



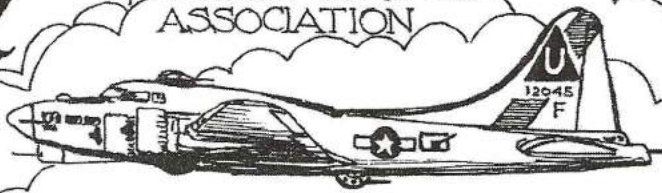
748th
Squadron



749th

THE

457th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION



"THE FIDDLER ALBATROSS"



750th
Squadron



751st
Squadron

THE 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION NEWS

ESTABLISHED JULY 1971 - BENTONVILLE, AR

NOVEMBER 2003

VOLUME 33

ISSUE 56

VETERANS DAY

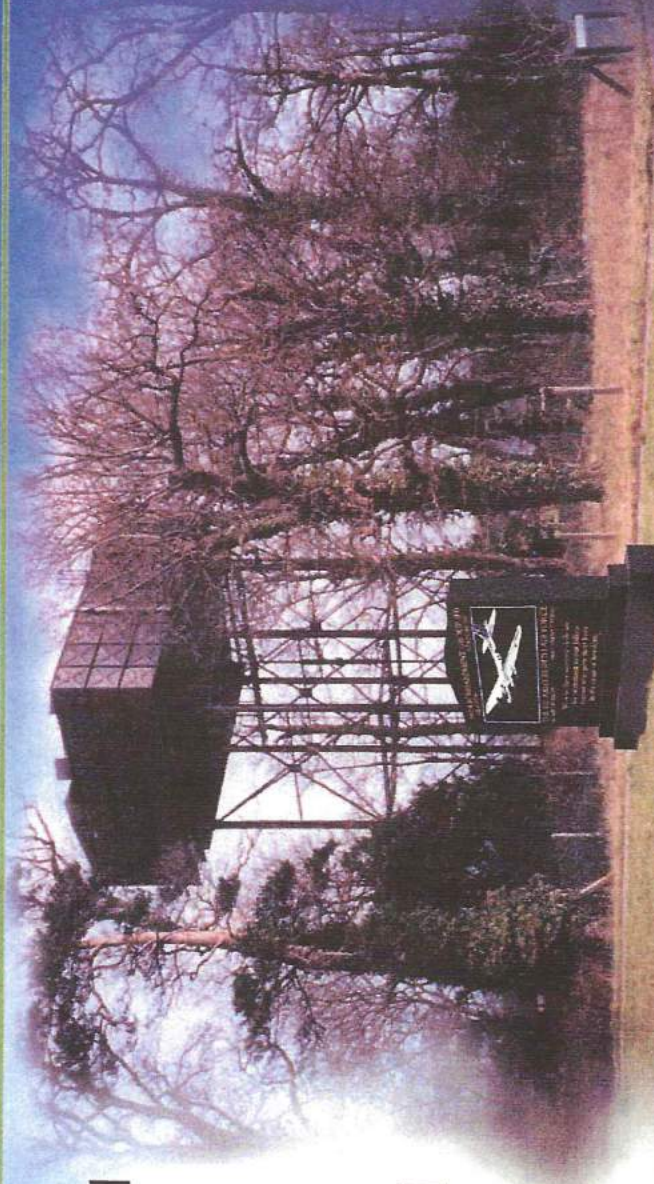
NOVEMBER 11



THANK YOU...then and now

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO FREEDOM

457th Memorial, Glatton, England



A memorial to the 457th Bomb Group is being erected in Glatton, England. This memorial will honor the members of the 457th who served, and sacrificed their lives in WWII. It will stand as a tribute to our generation and a reminder to future generations.

That freedom today is a gift from the past.

Your contribution is greatly appreciated.



Front View



Back View



Side View

457th Memorial, Glatton, England

As many of you are aware, especially if you were able to be in Rapid City, Will Fluman has been working to see that a memorial is erected near our former base at Glatton...specifically on the North Road. At the 2003 reunion, the membership voted to proceed with the fund-raising to place this monument. Working closely with Will, has been Ray Pobgee. Ray has spent many hours tracking down owners of the property where we could place the memorial, and then to get official authorization to title the property over to us. As a result of the members embracing this project, we are proceeding with the maker of the memorial. The plan is to have the memorial ready to dedicate at the 2004 Mini-Reunion in Peterborough. Will and his family are serving as hosts for this Reunion. This will prove to be the best Reunion in England that we have ever experienced.

ONCE AGAIN, WE NEED YOUR GENEROSITY AS NEVER BEFORE. THE ESTIMATED COST OF THE MEMORIAL AS WELL AS TWO FLAGPOLES TO FLY THE FLAGS OF THE UNITED STATES AND ENGLAND WILL BE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF \$27,000.

PLEASE SEND YOUR DONATIONS TO HELP BUILD A PERMANENT MEMORIAL AS A TRIBUTE TO OUR GENERATION AND AS A REMINDER TO FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Make checks out to: 457th Bomb Group with a notation that it goes to the Glatton Memorial Fund.

Send checks to: John Pearson, Treasurer
1900 Lauderdale Drive, Apt. C-315 Richmond, VA 23233

John will send you a receipt for tax purposes with Gifts of \$250.00 or more.



THE PREZ SEZ...

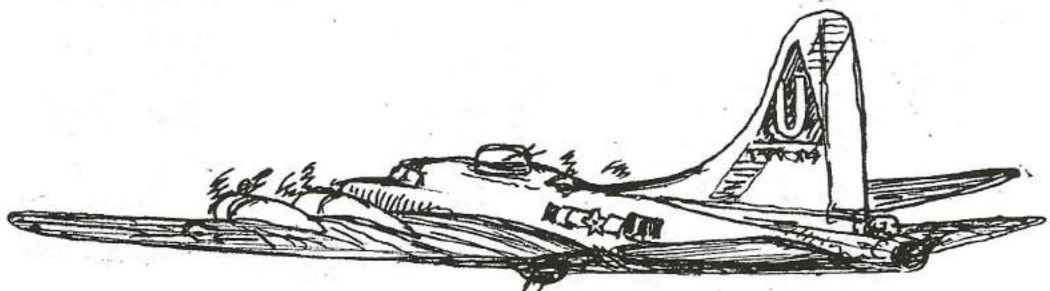
I am very honored that you have placed your trust in me to be the 457th Bomb Group Association President. I hope and pray that I will be able to do as good a job as my predecessors, some of whom were at the Rapid City meeting. And, in regards to this meeting, our heartfelt thanks go out to John and Alberta Welch for all their hard work to arrange for this very successful meeting.

The accomplishments of this organization have been many in the past few years: the Memorial Window at the Savannah Chapel of the 8th Air Force Historical Society Museum, the plaque honoring both our group and the Commemorative Air Force that was placed at their new museum at Mesa, Arizona, the establishment of a great web site, and now, the memorial to be erected at the entry to our old Glatton base in England. And, I'm probably overlooking some other good accomplishments.

When I attended the General Meeting of our Association at Rapid City, I thought how fortunate that most of us there had the health and wherewithal to attend. After all, most of us are in our 80s. Have you ever wondered why God chose some of us to live, while He chose for others to pass on? I used to wonder about that when flying my missions over Germany during the war. Now, I recognize that if I knew God's intentions, then I would be God myself, which of course is impossible. I'll just leave such decisions up to Him.

The future shapes up to be an exciting one for our Association. With your help, we will make it a rewarding and memorable one.

Don Nielsen



PAST PREZ SEZ

WILL FLUMAN

THE PAST TWO YEARS HAVE BEEN VERY ACTIVE FOR THE 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION AND OUR NEWSLETTER HAS KEPT ALL OF US INFORMED IN A VERY INTERESTING AND TIMELY MANNER.

I'M SURE ALL OF YOU JOIN ME IN EXPRESSING OUR SINCERE APPRECIATION TO NANCY, AS WELL AS THE ENTIRE TOTH FAMILY, FOR MAKING THIS PUBLICATION THE TREMENDOUS SUCCESS THAT WE ALL LOOK FORWARD TO READING.

I ALSO WANT TO THANK THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EACH OF YOU FOR THE SUPPORT YOU HAVE GIVEN ME AS ALL OF US WORK TOGETHER TO HONOR AND PRESERVE THE MEMORY OF THE 457TH BOMB GROUP.

AS PAST PRESIDENT, I WILL CONTINUE WITH THE GLATTON MEMORIAL MONUMENT PROJECT. I TALKED WITH RAY POBCEE YESTERDAY AND HE REPORTS THAT WE HAVE VERBAL AUTHORIZATION FOR OUR PREFERRED SITE AT THE CORNER OF GREAT NORTH ROAD AND CONINGTON LANE. THE LEGAL PAPER WORK SHOULD PROCEED PROMPTLY. BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS, WE WILL HAVE AUTHORIZED THE GEERE COMPANY TO BEGIN THEIR WORK ON PREPARATION OF THE MONUMENT. IT IS OUR INTENTION TO DEDICATE THIS MONUMENT AT OUR 2004 MINI-REUNION IN PETERBOROUGH. DETAILS ABOUT THIS MEMORIAL MONUMENT ALONG WITH PICTURES IS INCLUDED ELSEWHERE IN THIS NEWSLETTER.

THE FLUMAN FAMILY WILL ONCE AGAIN COORDINATE THE MINI-REUNION. PRECEDENT OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS INDICATES THAT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE AT MADINGLY WILL BE MONDAY, MAY 31, 2004. OUR MINI-REUNION IS KEYED AROUND THAT DATE AND WE WILL ADVISE YOU OF SPECIFIC DETAILS AS THEY DEVELOP.

457TH MEMORIAL, GLATTON, ENGLAND

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO FREEDOM



Letter from John Welch, 2003 Reunion Chairman

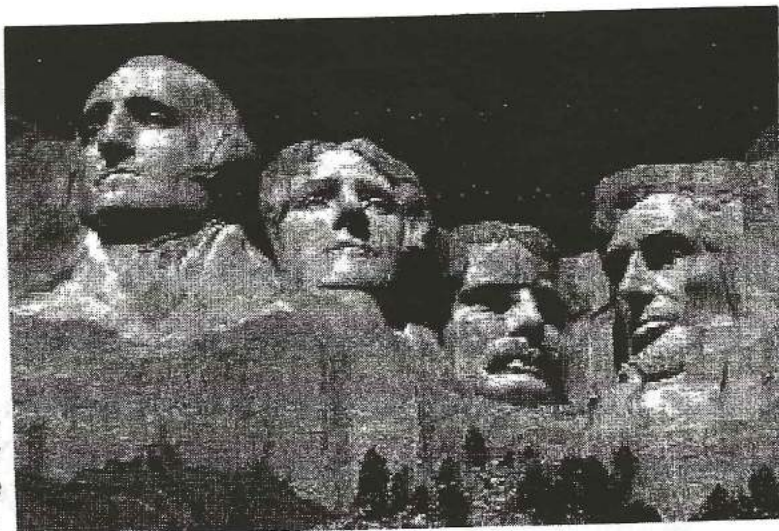
We had our ups and downs, but, except for some small glitches, everything went well. Alberta and I received many compliments while the Reunion was going on, and quite a few gratifying letters and notes.

The minor problems were things like the TV in the Banquet Room not receiving our public recognition from a local station, the microphone battery went dead while Col. Brown was telling us about flying the B-1B in combat over Iraq, and someone was taken ill just before our dinner was served.

Numbers? Name tags, 176; trip to Deadwood, 56; trip to the Passion Play, 25; to Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse, and Heritage Village, 137; Banquet, 161; Brunch--we sold tickets and made reservations for 66, but some canceled out for illness, nevertheless the serving staff gave up on tickets and just counted plates, something over 90. A substantial number of people ate brunch without paying. We had to pay per plate used. The Hotel hadn't planned for quite so many, so they ran short of some items, like fruit juice, etc.

Transportation went well, we were marginal on the number of seats to the Air Base and to Mt. Rushmore. A couple of guys were almost left behind at Mt. Rushmore. The driver of the third bus waited several minutes for them, and was just pulling out when they arrived.

