representative of Dodds Monuments, who constructed and decorated the bench. Chaplain David E. Broyles rendered the invocation.

Jeffers then opened a moving account of the history of the 457th Bomb Group thusly: "FIFTY YEARS AGO, IN THE FLOWER OF OUR YOUTH, WE WERE THE 457TH BOMB GROUP OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE". Citing how we carried the war to the tyranny that had enslaved Europe by destroying the enemy's submarine pens, armament factories, oil refineries and transportation systems. He described our agony at seeing comrades fall to their death or to captivity. He told how we crashed our aircraft on the Continent, the British Isles and in the waters between them, and then the next day would launch another strike. He chronicled the *"Fait accompli"* in the war effort, *"Big Week"*, support of the invasion of Normandy, paving the way for the Breakout, and attacking the buzz-bomb launch sights. Jeffers spoke emotionally of the great beating heart that is a Bomb Group, and how each of us was a part of the pulse of that heart. Few eyes were dry as he concluded, "TODAY, FIFTY YEARS LATER, WE ARE ASSEMBLED HERE TO DEDICATE THIS GRANITE MEMORIAL BENCH TO THE MEMORY OF THAT EPIC, THAT TITANIC STRUGGLE, TO OUR FALLEN COMRADES, AND TO OUR LIVING ... WE BAND OF BROTHERS".

The beautiful black-polished granite Memorial bench, with striking natural granite-finish lettering and drawings was then unveiled by Homer and Mickey Briggs, Secretary/Treasurers of the Association. President Hightower then presented the Memorial bench to the Air Force Museum on behalf of the 457th B.G. Assn. and the 457th Operational Group at Altus Air Force Base in

Oklahoma "IN RECOGNITION OF THOSE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE 457TH BOMB GROUP WHO GAVE PART OF THEIR LIVES TO KEEP US A FREE NATION. WE ESPECIALLY DEDICATE IT TO THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THIS TERRIBLE STRUGGLE .. AND WHO ARE MISSED BY THEIR FAMILIES AND LOVED ONES." Speaking of those future generations of Museum visitors who would see it, Hightower said, "May it serve to remind them of our precious American heritage, and that sometimes sacrifices must be made to maintain it".

The Memorial was accepted by the Director of the Air Force Museum, Richard Uppstrom, who complimented the 457th B.G. Assn on the large attendance for the ceremony, describing it as much above average for such groups, and for the Group's demonstrated cohesiveness. When presented a framed copy of the "Miss Ida Comes Home" painting, he said, "You say the Mayor of Peterborough, England has one of these? That means the "Mayor" of the Air Force Museum gets to hang this on his wall ... I think I'm going to usurp this for my office wall; there's a nail there waiting for it."

After the benediction by Chaplain Broyles, the Colors were retired by members of Huber Heights VFW Post, and the assembly stood with bowed heads and misty eyes for the sounding of "Taps" by a bugler of the Air Force Band of Flight. The ceremony was concluded by Mr. Bobbitt.

Among those attending were two members of the 457th B.G. Assn from the 457th Operational Group, Lt. Col. Keith (Billy) Osborne and Lt. Col. Craig Christman, and eleven of their colleagues. Also attending as special guests were Steve and Colin Mellenthin of Huber Heights, Ohio, whose father and grandfather, respectively, had flown B-17's.

The 457th Bomb Group Memorial Bench is the first bench on the left side of the walkway, just outside the Air Force Museum's main entrance building on the side toward the Annex, the newest expansion area of the Museum. The emotional, but enjoyable ceremony had been preceded by an event that delighted those attending, a walk-through of the Museum's B-17G, "Shoo Shoo Baby" of the 91st B.G., Bassingborne. This special privilege had been arranged by Dale Jeffers.

