



748th
Squadron



749th
Squadron

THE

457th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION



"THE FIREBALL OUTFIT"



750th
Squadron



751st
Squadron

THE 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION NEWS

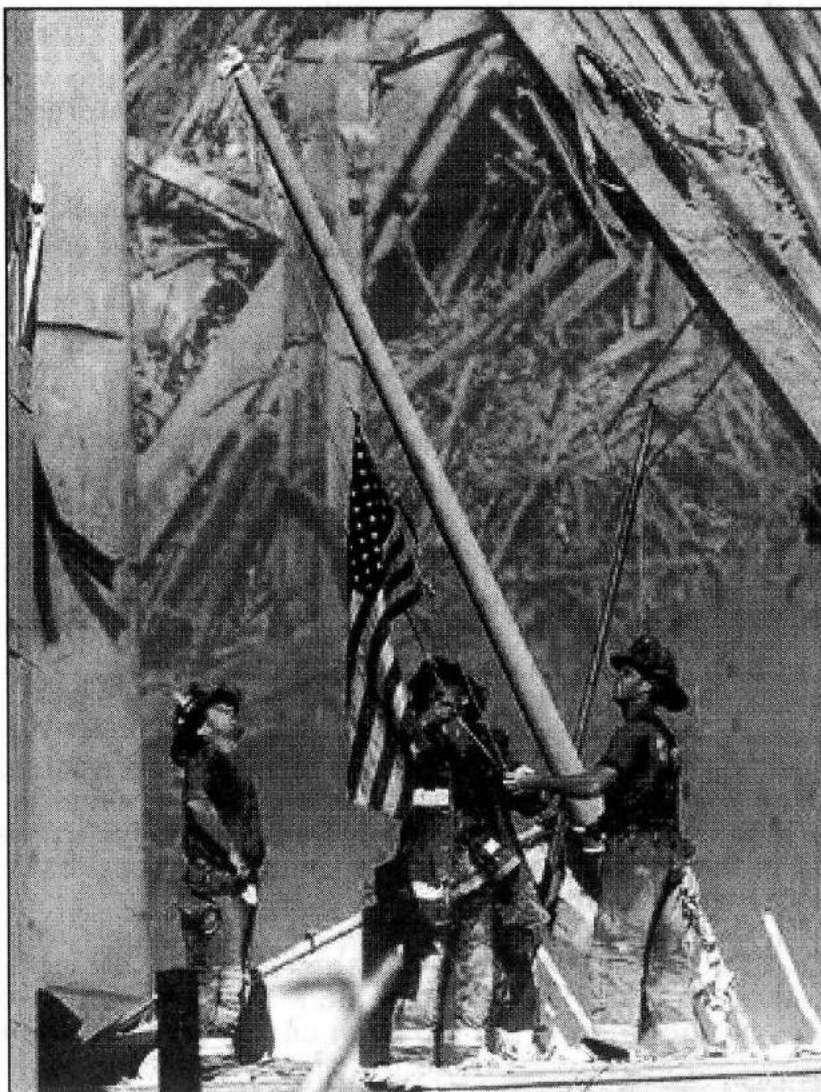
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Have you ever wondered why the flag of the United States of America is folded 13 times when it is lowered or when it is folded and handed to the widow at the burial of a veteran? Here is the meaning of each of those folds and what it means to you.

- The first fold of our flag is a symbol of life.
- The second fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.
- The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing our ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.
- The fourth fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.
- The fifth fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our Country, in dealing with other countries may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong."
- The sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we Pledge Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, Indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for All.
- The seventh fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.
- The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor Mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.
- The ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.
- The tenth fold is a tribute to the Father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.
- The eleventh fold, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- The twelfth fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.
- With the thirteenth fold, when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding us of our nation's motto, "In God We Trust".

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the sailors and marines who served under Captain Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and airmen in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today.

The next time you see a flag ceremony honoring someone that has served our country, either in the Armed Forces or in our civilian services such as the Police Force or Fire Department, keep in mind all the important reasons behind each and every movement and fold. They have paid the ultimate sacrifice for all of us by honoring our flag and our country.

TO ALL VETERANS...THANK YOU...AND GOD BLESS YOU



THE PREZ SEZ...

It's been 56 years since we left the old air base at Glatton and 30 years since our group held it's first reunion. A lot has happened in those intervening years, to us personally and to our organization. But, if you were with us in Colorado Springs and watched our people enjoying the planned activities and the fellowship with one another, in the memorabilia room, the lobby, the bar, I think you will agree that being able to get together is good for us.

With the very capable help of our younger members, which we certainly need and sincerely appreciate, the 457th will continue to do the kinds of things we like to do ---- for as long as we can.

And so, we plan to Return to Glatton in late May, 2002, for our tenth Mini-Reunion in Peterborough. As soon as we can determine the exact date of the Memorial Service at Madingley, we will firm up our schedule and advise you. I've said this before, but if you feel you'd like to go back to Glatton or you want to see Glatton one more time, think seriously about 2002.

We plan to hold our biennial reunion in 2003. The date, the location, and host for this event has not yet been determined. Hosting this reunion is a complex, involved activity and at this time we are reviewing the options available to us. Your board will act on this matter as soon as possible and advise you in an upcoming Newsletter.

Our Colorado Springs reunion ranks right up there at the top of the many gatherings we have had over the years. In spite of the tragic events of September 11, the 457th turned out in surprising numbers to spend a few days together. Success like this doesn't just happen. This reflects months of planning and hard work by Joe & Jeanne Toth and Nancy & Bob Henrich. All of us who were there appreciate the great job they did and thank them one more time.

As your new president and speaking for the officers and board members, we look forward to working with each of you in helping preserve the history and memory of the 457th Bomb Group and promoting the welfare of our organization. Communicating today is easier than it has ever been, so please contact any one of us at any time.

These are troubling times, but we must maintain our faith in the future.

Will Fluman

2001 REUNION...COLORADO SPRINGS

With perfect weather, Colorado sunshine and clear blue skies, we enjoyed the scenery, the laughter and the camaraderie which the 457th Bomb Group Association is founded upon. A camaraderie which began almost 60 years ago was continued at the Sheraton Hotel at the foot of America's mountain.

Overshadowed by the unspeakable tragedy in New York, Washington D.C., and Pennsylvania, getting here wasn't all that easy for many. But, according to one "Fireballer", we never ran away from trouble yet, and we're not starting now." Nearly 280 veterans, wives, children, brothers and sisters, and friends gathered to celebrate the reunion tradition started 30 years ago by Homer and Mickey Briggs.

Due to the high-level of security at the Air Force Academy, we were not able to go for our tour, a memorial ceremony, viewing of the cadet wings marching, and a lunch. Everyone understood this and took the disappointment in stride.

One highlight of the reunion was our trip to the *Flying W Ranch*. Here, we were treated to an evening of good food, and great entertainment. We were honored by the kind words of Vern Thompson when he introduced the 457th to the rest of the audience, told of the number of missions flown, and thanked our veterans for the freedom we enjoy in our country. Several songs were patriotic in our honor, and reference was drawn to the 457th a number of times throughout the evening.

The Memorial Ceremony at the Hotel was particularly moving when bag pipes played by Gene Moeny sounded "Amazing Grace" and "Taps".

"What is it with that water, all you guys turn out to be Heroes."

With those words, Peter C. Lemon toasted the heroes of the 457th Bomb Group and thanked them for their contribution in helping to make our country a free one where his children could grow up. With the close of the Banquet, we said goodbye to old friends and new, with the hope of seeing each other again at the next reunion.



We want to thank everyone for all the kind words and appreciation shown to us by you. We are so glad you enjoyed the activities, the hotel, and the get-togethers. We had lots of help and will try to not forget to mention anyone by name.

PX: Lori Barnett and Candy Fluman spent many hours taking care of the PX and were so nice about then spending even more! Erika spent all day in the PX...if any of you need a salesperson, she's the one for you!

MEMORABILIA: Jerry Silverman
George Lewis,
Irv Lewis, Hap
and Diane Reese,
son Gregory,
all the Briggs kids
helped set up

REGISTRATION: Sandra & Don
Nielsen

Helen Schwab,
Phyllis Fluman,
Rosalie Upton,
Helen Zimmerman,
Ethel Marsden,
Mildred Peterson,
Mickey Briggs

Jerry Silverman tried valiantly to put together a trip to the top of Pikes Peak since the Air force trip was canceled. However, we had never scheduled that trip due to the high altitude and potentially harmful effects of that altitude. If you remember, you guys were required to be on oxygen at 10,000 feet during the War. And, no offense, but you were in your 20's then!!! Pikes Peak is well above 10,000 ft.

A special thanks goes to Bob Henrich for the loan of his one-and-only office copy machine! We made lots of copies and was that ever convenient having a copy machine right there in the Memorabilia Room. Thank you, Bob.

And also, to my daughter, Julie Alldritt. Julie put all the banquet programs together, as well as lent her expertise and experience as a former banquet manager. She was a great source of calm in the midst of a storm!!! Thanks Jules!