We gathered from comments that all the entertainment events went well, especially the Cowboy Music Show at Heritage Village, and the Sunday night dance band. Did you see Col. Joe Brown and his wife, Sue, dancing? There were no complaints about the service rendered by the Hotel. All the service people were helpful and generous with their time, and seemed genuinely pleased that we had come. When we asked for something, the response was timely and appropriate. We have received "Thank You" letters from the folks at the Hotel, and from the



Hospitality Group at the Chamber of Commerce and even from the Silverado Casino in Deadwood.

I wrote a letter to the Air Base Commander, Col. Kowalski, expressing our appreciation for the Base's showing us around and for the privilege of visiting the airplane, and asking him to tell the people who gave up their "Down Day" how much we appreciated their enthusiasm and graciousness.

I saw Enid and Ray Pobgee at the Hotel just before they left for the Airport, and a letter of appreciation from them was waiting for us when we arrived home last Saturday night. I believe they truly had a good time visiting with all of us, and seeing the sights of Rapid City and the Black Hills.

Alberta and I are very grateful for all the kind comments we have received from 457th folks. We were pleased to give the Reunion our best because we believe you all are among the finest people in the world. The plaque you presented to us is BEAUTIFUL. It shall have a place of honor on our family room wall, where we can admire it often, and visitors will be able to see it, too.

Gratefully,

John

Deceased Memorialized at 2003 Reunion

Rapid City, SD

Wesley C. Akins	Richard Henry Gardner	James McCloskey	Sherman Roberts
George D. Anderson	James P. Gelsi	William R. McCoy	Raymond F. Rossner
Stephen F. Billisits	Dan Graham	John R. Middlebrooks	Richard C. Seely
Lewellyn G. Bredeson	Charles O. Gunderson	Luster B. Mills	Morris Shuff
Thomas Brines	Donald S. Hain	William B. Moore	Edward F. Slaman
Jack Cade	Augustus Julian Harris	Dominic Muscato	Virgil D. Smallen
Robert S. Christofferson	Robert L. Haynes	Fred Oglesby	Robert E. Southern
John Chumas	A. Clair Hetrick	Robert F. Ohwick	Robert Tangney
John A. Dahler	Billy Hightower	Carl W. Ostlind, Jr.	Ralph J. Thole
William E. Dee	George S. Inman	Stanley Patterson	Quentin P. Thompson
Garry De Young	Walter H. Kleinfelter	James Pedine	Alfred F. Tiedeman
Frederick L. Exley	Chyde B. Knipfer	Chuck Pirtle	Herman D. Walner
Barnett Feldman	George Langowski	Ramsey Hale	Charles O. Webber
John C. Fonda	James Harvey Latimer	Robert H. Reed	
Robert L. Fortner	Joel Lester	Homer E. Reich	
Keith Fuller	Paul C. Mason	Lynn Rice	



LETTER FROM JOHN PARKER REGARDING THE MEMORIAL DEDICATION IN FRANCE ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2003.

Just a note to send along with a copy of the speech I delivered in France on Saturday the 20th. The only problem we had was not being able to communicate with our hosts. There were a couple of younger folks who spoke English well, but they were not available all the time and there were just too many things going on for them to be everywhere. If I had to assess the whole weekend, I would rate it as completely fantastic and successful.

I was accompanied by my best friend in Europe, Mo Shields, who is a counselor in the large Army Hospital in Landstuhl, Germany. He meets most of air evac planes coming from Iraq with our wounded and injured. His wife, Ann, is a head nurse there and they are really busy right now with so many coming in. Friday was the first day she had had off in months. We drove from my home here in Luxembourg which took about 4 and a half hours almost all Autobahn. When we arrived at the hotel, we were greeted by Bill Siler. I had met him at Ramstein Air Base when he was catching a ride on an Air Force plane to England where he spent a few days, mostly at Glatton.

We saw few of the French folks Friday, but they arrived big time on Saturday morning--Pierre Colson, the man who organized the entire thing- Ann Muller who is a good friend of Russ Karl and speaks great English. We were not sure of the schedule as there had been none printed (never was), but we were to be at the site of the monument at 0930, which we were--four Fireballers, Me, Bill Siler, Russ Karl, and Rex Burke, and our pin up girl, Joan Shuff and her Grandson, Cory Getz. When we arrived there were about 500 French already there, and they continued to come--then there came a marching band, a platoon of retired members of the Free French and Foreign Legion, and perhaps 300 local citizens!! The weather was perfect, and the crowd was jubilant.

The audience stood in front of the bandstand--a color guard of U.S. Marines from the Embassy in Paris was up front--and about 15 of us on the bandstand. There were speeches from about 5 of the French dignitary including the Mayor of the

Community, the District Governor, and others I met but do not know their official titles. Then, just before my speech we all heard a sound approaching from the west, and over the horizon came a Fortress, at approximately 300 feet!! Everyone began applauding, yelling, even screaming with joy--the plane make 3 passes, all very low. I think it is based in Paris, but I am not sure.

I had sent my speech ahead to the French Friends of the 8th a couple of weeks ahead so that it could be translated. I read a paragraph into the microphone, and then the translator repeated it in French--a little awkward, but it worked well. I doubt that the speech was as good as the crowd thought it was, but it did the job and they enjoyed it.

After the speeches, we moved to the monument which is fantastic--the plaque is huge, perhaps 6 feet high and 4 feet wide, in black marble with a large 8th Air Force insignia at the top--it is all in French but one can read the names and numbers of the 4 Fortresses, including the 2 457th planes "You Never Know" which crashed very near the site on 10 Sept 44, and "El Lobo" which crash landed not far away, on 19 March 45. After the band played the Star Spangled Banner and the French National Anthem we thought we were free to go, but a horde of French armed with cameras came up front and begged us to pose, which we all did, for about 15 minutes. I finally found a chair near the refreshment tent where someone "forced" a large glass of champagne on me--and I sat there for half an hour signing autographs. It was absolutely overwhelming. I had brought along 50 small American flags I got from the U.S. Cemetery in Luxembourg and about fifty even smaller ones I bought at the PX at Bitburg Air Base--the larger ones outlined the monument site and the smaller ones we gave to children.

We left for the community hall at around 1245--there was only room for 300 inside, and it was packed. Fortunately, there was a reserved table for the Americans--we were applauded as we entered. As soon as we were seated they descended on us to get photos and autographs. But the wine and food began almost immediately and did not stop for more than 3 hours--at least a 6-course meal, all fantastic, and of a quality I could seldom afford. There were awards--Rex Burke had brought a hugh Eighth Air Force Flag as a gift from the Association and Pierre Colson carried unashamedly when he

--French Memorial Dedication...continued

got it. I had brought a large U.S. Air Force Flag with staff which I presented him at the monument site and he loved that of course. The President of Luxembourg Friends, U.S. Veterans, was there, and sat at our table. He presented their Medal of Freedom to the 457th Veterans and to Joan--and a beautiful book about their program here in Luxembourg and a large plaque for each of them. I had brought along 50 baseball type caps, 25 U.S. Army, and 25 U.S. Air Force, and they went too quickly--I made 50 of them happy and 250 angry, I suspect! I also had about a hundred lapel pins--small American flags, about 15 B-17 lapel pins, some U.S. Army with a flag, and some U.S. Air Force with flag--they were so appreciative.

The food was superb of course, the service just the best--it was one of the most wonderful days I ever spent. These people really do love those who served in the 8th Air Force and I am so glad that we were able to show in a small way that we do appreciate all they did during the war and after. There were old timers there who grabbed fliers as they landed in chutes and hid them away from the Germans--some were women.

We each took photos which we will get developed as soon as we can and send some along. Bill Siler took a lot of notes, too. He went on to Ramstein with my friends, spent the night with them, and will probably get out to the States today or tomorrow. He was the life of the party--they just loved him, especially when they found out he would soon be 88!! He, Russ, and Rex went out of their way to be gracious and were available to answer any questions, pose for photos, sign autographs--and Joan Shuff was gracious and charming as usual--they loved her.

I hope that all 457th folks will support what the French Friends of the 8th Air Force are trying to do, and if any of you are in Europe you should get in touch with them (Russ Karl has all the necessary info) and if possible visit this lovely monument. The most beautiful part of it is that lovely B-17, proudly wearing a stripe on its tail with a "U"!! I know you will be impressed. I intend on going back, I assure you.

WARM REGARDS...

JOHN PARKER

JOHN'S SPEECH AT THE MEMORIAL DEDICATION CEREMONY...

Distinguished members of the French Friends of the 8th Air Force, fellow veterans of the 457th Bomb Group, ladies and gentlemen:

It is a great honor for me to represent the 457th Bomb Group Association as our dear French Friends dedicate this monument to the Crews of 4 Flying Fortresses which crash landed near this area in 1944-1945. Two of these planes were from the 457th Group. This beautiful monument is a tribute to young Americans who fought and died in defense of Freedom and to the gallant French who risked their own lives to safeguard fliers who parachuted from crippled aircraft. 78 members of the 457th successfully evaded capture by the enemy and returned to friendly territory, mostly because of the bravery and dedication of our French Allies, some of whom are here with us today.

The 8th United States Army Air Force lost 26 thousand men killed and 28 thousand who became prisoners of war. The 8th Air Force had the highest casualty rate of any combat unit. The 457th made a significant contribution to this effort. In 14 months of flying combat, it flew 237 combat missions, dropped more than 17 thousand tons of bombs, losing 739 of our fliers who were either killed or became prisoners of war. I do not feel that I was a hero, but I flew with heroes. They are no longer young men, most are in their eighties, but they are still patriots, as you, our gallant French friends are also. Last month our Bomb Group had its reunion in South Dakota--we conduct one every 2 years--fewer than a hundred veterans were able to attend--many were too feeble to travel, or have wives who are seriously ill. Most have gone to their heavenly reward, joining their brothers who perished nearly sixty years ago.

I have lived a long and exciting life and my proudest moments were when I was privileged to fly with the brave men of the 457th. Only 4 of our crew of 10 are still alive--me, my pilot, flight engineer, and radio operator. Those three men are as dear to me as my own brother who by the way was a pilot in the 457th and completed 17 missions before the war was over.

I wish that each of my 457th buddies could be with us today, to experience the love and affection that you have showered upon me. Nobody in the 457th doubts that the French love the men of the 8th Air Force, especially me.

Thank you for inviting me to share this wonderful day with you--I will be back, I assure you. I love each of you and will never forget your display of friendship and your hospitality. God bless each of you, bless the veterans of the 457th Bomb Group, and Vive La France!!

PHOTOS FROM THE MEMORIAL DEDICATION IN FRANCE

①

Rex Burke and Russell Karl
with the 8th AF flag
presented to French Friends
of the 8th Air Force.

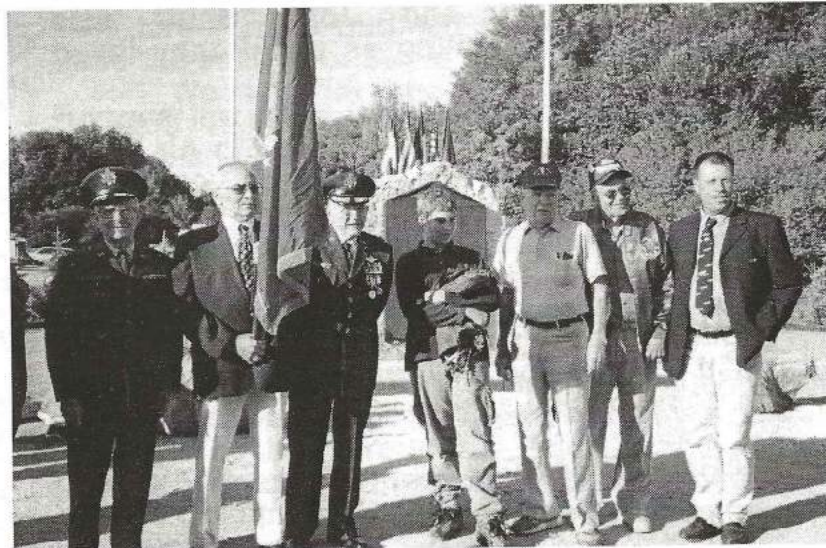


②

Joan Shuff with her
'Medal of Freedom'
awarded by Luxembourg
Friends of U.S. Veterans

③

Bill Siler, John Parker,
Rex Burke, and Russell
Karl with U.S.A.F. flag
presented to Pierre Colson.