SPECIAL GUESTS

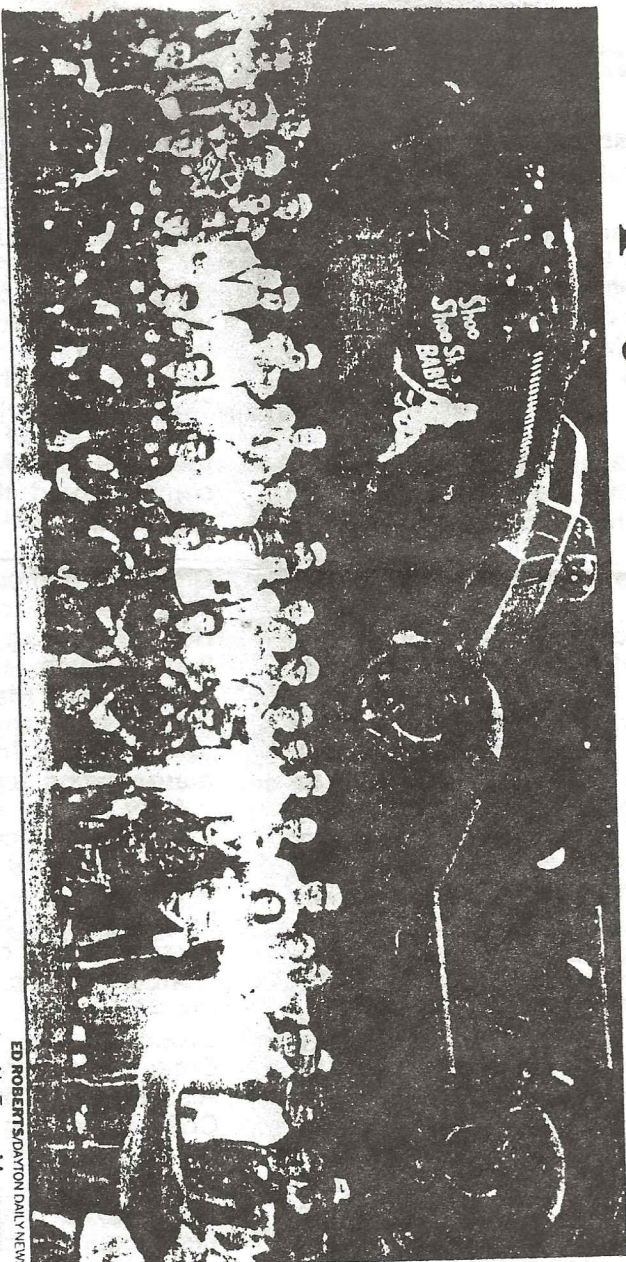
from the

457TH OPERATIONAL GROUP AMC
ALTUS AIR FORCE BASE, ALTUS, OK

L/Col.. B. Keith Osborn
Capt.. David Delk
Capt.. Howard Williams
S/Sgt. Thomas Jones
SrA... Michael Kriewall
Lt.... Patrick Alderman
S/Sgt. Robert Prichard

L/Col..Craig Christman
Capt.. Scott Gericke
SrA.... Presley Lewis
SrA.... Carlton White
Capt... Lawrence Speer
M/Sgt Temur Ablay

Vets pay tribute to their Flying Fortress



Members of the 457th Bomb Group, family members and their hosts, with the Shoo Shoo Baby B-17 at the Air Force Museum

By Mary McCarty
DAYTON DAILY NEWS

The B-17, The Flying Fortress, for 96 veterans from the 457th Bomb Group, gathered at the U.S. Air Force Museum to dedicate a memorial Wednesday, the plane was far more than a historic artifact.

It was the plane in which they faced death and feigned nonchalance; the plane from which many bailed out on a parachute and a prayer; the plane in which others limped back to safety to England, and to full lives, after watching comrades go down in flames.

And, it was the "greatest plane in the world," veteran after veteran boasted as they toured Shoo

Shoo Baby, one of 12,000 B-17s produced during World War II.

"How many times did we come in on two engines?" marveled John Roe Jr. of Vandalia to his long-lost crew member, Terry Camp of Fort Worth, Texas.

"And how many times did we come in with gaping holes in the plane?" asked Camp.

The friends, reunited for the first time in 50 years, recognized each other immediately when they met at the Dayton International Airport. They joined the veterans from across the country who shared their memories — and the brotherhood of the B-17 — at the emotional dedication ceremony.

Clanking back tears before unveiling the granite memorial

bench, Lt. Col. Dale Jeffers of Fairborn delivered his tribute to the 457th.

"We came into our manhood in that memorable year and tested ourselves against the best that totalitarianism could offer. And we destroyed them. In the great beating heart that is a bomb group, we performed miracles...."

"Today, 50 years later, we are assembled to dedicate this memorial bench to the memory of that intrepid struggle, to our fallen comrades and to our living, we band of brothers."

As the mournful strains of Taps closed the ceremony, tears filled the eyes of veterans who had been laughing and joking with one another all morning. They covered

their hearts with their hands or their caps.

The 457th flew out of Glatton, England — 70 miles north of London — on daylight missions over Germany, targeting key industrial and military installations. It paved the way for the invasion of Europe, Jeffers said, by destroying key rail and road junctions, airfields and battle-tank concentrations.

They were young men, mostly in their early 20s, with a lot to lose. They all lived in terror of going on a "half-mission" — one that ended in death or capture in German territory — but they rarely talked about it.

"We were scared all the time," confessed Ed Reppa of Westland, Mich.

"Show me someone who wasn't scared and I didn't want to fly with him," interjected Craig Harris.

"But you were even more scared of being a coward and letting your family down, and letting your mission down," Reppa continued.

Now, as then, they joked about the dangers. Everyone greeted Frank Heekin of Cincinnati as "Half-A-Mission Heekin," as if he were the hero in a merry adventure. But he earned the moniker after being shot down over Germany during his first mission. As a prisoner of war, he marched for 70 days on the so-called "Black Death March."

Fellow prisoners dropped around him, felled by dysentery and starvation. Heekin ate three boiled potatoes a day and weighed only 100 pounds when he made a dangerous escape with three other prisoners. After days of hiding in barns and in the forest, they were rescued by the British.

"I was afraid of combat," Heekin said of his ordeal.

"You picked a hell of a way to get out of it," cracked a friend.