With a big project such as this, it is just not possible to remember to mention everyone who helped. I sincerely apologize to those I have forgotten to mention. You are forever in my heart.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU,
THANK YOU!!!
SINCERELY,
JOE AND JEANNE TOTH AND
NANCY AND BOB HENRICH

LIST OF ATTENDEES:

Addison, Mary R.
Ambrosetti, Joe
Arnold, Hugh H. and Phyllis
Atkinson, Andrew-grandson of
Frank Bernd
Atkinson, Sandra-daughter of
Frank Bernd
Auten, Russ and Dot
Baker, Arthur and Doris, daughter
Carol Harbushka
Barnett, Lori-daughter of Herb
Paris
Barrier, Charles and Elise
Bass, James and Erma
Bell, William Jr., and Lucille
Bennett, Alexander and Janet
Bernd, Frank and Evelyn
Bird, William and Nancy
Blakebrough, Kenneth and Arden
Bolier, Earl and Helen
Bowers, Chuck and Marjorie
BRIGGS FAMILY:
Briggs, Mickey
Baird, Linda-daughter
Barron, Carolyn-daughter
Bell, Diana-daughter
Briggs, David-son
Briggs, Jerry-son
Briggs, Robert-son
Bunker, L. Bradley and Dorothea
Burke, Rex
Burningham, Haven and Angela
Buxton, Reg and Betty
Campbell, Harry and Doris
Christensen, Kenneth
Creigh, Walt and Donna
Darling, Martin and Huella
Day, James and Marjorie
Day, Jason-grandson of James
Day
DeCunzo, Louis and Rosalyn
DeLuccia, Joseph and brother
Emil
DeVoe, John and Grace
Digre, Clifford and Bernice
Dobler, Champe
Drache, Hiram and Ada
Dykes, Gordon and Margaret
Ellsworth, Robert and Patricia
Farrell, Thomas and Rosalie
Field, Ray and Carolyn
Fluman, Candace-daughter of Will
Fluman, Will and Phyllis
Fluman, Jr., Will-son of Will
Friedman, Daniel and Angeline
Gallaher, Lawrence
Gassman, Jack and Carol, Ken
and Andrew
Gelvin, Samuel and Mary
Gibbs, Richard and Barbara
Goff, Thomas and Lillian Malkus

Gray, Lloyd
Grimm, Preson and Nancy
Grisa, Arthur and Marnie
Gunderson, Charles and Jean
Hall, James
Hall, Ralph and Mildred
Hallson, Frank and Jeanette
Hamilton, Joseph
Hammar, Arthur and Ann Marie
Harris, Craig
Hedge, Willard
Hedrick, Ray & Wanda, guest
Lillian Zaun
Heekin, Francis
Heidenreich, Vaughn and Mary
Henrich, Bob and Nancy-daughter
of Joe Toth
Hertenstein, Paul
Hoagland, Ray and Kathryn
Hoffman, Art
Huels, Robert and Florence
Huey, William and Mary Blue
Hunt, Walter and Belva
Ingraham, Robert and Jeanne
Johnson, Bennie
Kabine, William and Ruth
Kabine daughters- Pamela
Kabine and Kandy Gregory
Karl, Russell and Ella
Kaufman, Chuck and Bonnie
Kearney, John
Kollaja, Alvin and Clare
Krug, Eldon
Lacy, Jay and Jerry Holt, sons of
Col. Lacy
Lambertson, Karl and Winifred
Larson, Lloyd and son Doug
Lewis, George
Lewis, Irving and Sue
Lindholm, John and Mildred
McCloskey, James and Catherine
McMahon, Larry and son Gary
Marsden, Clement and Ethel
Martin, and Frank Dorothy
Mellin, James and Mary
Menard, Normand and Irene
Merlone, Felix and Carol
Mihalik, Peter and Elizabeth
Miller, Robert and Iva
Morrow, Hiram and Mary
Morse, William and Erika
Morton, Alan
Moses, William
Nielsen, Donald and Sandra
Nose, Daniel and Jeanne
Papaanni, Anthony and Sarah
Parker, George and Maggie
Pearson, John
Peschen, George and Nancy
Peters, Elroy and Dorothy
Peterson, Mildred and son Rod
Polen, Donald and Beverly
Raymond, George and Betty

Reese, "Hap" and son-David
 Reese's grandson-Gregory Perkins
 Reese, Diane-daughter of Willard Reese
 Rittman, Alden & Geneva Sabatina
 Rodel, James and Ardis
 Salzer, Mary Jean and daughter Mary L.
 Salzer guests-Dan & Michele Mihelich
 Schuelke, Harland "Bud" & Shirley
 Schwab, Del and Helen
 Seesenguth, Donald and Betty
 Sellon, Donald
 Siler, Bill
 Silverman, Jerry
 Sloan, Hugh and Barbara
 Springer, Robert and Virginia
 Swanson, Dwight and Nadine
 Tangney, Robert and Margaret
 grandson-Matthew Will and
 guest Lily Blade
 Taylor, Edward
 Thacker, Bill and Jan
 Thoman, Tex and Julia
 Thompson, Nels and Pauline
 Thompson, William and Judy
 Toscano, Nicola
 Toth, Joe and Jeanne
 Toth, Jerry and Sandra-son of Joe Toth
 Troutwine, Mel and Sherry-
 daughter of Gene Morrow
 Upton, Rosalie
 VanZant, Loyd
 Voris, George
 Ward, Rev. John "Zeke" and Anne
 Watts, William and Grace
 Watts-Rieke, Elizabeth-daughter
 of William Watts
 Welch, John and Alberta, guest
 Anna Landauer
 Wells, Clinton and Shirlee
 Wilde, Lawrence and Claudia
 Williams, Albert and Shirley
 Windell, Ralph and Vivian
 Woodell, Morris and son Michael
 Woodruff, Cecil
 Wraneish, John and Barbara
 Zeagler, R.C. and Ethel
 Zeiler, Donald and Marie
 Zimmerman, Lee and Helen

**BY ALL
ACCOUNTS,
A GOOD TIME
WAS HAD
BY ALL!**

JOHN WILSON

We were saddened to learn of the death of John Wilson, one of our long time English historians, on Oct. 19, 2001. John Walker telephoned to inform us of the death and report that he and the other historians would represent the 457th at the funeral service.

Wilson's association with the Bomb Group goes back to our days at Glatton, when as a teenage member of the Air Training Corps, he was able to log some flight time as a passenger on training flights.

John was a FOTE member and had been quite active in the earlier days of our organization attending a number of our stateside reunions as a guest of several of our members.

The contributions of our English historians is greatly appreciated and vital to the success of our organization.

PETERBOROUGH MEMORIAL SERVICE

Following the tragic events of Sept. 11, we were all heartened by the acts of tribute and support displayed by both the people and the government of England. We may have seen the band outside Buckingham Palace playing "The Star Spangled Banner" or heard one of their star vocal artists singing "God Bless America".

However, we may not all be aware of an event more closely associated with our group. The Mayor of Peterborough, Raymond Pobgee, is a good friend and very active supporter of the 457th. The day after the attack, a Royal Air force parade had been scheduled as part of a local celebration in Peterborough. Working with RAF officers, Ray arranged for the cancellation of the parade and the holding of a memorial service for American victims in Peterborough Cathedral. Although this was all arranged on very short notice, 600 to 700 people attended this service.



MEMORIAL WINDOW FUND FULLY SUBSCRIBED

With an abundance of donations coming at, and after, the Colorado Springs reunion, the Memorial Window Fund topped out at \$16,241. The sketch shown at the reunion gained widespread approval, which was reflected in the donations. The final payment was sent to the Heritage Museum on Nov. 1, with the amount over the \$15,000 sponsorship price going to the general Chapel Fund. Your stained glass window is expected to be installed in the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles by the time of its dedication on May 17, 2002. The legacy of the 457th Bomb Group will live on in this beautiful window.

THE EX-PREZ SEZ

It is with humble gratitude that I thank you for letting me be your president for the last two years. It has been a trying, yet rewarding, time for us all, and I am grateful for your wonderful generosity and support. Though going on to new challenges, I will always try to be an active part of the Fireball Outfit and its wonderful members.

Craig Harris

NEWS OF THE 8TH AF HISTORICAL SOCIETY

At the recent 8FAHS reunion in Irving, TX, new directors and officers were elected. New to the Board of Directors are William C. Rawson, TX (493 BG), and Ken Hoddinott, GA (487 BG), along with Ken Nail, MS (457 BG), who returns to the Board after a one-year absence. Walter Brown, TN and Larry Goldstein, NY (388 BG) were reelected to the Board. New officers are: president, Craig Harris (457 BG); vice-president, Ken Nail; secretary, John Pearson (457 BG) and treasurer, Ivan McKinney (post WW II 8AF).

The 2002 8AFHS reunion is scheduled for Oct. 10 - 13, 2002 at the Sheraton Waterfront Hotel, in Norfolk, VA. The 2003 8AFHS reunion will be in (now hear this!) at the Sheraton Colorado Springs, Oct. 16 - 19, 2003. All bomb groups and fighter groups are invited to bring their 2003 reunions to Colorado Springs.