PHOTOS FROM THE MEMORIAL DEDICATION IN FRANCE

④

**John Parker and
Bill Siler in front
of the monument.**



⑤

**Bill Siler and John Parker
with Marine Color Guard
from U.S. Embassy in
Paris.**



⑥

**Bill Siler and John Parker
at Chigy Monument
21 September 2003.**





2003 ROSTER NOW AVAILABLE

New Format...Larger Print...New Information

129 Pages in 6 Sections:

Section 1-Active Members

Section 2-Memoriams

Section 3-Widows

Section 4-Pilots/Flight Crews

Section 5-Ground Personnel

Section 6-457th B-17 Aircraft

In Addition...the roster contains extra pages and spaces to record new members as they appear in future newsletters

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...	\$18.00	for Roster and postage to mail in the U.S.
...	\$20.50	for Roster and postage to mail to Canada
...	\$26.00	for Roster and postage to mail overseas

We ordered enough copies from our printer to cover all those who expressed an interest in buying a Roster...We have many of those Roster left...If you said you would be interested in buying a Roster, please do so now. We need to pay our printing bill.

MISSION LOADING LISTS

- Loading Lists show the date, airplane number, and the crew of missions flown by the 457th Bomb Group.
- Here is a partial list so you can see what it will look like.

751ST BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON					
Office of the Operations Officer					
7 June 1944					
Crew No. 407			Ship No. 131		
P	1st Lt.	NORMAN A. ERBE	0-407238		
CP	2nd Lt.	ROBERT J. SHAFFER	0-816602		
N	2nd Lt.	ROBERT A. CARSON	0-699924		
B	2nd Lt.	RUSSELL H. AUTEN	0-753121		
AEG	S/Sgt	Richard N. Cochran	16046775		TT
ROG	S/Sgt	Richard M. Kirkland	14174689		RO
AG	Sgt	Wayne A. Taylor	31281360		BT
AG	Sgt	William L. Egri	13088881		TG
AG	Sgt	Paul (NMI) Frank	32704713		WG

- Loading Lists are available for nearly all missions.
- Use the order form below to order copies of your mission loading lists.

TO ORDER MISSION LOADING LISTS:

Name: _____ Squadron: _____

Date of 1st or last Mission: _____

Total number of Loading Lists requested: _____ @ \$1 per mission = _____

+ postage and envelope \$2

Total Amount Due = _____

ATTACH CHECK TO THIS ORDER FORM.

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: JOE TOTH

Address: _____

RECEIVED FROM DEL SCHWAB...

I thought this would be a good followup to "*THE LANLOUP GHOST SHIP*", a story that appeared in the April 2002 newsletter issue, telling of the experience of one of the crew members of the ill-fated B-17 "Luck of Judith Ann". Perhaps other friends, relatives, or crew members themselves might add to the story.

This was Hulitt's third mission, and according to his story, not all of the crew members thought that they were over freed territory. His story confirms much of what was told in the previous article.

Hulitt and I met at Mississippi State College, Starkville, Mississippi, the first pre-flight class of aviation cadets, about the first week of March 1943. We were billeted in an old three story quadrangle dorm of about Civil War vintage. Most of the windows were broken. The halls were covered with graffiti and had holes punched in them, and large holes had been burned thru from the upper floors so that you could see thru to the floors below. The Army soon remedied this and tho sparse, we were soon comfortable.

We soon became friends (he from Wilmington, Ohio and I from Toledo) and chummed along with others during our approximate five months stay. Being sent to different bases we lost touch until about 1988 when I looked him up in his hometown. We had a pleasant visit, but very little was said about our military careers (which by the way, were quite coincidental). At different times, both attended Radio School in Sioux Falls, SD and Gunnery School at Yuma Army Air Base, in Arizona, finally to the 457th BG, 8th Air Force, Glatton, England.

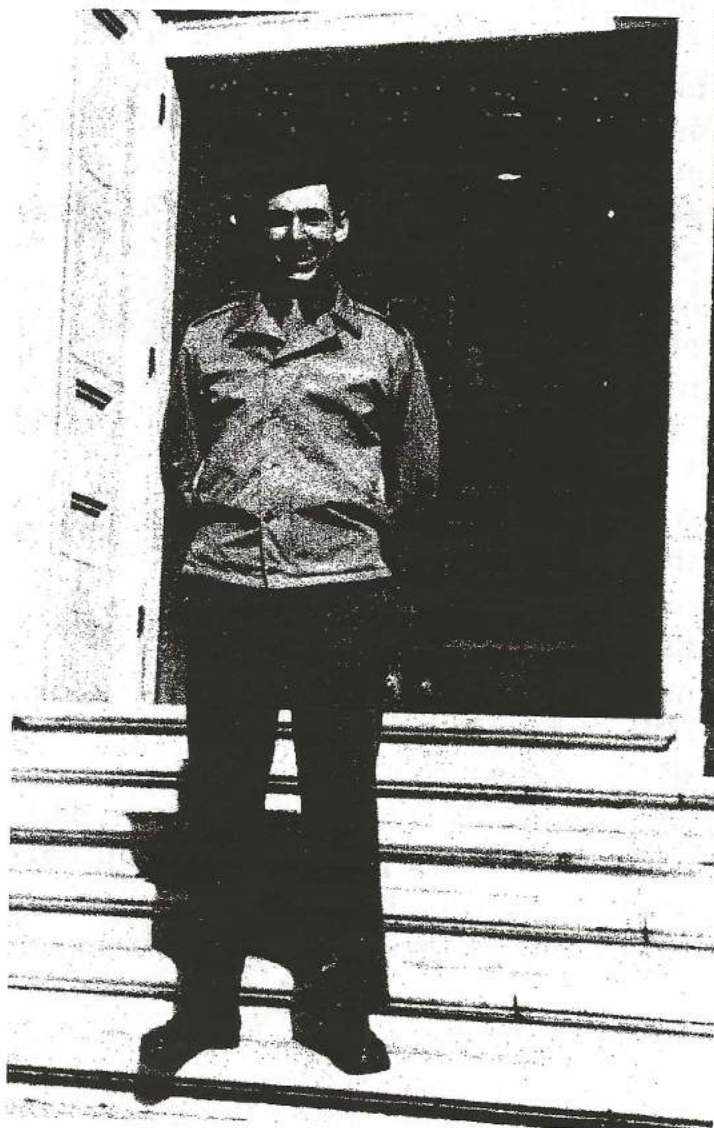
This group photo is from Miss State in 1943.

L to R: Hurlbut Bonney, Del Schwab, Hulitt Kirkhart, and Nelson Beal.



PERSONAL ACCOUNT FROM HULITT KIRKHART...pictured here.

The B-17 bomber crew, of which I was Radio Operator, was formed in early Spring of 1944. 2nd Lt. Montell C. Higgins was the pilot. Our training took place at Alexandria, LA. Upon completion of training, we were sent to Europe. We arrived at the 457th Bomb Group, Glatton, England in late July 1944. In early August, after a few days of orientation, we flew our first mission over enemy territory. It was a long one, and our plane was hit when enemy fighters attacked. No one was injured but there were holes in the fuselage. Two days later, on our second mission, flak damaged a fuel tank so that a sheet of fuel streamed behind the engines. God's mercy protected us from explosion. With quick transfer of remaining fuel from that tank to the other tanks, and orders to divert from the original target to another, we were able to return to base.



On August 11, our crew was not scheduled for a mission. After having attended a class session to maintain proficiency in copying Morse Code and visiting the PX, I returned to the barracks. I was notified that I had been assigned to a different crew for a bombing mission later that day. This crew's radio operator had not returned from a mission the day before when he filled the vacancy

another crew had created when that crew's radio operator had been injured by enemy fire. The target was the port of Brest, France. 2nd LT Gerald Ross was the pilot of this crew. It was an afternoon flight, a "Milk run", this crew's first mission. Pre-flight operations were routine, the flight to the target was without opposition. We were flying at about 30,000 feet when the bombs were released over the target. Just after release, flak hit our

Hulitt Kirkhart story...continued...

plane and shut down #3 and #4 engines. The pilot turned inland to find a place to land the plane. Finding none, he ordered us to abandon the plane. The navigator gave us an approximate position with the information that we were probably over German occupied territory. The pilot had now headed the plane toward the ocean with the hope that the crewless plane would not crash on land.

After attaching the chest parachute to the body harness and hooking my tied-together shoes to a snap, (we wore heated flight suits including footwear) I made my way to the waist door. An officer (I can't remember which one nor when he had come back to the waist) was there alone as the gunners had already exited. I prepared to jump but made the error of looking down. Fear caused me to hesitate several seconds. With realization of the necessity and "encouragement" from the officer, I leaned out of the door, kept my head low to avoid being hit by the horizontal tail stabilizer and left the plane.

In training lectures, we were told to delay opening our chutes to avoid detection and thus become a target of ground fire. (THOUGHT--How long does it take to fall 8,000 or 9,000 feet to the ground?) I pulled the ring when I realized that I didn't know the answer. The chute opened, my shoes went flying up past my face, and I received the jolt of deceleration. (The wisdom of being sure the harness is snug took on meaning at that moment. Mine was!)

My first sensation was that I was hanging, immobile in mid-air. I looked up to see the plane going away. No other chutes were visible. I experienced a profound sense of loneliness. As I descended, the clarity of the sound of birds, dogs, and chickens was impressive. But what about landing? Our training did not cover this. I did remember someone said, "Do not stiffen your knees."

The wind was light and the path of my descent was such that I missed hitting trees, thus, I landed in an open field. I hit the ground hard enough to be dazed for a few seconds. Reality returned when I heard shouting and the barking of dogs. Per procedure, I gathered my parachute and headed for cover which was a depression beside a hedgerow. I covered myself with sticks and leaves to the best of my ability and waited as the sounds of search drew nearer. I was not discovered. I stayed in place until dark, then ventured to explore my surroundings. I found myself in a field of shocked wheat. I spent the night next to one of those wheat shocks. My thoughts covered a wide range, but the main one centered on the question, "How do I get to the American lines without encountering the Germans? What direction do I go?"

When morning arrived, I walked across fields to avoid a road where I'd heard the sound of a motorcycle during the night. I do not know how long I'd walked when I came over a rise and encountered a 10 or 11 year old boy. He was dragging a cow which I supposed

Hulitt Kirkhart story...continued...

was being taken to his home for milking. We saw each other at about the same moment. I decided to make contact. In my best high school French, I told him that I was an American. (NOTE: My clothing would not indicate that fact.) I tried to make inquiry about his family but the idiomatic phrases eluded me. I followed the boy to a house where a woman and two teenage girls met us. Again, I explained that I was American. They were friendly and we were able to communicate somewhat. Soon the boy left on a bicycle. Provision was made for me to freshen up and a snack was offered. I gave them some candy from my survival kit. That was a hit. It was communicated that the girls wanted the parachute. I consented to try to find it but soon realized that I could not retrace my steps. Shortly thereafter, a man arrived on a motorcycle and indicated that I was to accompany him. I hoped this would lead to reunion with other American soldiers.

I was transported to a small town where I was questioned by an English speaking man. His questions were few but with the indication that he knew that I had parachuted from a crippled plane. He did not seek any military information so I relaxed a little. (I later discovered that these people were part of the French underground resistance.) Afterward, I was taken to another town where there were US troops. Reunion occurred with others of the crew who had been picked up the day before. There was some

suspicion and nervousness among the GI's here, about us, for we had no uniforms or insignia. Trucks which were returning for supplies for the front lines of battle, transported us to the port of Cherbourg, France. On the way we saw the damage of war in destroyed buildings and military equipment. A C-47 was sent to bring us back to the 457th base. I discovered that I had been listed as MIA. I quickly wrote a letter to my parents. Also, I discovered some personal items had been stolen from my locker.

We were given orders to report to the Director of Intelligence, at Central Command in London. We were debriefed. We learned that a provision concerning escapees from enemy territory made us eligible to return to the US. While in London I saw the damage wrought by Hitler's air power and V-bombs. I experienced the fear of V-bomb attack as 3 or 4 passed overhead during my stay there.

I went overseas by troop ship. I returned to the US by plane, a smooth flying C-54. I was assigned to two more air bases before the war ended. They were at Yuma, Arizona, where I had received aerial gunnery training the year before. The other base was located at San Bernardino, CA. I received an honorable discharge there Nov. 10, 1945 after having returned from furlough with my bride. We stayed in California for several weeks, then returned to Ohio to begin post-war civilian life.