All the laughter has a serious purpose, Heekin explained. "I guess it's therapy. The other guy will understand. And it's better to talk about it. I know a couple of guys who lock it up in their heads, and they're the worse for it."

The veterans laughed, too, at the ravages of age on their once battle-primed frames. "Has this ship gotten smaller or have we gotten bigger?" quipped one. Many struggled to negotiate the B-17 they had once maneuvered in so effortlessly.

Reppa stumbled a bit, too, along the narrow passageways he once bounded. But everything came naturally once the former pilot claimed his cockpit. It was as if he could identify every control on the instrument panel, blindfolded, as he had before each of his 30 missions.

Recently, Reppa practiced at the control panel of a B-17 with his former co-pilot.

After an hour of training, his co-pilot turned to Reppa. "Are you thinking the same thing I'm thinking?"

They wanted to take off and fly — an instinct shared by many of the veterans who toured the plane Wednesday.

Was it love of the "ship," or nostalgia for the lifelong camaraderie forged by the dangers they faced there? Proponents abounded for both theories.

"This plane gained more love than any other plane," Reppa said. "It took a lot of punishment from enemy gunfire. This thing came back with pieces missing, with engines missing. But they came back."

Just as the friendships come back, even after 50 years — friendships formed in the most critical moments of their youths, and of their country's destiny.

Attention !!!!!!!

TO: Attendee's of the Bench Memorial in Dayton

FROM: Craig Harris

SUBJECT: Panoramic Photo taken at Dayton

MESSAGE: Panoramic Photo's of the 457th B.G. taken at the AirForce Museum are available for \$80 for print and handling from:

Par-A-View
2501 E. Rahn Road
Kettering, OH 45440

Par A View is William F. Aldrich @ (513-434-9287)



(Staff Photo by Charles Caperton)

Lest we forget

Members of the 457th Bomb Group Association yesterday dedicated a marble memorial bench at the U.S. Air Force Museum. Fairbornite Dale Jeffers, an Air Force retiree, is shown in the picture giving a history of the bomb group, which flew more than 200 missions over Germany during World War II in the B-17 Flying Fortress.

WE BAND OF BROTHERS - Address by Dale Jeffers

Fifty years ago, in the flower of our youth, we were the 457th Bomb Group of the Mighty Eighth Air Force. We flew our great silver birds to England and established the base at Glatton, near Peterborough, England. We carried the war to a foul tyranny that had enslaved all of Europe. We destroyed their submarine pens, their armament factories, their oil refineries, their railroad marshalling yards, their roads and their bridges. We wrecked German airfields and aircraft factories, and dueled the Luftwaffe in mortal combat in the bitter subzero cold five miles above the earth. We watched in agony as our comrades died in exploding planes and we counted the parachutes as some fell to death and others to captivity. We crashed our stricken aircraft in Germany, in the Baltic Sea, in the Zuider Zee, in the North Sea, in the English Channel, in the Bay of Biscay and in the British Isles. We rescued the living, put out the fires, and buried our dead. And the next morning, before dawn, we launched another attack against that foul tyranny that had instigated this terrible war.

We mortally wounded the Luftwaffe in the BIG week of February and we lured their fighters up for deliberate air to air combat over their own capitol. We paved the way for the Invasion of Europe by interdicting the battlefield. We destroyed key rail and road junctions, airfields and battle-tank concentrations. We bombed their troops at St Lo, broke the back of the German 7th Army, and paved the way for the victory at Avranches and the breakout from Normandy. Safely back in England, we sought refuge in bomb shelters from the buzz-bombs, or looked up and watched them as their engines cut off and they dived into London. And the next day and the next and the next we sought out and destroyed their launch sites.

We came into our manhood in that memorable year, and tested ourselves against the best that totalitarianism could offer. And we destroyed them. In the great beating heart that is a Bomb Group, we performed miracles of battle damage repair, armament preparation, bomb loading, and every support function necessary to sustain combat operations. Few of us knew much about the many skills required to function as a Group, but we all sensed that pulse, that great beating heart, and each of us was a vital part of it. Today, fifty years later, we are assembled here to dedicate this granite memorial bench to the memory of that epic, that titanic struggle, to our fallen comrades, and to our living, we Band of Brothers.

Friday, June 17, 1994

THE EVENING TELEGRAPH news & advertising

Reunion in city for World War Two veterans



About 30 American war veterans, who were based near Glatton during the Second World War, gathered in the city recently for a reunion.

The heroes from the 457th bomb group of the American 8th Army Air Force, travelled to the city to take a look at some of the sites which they saw while on duty at Conington airfield.

And during their trip they saw President Clinton at a D-Day service at Madingley, near Cambridge and visited Duxford Air Museum.

New city mayor Bobbie Day, **pictured** with the veterans, also invited them to join her for coffee and biscuits at the town hall.

The trip was organised by Bernard Bains – who belongs to the Peterborough 457th Historical Society.

He said: "It was a splendid three days and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves."

A trip to Burghley House in Stamford and a tour around Peterborough Museum, were also arranged.

The reunion took place last weekend.



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