Your Website on the Internet: The 457th Bomb Group Association

<http://www.457thbombgroup.org>

What a successful reunion at Colorado Springs! In spite of all the overtones related to the Sept 11th episode, the reunion was well attended and enjoyed by all. We met so many of you in the Memorabilia Room where we set up our computers. I hope you had a chance to stop by and chat. After seeing so much interest in our website, Nancy asked us to start a regular newsletter column, and we agreed. Here is where we'll let you know about website improvements, and ask for your help in identifying "mystery photos" or solve other mysteries we come across while adding to the site.

But first, have you visited our website lately: (Or should I say **YOUR** website? Because that's what it is!) There are some exciting new things (the website address is above):

- We have posted some color photos taken at the reunion by Diane. (They are under the "Reunion" button). We have invited others to send any photos they have so that we might display them also, but we've had no response to date. Don't you have some photos you'd like us to feature? **If you have any photos from either the 2001 or the 1999 reunions, send them along!** (With names, please.)
- The new officers of the Association are now posted under the "Association Officers" button, so take a look at the names and background of those who will be representing you for the next two years. Their email addresses are posted there, so if you have something to say to one of them, **that's how you can write them.**
- Some new stories have been added under "Personal Recollections". I'm disappointed in the response to my request for your personal recollections. I thought that many of you would like to share the stories of your experiences with future generations. We don't have much longer to commit these memories to paper: a permanent record for future generations to know, first hand, what it was like during those exciting and turbulent years. **Please, take a few minutes and jot down one experience or memory and send it to me.** Don't worry about the grammar or spelling or whatever, we have experienced writers who have volunteered to rewrite your stories suitable for publication. Do it today and it will be up for all to see on the Association's website, and saved for history.
- The "Message Board" is actively used by some of the younger generation seeking information about a loved one or some details of history, but I find that not many of we old-timers are using it. It is simple to use and can be very rewarding. **Take a look at some of the messages that have been posted in the past months** (under the "Message Board" button) and see if there is not a question raised in one of these messages that you are able to answer.
- The most useful tool, for me anyway, is the "Search" box on the home page. It is fast and thorough since it is on our local server. If what you are looking for is on the 457th website then this search will take you directly to it. One tip...If you are searching for a particular name or phrase such as William Thomas or the plane name Slow But Sure, then be sure to put the input in quotation marks (" "). Using quotation marks will search only for that particular phrase. Without quotation marks, the search will locate all the *Williams*, all the *Thomas's*, all the *Slow*, all the *But*, and all the *Sures* on the website.

This is the first of our columns to appear in the Newsletter but we expect to be back with each new issue. If you have any questions about or suggestions for the website, please contact me or Diane via email: areese@bestnetpc.com or dreese@us.ibm.com.

Enjoy...and **send us your stories, comments, and pictures!**

WILLARD (HAP) REESE, WEBMASTER, 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSN.
DIANE E. REESE, ASSOCIATE



SEPTEMBER 16, 2001

TO: President of the United States,
Commander in Chief of the Armed
Forces

FR: The 457th Bomb Group Assoc.,
Memorial Association of a
former unit of World War II,
EIGHTH AIR FORCE

RESOLUTION

Whereas, the 657 members of The 457th Bomb Group Association denounce the unspeakable evil acts of destruction and murder inflicted upon our country, September 11, 2001, and we mourn the loss of our many citizens as a result of these vicious attacks, and

Whereas, the Eighth Air Force was forged in the crucible of another war against evil, growing into the largest military unit in history, and continues today as your bomber force and your key strategic weapon, and

Whereas, those of us who still live know all too well the sacrifices necessary to win against tyranny, (in WWII, the Eighth Air Force lost 26,000 men and another 28,000 men became prisoners of war, but our actions were key in the defeat of Nazi Germany),

Therefore, we have resolved to show you our support in your determined action to hunt down those who perpetrated these evil acts, and those who harbored them. We pray God's blessing on you as you proceed with wisdom and determination to again make the world safe for freedom-loving peoples everywhere. God bless you in your leadership and decisions.

GOD BLESS AMERICA.

C. Craig Harris
President, 457th Bomb Group Assoc.

Dear Mickey and Family,

Please find enclosed my Sentiments in regards to the recent tragic events. I hope most sincerely that you will be able to print it in the newsletter. It goes without saying how we over here feel about the whole thing. I do hope that you and yours are well. We often talk about your 1st visit to our home with all the children. Seems a long time ago now. Hope you had a good Reunion in Colorado (overshadowed by the tragedy, no doubt).

ERIC'S COMMENTS TO MEMBERS OF
THE 457TH BG ASSOCIATION FOLLOW:

Dear Friends,

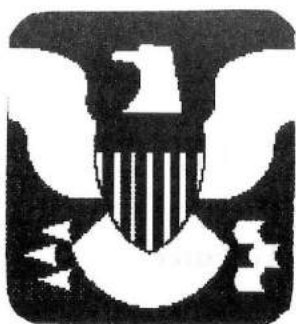
It is very difficult indeed to put into words how one feels about the tragic events of Sept. 11th. My wife and I were sunning ourselves on a hotel balcony in Spain when the horrendous news came filtering over the TV Network. At that moment, as the great tragedy unfolded, it was more than I could comprehend that this whole event was actually taking place! And, indeed, it was only when we arrived home in England a few days later that the full force of the tragedy became evident. Our own English Newspapers gave us the full scope and enormity of what had transpired--so--words are not enough! The enormity of the many personal tragedies which befell the peoples of many nations that day, and the personal tragedy which befell the American people in particular will forever be on the memory of anyone who was alive on that terrible day.

That the people of America will rise above this tragic event which befell them and others is as certain as night follows day, and those responsible for this horrendous crime will reap the whirlwind which will most certainly follow in due course.

Please accept our sorrow, our heartache, our love and our 100% support for all. God Bless America.

Warmest Regards,

Eric and Ann Brumby and family
457th BG Historian
Peterborough, England



MAIL CALL...

September 13th, 2001

...Unfortunately I have not been an active "English Historian" of the 457th BG Association for some two or three years-- BUT NONETHELESS, you are often in our thoughts and especially so at this moment. I can't find words to express how we feel about events in New York and Washington - disbelief, hurt, anger - lots of emotions all boiling up together and being expressed in tears. I wish there was something I could do. Our thoughts and love are with you. God Bless.

Mike and Jean Jackson

September 16th, 2001

Once again America has been violently called to combat even in the world just as You and my Dad and 1000's of others were after 7 Dec 41. We must do now, after 11 Sep 01, just like 60 years ago. It will not be easy, it will not be quick and it will not be with out more loss. But then, like now, it has to be done. God Bless you and God Bless America!

TSgt Patrick J. Connelly

Mr. Douglas Hedrick, Editor
The Daily Post-Athenian
P.O. Box 340
Athens, TN 37371-0340

Dear Mr. Hedrick,

On behalf of the 457th Bomb Group Association, I express our collective appreciation for the excellent coverage surrounding the presentation make in memory of Ancil shepherd. The ceremony was a well deserved recognition and the coverage gave the residents of the area the opportunity to learn of the supreme sacrifice made by Ancil Shepherd.

Regards,
457th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION
James L. Bass

NOTE: Look for the above mentioned article about Ancil Shepherd elsewhere in this newsletter.

DEAR MICKEY...

Enclosing picture of my new license plate for my pick-up truck...8 TH AF. They wouldn't space it like I would have liked but with space between 8 and TH then space AF, it is still readable and appropriate for an 8th Air Force Vet. I applied for my 1st choice of 457 BG, but was issued

8 TH AF

If, in your newsletter, someone from Illinois hold the plates (457 BG) and if they ever want to relinquish it, I would be pleased to have it to grace my vehicle. On the van I used for years to tow my boat, I held X CRU B17. But changing from van to pickup, the numbers have to be first so that is why I have 8 TH AF.

Hope to see you in Colorado Spgs.

Your comrade and friend, Bob Day

VETERANS DAY POEM

Disused UK Airfield

The loose door flaps on rusted hinge.
Forgotten paintings moulder to oblivion on the flaking walls and through the shattered panes, the sadness of vanished laughter silently reminds me.

This is where they all lived before death, where their last earthbound smile was seen; where their sadness, happiness, and love flamed and sputtered.

Now the dull, steaming cattle crop the wet grass where the aircraft waited - aircraft long burned and shattered in flaring, searing skies and fields. 60 years have slipped away, whilst we, the living, are as these crumbling huts in a deserted field, ravaged by time. Reflecting on the passing of our friends, Bud, and Jimmy, Yank, and young Tim, and so many more; ...and we were all so young. Through dangers to the heavens they flew from these quiet corners; now the lowing cattle linger amidst their shades.

Remember, lest we forget, for our tomorrow they gave their today.