--Hulitt Kirkhart

Freedom isn't free...it is provided and protected by our gallant military

It could have been any night of the week, as I sat in one of those loud and casual steak houses that are cropping up all over the country. You know the type--a bucket of peanuts on the table, shells littering the floor, and a bunch of perky college kids racing around with long neck beers and sizzling platters.

Taking a sip of my iced tea, I studied the crowd over the rim of my glass. I let my gaze linger on a few of the tables next to me, where several uniformed military members were enjoying their meals. Smiling sadly, I glanced across my booth to the empty seat where my husband usually sat.

Had it only been a few weeks since we had sat at this very table talking about his upcoming deployment to the Middle East? He made me promise to come back to this restaurant once a month, sit in our booth, and treat myself to a nice dinner.

He told me that he would treasure the thought of me there eating a steak and thinking about him until he came home. I fingered the little flag pin I wear on my jacket and wondered where at that moment he was. Was he safe and warm? Was his cold any better? Were any of my letters getting to him? As I pondered all of these things, shrill feminine voices from the next booth broke into my thoughts.

"I don't know what Bush is thinking invading Iraq. Didn't he learn anything from his father's mistakes? He is an idiot anyway, I can't believe he is even in office. You know he stole the election."

I cut into my steak and tried not to listen as they began an endless tirade of running down our president. I thought about the last night I was with my husband as he prepared to deploy. He had just returned from getting his smallpox and anthrax shots and the image of him standing in our kitchen packing his gas mask still gave me chills.

Once again their voices invaded my thoughts. "It is all about oil, you know. Our military will go in and rape and pillage and steal all the oil they can in the name of freedom. I wonder how many innocent lives our soldiers will take without a thought? It is just pure greed."

My chest tightened and I stared at my wedding ring. I could picture how handsome my husband was in his mess dress the day he slipped it on my finger. I wondered what he was wearing at that moment. He probably had on his desert uniform, affectionately dubbed coffee stains, over the top of which he wore a heavy bulletproof vest.

"We should just leave Iraq alone. I don't think they are hiding any weapons. I think it is a ploy to increase the president's popularity and pad the budget of our military at the expense of social security and education. We are just asking for another 9-11 and I can't say when it happens again that we didn't deserve it." Their words brought to mind the war protesters I had watched gathering outside our base. Did no one appreciate the sacrifice of brave men and women who leave their homes and family to ensure our freedom? I glimpsed at the tables around me and saw the faces of some of those courageous men, looking sad as they listened to the ladies talk.

"Well I for one, think it is a travesty to invade Iraq and I am certainly sick of our tax dollars going to train the professional baby killers we call a military. 'Professional baby killers?' As I thought about what a wonderful father my husband is and wondered how long it would be before he was able to see his children again, indignation rose up within me.

Freedom isn't free...continued

Normally reserved, pride in my husband gave me a boldness I had never known. Tonight, one voice would cry out on behalf of the military. One shy woman would stand and let her pride in our troops be known. I made my way to their table, placed my palms flat on it and lowered myself to be eye level with them.

Smiling, I said, "I couldn't help overhearing your conversation. I am sitting over here trying to enjoy my dinner alone. Do you know why I am alone? Because my husband, whom I love dearly, is halfway across the world defending your right to say rotten things about him. You have the right to your opinion, and what you think is none of my business, but what you say in my hearing is and I will not sit by and listen to you run down my country, my president, my husband, and all these other fine men and women in here who put their lives on the line to give you the freedom to complain. Freedom is expensive ladies, don't let your actions cheapen it."

I must have been louder than I meant to be, because about that time the manager came over and asked if everything was all right. "Yes, thank you," I replied and then turned back to the ladies, "Enjoy the rest of your meal."

To my surprise, as I sat down to finish my steak, a round of applause broke out in the restaurant. Not long after, the ladies picked up their check and scurried away, the manager brought me a huge helping of apple cobbler and ice cream, compliments of the table to my left.

He told me that the ladies had tried to pay for my dinner, but someone had beaten them to it. When I asked who, he said the couple had already left, but that the man had mentioned he was a WWII vet and wanted to take care of the wife of one of our boys.

I turned to thank the soldiers for the cobbler, but they wouldn't hear a word of it, retorting, "Thank you. You said what we wanted to say but weren't allowed." As I drove home that night, for the first time in a while I didn't feel quite so alone. My heart was filled with the warmth of all the patrons who had stopped by my table to tell me they too were proud of my husband and that he would be in their prayers.

I knew their flags would fly a little higher the next day. Perhaps they would look for tangible ways to show their pride in our country and our troops, and maybe, just maybe, the two ladies sitting at that table next to me would pause for a minute to appreciate all the freedom this great country offers and what it costs to maintain. As for me, I had learned that one voice can make a difference. Maybe the next time protesters gather outside the gates of the base where I live, I will proudly stand across the street with a sign of my own. A sign that says, "Thank you!"

--Lori Kimble

Lori is a 31 year old teacher and proud military wife. She is a California native currently living in Alabama.

Thanks to Lori Paris Barnett for sending this in. It's perfect for a 'Veterans Day' issue of our newsletter.



Questions answered...

Family learns what really happened to Maria Stein native, Jerome Hartings who was shot down during WWII

An American flag waves in the breeze, caressing the granite marker of Sgt. Jerome J. Hartings at St. Mary Cemetery in Philothea. The passage of time--nearly six decades--has turned the once pristine white to light grey and the etched texture smooth.

Time, as well as an unexpected letter from a former military acquaintance turned author, have provided answers at last to questions that plagued his family since March 1944.

Hartings, a Marie Stein native nicknamed Bud, was killed in action during a WWII mission over Germany. A radioman in the U.S. Army Air Force, he proudly served with the 457th Bombardment Group affectionately dubbed "The Fireball Outfit."

"My mom and dad went to their graves wondering whether the fallen veteran laid to rest here was really Bud or some other airman," his sister, Martha (Hartings) Sherman of New Bremen, says, "Now we have no doubts whatsoever that it is our brother."

Sherman was 14 years old when a knock on the front door interrupted preparations for the evening meal March 24, 1944. No one had an appetite after the uniformed officer left in a shiny black car. A telegram spelled out the chilling news--Hartings



was missing in action after his plane went down in the Baltic Sea.

The family prayed the dark-haired man who always sported a smile would be found safe and sound. Perhaps he was stranded on a distant shore or held captive by the Germans.

The speculation proved unfounded and 20-year old Hartings was officially pronounced dead Aug. 15, 1945. Memorial services were held the following month with relatives, friends and fellow members of the St. John High School class of 1942 filling the church pews.

"My parents never believed Bud's body would be recovered," Sherman says. "The military didn't recover planes lost at sea in those days. There were far too many of them."

In April 1950, the Air Force announced Hartings' body had been recovered. It would arrive in Coldwater aboard a Nickel Plate train at 11:27 p.m. April 18. A hearse from Desch Funeral Home bore the flag-draped casket to the Hartings home west of Philothea the following day.

"The casket was placed in the living room and an airman from Florida spent the night with us," Sherman recalls. "It all seemed so unreal--the casket, the flag, Bud's picture. My mom and dad wondered whether it was

-Jerome Hartings in 1943-

really him inside that sealed casket. All of us did."

The wake provided a time for memories of happier times. Sherman recalled Bud being captain of the high school basketball team and later working at Master Electric in Dayton with his father. They lived there Monday through Friday and came home on weekends. That all changed Jan. 14, 1943, when he entered the service.

"Bud was popular and had a lot of girlfriends," she says with a chuckle. "Being four years younger, I thought he looked so handsome in his uniform."

Family members, including sisters Viola Davis of Coldwater, Rosalie Decker of St. Marys and Julia Heyne of Dayton, visit his grave from time to time. They always took flowers on Memorial Day.

"This is the first year we didn't stand there and wonder about Bud," Sherman says. "I can't explain how it feels to have all our doubts reserved. It took 58 years to reach this point."

James L. Bass, a former military man who lives in Tennessee, sent a letter to Celina resident Wilfred Hartings in February inquiring about relatives of Sgt. Jerome Hartings. The cousin, whose name Bass found on the internet, quickly contacted Sherman, who in turn called her brother, Don, in Fort Worth Texas.

"The letter came out of the blue and we had no idea what Mr. Bass wanted," Sherman says. "He proved to be a wealth of information regarding our brother's last day."

Questions...cont

Hartings, who had five successful missions under his belt, served as a crew member aboard the "Flying Jenny" piloted by Lt. Eugene H. Whalen. On March 6, 1944, a daytime bombing raid over Berlin drew heavy anti-aircraft fire near the city of Magdeburg. Crewmen from other planes reported hearing the sound "thwack" over and over as shells hit paydirt.

A German fighter planedrew a bead on the "Flying Jenny". It exploded and crashed into a plane piloted by Lt. Roy E. Graves. Both aircraft came down near the town of Brachwitz, midway between Berlin and Magdeburg, according to Bass.

The Germans recovered all the bodies, including that of Hartings. They were buried four days later in a mass grave by Polish people who had been displaced by the war.

The Tennessee man, who has shared the history of the 457th in a trilogy of books called "Fait Accompli," reported the Army learning of the mass grave in 1945 through German burial records. The then current Burgermeister, or mayor, confirmed the site because he had witnessed the somber burial.

"Your brother was identified by his identification (dog) tags, the staff sergeant chevrons on his shirt, a little triangular emblem sewed on his sleeve indicating he was a radio operator and some dental records," Bass wrote

to Hartings in March. "While identification can always be questioned, you can be assured proper military procedure was utilized in the identification process."

He also explained the grave was opened wider and deeper in order to prevent damaging or disturbing key evidence. The remains were subsequently transferred to Neuville, Belgium, for additional review prior to notification of families.

Sherman is grateful the information came in time to share with another brother, Andrew F. Hartings, Sr., who died earlier this month in Indiana.

"We always assumed Bud was in the plane at the bottom of the Baltic Sea," Sherman says. "Now we know the whole story after all these years."



BOB HOPE
1903-2003



Your Web Site on the Internet: The 457th Bomb Group Association

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

WEB MASTER: WILLARD "HAP" REESE

HELPFUL HINTS FOR SURFING THE WEB SITE

In the past months I've had some comments about the difficulty of surfing through the Web site. I'd like to take a few minutes and suggest a few ways to find things. We know your time is valuable and limited so these suggestions should help you find your way through the 2000 photos and the 170 megabytes of information that make up your web site. Let's start with the easiest way to find any information on the site.....that's the "Search" box.

When using the "Search" box on the Home Page, there is a tendency to supply too much information at one time. Here's a tip. Don't enter a person's full name...just enter the last name. You see, the search program looks for exact words and phrases so if you enter John Peters the program may not find the name if, on the web site, we have used a middle initial. By using just the last name the search results will show all the instances with that last name. From this you can decide which ones you wish to look at. Remember too, the search program will ferret out numbers - mission number, dates (enter month, day, and year [i.e. Jun 6th, 1944] abbreviating the month.) Also, aircraft serial numbers, bombing targets, bomber names, and almost anything else is searchable. This is, by far, the best way to find information on the web site.

When search results lead you to a page that has thousands of data on it, it becomes a problem finding the item on the page. To search an individual page for a name or number, first hold down the Control key and hit the F key on your keyboard. This will bring up a small window titled "Find in this page". Enter the text or numbers you are looking for and then click on the "Find" button in this small window. This will immediately jump to the word. If the word is not the one you are looking for continue clicking on the "Find" button to continue the search down the page. The small search window will remain open until you click on the "Close" button.

On the "Message Board", with so many entries, it is difficult to find the current additions. I use the Control - F (as described above) and enter the date as follows: i.e. 10/09/2003 and the highlight will jump to any entries for that date. To scan further just keep changing the day number and search for the past week or more.

Another helpful hint. If you have a URL for a particular web site page, you can enter that directly in the Browser's URL input box (at the top of your browser). That will immediately take you to that page.

That's it for now, but remember...the 457th Bomb Group is now on cdrom with all of the same features that we find on the web. There are still copies of the first edition available. To obtain one, just click on the picture of the cdrom disk on the Home page and all the information on obtaining the cdrom will be found there.

Good surfing,

Willard "Hap" Reese

FYI



- OUR WEB SITE ON CD ROM...STILL AVAILABLE

Permanent recording of the lives and times of those men who served with the 457th Bomb Group...you do not need the internet to view this CD.

... \$30.00 for CD and postage to mail in the U.S.

... \$35.00 for CD and postage outside North America

ORDER FROM JOSEPH DELUCCIA

214 Cambridge Avenue
Saddle Brook, NJ 07663

- WWII MEMORIAL DEDICATION DATE SET

The year 2004 will see the completion of the long overdue (59) years) World War II Memorial dedicated to all who served in the Armed Forces and Merchant Marine of the United States. The construction site in Washington DC is located between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument, at the eastern end of the Reflecting Pool. The American Battle Monuments Commission has set Saturday, May 29, 2004--Memorial Day weekend--as the dedication date.

Del Schwab says you better make your hotel and travel arrangements now as many hotels are already booked solid.

- CHECK THE NUMBERS AFTER YOUR NAME ON THE MAILING LABEL OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

IF YOU SEE THE NUMBERS "03" YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS ABOUT TO EXPIRE UNLESS YOU PAY YOUR DUES BY DECEMBER 31.

DON'T LET THIS BE YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I RECEIVED THIS FROM MAJ. JOHN SCHWIKERT USAF (RET) AFTER A MEMORIAL NOTICE APPEARED IN A NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCING THE DEATH OF QUENTIN P. THOMPSON, WHO DIED JUNE 10, 2002. JOHN SAID THAT NOTICE BROUGHT BACK SOME MEMORIES...

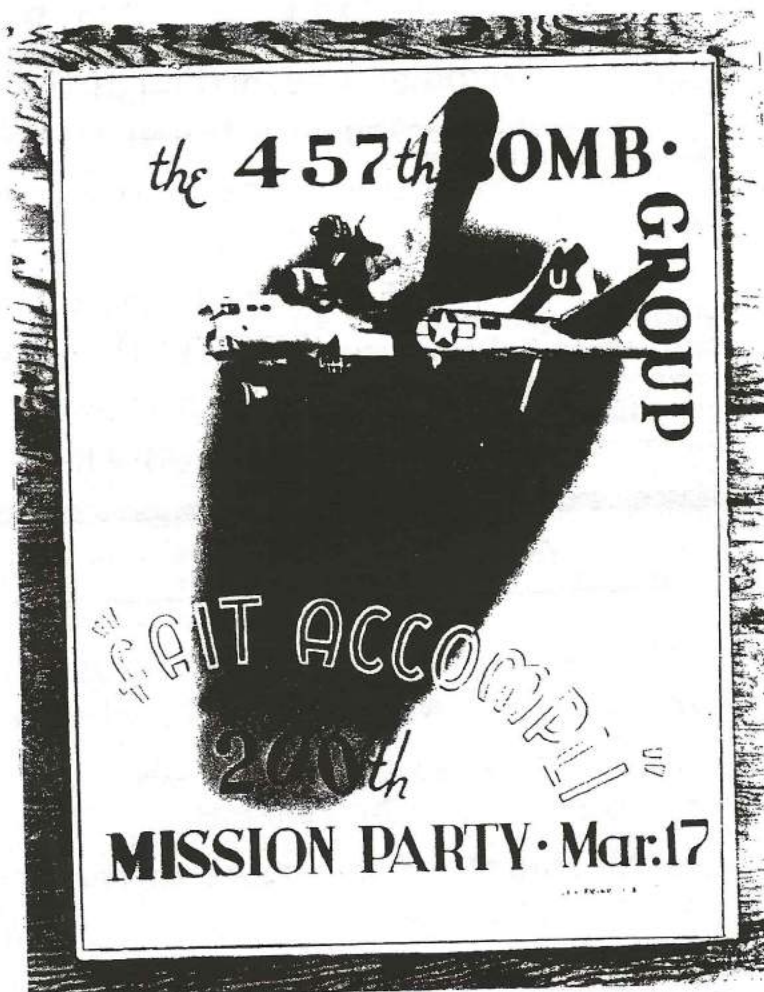
"I was in the 749th Squadron and on March 17, 1945, we flew 10 hrs. to Altenberg, Germany. On return to Glatton, we were told no flying tomorrow for the 457th Bomb Group as we were having a 200th mission party that night.

We were told to turn in our side arms at the ammo shack. (No shooting during the party!) While crossing a little creek, my co-pilot twisted his leg and was grounded. After the party and a short sleep we were told to get up for a mission. This is when I first met Quentin who was replacing my co-pilot.

Had a delayed take-off as we had several maintenance problems plus the group had already departed when the aircraft finally checked out. I asked the navigator to give me a course where we might intercept the group and that we did.

Everything went normal until after bombs were dropped over Berlin. When the squadron turned left, my leader of the three ship element went straight ahead. Seems like he had trouble closing the bomb bay doors. Then he made a radical turn to the left to join the squadron when we were hit by Me262s.

We had more damage reported in the book "Flak Dodger". I pulled back a little out of formation to see how much of a problem we had. There was a hole in #2 fuel tank the size of a basketball and it was on fire. I had filled the main tanks full from the Tokyo Tanks and it burned instead of blowing up. No. 2 engine was on fire and #3 prop was running away.



John Schwikert article...continued

I started letting down very fast (went through the red line) trying to blow the wing fire out and also to get down where we wouldn't need oxygen masks if we had to bail out. At about 16,000 feet I leveled off and since the wing fire was getting worse I told the crew to bail out and also rang the bail out bell. I put the ship on auto-pilot and went to the navigators hatch to bail out when I noticed the left main gear hanging down. We must have also been hit by Flak to damage the gear like that.

Shortly after I went out, the wing burned off and did a falling leaf---the rest of the ship went tumbling down. We were captured (no side arms) and several days later we were in a Berlin rail road station bomb shelter with a lot of Germans when the RAF bombed that night.

Went to Stendal Germany by rail where we were put in solitary and interrogated daily. Same old thing, 'you are not Schwikert, you have his dog tags, you are a spy, we will turn you over to the Gestapo.' Then on to Stalagluft I, Barth, Germany.

When I say we, I do not remember how many of the crew were together at what time. I do know that my navigator, R.O. Everett and I had joining cells at Stendal and we communicated by tapping on steam pipes in Morse Code. (Just like in the movies!)"

Editor's Note:

Additional information included in the "Flak Dodger", pages 206-207 states the following: "A/C #43-38203, piloted by Lt. John W. Schwikert, was flying in number three slot in the high flight of the low squadron. The squadron was attacked by three Me 262s. The enemy jets attacked the formation from the tail, each attacking one of the B-17s. The B-17s were flying through moderate to heavy accurate flak during the fighter attack. A/C #43-38203 continued to fly in its position for some time after the fighter attack and then engine #2 caught fire. The A/C dropped out of the formation, gradually lost altitude, and when last seen was apparently flying under control. From six to nine parachutes were reported by observers."

P	2nd Lt	John W. Schwikert
CP	2nd Lt	Quentin P Thompson
N	2nd Lt	Reuben O. Everett
T	Sgt	Hugh Burton
AE	Sgt	Emilie D. Piagini
RO	Sgt	Rayford L. Brooks
BW	Cpl	Douglas R. Barron
BT	Cpl	Irving S. Brod
TG	Cpl	James C. Taber

IN MEMORIAM



TAPS

*Thanks and praise...for our days
Neath the sun, Neath the stars, Neath the moon
As we go...This we know
God is nigh.*

The following are reported deceased since last newsletter.

DEE, WILLIAM E. "NED"

July 14, 2003

Reported by Lee Zimmerman

A combination newspaper article/obituary notice reads in part...

"William 'Ned' Dee was anything but your typical commercial pilot"

Major William E. 'Ned' Dee fell in love with airplanes when he was a kid. He cut classes in Whiston-Salem, N.C., to go down to the airfield to watch Charles Lindberg deliver the mail. "That was when he knew he would be a pilot," his widow, Evelyn Dee said. At the outbreak of World War II, Dee volunteered for the Army Air Force and received his flight training at Turner Army Air Base in Albany, GA. He was assigned to B-17s in the 457th Bomb Group in England. In June 1944, his aircraft was shot down over Germany and most of the crew killed. Dee parachuted into Germany, and even though badly wounded, managed to evade capture for four days. He was caught on June 5, 1944. The Germans did not understand he was a downed pilot, and treated him as a spy or saboteur. They took him to Berlin, where he was tortured and interrogated by the Gestapo. Dee gave only his name, rank, and serial number, and fought off paranoia by forming a mental calendar, and reciting verses from the Bible. After they concluded he was not a spy, they sent him to Luft Stalag I. He was liberated by Russian forces. After leave in Paris, Dee was returned to his squadron then stationed in Iceland. His adventures were not over yet. On patrol over the North Atlantic, his plane ran into a heavy snowstorm, then ran out of gas before reaching base. Dee ordered the crew to bail out; he followed. What happened to the rest of the crew is unknown, but Dee came down on a farm, where the wind carried him into a pasture full of pigs. He was honorably discharged in 1948. He retired from the FAA in 1974, and became a private pilot. In that capacity, he piloted President Richard Nixon and Florida Gov. Claude Kirk. But his most exciting flight was when he was tapped to fly TV newsman Bill Moyers to Cuba for an interview with Fidel Castro. He was the first private pilot allowed to fly into Cuba after the Castro revolution. Their plane was met in Cuban airspace by Cuban MIGs and ushered to the airfield in Havana, where Moyers was allowed to disembark. But armed guards made Dee stay in the plane. He sat in the plane on the airfield apron for 12 hours. When Moyers returned, they flew back to Miami under escort from the MIGs."



IN MEMORIAM

BUDICH, SR. JOSEPH MICHAEL

September 23, 2003

Reported by Robert J. Huels

Robert Huels sent an Obituary notice of this former member of the 457th Bomb Group. The notice reads, in part..."Joseph Michael Budich, Sr., of Kettering, formerly of Dayton, was a United States Army Air Force World War II Veteran and a former P.O.W. captured in Germany. He was 81 years old."

CHUMAS, JOHN

February 1, 2003

Reported by wife Antoinette

No other information received.

GELSI, JAMES P.

May 5, 2002

Reported by a relative

No other information received.

HALE, RAMSEY

January 25, 2003

Reported by Linda (Latimer) Contreras-daughter of James H. Latimer

"Ramsey Hale, part of the 8th Air Force, 457th Bomb Group, 750th Squadron, passed away in La Grange, North Carolina. Ramsey was the Waist Gunner for Maj. James H. Latimer (Ret./Deceased). We know that they are together again, catching up on all the news. God Bless!"

HAYNES, ROBERT L.

Reported at 2003 Reunion in Rapid City

Need information

HEINS, EVERT R.

August 5, 2002

Reported by James Bass

Member of Donald Snow crew
No other information received

LATIMER, JAMES H.

October 16, 2002

Jim's death was first announced in the last newsletter. The following additional information was received from Jim's wife, Ernestine:

"James H. Latimer, U.S.A.F. (Ret.) passed away October 16, 2002. He was a Life Member and was with the 750th Sq. He was a Pilot and flew 25+ missions from England, flying the last combat mission on April 21, 1945. Afterwards, he flew to Linz, Austria to return liberated French prisoners back to France. Due to his illness, we haven't been to a reunion since Reno, Nevada. He always looked forward to the 457th newsletters. His graveside funeral was a beautiful one at the Riverside National Cemetery in California. He was honored with full Military Honor Guard. We would have been married 60 years in 2 weeks after his death. A wonderful life and great loss. But the Lord knew it was his time and he had suffered so. His co-pilot passed away this year also....Jack O. McMillen from Boise, IA. Now just 3 of his crew are still living."

IN MEMORIAM



MCCLOSKEY, JIM

November 23, 2002

Jim's death was reported in a previous Newsletter. We received this note from Jim's son, George...

George says: "Jim McCloskey, a member of the 751st with Willard Reese and his crew, passed away at the V.A. Hospital in Palo Alto, CA. Jim was a proud member of his team, of which contact with others on his crew was something he enjoyed until his passing. He was a great man who raised 7 kids on the west coast. We miss him greatly, and know he is in loving hands, eagerly awaiting our return from our own 'mission.' "

MILLS, LUSTER B.

June 18, 2003

Reported by son David

David wrote: "It is with great sadness that I report the passing of my father, Luster, CMSGT USAF (ret.), tail gunner of A-Able, ser# 43-37532, "The Joker's Wild", 751st Bomb Squadron in Spokane, Washington. He was 78.