--Written from the heart by Doug Tidy, 74 SQ
RAF and 98th HBG USAAC - 1940-46

The American War Library
www.americanwarlibrary.com

A LONG AND MEMORABLE CIRCUITOUS ROUTE

A SHORT STORY BY JOHN WRANESH

Crewmember of Aircraft #43-37834 -- B-17 Bomber - 457th Bomb Group - 8th Air Force

This is a story dating back to the wartime 40's. Following aerial gunnery school in Harlingen, Texas, I was assigned to the 2nd Air Force Training Command, Lincoln Army Air Force Base (at that time the Air Force was a part of the Army). The insignia had a bird on it and we referred to it as a "chicken s---" outfit. At this time, I was assigned to an air crew to train at Sioux City Army Air Force Base on B-17 Bombers.

There was day and nighttime training conducted by seasoned veterans who had already been in overseas combat. The crew had an excellent opportunity to know each other and develop the team concept, and there was always interaction among the various crews in training.

Following our training we were assigned to Herington, Kansas, which was a staging area for overseas assignment. From there it was a train ride to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey and a boat ride (in a convoy which took two weeks) to England. Upon arrival in England there was additional training at Stone and The Wash and ultimate assignment to the 457th Bomb Group, Station 130, Glatton, (near Peterborough) England. Many of the crews who had trained together in Sioux City were still together in the 457th.

On the mission to bomb Magdeburg, Germany on September 28, 1944, the formation was attacked by German fighter planes about five minutes to the IP (initial point where the bombers were in preparation for the bomb run). Our aircraft #43-37834 was hit by 20MM gunfire, was on fire, lost two engines and dropped from the formation. Two crewmen, Harry I. Jacobson, the radio operator, and Joseph Jirik, co-pilot, lost their lives. The remaining 7 crewmen became prisoners of the Nazi government.

Following return of the remaining bombers to the base in England, Louis Reinhart, a neighboring crewman, retrieved some of the personal effects of Harry (Jake) Jacobson with the intention of sending them back to the family, but he had no address, so he held onto them for 57 years!

Jake was the only married crewman with a child, Dee Dee, who was two years old at the time. Doris, Jake's wife had corresponded with various families of crewmen trying to determine what had happened to Jake. The last two addresses of letters Doris had written to my parents in 1945 were Huntington, West Virginia and Louisville, Kentucky, respectively. The last correspondence was in July 1945 and she, Doris, had received final word from the army as to what had happened to Jake. I had not reached home yet following my liberation from the German Prison Camp. I did not follow up on any correspondence following my release and pursued a rather loose life-style for a time, but Jake and Joe (the co-pilot) have been and will forever remain in my memory system.

In December of the year 2000, I received the quarterly bulletin from the 457th Bomb Group Association of which I am a life member and noticed the name Louis Reinhart, Enid, Oklahoma. I called him that evening and during the course of conversation he mentioned that he had some personal effects that belonged to Jake and he had kept them all these years not knowing what to do with them. I said, "We will have to try to find an address, but it won't be easy." Working through the internet, trying to find various Jacobson addresses, I noticed there was a possibility in Louisville, Kentucky, the last known address for Doris. In contacting Harry E. Jacobson, I discovered "THE NEEDLE IN THE HAYSTACK!"

Harry was a cousin of Dee Dee's. He supplied information as to what had transpired over the years. Doris had remarried and spent much of her life in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Dee Dee had been adopted by her "new" dad (the adoption papers were signed by former President Gerald Ford who was an attorney at the time). She had gone on to school and recently retired after teaching at Eastern Michigan University for 29 years! A grandma, she currently lives in Plymouth, Michigan.

There was an immediate interest on the part of the cousins, Dee Dee and Harry. Louis was contacted by Dee Dee and arranged for the return of Jake's personal effects. Later, Dee Dee phoned me and set up a dinner date in Ann Arbor where I gave her additional items of interest such as the letters her Mom had written to my parents about Jake; a crew picture; a history of the 457th Bomb Group; a layout of the airfield (Glatton); and a marked up B-17 aircraft drawing with crew positions. I tried to answer the many questions as to what her Dad was like, what did he do, did he have fun...She is a most grateful person.

It is indeed a small world when Dee Dee and I have unknowingly lived within 20 miles of each other for many years and to be drawn together by a gentleman in Oklahoma, by a chance listing in a bulletin. Louis had just joined the 457th Bomb Group Association at this late point in time and was listed under the heading "New Members, New Found 457th Buddies, Relatives and Interested Persons". We were, indeed, newly found "old buddies."

Louis and I plan to meet at the 457th Bomb Group Association Reunion in Colorado Springs, September 2001, and we're both looking forward to our reunion.

P.S. Louis was unable to attend the reunion as a result of the September 11th disaster; his son, a doctor and member of FEMA, was called to New York City and Louis had to tend to family obligations and provide support.

ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE IS A PICTURE OF JOHN'S CREW:

This picture was taken on or about 7-1-44. The crew members are as follows:

Back Row Left to Right:

Fred Lockwald, pilot
Joseph Jirik, co-pilot
James Rawls, navigator
Seymour Salganick, bombardier
Carlton Killgo, engineer, top turret

Front Row Left to Right:

Phil Williams, tail gunner (he had an ear problem and was replaced by E. Alan Mahannah)
Karl Lambertson, ball turret gunner
Drew Sheffield, engineer, gunner
John Wranesh, armorer gunner, waist and ball turret gunner
Harry Jacobson, radio operator, waist gunner

As shown in the picture, the crew consisted of ten crewmen. At the time the crew became operational with the 457th Bomb Group, it was common to fly nine crewmen, the radio operator manned the right waist gun.

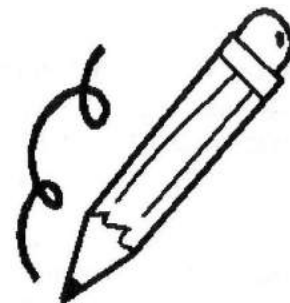
The picture was taken at Herrington, Kansas as the crew was being outfitted with overseas gear and just prior to the train ride to Fort Dix, New Jersey and the overseas convoy which took two weeks on the water to Southampton, England.

Each squadron had responsibility for maintaining readiness of twelve B-17 bomber aircraft. The policy was to fly 36 aircraft on a mission, thus leaving one squadron "a day off". However, when a mission called for "maximum effort" then all squadrons flew for a total of 48 aircraft.





ON DECK



My name is Rod Peterson. My father, Les Peterson (deceased 14 October 1995), served with the 750th of the 457th from August of 1944 through the end of the year. He (and my mother, Mildred, also a veteran) joined the 457th Bomb Group Association in the 1970's, and he was also a charter member of the 8th AF Historical Society. I am second generation 457th, born after the war, but I have had an insatiable interest in aviation all of my life, due in no small part to my father. Those are about the only bona fides I have. Nevertheless, as a semiprofessional writer, I want to try and make a small and regular contribution to the newsletter of the 457th Bomb Group Association and help to promote and further its purpose.

The recent reunion in Colorado Springs was by all accounts an unmitigated success. I know that Nancy and Joe bemoaned the cancellation of the Air Force Academy luncheon, but I did not hear a single participant express anything but the complete understanding for it, given the circumstances of the previous week, and no one, that I'm aware of, went hungry or unentertained during the time slot allocated for it.

I had attended the 1990 and '92 mini-reunions in Peterborough and had met several of the attendees that were also at Colorado Springs. Of course the stateside reunions are bigger, so there were a lot more people to meet. Fortunately my mother knows many of them from previous reunions so that was a big help. The message I wish to send from my experience is that anyone who has never attended a reunion should try and do so. I especially encourage second generation members or relatives to attend as well. There is a feeling at one of these like no other and it deserves to be shared.

Although there were some parts of the reunion that were memorable by anyone's measure, I was personally affected by two in particular. The dinner speaker at the banquet was a Congressional Medal of Honor holder from the Vietnam War, and his presentation was memorable. As someone who has always appreciated the significance of the Medal of Honor, I was particularly proud and humbled to be able to shake his hand and speak with him briefly.

The second part was more personal. I met a half dozen or so sons and daughters of 457th veterans and I believe the future of the organization, about which I hear so many veterans express concern, is well situated in their ranks. I had long felt that there was no way that we, the second generation, who were not there, could carry on the organization that was based on the veterans who been there and done it.

But remembrance, the principle upon which organizations such as the 457th are formed, isn't just about recalling the experience with those others who lived it with you, remembrance is also participating in the furtherance of the organization so that the result of that experience isn't forgotten. The next generation weren't there for the former, but we and our sons and daughters can be there for the latter.

The veterans are at bat in the long game of the 457th Bomb Group Association, but we're On Deck, and we won't forget, nor will we let it be forgotten.

--ROD PETERSON

WALL OF THE MISSING

"THE AMERICANS WHOSE NAMES HERE APPEAR, WERE PART OF THE PRICE THAT FREE MEN FOR THE SECOND TIME IN THIS CENTURY HAVE BEEN FORCED TO PAY TO DEFEND HUMAN LIBERTY AND RIGHTS. ALL WHO SHALL HEREAFTER LIVE IN FREEDOM WILL BE HERE REMINDED THAT TO THESE MEN AND THEIR COMRADES WE OWE A DEBT TO BE PAID WITH GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF THEIR SACRIFICE..." President Dwight D.