MOORE, WILLIAM BERNARD "BILL"

December 15, 2002

Reported by wife Betty J. Moore

Betty says: "Just wanted to let you know that Bill was very disappointed that he couldn't make it to the Reunion in Colorado. He was very ill for the past two years, so we are happy for him that he no longer has to suffer. He was the "Greatest" Husband and Father. We miss him so much." His obituary reads in part: 'He was a WWII Army Air Corp Technical Sergeant where he undertook 35 missions over Germany serving as Radioman and Ball Turret Gunner as a member of the 8th Air Force, 457th Bomb Group. He enjoyed reunions with the 457th Bomb Group. He is survived by his wife Betty and 3 daughters.'

OGLESBY, JR. FRED M.

Post Office notification

PEDINE, JAMES

May 13, 2002

Reported by wife Mary

PIRTLE, CHUCK

June 13, 2002

Reported by Jim Murphy

Crew Chief on "Ace of Hearts"
No other information received.



IN MEMORIAM

RICE, LYNN

June 3, 2002

Reported by friend, Dot Rasco

No other information received.

STEWART, CHARLES

July 31, 1986

Reported by Joe Toth

Tail Gunner on 'Black Puff Polly'

Charles' daughter, Marcy Adams, reports...

"At the time he died he had an appeal going to make his VA Disability service connected. They said he did not qualify...he had a stroke, a heart attack, frost bitten feet, ulcers, anxiety, and I'm sure he suffered from depression from time to time. I always said some of this was from being in the POW camp. The men almost starved to death. Dad weighed 89 pounds when he got out. And, as long as he lived, you could never close a door in a room he was in. He was a beautiful man, he never complained, and he did everything the Doctor and nurses asked him to do. I tried to get his Purple Heart replaced...the government said he did not win the Purple Heart. But I do know he was injured when his plane was shot down, I talked to Mr. Schellenger, the co-pilot on 'Black Puff Polly, and he said everyone on the crew was awarded the Purple Heart."

Note: Joe Toth has given Marcy help to see about having her Dad's medals replaced.

TIEDEMANN, ALFRED F.

April 17, 2003

Reported by wife Doris Jones

No other information received



2 PILOTS AND AZ WING'S/CAF'S HEINKEL HE-111 ARE LOST

AFTER SPENDING 3 MONTHS ON ROTATION IN MIDLAND, THE CAF'S/AZ WING'S HEINKEL HE-111 DEPARTED MIDLAND ON THURSDAY MORNING JULY 10 ENROUTE TO MISSOULA, MONTANA, TO JOIN UP WITH OUR B-17 SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY ON TOUR.

Approaching the Cheyenne, Wyoming Airport the Heinkel declared an emergency with the Cheyenne Control Tower as the left engine failed, and was feathered. The crew appeared to make a left turn to avoid a residential area between its location and the airport.

During an attempt to pull up to avoid a power line the aircraft appeared to stall and fall off on its left wing, striking the ground and sliding through a chain link fence into a building under construction, a school bus washing facility. The aircraft then caught fire and engulfed the building in flames. No injuries were reported on the ground, but both pilots were killed. The cause of the engine failure is under investigation. This report is very preliminary and may not be as the accident investigators will see it in the final report, but was reported in the initial statement.

The pilots were AZ Wing's Operations Officer Neil Stamp and Charles "Steve" Bates. Neil Stamp was a Boeing 767 Captain flying International



Routes for US Airways. He was PIC rated in the He-111 and SNJ. Neil also flew his own helicopter and was a helicopter crew chief in the Vietnam War. He leaves a wife Sally and a son Adam.

Steve Bates was an A-320 Airbus Captain and Check Airman for America West Airlines. He was also a designated Pilot Examiner for the FAA for the State of Arizona. He was PIC rated in the B-17, O-2, and Champ. Steve leaves a wife, Betty.

The Arizona Wing and the entire CAF are greatly stricken with the loss of these 2 fine people and pilots and send our deepest sympathy to their families. On August 9, the AZ Wing held a remembrance for both Neil and Steve at their hangar.

We are also greatly stricken for the loss of the Heinkel He-111, the last one in the world which was flying.

The He-111 was originally designed as a transport and first flown in 1935. The He-111 became one of Germany's primary bombers and the one used to bomb England during the Battle of

Britain. Our CAF/AZ Wing's He-111 was Spanish built and was known as a CASA 2111/He-111H-16T-8B-transport RR (Rolls Royce) engines. The CAF purchased the plane in England in 1977, and in September of that year an English crew flew the plane across the Atlantic to the U.S. where it became the first aircraft of its type to land on American soil under its own power, landing in Bangor, Maine.

In 1993 the He-111 was assigned to the Arizona Wing and on March 6 it landed at Mesa, Arizona's Falcon Field and rolled into AZ Wing's hangar. For the next few years AZ Wing members worked on restoring the plane. It then joined the B-17 Sentimental Journey and toured the country as a flying museum, bringing history right to the people in both large cities and small towns alike. And this is what it was setting out to do, along with Neil and Steve who enjoyed bringing history to the people when the plane and its crew were lost in Cheyenne.

ON DECK

--**ROD PETERSON**-- son of Les (deceased) and Mildred Peterson.



As we all grow up, we travel different paths as far as experiences are concerned. I was fortunate in that both of my parents taught school, so we all had summers off. We did a lot of traveling around the United States, and as a consequence, I had been in 35 states by the time I was 18. Other people may not have had the travel experiences I did, but they may have worked on a farm every waking hour, as one of my cousins did. One of my high school friends worked in a grocery store during his free time and always had plenty of money for his infrequent spare time.

I'm not saying I would have wanted to work on a farm, but my cousin sure learned things that I'll never know, and my high school friend has a lifelong database of produce knowledge that I'll never match, even if I become a bagger at Publix (Safeway for those of you in the West) in my old age.

There are all kinds of other examples of different paths, but what I'm leading up to is some serious deficiencies in my "watched movies" list. For example, although it made big headlines when I was in high school, I never had occasion to see "To Kill a Mockingbird" when it was in the theaters. There are other movies I've seen parts of while channel surfing but have never seen whole. Some of them are ones you'd almost universally include on a "must see" list.

As some of you may know, my wife and I recently purchased a house in Northern Florida which needed some rehabbing; not so much because of structural problems, but because it was hopelessly mired in '70s decor, and while I was at it, could stand a wall removed here, and a laundry room updated there. I spend about four or five days a week there and to keep distractions to a minimum I spent the whole summer without a TV, computer, or air conditioning.

A month or so ago, as a function of clearing out the condo for the new owner, I moved the big screen into the living room and set up a VCR and a DVD player; still no cable or satellite, however. It didn't take me long to go through all of the movies I had on tape and the relatively small DVD collection I have, so I borrowed a pile of DVDs from another cousin. There were some old favorites; we're both diehard John Wayne fans, so I was glad for the chance to see "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" for the umpteenth time, as well as "The Cowboys," for only maybe the third or fourth time. I enjoyed other old favorites, such as "The Caine Mutiny," "Day of the Jackal," and "The Guns of Navarone."

The aforementioned "To Kill a Mockingbird" was among his loaners, and I was quite impressed with that movie that I had never seen in 40 years. Then I played the one this article is about: "The Best Years of Our Lives."

No, I had never seen it, although I realized that I had seen parts of it. What a great movie (although there were what I considered some flaws in it). I can't help but think that all of the returning veterans must have seen it when it was first released, and I wonder what their reaction was. I'm writing this on a deadline, so I haven't had a chance to query my mother, but I'll be having dinner with her tomorrow night (as I write this), and even though her response won't make this article, I'm really interested to hear what she thought of it and to see if she remembers my father's reaction.

What I did, and I believe this was one of its goals, was to make me realize that there was a whole lot more to the war experience than the flown missions and all the support work associated with them. For example, a young officer holding a command position in his early twenties must have had a difficult transition in civilian life when jobs weren't plentiful and many were overqualified. I would imagine the rather rigid structure of military life might have been hard to live without in the first days or weeks back home with friends and family, although I can imagine the change in food was welcome!

Anyway, I'm glad I got to see the movie, and if there weren't enough opportunities to thank our veterans for the sacrifices each made in their war, "The Best Years of Our Lives" provided another one for me.

Editor's Note: I received the following from Frank Bernd. I thought it was very appropriate for Veteran's Day, and was wondering if...

THIS MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED TO ANYONE ELSE???

- Despite objections from my mother and father, I went to the Post Office in downtown Chicago and took the necessary tests that covered a multitude of subjects and a physical that was quite extensive. Everything was passed but the physical. Somehow, this skinny kid had to put on another 10 pounds of weight, pronto. The Air Corps would not take me "as is". After eating what seemed like tons of bananas and drinking gallons of cream as prescribed by our family doctor (Dr. Van Dellen), I didn't gain an ounce. However, a friend of mine had joined the Air Corps a few months earlier and was stationed at the Chicago Post Office, helping the army with their paper work until they shipped him out. It just happened that he would be in the medical department alone on a Saturday morning and would be happy to weigh me in. A 12-pound weight gain was developed in a matter of seconds. And that is how a skinny kid of 19 years was sworn in as an aviation cadet candidate in November 1942.
- Orders written September 24th, 1945, eliminated me from further pilot training. The orders also relieved me from any other duties. Orders written on October 11th sent me to Chanute Field at Rantoul, Illinois, for relief of active duty. The Chanute Field orders relieving me from active duty are dated October 18th. My time at this base was only one night and most of a day. Along with a fairly large group of officers, I was getting all types of paper clearance and ended up having a complete physical. The doctor seemed really interested in what he was doing. He examined my back in great detail. "Lieutenant," he said, "How the hell did you ever get in the Air Corps? You have curvature of the spine far in excess of what is allowed." My answer was, "Where the hell were you three years ago?" My final orders included a 31-day period before I was really released from active service. To be accurate, it wasn't until the 19th of November that I went on the inactive list. I did sign up for the reserves, which almost involved me in the Korean War. Signing up for the reserves might seem like a stupid thing to do, but I really loved the Air Corps and it was tough to think about being completely isolated from it.

NOTE FROM FRANK: So you see, I should have been a defense worker earning good money and having a great time courting Evie. What I would have missed most was the honor of serving my country. Also missed would have been the comradeship of all the young men I served with during my training and combat experience. I still consider the members of our crew my very best friends. I think that Major Boyington, the Marine Corps Fighter Ace, summed it up when he said,

"I had a great time in WWII except for those moments of sheer terror."

ALAN'S ANECDOTES

GETTING INTO HEAVEN...

It's easy if you know how...

"If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale, and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into heaven?" I asked the children in my Sunday School class.

"NO!" the children all answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would that get me into heaven?"

Once more they all answered, "NO!"

"Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave candy to all the children and loved my wife, would that get me into heaven?" I asked them again.

Once more they all answered, "NO!"

"Well," I continued, thinking they were a good bit more theologically sophisticated than I had given them credit for, "then.....how can I get into heaven?"

A five-year-old boy shouted out,
"YOU GOTTA BE DEAD!"

IDIOT SIGHTING

I was at the airport, checking in at the gate when an airport employee asked, "Has anyone put anything in your baggage without your knowledge?" To which I replied, "If it was without my knowledge, how would I know?" She smiled knowingly and nodded, "That's why we ask."

I work with an individual who plugged her power strip back into itself, and for the life of her couldn't understand why her system would not turn on.

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHO TO MARRY?

You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dip coming. -- Alan, age 10

No person really decides before they grow up who they're going to marry. God decides it all way before, and you get to find out later who you're stuck with. -- Kirsten, age 10

WHAT IS THE RIGHT AGE TO GET MARRIED?

23 is the best age because you know the person FOREVER by then. -- Camille, age 10

No age is good to get married at. You got to be a fool to get married. -- Freddie, age 6

HOW CAN A STRANGER TELL IF TWO PEOPLE ARE MARRIED?

You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids. -- Derrick, 8

WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE DO ON A DATE?

Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough. -- Lynnette, age 8

On the first date, they just tell each other lies and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date. -- Martin, age 10

IS IT BETTER TO BE SINGLE OR MARRIED?

It's better for girls to be single but not for boys. Boys need someone to clean up after them. -- Anita, age 9

HOW WOULD THE WORLD BE DIFFERENT IF PEOPLE DIDN'T GET MARRIED?