Eisenhower

~~~~~  
It is my sad duty to report the death of **Steve Billisits**, my engineer top turret gunner on February 24, 2001, and of **Helen Overdahl**, wife of Curt Overdahl, my navigator on May 12 of 2001. Steve died of complications following surgery for lung cancer. Steve, along with Curt Overdahl and George Stateman, my bombardier, were with me from Moses Lake to Euphrata to Wendover to Grand Island, then across the Atlantic to Glatton, where we went on the first mission of the 457th on February 22, 1944. We all completed our 30th missions around June 22, 1944. We are (were) life members of the 457th BG Association and have made most of the reunions. As for me, this will be my first missed reunion since the 1976 reunion at Bentonville, Arkansas. My best wishes for a fine reunion.

--Edward Reppa, pilot, 748th SQ

President at the first reunion in Colorado Springs

**NOTE: Agnes Billisits sent Stephen's funeral notice and it reads in part:**

"He was a U.S. Army Air Corps veteran, serving as an engineer/gunner with the 457th Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force during World War II. He completed 31 missions and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. He was employed as an Internal Revenue Service agent for 26 years before retiring in 1978.

~~~~~  
Dear Mrs. Elizabeth Lade:

Thank you for your order for "Fait Accompli III". Shipment will be made tomorrow. We also appreciate you advising us of the death of your husband, **Jack Cade on 11/20/97**. I am sorry we did not have the information earlier. The Group had its meeting in September and as always a memorial service was held. However, his name will be added to those to be memorialized at the next meeting.

Your husband served with honor and you can be proud of his service to his Country.
Yours very truly,

James L. Bass

~~~~~  
**NOTE FROM ELEANOR C. SLAMAN:**

I would like to add my husband's name to the memorial. **Edward F. Slaman died July 30, 1990**. He was the pilot of the Rampant Pansy and he flew 35 missions.  
Thankyou.

~~~~~  
NOTE FROM NANCY E. BARRIS:

Please adjust your records to reflect the death of my husband, **Harold L. Barris, on March 1, 2001**. I am still interested in participating in the Bomb Group's reunions.
Thankyou.

~~~~~  
**NOTE FROM KEN NAIL:**

Ken, and pilot Frank Gamboa's copilot, **Ray Rossner**, of West Boylston, MA, suffered a stroke and **died May 01, 2001**.

**Ray's funeral notice reads in part:**

He was an Army Air Forces veteran of World War II, serving in Northern France and Germany. Mr. Rossner worked 30 years in the customer service relations department of Massachusetts Electric Co., retiring in 1983. Donations may be made to the Mighty Eighth Air force Heritage Museum, Savannah, GA.



Dear Mickey Briggs:

Was sorry to read in the Sept-Oct 2000 newsletter that Homer had passed away. We will all miss him.

Seems like nothing but sad news. I am writing to inform you that **Paul C. Mason** (pilot) and **Herman D. Walmer** (navigator) have passed away, Paul in August of 2000, and Henry in February 2001. Both were members of Robert W. Gronberg's crew.

Yourstruly,  
Robert M. McMakin

Enclosed is obituary of **Wally McGibbon** who was tail gunner on our crew, the Paul Chapman crew -- one of the 748 SQ original crews. I was the navigator. I believe Wally has attended all the reunions since Omaha in 1979, and served as a director back in the 80's. Wally passed away on **July 7, 2001**.

Sincerely, Bill McKelvey

### Wally's funeral notice reads in part:

He was a staff sergeant with the 8th Air Force, 457th Bomb Group in Peterborough, England during World War II. He was a By-Products Supervisor for Lukens Steel Co., retiring after 38 years of service. He was a member VFW and the Lukens Veterans Guild. He was a B-17 enthusiast, and was active in the 8th Air Force 457th Bomb Group Association.

### LIST OF THOSE MEMORIALIZED AT THE REUNION... COLORADO SPRINGS 2001



Bernard Baines  
John Bass  
George M. Barnes  
Harold Barris  
Felicimo Basuil  
Robert Bloomer  
Boone B. Boggs  
George Lyle Branstetter  
Homer Briggs  
Richard W. Byrd  
Ras M. Clausen  
Robert Coakley  
J. McGavock Dickinson  
Norman Erbe  
James C. Evans

John L. Fowler, Sr.  
Harold Franklin  
William H. Good  
Harold E. Graham  
Robert Gronberg  
Carroll W. Gustafson  
Michael Halayko  
James F. Hedgecock, Jr.  
Cleotis Helm  
Clyde S. Jolley  
Sam Kalman  
Edgar Lanzoni  
George Lawlis  
William R. McCall  
Waldron McGibbon

Alan McHannah  
Donald E. McLeod, Jr.  
Robert J. Maitland  
Lloyd I. Miller  
Ralph W. Mynhier  
John Poshefko  
Charles Rogers  
Dennis G. Schaffner, Sr.  
Gerard A. Sharrock  
Donald R. Sweetman  
John Wilson  
Edwin Witten  
Joseph A. Youngross

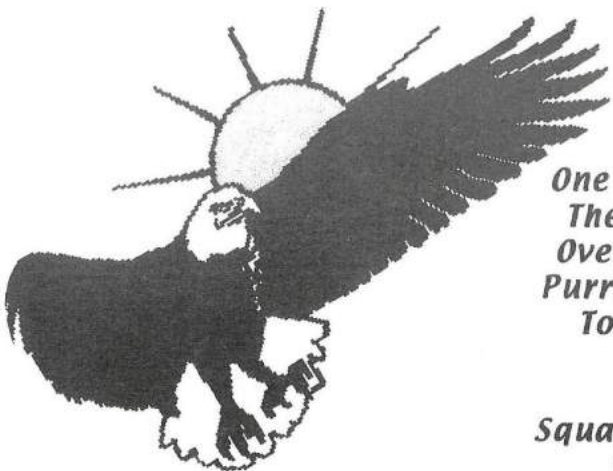
*"Let us strive on to finish the work we are in: to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle; and for his widow and orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."*  
Abraham Lincoln...2nd Inaugural Address...March 4, 1865

# ***IN MEMORIAM***

*The following are reported deceased since last newsletter.*

|                                 |                   |                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>Harold Barris</u>            | March 1, 2001     | Reported by wife-Nancy                                                                                                                       |
| <u>Stephen F. Billisits</u>     | February 24, 2001 | Reported by wife-Agnes<br>Complications following<br>surgery for lung cancer<br>Ed Reppa's Flight Engineer                                   |
| <u>Boone B. Boggs</u>           | December, 1999    | Reported by Ray Hoagland<br>750th SQ.<br>need information                                                                                    |
| <u>Norman Erbe</u>              |                   | Reported by James Bass<br>750th SQ.<br>need information                                                                                      |
| <u>James C. Evans</u>           |                   | Reported by wife-Sophie<br>Passed away shortly after the<br>reunion...was not able to<br>attend although he did register<br>need information |
| <u>Harold Franklin</u>          |                   | Reported by wife-Elizabeth                                                                                                                   |
| <u>Michael Halayko</u>          |                   | Reported by Robert McMakin<br>Pilot-Gronberg crew<br>need information                                                                        |
| <u>George S. Inman</u>          |                   | Reported by Bill McKelvey<br>748th SQ. - Tail Gunner on<br>Paul Chapman crew                                                                 |
| <u>Clyde S. Jolley</u>          |                   | Reported by Craig Harris<br>Shot down and held as POW<br>for one year before liberation<br>Wife-Eleanor<br>need information                  |
| <u>Jack Lade</u>                | November 20, 1997 | Reported by Ken Nail<br>Suffered a stroke<br>Copilot to Ken Nail and Frank<br>Gamboa<br>need information                                     |
| <u>Paul C. Mason</u>            | August, 2000      | Reported by wife-Eleanor<br>Pilot of Rampant Pansy<br>Flew 35 missions                                                                       |
| <u>William R. McCoy</u>         |                   | Reported by Robert McMakin<br>Navigator-Gronberg crew                                                                                        |
| <u>Waldron "Wally" McGibbon</u> | July 7, 2001      | Reported by several friends<br>Was FOTE member<br>English Historian<br>Short illness/brain tumor                                             |
| <u>Lloyd I. Miller</u>          | March 24, 2001    | Reported by Craig Harris<br>749th SQ. - Tail Gunner<br>Captured and held Lufts 4<br>Wife-Geraldine                                           |
| <u>Ralph W. Mynhier</u>         |                   |                                                                                                                                              |
| <u>Raymond F. Rossner</u>       | May 1, 2001       |                                                                                                                                              |
| <u>Dennis G. Schaffner, Sr.</u> |                   |                                                                                                                                              |
| <u>Edward F. Slaman</u>         | July 30, 1990     |                                                                                                                                              |
| <u>Herman D. Walmer</u>         | February, 2001    |                                                                                                                                              |
| <u>John Wilson</u>              | October 9, 2001   |                                                                                                                                              |
| <u>Joseph A. Youngross</u>      | January 2, 2001   |                                                                                                                                              |





## THE GALLANT "EIGHT"

*One early morn I stood and heard  
The voice of a mighty silver bird  
Over land and sea, ready to soar;  
Purring, throbbing to mighty roar,  
To fight for freedom as before  
We hit the Nazis in '44.*

*Squadrons, known by Number Eight  
Keep the date, never late'  
Sturdy crews, full of fun,  
The boys to make ol' Jerry run.  
Pushing on, through the flak,  
No thoughts of ever turning back.*

*Every veteran in the Flight  
Knows "Wrong is Wrong" and  
"Right is Might."  
So on the go, with the urge,  
To clean up with a Nazi purge.  
For no Jerry we care a damn;  
We'll fight and die for Uncle Sam.*

*"Fait Accompli" is their sign,  
Famed from Burma, to the Rhine;  
Blazing a trail to Victory;  
A glorious page in history.  
Gallant heroes from every State,  
We thank you boys of the Mighty Eighth.*

*Praise and wishes are not enough  
To thank the boys who do their stuff;  
So let's just offer a silent prayer,  
For the boys way out over there.  
That they return, with God's kind hand,  
To the United States, dear Motherland.*

Dedicated to my best Pals,  
LIMEY SAILOR

EDITORS NOTE: IF YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHOSE NAME HAS NOT BEEN REPORTED IN A NEWSLETTER, PLEASE LET NANCY KNOW.

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE INFORMATION REQUESTED ON THE "MEMORIAL" PAGE, PLEASE FORWARD IT TO NANCY FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER.

MY SINCEREST APOLOGIES TO KENNETH BURKHART. I MISTAKENLY POSTED HIS NAME AS DECEASED IN A PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER. IT WAS, IN FACT, KEN'S WIFE KAREN WHO HAD PASSED AWAY. WE ARE SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS, KEN.

NANCY HENRICH

## REMEMBERING ANCIL SHEPHERD

**FIFTY SEVEN YEARS AND ONE DAY AFTER HIS DEATH, THE 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION ASSEMBLED WITH MORE THAN FIFTY MEMBERS OF T/SGT ANCIL SHEPHERD'S FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO PAY A TRIBUTE OF REMEMBRANCE AND TO PRESENT THE "FAIT ACCOMPLI" TRILOGY IN HIS MEMORY TO THE E.G. FISHER PUBLIC LIBRARY IN ATHENS, TENNESSEE.**

**IN MAKING THE PRESENTATION OF THE TRILOGY ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION JAMES BASS SAID, "IT IS FITTING FOR ANCIL SHEPHERD TO BE REMEMBERED BY HIS FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND FELLOW AIRMEN. THE SACRIFICE ANCIL AND THOUSANDS OF OTHERS MADE FOR THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM SHOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN."**

**THE PRESENTATION WAS REPORTED BY THE ATHENS PAPER AND A CHATTANOOGA TV STATION. THE PAPER RAN AN ARTICLE PRIOR TO THE PRESENTATION AND BOTH INTERVIEWED THE FORMER AIRMEN PRESENT.**

**ALSO PRESENT FROM THE 457TH WERE DON AND BETTY SEESENGUTH, G.R. AND LINDA TAYLOR, AND ERMA BASS.**

## CEREMONY HONORS MILITARY SERVICE

The sacrifice made by a McMinn County veteran was remembered Monday during a ceremony at E.G. Fisher Public Library in Athens.

James L. Bass of Carthage on behalf of the 457th Bomb Group Association, presented "The Fait Accompli Trilogy" to the library in memory of T/Sgt. Ancil U. Shepherd.

Shepherd, who entered military service from McMinn county in World War II, died in a bombing raid against Germany on Oct. 7, 1944.

Bass, who also served in the 457th Bomb Group, compiled the "Fait Accompli Trilogy" in three volumes. They consist of Volume I, which is historical; Volume II, which is 95 percent pictorial; and Volume III, which is made up of anthologies told to Bass by men who survived missions and memories of others who were still children during World War II.

"Our purpose today is to preserve history and the heritage of the 457th Bomber group and to relate their Legacy," Bass said.

Shepherd grew up during the Depression in

Niota with his parents, brothers and sisters. When World War II erupted, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps and became a flight engineer.

He had served in five previous flights in the crew of a lead plane and was on his 28th mission at the time of his death.

Bass said Shepherd probably had only two remaining missions to fly before he could return home. Instead, he died when his plane was hit by German gunners.

"Today, after 57 years plus one day of his death, we recognize that Ancil Shepherd became one of the heroes of World War II. He died on his last mission and his body was one of those never recovered," Bass said.

"The Trilogy is called 'Fait Accompli,' which means 'Mission Accomplished' or 'Accomplished Fact'. Without the sacrifices of those who didn't return, we wouldn't have the freedoms we have today," he added.