Well, there sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there? -- Kelvin, age 8

HOW WOULD YOU MAKE A MARRIAGE WORK?

Tell your wife that she looks pretty, even if she looks like a truck. -- Ricky, age 10



Secretary's Station 130

Note from the Editor:

I recently received the following email:

"Ms. Henrich, I was reading my father's 457th BG newsletter today and came across two articles which I know to be untrue. The origin of 'TAPS' and the story about 'TARGET' stores. Both of these are "urban legends" that have been circulating on the internet for some time.

I have found the newsletter to be an improvement over past issues and sincerely hope that you will check these types of things more thoroughly before printing them.

Thank you
D. Johnson"

I would respond as follows:

"D. Johnson, I apologize if you were offended by the printing of the above mentioned articles in the 457th BG newsletter. I believed that my disclaimer *"do with it what you will"* left it up to the discretion of the reader to believe it or not, to investigate or not to investigate the validity of the information. I'm glad you like the newsletter otherwise."

Nancy Henrich, Editor

FYI: For anyone interested, there is a web site that gives information on "urban legends". The site is: snopes.com

* * *

ENGLISH TRAVEL FUND...UPDATE

Once again, members of the 457th Bomb Group Association have stepped up and shown their love and devotion to our English friends. After a special mailing asking for donations, members sent a little over \$4,000 for the English Travel Fund to the 2003 Reunion in Rapid City, SD. Thanks to you all for responding to the call!

I need your help:

If you move, and forget to notify me directly, you probably won't get your newsletter. As a moneysaving measure, newsletters are sent by Bulk Mail. **Bulk mail is NOT usually forwarded to new addresses even if you have filled out a "Change of Address" card with your Post Office.** If you drop me a Post Office change of address card, you can be assured that you will not miss any newsletters.

Notice the notation on the back of the newsletter..."Address Service Requested"...this is so that the Post Office notifies us of changes of address. It costs us 70 cents for every such notification...and I get 10-20 per mailing. If a newsletter is returned, it may cost as much as \$2.70 as well as additional postage to resend your newsletter if I can track you down.

Please help us save money by remembering to notify me of address changes. This includes those of you who have more than one address depending on the seasons.

* * *

Please Note:

Checks for dues should be made out to:
457TH BOMB GROUP

Checks for the Glatton Memorial Fund to:
457TH BOMB GROUP with a notation to the "Glatton Memorial Fund"

Checks for PX items, including a Roster:
457TH BG PX

Checks for Loading Lists:
JOE TOTH

* * *

Secretary's Station 130 (continued)

From time to time, I receive requests from outside our Association to advertise certain products or events.

I include them as a service to you...these should, in NO way, represent an endorsement of the 457th Bomb Group Association.

One such request is as follows:

Dear Ms. Henrich:

MKG Travel has conducted numerous trips to the WWII sites in Europe. We specialize in tours for veterans, their families, friends and anyone interested in WWII history.

Next year we will lead a group to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of D-Day. This will be a unique and memorable opportunity for all. It will start in Paris, include the festivities on the Normandy Beaches, as well as sites across France, through Battle of the Bulge area and into Germany.

We would like to make this trip known to your association as we're always hearing from veterans who "wish I had known about it." Is it possible that we might announce this in your newsletter? We can make brochures available.

Regards, Brenda Repland
President, MKG Travel
www.mkgtravel.com
800-655-3342

A second request follows:

Dear Ms. Henrich:

Bomber Legends (formerly the B-24 Liberator Club) has produced a "2004 B-17 Flying Fortress Historic Calendar". This calendar is packed with color and black and white photos, historical descriptions, and dates. It retails for \$10 (plus \$2.50 shipping).

We request that you run one of the enclosed ads for the B-17 Flying Fortress calendar in your newsletter. As special thanks, we will reimburse your organization 50 cents for every copy of the calendar that is sold to members of your organization. The total sales will be calculated on February 27th, 2004 and checks will be mailed to your association. We

have assigned your group a special code to track sales. The code appears in the return mailing address next to "Bomber Legends" in the ad.

Thank you in advance for your help! The calendar will be available in September 2003.

Sincerely, George Welsh, Editor-in-Chief



This NEW 2004 calendar is packed with photos and historical information.

Order your copy today!

\$10 (plus \$2.50 shipping & handling)

Make your checks payable to:
"Bomber Legends"

Your organization will receive a portion of the sale of each calendar through Feb. 2004. We track sales by the special code in the () following "Bomber Legends" below.

Bomber Legends

Bomber Legends (457BG)
1672 Main Street, Ste. E - 124
Ramona, CA 92065

* * *

PLEASE LET NANCY KNOW IF...

☐ YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED A MEMBERSHIP CARD, OR A LIFE MEMBER CARD

--OR--

☐ YOU HAVE RECENTLY JOINED OR HAVE UPGRADED TO A LIFE MEMBERSHIP AND WE HAVE NOT PUBLISHED YOUR NAME IN A NEWSLETTER

* * *

THE EDITOR'S PLIGHT

The typographical error is a slippery thing and sly; you can hunt it 'til you're dizzy, but somehow it will get by. 'Til the pages are off the press, it is strange how still it sleeps; it shrinks down in a corner, and it never stirs or peeps.

That typographical error is too small for human eyes, 'til the ink is on the paper, when it grows to mountain size.

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/release: _____

Retired? _____ Rank? _____ Birthdate _____

DUES INFORMATION:

Annual Dues: \$25 for 2 years

-or-

Life Dues:

Under 60 years of age:	\$110.00
61-65 years of age:	\$90.00
66-70 years of age:	\$75.00
71 + years of age:	\$60.00

Make checks payable to: 457th BG Association

Mail top of this form and check to:

John Pearson, Treasurer
457th Bomb Group Association
1900 Lauderdale Drive, C-315
Richmond, VA 23233

Your canceled check is your receipt.

THE NATIONAL D-DAY MUSEUM

AMERICA'S WORLD WAR II MUSEUM

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Used with permission of Stacy Peckham, Staff Writer and Marketing Assistant

War Clouds

The generation of Americans who came to adulthood during the 1930s grew up in a world shadowed by extraordinary economic and military threats.

A financial depression gripped much of the globe, throwing millions out of work. In some countries, economic hardship contributed to the power and appeal of political extremists. These leaders offered simple solutions to their countries' problems, solutions that included extreme nationalism, military expansion and doctrines of racial superiority.

In Germany, Adolf Hitler created a fascist state that threatened the peace of Europe. Hitler renounced treaty obligations, began a rapid arms buildup, and made territorial demands on Germany's neighbors. He and the Italian dictator, Benito Mussolini, joined their nations in a military union.

Separated by two oceans from these troubles, Americans hoped to isolate themselves from war. Yet at the end of this troubled decade their lives were profoundly altered by events that unfolded far from home.

Imbalance of Power

The world of the 1930s was one of extremes. In Japan, Germany, and Italy, violently nationalistic leaders were at work building formidable war machines. They used their military power to threaten other countries. Threats soon gave way to hostilities and the people of Europe and Asia lived increasingly in the shadow of hatred and oppression.

A far different attitude towards war existed in the United States. Situated between Europe and Asia, America had a small peacetime army and a deep unwillingness to be drawn into another global conflict. Americans were content in their isolation. Many were coping with the harsh realities of the Depression. Few wanted to get involved in troubles overseas.

But it was impossible to ignore events taking place around the world. Some Americans harbored growing concerns that these events could pose a threat to the United States. Still, isolationist sentiment remained strong. Bowing to popular pressure, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Neutrality Acts, which kept the country in a passive position.

THE NATIONAL D-DAY MUSEUM...continued

Meanwhile, the German, Japanese, and Italian armed forces continued to grow. By 1939, it was clear that the United States was at a grave military disadvantage. Should it be drawn into war, it would face a difficult situation.

Germany's Expansion

During the 1930s, Germany and Japan expanded their armed forces with astonishing speed, through conscription and massive production programs. Military expenditures skyrocketed, especially in Germany. By 1939, the armies and air forces of both countries dwarfed those of the United States. Even Italy, whose army was only a fraction of the size of Germany's and Japan's, had more troops than the United States. America's only strength was its navy, which served in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, as the nation's main line of defense.

Japan

At the start of the 1930s Japan was an overcrowded nation heavily dependent on foreign imports of food and raw materials. In 1931 ultranationalists pushed the country to seize the Chinese province of Manchuria. As the decade progressed, the military increasingly dominated Japan's economy and government. The army grew enormously and the navy boasted aircraft carriers, powerful battleships, and strong air and submarine forces. Soon it set its sights on further expansion in China and Southeast Asia. In 1937 Japan entered a full-scale war with China. But American and British presence in the region hindered Japan's ambitions in Southeast Asia. War production accelerated in anticipation of future conflicts.

United States

After World War I the United States returned to its traditional policy of isolation from armed conflicts abroad. America's military was reduced drastically. During the 1920s and 1930s its strength remained low. Even as war loomed in Europe and Asia, America made little effort to mobilize. In 1939 the United States armed forces ranked 18th in the world. The nation was far from being a military superpower. Only the navy, which had long been America's primary line of defense, was maintained at a level that commanded respect.

Germany

After its defeat in World War I Germany was forced to demilitarize. The Treaty of Versailles restricted Germany to an army of 100,000 men and forbid it to have a navy or air force. Until the early 1930s Germans were preoccupied with reviving their crippled economy. But in 1935 Adolf Hitler, in a bid to build a new German empire, began remilitarization--a direct violation of the Versailles Treaty. By 1939 the size of the German war machine was second only to that of the Soviet Union.

THE NATIONAL D-DAY MUSEUM...continued

Italy

During the 1930s Italian dictator Benito Mussolini began a military campaign to extend Italy's influence in Europe and Africa. After invading and annexing Ethiopia in 1936, Mussolini controlled much of East Africa. During the next two years Italian military spending and production increased dramatically. In 1939 Mussolini signed the Pact of Steel that aligned Italy's fortunes with Germany. By that time, Italy possessed a sizable navy and airforce, and an army three times as large as the U.S. Army.

The Course of War

"We are ready!...The year 1941 will bring completion of the greatest victory in our history."

-- Adolf Hitler, December 31, 1940

"For 2,600 years since it was founded, our Empire has never known a defeat. This record alone is enough to produce a conviction in our ability to crush any enemy no matter how strong."

-- Prime Minister Tojo Hideki, Radio address, December 8, 1941

World War II began in Asia. During the 1930s Japan undertook a campaign of aggressive military expansion. It occupied Manchuria in 1931, and in 1937 began a long and brutal war in China. In 1940 it pushed into French Indochina.

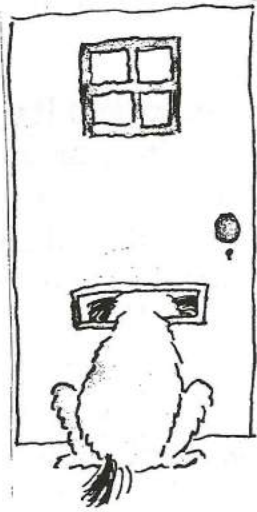
On the other side of the globe, two other nations pursued expansionist policies during the 1930s. In 1935 Italy invaded Ethiopia. In Europe, Adolf Hitler began intimidating neighboring states and expanding Germany's borders. In 1938 he annexed Austria. He then demanded German-speaking areas of Czechoslovakia. The democracies of Europe, anxious to avoid war, bowed to Hitler's wishes. But this only led to new demands on Czechoslovakia. Germany also forged a military union with Italy.

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France, Poland's allies, declared war on Germany. At first the war went well for Germany and its Italian ally. Poland capitulated. France was defeated. British troops were driven from the continent. There were military successes in Scandinavia and the Balkans. Then Hitler made a strategic error. In June 1941 he invaded the Soviet Union. His offensive soon bogged down. Germany now faced enemies on two fronts.

On December 7, 1941, the war took another dramatic turn. Japan attacked American, British, and Dutch territories in the Pacific. On December 11, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States. America now joined a conflict that mushroomed into a global war--the largest in world history.

Part II, "America at War", next newsletter issue.

Mail Call...



Dear Mr. Reese,

Firstly I would like to congratulate you on your Website, it is probably the best and easiest to use site I have seen.