The 457th Bomb Group (also called "The Fireball Outfit"), flew 236 missions using B-17's and B-24s and was part of the Eighth Air Force stationed in Glatton, England during World War II. The Eighth Air Force became the largest military unit in World War II and the largest aerial bomber force of all time.

The 457th was stationed about 70 miles north of London on the old York Road, a direct route once taken by William the Conqueror on his way from London to York.

"The road reminded me of our old secondary roads, narrow and with no shoulders. The squadron had to go up that road to get to the base," Bass recalled.

Shepherd became a proficient flight engineer and turret gunner. On his last mission he was serving under Group Commander Col. James R. Luper, the air commander, and veteran pilot Alfred W. Fischer.

There were also a group navigator, a group bombardier, a group surgeon, and other crew members.

On Oct. 7, 1944, the 457th Bomb Group would lead the entire 94th Combat Wing of the Eighth Air Force with a total of 144 bombers. They flew their B-17s and B-24s across the North Sea, the Baltics, Denmark and to points farther south. The final destination was a town called Politz that was just over the German border into Poland that lay on the mouth of the Oder River where it emptied into Stettin Bay.

Politz was the site of synthetic oil production and the destruction of oil facilities was of great importance to the war effort.

"They were to bomb targets and then come back home (to the base), but the Germans picked off the lead plane in which Ancil was flying and it was engulfed in flames. The lead navigator did escape, but out of 11 men, only five survived. Ancil did not," Bass said.

"All school children should know about the



sacrifices that Ancil and others like him made to ensure that freedom would prevail," he said.

Bass said in recent years inquiries have revealed Shepherd was entitled to awards and decorations his family has not as yet received.

"We are working on that through the office of Congressman John Duncan, Jr. The military says those awards are forthcoming and will be available to his family at a later date," he said.

Family, friends, members of the 8th Air Force, the 457th and veterans of other service groups came to E.G. Fisher Library for the recognition ceremony and also contributed their own individual memories of that earlier fight for freedom.

McMinn County native Carlos Landrum is Shepherd's nephew. He remembers his uncle.

"He wasn't married and volunteered for service. He was just a kid and was maybe age 24 when he died," Landrum said.

Shepherd's brother, Kelly Shepherd of Athens, also came to the recognition ceremony.

"I was serving in Germany in the infantry at that time," he remembered.

Paul Billings of Niota, who served in the 8th Air Force, also remembers Shepherd.

"I know Mr. Shepherd. He pulled pigtails on girls like all boys our age!" he said.

"I was 16 at the time of Pearl Harbor and I volunteered immediately. Since I was determined to fly, I became a gunner and went to Hethel, England in Norfolk county.

"I flew 27 missions and was awarded an Air Medal with three clusters. I was recognized for service in the Ardennes Forest, the Rhineland and in Central Europe. By April 24, the Air Force had about eliminated the German Air Force as a threat," Billings said.

Donald Seesenguth served in the 457th Bomb Group in the 748th Squadron.

"I flew 30 combat missions as a lead pilot under an air commander. We would leave with 36 airplanes taking off two minutes apart," he said.

"What I remember most is the Christmas Eve of 1944 at the Battle of the Bulge. The weather was so bad we had been unable to give air support. But on Dec. 24 we were told to fly regardless of the weather. When we took off, we could only see the middle line of the runway. Our sixth airplane crashed on takeoff.

"We took our planes along with another group and my plane got hit with shrapnel. We managed to drop our bombs. Then flying through a bad fog, we were able to land at a coastal base," he said.

Henry M. Barker of Knoxville said he was with the 453rd Bomb Group, 735th Squadron.

"I was on a B-24 Liberator flying as a co-pilot stationed at a base called Buckenham at Attleborough in Norfolk/Suffolk, England, which was about 100 miles north of London," he said.

"I would fly 20 minutes and the pilot would fly 20 minutes because the B-24s required a lot of strength to handle. Later, I flew B-17s over Germany," he said.

"The Hollywood actor, Jimmy Stewart, was our group operations officer. He was over the 453rd and also over the 445th before us. He flew 22 air combat missions. The group liked and respected him very much," Barker remembered.

Charles Lee of Madisonville also served in the 8th Air Force and remembers May 12, 1944. That was the day he was shot down and became a prisoner of war at the age of 20.

"I was taken as a POW first to Poland and later moved to the Baltic Sea. I flew five missions and was shot down on the sixth mission," he said.

"Like Ancil Shepherd, I was also a flight engineer. I guess my worst memories of the war were during the year that I spent as a POW. We were in a 12-by-12 foot room with 24 of us to a room, but we were allowed outside in daylight hours. I weighed 85 pounds when I was liberated."

Bass said the Trilogy volumes are available but not at book stores. Orders may be sent to:

James L. Bass Publications,  
P.O. Box 500,  
Carthage, TN, 37030  
or phone 615-735-1122.

"Our purpose is to preserve history and the heritage of the 457th Bomb Group," he said.

"The proceeds from sales go to the 457th Bomb Group Association and the projects we participate in. An example is the 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah, GA, where we're building a window in the Chapel on the grounds near the museum."

"On Sept. 23-27, the 457th held a reunion at Colorado Springs, CO, where 280 people attended for a banquet, a dance and to share memories," Bass said.

\*\*\*\*\*

**It is the soldier, not the reporter,  
who has given us freedom of the press.  
It is the soldier, not the poet,  
who has given us freedom of speech.**

**It is the soldier, not the campus organizer,  
who has given us the freedom to  
demonstrate.**

**It is the soldier, not the lawyer,  
who has given us the right to a fair trial.**

**It is the soldier,  
who salutes the flag,  
who serves under the flag,  
and whose coffin is draped by the flag,  
who allows the protester to burn the flag.**

# Family Service

**Editor's Note:** The following article appeared in the "Delaware County Sunday Times" on November 12, 2000. It was written by John M. Roman, of the *Times* staff. We thought everyone should share this story.

**RIDLEY PARK** - Retired Master Sgt. Lewis D'Ambrosia, a veteran of World War II and Korea, has always been grateful he and his six brothers didn't suffer the fate of the five Sullivan brothers.

The Sullivans of Waterloo, Iowa, were among 500 sailors who lost their lives while serving aboard the USS Juneau Nov. 13, 1941, after a Japanese torpedo attack.

The Sullivans, angry about the attack on Pearl Harbor and the death of a friend, had managed to argue their way past Navy regulations that prohibited members of the same family from serving together. Their deaths shocked the nation.

The seven D'Ambrosia brothers, the sons of the late Octavio and Elvera D'Ambrosia of West Philadelphia, all joined the 111th Bomb Group of the Pennsylvania National Guard in Philadelphia when the Korean War broke out.

Five of the brothers had served during World War II - Claude, Cleo, Thomas, Idillio, and Lewis.

The seven men, ranging in age from 22 to 35, enlisted after the Bomb Group was activated in April 1951 by the federal government for overseas duty.

"We were all proud of what we did -- I'm glad I served," said Lewis, 81, the fourth-oldest brother, of Acres Drive, who is a retired Ridley School District Maintenance worker. "All my brothers felt the same way ... my whole family," he said.

Cleo Michael, Daniel, Claude and Justin are deceased.

Lewis has two other brothers who live in Delaware County, Thomas, 80, of Havertown, and Idillio "Willie", 74, of Upper Darby.

All seven D'Ambrosia brothers had aviation in their blood, Lewis recalled -- even though only two, Daniel and Thomas -- were



licensed pilots. The other brothers centered their interests on aviation engines and mechanics, previously being experienced auto mechanics.

His youngest brother, Cleo Michael, was interested in aviation from his model plane building days.

Claude developed his interest in aviation during World War II when he was assigned to a helicopter squadron before going overseas. In Texas, he met Major Sandusky and Igor Sikorsky, pioneers in helicopter development, and worked on the hovering aircraft and next on planes.

Lewis said his brothers, Thomas and Claude, both served in the Vietnam War.

Idillio saw combat in France during World War II with Gen. George Patton's Third Army from 1943 to 1945.

Thomas served in the Pacific under Gen. Curtis LeMay of the 20th Air Force from 1942 to 1946.

Lewis served in England with the Eighth Air Force from 1942 to 1945.

"When I was only 15, I enlisted in 1940 with the Pennsylvania Army National Guard at the Broad and Diamond Streets armory near Temple University," Lewis said. After serving six months, Lewis said his mother found out he was going overseas with the 108th Artillery and notified his commander, who canceled him out.

He was finally able to join the Eighth Army Air Force at age 18 under Lt. Gen. James H. Doolittle, who later became a national hero when he led the first World War II bombing raid on Japan in 1942.



## THE BATTLE OF THE FLAG

Lewis was stationed near London as an aircraft flight engineer, repairing all kinds of damage to aircraft from engines to fuselage on B-17s, B-25s, B-29s, and the B-26 Invader, all propeller driven.

With the 457th Bomber Group, 94th Wing, "we supported the Normandy Invasion," he recalled.

"We worked 18-20 hours a day, trying to get them back in shape for the next mission (to Europe)," he said.

When he was discharged in 1945, he was awarded the American Campaign Medal and World War II Victory Medal. In 1946, he enlisted in the Army Air Force, serving in the Aleutian Islands and Alaska with the 20th Air Force for two years. He was among the crew that built the northernmost airstrip in Greenland. He was also stationed in Iceland.

A veteran of the Korean War, Lewis spent 14 months at an air base about 30 miles south of the 38th Parallel, the demilitarized zone, with the Fourth Fighter Wing, providing technical support.

Lewis rejoined the Air National Guard 111th Bomb Group at the Philadelphia International Airport, serving 26 years before ending his service with the rank of Master Sergeant in 1979.

Recently, Lewis was honored at the Herbert W. Best Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 928 in Folsom, where he and his brothers' memory were given a standing ovation.

Aviation still remains in the D'Ambrosia family's blood.



Lewis D'Ambrosia in uniform in 1952.

*A protest raged on a courthouse lawn,  
Round a makeshift stage they charged on,  
Fifteen hundred or more they say,  
Had come to burn a Flag that day.*

*A boy held up the folded Flag,  
Cursed it, and called it a dirty rag.  
An OLD MAN pushed through the angry crowd  
With a rusty shotgun shouldered proud.  
His uniform jacket was old and tight,  
He had polished each button, shiny and bright.  
He crossed that stage with a soldier's grace,  
Until he and the boy stood face to face.*

*'FREEDOM OF SPEECH,' the OLD MAN said,  
"is worth dying for, good men are dead,  
So you can stand on this courthouse lawn,  
And talk us down from dusk to dawn.*

*But before any Flag gets burned today,  
This OLD MAN IS GOING TO HAVE HIS SAY!  