The reason for this email started when I visited some of our friends who had recently moved to Connington in Cambridgeshire. During our stay my friend mentioned that Connington used to be an Air Force base during the war, he mentioned this, as he knew that I love all things to do with WWII. We took a walk out over from his house, Rose Cottage, up the Connington Road and then over a field towards the church, we passed what I believe now to be the old generator building left over from the forties. *(NOTE: The author of this letter informs us that Rose Cottage is not Rose Court Farm but the first house in from the highway on Connington Road.)*

We had a good look around the church and came across the memorial that stands to the side of the church-- "Fait Accompli". Sculpted on the back of the memorial was a B17; at least I knew what used to fly from here! We walked towards the village of Holme and came across what I took to be the runway and proceeded to walk up it. The runway was a bit narrow and had a reasonable bend in it so we decided it wasn't the runway after all! There were markings in the runway on each segment of concrete which must have been made while the concrete was still wet, something like 'BP21' where the last two digits were different on each section, but not in any order! The runway turned out to be the route between two runways that run in front of the main hanger.

After walking down there for a while we realised that the route would take us into the path of the only runway still in use by the local aviation club so we turned west into what used to be the old Technical site. This whole area has now been taken over as a game reserve where pheasants are bred for sport. After a little while we came across a huge pile of concrete and steel, this turned out to be the old HQ, not much of that left I'm afraid. About 30 yards further on we came across the outer walls and little else of another building, inside here was a few metal parts that were obviously electrical in nature it turns out that this was the local substation for the camp.

We walked a lot more that day. There is still a lot of concrete down, mainly covered by earth now but still there all the same. We ended up back on the Connington Road just north of the church. As we walked back we could see distinct shapes of what could have been Nissan huts just North of the road, completely overgrown and inaccessible due to the swampy conditions.

I was completely engrossed in what I saw that day. I decided to investigate what I now know to be Glatton, was like back in the war. Our friends had a little leaflet about the air base that showed where the runways and buildings were and what used to fly from there. I was absolutely amazed! Connington is now a sleepy little village with one phone box and one letter box. I cannot imagine how life was back in 44 with all those people there!

Today, I found your website and spent quite a while reading all the stories and looking at all the pictures. How different life was in those days. I am 45, from a strange generation whose fathers and grandfathers either served in, or were affected by the two wars, but was never actually involved personally. I also found that previous generations were reticent to talk about their part in the wars and as a youngster was not interested in asking. This has seemed to change as I

Mail Call...continued

grew older and I now realise that the recent past is so important to our present times, and also realise how different life would be now if it was not for the sacrifice of so many from your generation. I cannot image, in these cosy times, what it was like to be a part of WWII, and what hardships you and your generation went through. But, at least your website has given me some insight.

Now that I know so much more of Glatton I have promised myself that I will return (Connington is around 120 miles from here.) Next time I will come armed with a camera. I am not sure if anyone will be interested but I will pass all the pictures on to you when I return.

Finally, a big Thank You to you and your comrades for giving your all to help our country in those dark days. I can assure you that people from my generation are slowly becoming aware as to the great sacrifice you made and the courageous way you faced danger against all odds. I will ensure that the deeds of you and your generation will be recounted to my children.

Yours sincerely, Tim Meek

The following letter was received and is being printed here 'For Your Information'. This is not an endorsement by the 457th Bomb Group Association...

Dear Madam,

I am writing to ask if you might have a noticeboard that I could place a Poster advertising Paintings of Aircraft and Prints. Alternatively if you have a Newsletter or magazine that could accommodate my request that would be helpful.

I work as a Freelance Artist since 1986 and Aviation themes are just one of the subjects that I cover. Should you require further details or information, please don't hesitate to contact me. I can be contacted by Tel/Fax 01425 629629. More details and work samples can be found on the web site: www.forgottenwars.com/David Walker/.

Yours Sincerely, David Walker

ATTENTION ASSOCIATION MEMBERS:

UNFORTUNATELY, I RAN OUT OF SPACE BEFORE I COULD INCLUDE A LISTING OF NEW MEMBERS/LIFE MEMBERS. THAT WILL BE IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER. ALSO, BEGINNING WITH THE NEXT NL, I WILL BEGIN A NEW COLUMN TITLED: "CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE ROSTER". WATCH FOR THIS IN ALL FUTURE ISSUES AND MAKE THE CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS IN YOUR OWN COPY OF THE 2003 ROSTER. (PROVIDING YOU HAVE ONE, OF COURSE!!!) NANCY

RECEIVED VIA WILLARD REESE FROM TIM BRUGGEMAN

My siblings and I would be pleased if you would publish this poem on your web site, and in your newsletter. We think it's too good not to share with others. Hope you like it! -Tim

The children of John C. and Dolores R. Bruggeman:

*Elizabeth A. Mulligan
Jeanne M. McGowan
John Bruggeman (Deceased)
Kathryn L. Bruggeman
Daniel P. Bruggeman
Timothy J. Bruggeman
Robert D. Bruggeman
Dr. Nicholas B. Bruggeman*

INTRODUCTION :

This World War II story was conceived and told, during imprisonment in Stalag Luft 1, a German POW camp near Barth, Germany, by an unknown U.S. serviceman, whom I believe was a fighter pilot. The story tells of the bomber mission over Germany in which he was shot down and captured.

The story was written down and saved in his personal journal by T/Sgt. John C. Bruggeman (our father) who was a radio operator/gunner in a B-17G Flying Fortress crew, of the 457th Bomber Group, 751st Squadron stationed near Glatton, England. He was shot down over Bernberg, Germany on 2 November, 1944. The mission was to have targeted Merseburg, Germany, however the group veered off course to the north and met severe resistance from Luftwaffe fighter planes. Nine bomber planes were lost on that mission. Of the nine members of my father's crew, four survived.

THE STORY BEGINNETH...

And so it came to pass that there dwelleth in the land of the Saxon, a group of strange men who flitteth here and there and make like birds for such was their business, to bring success and protection to their brethren, who lumbereth about on more unwieldy limbs, and they were called birdmen.

And it came to pass that one morning, as the sun first shineth on the hut of the sleeping birdmen, one called the "CQ" entereth therein and sayeth, "Arise, for the time of briefing is at hand." And he departeth in great haste for he was wise in the ways of the birdmen.

And lo, with much cursing and mumbling they arose, and appeaseth their hunger on powdered eggs and fat from the belly of the sow, for alas, such was the way of their quartermaster who walketh about on paddled feet.

Wherefore the birdmen wendeth their way to the briefing place where they beheld strange markings on the wall, many and numerous were the red spots on the plan of the enemy stronghold.

And their gaze fell upon the handwriting on the wall, for such it was, and they sayeth one to the other, "No, this cannot be." And there was weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And the sound of their murmuring ceaseth as the great gray eagle entereth the room. And he spake unto them saying, "Yea, verily wing upon wing of our big friends must go forth this day and assaileth the enemy, and let us not laggeth behind, for he who strayeth behind is lost."

THE STORY BEGINNETH...continued

And there was one amongst them who was called "S-2" for he claimeth to know the way of the enemy. But he went not amongst the enemy, and they believeth him not. And they spoke one to the other, "Why doth he speaketh, for he knoweth not the way of the enemy and the odds which we reapeth in the end."

And still another spoke to them of the winds and clouds, but they heedeth him not, for he confuseth them.

As they leaveth the briefing room, some entereth the little houses in great haste, and still others entereth the big house in still greater haste, thus they departeth to their winged steeds where they entangle each of them with many strange hooks and straps after a confusing manner. And each was known unto the other by various numbers and colors that they know their places, and in this manner, each after the other, they breaketh the bonds of the earth.

And one amongst them runneth fast but lifteth not for his R.P.M. runneth out. And the others wondereth at his great fortune. And still another returneth for his temperature ariseth, tho he waxeth cold.

And as they cometh unto their appointed place, their big friends are gone before them and the birdmen were troubled for lo! their petrol dribbleth fast.

And so they drew nigh unto the target and beheld numerous flashes amongst them - and they twist and weaveth to escape the flak, for such it was called.

And Red Number 1 calleth the great gray eagle and sayeth, "Whither shall we turn? Canst thou not lead us out?" And the great gray eagle answereth, "O thou of little faith, why doth thou murmur against me?"

And at this time, multitudes of enemy birdmen ascendeth against the Forts and Libs and they were sorely clobbered, for such was the custom in those days.

And they calleth to their little brethren with the sharp claws to come and give them succor. And they came forth, save one who came fifth, for he spoke of having a Focke-Wulf on his tail.

Whereupon each birdman turneth to the other and great confusion reigneth.

And Red Number 1 calleth to Red Number 2 and sayeth, "Wherefore art thou?" And Red Number 2 answereth, "Lo and behold I spinneth in and am lost to thee."

Then they sayeth one to the other, "Hitteth the silk!" And white parasols fluttereth earthward.

Thus, they cometh to the land of the enemy, KRIEGIE LAND, and the story endeth.

--Author Unknown

The Soldier

by Thomas V. Halm

Where's Daddy is what I asked her. He was a soldier, her reply.

Will I ever see him? That's when she began to cry.

Was he like the ones that I play with, that are always off to war?

The ones that when I'm done with I pick up from the floor?

With a broken voice she told me, with these words I can't forget,

With tears that kept on falling from her eyes and down her neck.

Your daddy he was special and someone very real.

And no, you will not see him but he's in your heart concealed.

I asked why do we need the soldiers

who don't come back from war,

When all their children miss them

and don't know why and still what for.

She said no earthly one can tell us but

God has his reasons, that I'm sure.

Let's thank all our fathers for what they have endured.

Mommy, I just told her, with tears running from my eyes,

I'd rather have my Daddy, the real soldier than

God's real reason why.

Now that I am older, it need not be explained,

It's on a wall you find him listing all their names.

Built by other soldiers who think that they know why.

A certain day with certain meaning, it's the 4th day of July.

Just a memory to a monument or a father I should know.

Which one would I have chosen dear God I think you know.

But thru Faith Your plan is perfect

As all eternity will show.

sent in by Russell Karl...Thomas V. Halm (1947-2003) was a friend

Abraham Lincoln said:

"FREEDOM IS THE LAST, BEST HOPE OF EARTH."

..PX.....PX.....PX.....PX.....PX.....PX.....PX.....PX.....PX.....PX.....PX..

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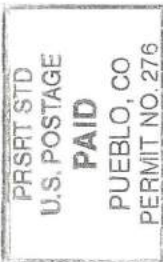
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I am your Flag

I was born on June 14th, 1777. I am more than just cloth shaped into a design. I am the refuge of the World's oppressed people. I am the silent sentinel of Freedom. I am the emblem of the greatest sovereign nation on earth.

I am the inspiration for which American Patriots gave their lives and fortunes.

I have led your sons into battle from Valley Forge to the bloody swamps of Vietnam and the deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan. I walk in silence with each of your Honored Dead, to their final resting place beneath the silent White Crosses, row upon row.

I have flown through Peace and War, Strife and Prosperity, and amidst it all I have been respected.

My Red Stripes...symbolize the blood spilled in defense of this glorious nation.

My White Stripes...signify the burning tears shed by Americans who lost their sons.

My Blue Field...is indicative of God's heaven under which I fly.

My Stars...clustered together, unify 50 states as one, for God and Country. "Old Glory" is my nickname and proudly I wave on high.

Honor me, respect me, defend me with your lives and your fortunes.

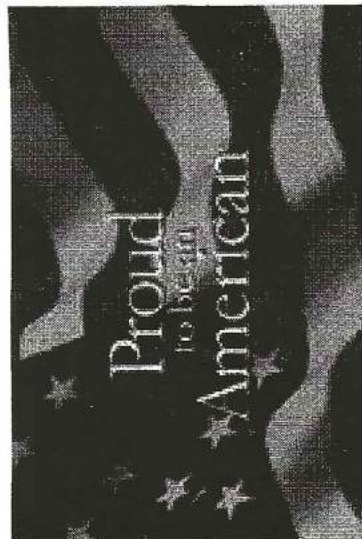
Never let my enemies tear me down from my lofty position, lest I never return.

Keep alight the fires of patriotism, strive earnestly for the spirit of Democracy.

Worship Eternal God and keep His commandments, and I shall remain the bulwark of peace and freedom for all mankind.

I am your Flag.

Colonel Daniel K. Cedusky, USA, Retired



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