My father died on a foreign shore,  
In a war they said would end all wars.*

*But Tommy and I wasn't even full grown,  
Before we fought in a war of our own.  
And Tommy died on Iwo Jima's beach,  
In the shadow of a hill he couldn't quite reach.*

*Where five good men raised this Flag so high,  
That the WHOLE DAMN WORLD COULD SEE IT FLY.  
I got this bum leg that I still drag,  
Fighting for this same old Flag.*

*Now there's but one shot in this old gun,  
So now it's time to decide which one,  
Which one of you will follow our lead,  
To stand and die for what you believe?*

*For as sure as there is a rising sun,  
You'll burn in Hell 'fore this Flag burns, son."*

*Now this riot never came to pass  
The crowd got quiet and that can of gas  
Got set aside as they walked away  
To talk about what they had heard this day.*

*And the boy who had called it a "dirty rag,"  
Handed the OLD SOLDIER the folded Flag.*

*So the battle of the Flag this day was won  
By a tired OLD Soldier with a rusty gun,  
Who, for one last time, had to show to some,  
THIS FLAG MAY FADE, BUT THESE COLORS DON'T RUN!*

## HOW THE "PAPER WARRIOR" CAME BY ITS NAME

### NOTE FROM FRANK BERND:

*Enclosed is a copy of the Paper Warrior Correspondence. It's nothing fantastic, but sort of a nice little story and perhaps some of the fellows will get a kick out of it. I had a chance to check out the details with the crew at the reunion, so the story is true.*

A group of World War II veterans give lectures or group discussions to the Jr. high school students at a local school on what we did in World War II. Our group consists of Air Force, Marines, Army, Army Nurses, etc. In talking to these young people, I emphasize that nothing is really new, such as protesting. I then show them a picture of the "Paper Warrior" and describe how it was named. This was a new B-17G.

Lead crews such as ours had to fly up to a miserable little island somewhere off the west coast of Scotland, regardless of the English weather, and practice bombing. It was a good distance away and we usually flew at approximately 25,000 feet. The record keeping, or paper work, was great since every bomb had to be recorded as to circular error, plus heading, temperature, bombsight settings, etc. We usually carried 20 practice bombs of about 20 lbs. Of course, the pilot and navigator had their own problems.

One night we diluted what my dear mother sent me tucked in the middle of a loaf of bread with some canned grapefruit juice. Our excessive amount of paperwork duty soon evolved into a rather boisterous discussion as the grapefruit juice with the Early Times kicker disappeared. It was agreed, our newly assigned B-17G needed a name. We picked a name as a protest. This is how the "Paper Warrior" was born. The next morning we were not flying, so I had time to paint this fantastic name in about 12" high bright red letters on the nose of our new ship. PAPER WARRIOR is listed with all the official 8th AAF names of combat B-17 planes.

### Things to think about---

- A. Neither group nor squadron brass ever said a word!
- B. Our ground crew would not talk to me for at least a week!
- C. If we had been shot down, the Germans would have had a lot of fun with this name. They may even have had a little sympathy for us.
- D. Our pilot, Captain Burningham, never drank but went along with our idea anyway.
- E. After several trips to Scotland I did learn to drop 20 bombs at one time --- and then back into the clouds. When there were no clouds, time went very slowly, one bomb at a time.
- F. The commendation from General Lacy for the December 29th mission mentions especially the high squadron -- us! Perhaps the practice flights did pay off.





## NEW LIFE MEMBERS...

Candace Fluman...daughter of Will Fluman  
45 Impala drive  
Dillsburg, PA 17019

Phillip Pemberton...grandson of William  
Fiedler  
405 Rancho Arroyo Parkway  
Apt. 230  
Fremont, CA 94536

Scott Pemberton...grandson of William  
Fiedler  
3542 Rutledge Commons  
Fremont, CA 94538

Mark Sakamoto...grandson of William  
Fiedler  
901 East Washington St. Apt. 325  
Colton, CA 92324

**WOW! WILLIAM FIEDLER SIGNED UP  
ALL 3 OF HIS GRANDSONS TO BE LIFE  
MEMBERS OF THE 457TH BG ASSOC.!**

Bryn W. Starnes...daughter of Hal Willett  
4465 Ikr Starns Rd.  
Granite Falls, NC 28630

Hal H. "Mike" Willett II...son of Hal Willett  
P.O. Box 1167  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323

Wm. Leck Willett...son of Hal Willett  
P.O. Box 1070  
Blowing Rock, NC 28605

**WOW AGAIN! HAL WILLETT SIGNED UP  
HIS 3 CHILDREN TO BE LIFE MEMBERS  
OF THE 457TH BG ASSOCIATION.**

**IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED A  
MEMBERSHIP CARD, OR A LIFE MEMBER  
CARD, PLEASE LET NANCY KNOW RIGHT  
AWAY.**

**IF YOU HAVE RECENTLY JOINED OR HAVE  
UPGRADED TO A LIFE MEMBERSHIP AND  
WE HAVE NOT PUBLISHED YOUR NAME IN  
THE NEWSLETTER, AGAIN, NANCY IS THE  
ONE TO CONTACT.**

## NEW MEMBERS...

Lori Paris Barnett...daughter of Herb Paris  
P.O. Box 1613  
Starkville, MS 39759

Patrick J. Connelly...son of T/Sgt. Aaron  
B. Connelly  
PSC# 76 Box 837  
APO AP 09720

J Lacey...son of Col. Lacey...CO 94th  
Combat Wing  
P.O. Box 1331  
Youngstown, FL 32466-2317

Douglas A. Larson...son of Lloyd Larson  
P.O. Box 6835  
Reno, NV 89513

## NEW FOUND FIREBALLERS

Stanley H. Krohn...Engineer/Top Turret  
751st SQ...Pilot was  
Vinton Mays  
152 Howard Hill Rd.  
Smyra, NY 13464

Leroy J. Peters...Bombardier/Navigator  
750th SQ...Pilot was  
Ralph Evans  
2261 Country Lane  
Columbia, MO 65201

Arthur R. Tiemann...Pilot...749th SQ  
12414 Deer Track  
Austin, TX 78727-5744

**A DRAWING FOR A FREE NIGHT AT  
THE SHERATON HOTEL DURING THE  
REUNION WAS HELD THE NIGHT OF  
THE BANQUET.**

**THE FOLLOWING WERE THE LUCKY  
WINNERS:**

**LORI BARNETT  
FRANK BERND  
JACK GASSMAN  
DONALD POLEN**

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!!**

# 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

## MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

New ☐

Renewal ☐

Address Change ☐

Fireballer? ☐ or Relative? ☐ relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Other ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Squadron # \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Assigned \_\_\_\_\_ Duties \_\_\_\_\_

Plane Names and # \_\_\_\_\_ Pilot's Name \_\_\_\_\_

POW?/Evadee?...Date of capture/escape: \_\_\_\_\_

Retired? \_\_\_\_\_ Rank? \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

### DUES INFORMATION:

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-or-

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Mail top of this form and check to:

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11308 Blendon Lane  
Richmond, VA 23233

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**NEW BOOK**  
by  
**KEN BLAKEBOROUGH**

Titled "A B-17 Co-pilot Remembers",  
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is an autobiographical work in which I present my personal  
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Beginning with the first days of my aircrew being assembled in  
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the camaraderie of the men, the beauty and companionship of the  
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The chronology recollects wartime experiences and continues  
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This narrative has 90 pages,  
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**THE DEDICATION READS:**

*"This story is dedicated to the  
American Warriors  
who served at Clatton.  
2 Timothy 4:7"*

To order your copy of "A B-17 Co-Pilot Remembers"

contact Ken Blakeborough  
28432 Borgona - Mission Viejo - CA - 92692  
[949]770-5021 ardenken@juno.com

# A B-17 Co-pilot Remembers



An 8th Air Force Memoir  
by  
Ken Blakeborough

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**ADVANTAGES OF EXERCISE**

- It is well documented that for every mile you jog, you add one minute to your life. This enables you, at age 85 months in a nursing home at \$5,000 a month.
- My grandmother started walking 5 miles a day when she was 60. She is now 97 and we don't know where she is.
- The only reason I would take up jogging is so that I could hear heavy breathing again.
- I joined a health club last year, spent about \$400. Haven't lost a pound. Apparently, you have to show up.
- I have to exercise early in the morning before my brain figures out what I am doing.
- I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.
- I have flabby thighs, but fortunately my stomach covers them.
- The advantage of exercising every day is that you die healthier.
- If you are going to try cross country skiing, start with a small country.
- And last, but not least, I don't jog--it makes the ice jump right out of my glass.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

- If you can be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains;
- If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles;
- If you can eat the same food everyday and be grateful for it;
- If you can understand when loved ones are too busy to give you time;
- If you can overlook when people take things out on you, when through no fault of yours something goes wrong;
- If you can take criticism and blame without resentment;
- If you can face the world without lies and deceit;
- If you can conquer tension without medical help;
- If you can relax without liquor;
- If you can sleep without the aid of drugs



THEN YOU ARE  
PROBABLY  
A DOG!!!



# THE 457TH BOMB GROUP -- VITAL STATISTICS 2001-2001 OFFICERS & APPOINTMENTS

|                                 |                         |                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>PRESIDENT</u>                | WILL FLUMAN             | 122 S RIDGE RD - BOILING SPRINGS, PA 17001-9712 TEL: 717-258-3090<br>FAX: 717-258-0560 - email: OakGrove@aol.com                         |
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| <u>RECORDING SEC</u>            | JAMES BASS              | P.O. BOX 500 - CARTHAGE, TN 37030 TEL: 615-735-1122 - FAX: 615-735-3149                                                                  |
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| <u>I. PAST PRES</u>             | CRAIG HARRIS            | 2701 PICKETT ROAD, #2035 - DURHAM, NC 27705-5649 TEL: 919-489-5685<br>FAX: 919-419-1705 - email: charris4@nc.rr.com                      |
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| <u>UNIT CONTACT</u>             | JOE TOTH                | (see DIRECTOR 4 YR above)                                                                                                                |
| <u>WEBMASTER</u>                | WILLARD (HAP) REESE     | 11 FLETCHER CT. - PALM COAST, FL 32137 TEL: 904-445-5773<br>email: areese@bestnetpc.com                                                  |
| <u>WEBMASTER ASST</u>           | DIANE REESE             | email: dreese@us.ibm.com                                                                                                                 |
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TEL: 44 1487 773493

**JOHN WALKER** - 29 CHANCERY LANE - EYE, PETERBOROUGH PE6 7YF - ENGLAND TEL: 44 1733 222994

**ERIC BRUMBY** - 82 BLUE BELL AVE - PETERBOROUGH UK PE1 3XH - TEL: 01733-709811

**MIKE JACKSON, HISTORIAN** - 11 WHISTON GRANGE - MOORGATE - ROTHERHAM S60 3BG - ENGLAND TEL: 44 1709 371547

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1976 -- HOWARD LARSEN (D)...KS  
1977-79 -- WILLIAM SILER.....NM  
1980-81 -- EDWARD REPPA.....AZ  
1982-83 -- DANIEL GRAHAM.....IN

1984 -- WILLIAM GOOD.....KS  
1985 -- DAVE SUMMERVILLE....CA  
1986-87 -- CLAYTON BEJOT.....NE  
1988-89 -- DONALD SELLON.....CO  
1990-91 -- JOHN WELCH.....SD

1992-93 -- ROLAND BYERS.....ID  
1993-97 -- BILLY HIGHTOWER.....TX  
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